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UPSKILLING
IS KEY

LUCKNOW, WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 16, 2020; PAGES 14 ₹3



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IN PLACE FOR
KOHLI: LANGER
14 SPORT

Kisan will teach Opp lesson: PM

Those spreading canards that farmers will lose land will be defeated, Modi says, assures new laws will benefit kisan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the continuing stand-off between his Government and the protesting farmers, demanding rollback of new farm laws, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday assured farmers that their land is "protected" and expressed confidence that "farmers across the country" would "teach a lesson" to the Opposition parties "misleading" them on the agriculture reforms initiated by the Centre.

"I am confident that when the honest intentions and efforts of Government are blessed by all farmers across the country... (then) the strength of it will defeat those misleading and making use of farmers for their own ends," said the Prime Minister while inaugurating a project in Kutch, Gujarat.

Citing example of highly profitable dairy business in the Kutch region which he said is free from any Government control, the Prime Minister said Government likewise "does not intend to interfere in the agriculture related business."

Modi, thereafter, went on to attack the Opposition which he said is "misleading farmers around Delhi that their land will be taken away by the

traders".

"Does any one take away the buffalo of dairy seller or the land of a fruit seller if you strike a contract (business)?" he asked seeking to dispel "doubts" of the agitating farmers that the traders will seize their lands in new contract system. The Prime Minister assured farmers that their land will remain "protected" and asked why foodgrain producers should not have a freedom that is available to those engaged in animal husbandry?

Modi said in the past farmers have been demanding that foodgrain production should be freed from Government control and Opposition political parties too favoured farm reforms when they were in power at the Centre, he said.

"Today same political parties have come together to mislead farmers... 'kisan ke kandhon per bandook chalan rare hain'. I appeal to the farmers that Government is ready to remove all their doubts...", said the Prime Minister saying his Government has been working to increase farmers' agriculture produce and the income.

"Those spreading lies will be defeated by farmers and taught a lesson," said Modi.

After the function, the Prime Minister interacted with a body of Sikh representatives



Farmers at Singhu Border during their sit-in protest against the Centre's farm reform laws in New Delhi on Tuesday
Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

and some farmers in Kutch.

The Prime Minister's comments have made it clear that his Government would not scrap the new farm laws, which

is the principal demand of the farmers, resulting in a deadlock and escalation of protests on the outskirts of the Delhi borders.

22 protesters die in last 20 days

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Four Punjab farmers returning from protest sites near Delhi borders were killed in two separate road accidents on Tuesday while one died of heart attack. According to Sanyukt Kisan Morcha, at least 22 farmers have died in the last 20 days. Eight of these farmers have died in road accidents while returning to their home while 12 died of heart attack and two succumbed to cold.

In the first incident, two farmers were killed and four others were injured after a truck hit their tractor-trolley near Taraori flyover in Karnal in the wee hours of Tuesday. The farmers were returning to Patiala after participating in the protest against the farm laws.

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Farmers harden stance, to block Chilla border today

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With talks between farmers and the Union Government failing to resolve the crisis, the protest against the Centre's new farm laws looks set to intensify as farmers hardened stance and said they are determined to win this fight no matter what.

Addressing a Press conference at Singhu border, farmers' leaders said the fight has reached a stage where they are determined to win no matter what. "We are sure that we will make the Government repeal these laws. We are not running away from negotiation, but the Government has to pay heed to our demands and come forward with concrete proposals," said Jagjeet Dallewal, a farmer leader.

Several other farmer leaders also addressed the Press conference and said they will completely block the Chilla Border between Delhi and Noida on Wednesday to press for their demands.

The farmers' leaders also called upon people to pay tributes on December 20 to those farmers who have lost

their lives during the ongoing protests.

Farmer leader Rishipal said one farmer has died every day on an average since the protest started in the last week of November.

"A Homage Day (Shraddhanjali Diwas) for all the farmers who lost their lives and became martyrs in the ongoing protest will be organised across the country in villages and tehsil headquarters on December 20 from 11 am to 1pm," said another farmer leader.

Meanwhile, following the protest, the Delhi Traffic Police took it on to Twitter and informed commuters regarding the traffic closed.

Police said Singhu, Auchandi, Piau Maniyari, Sabholi and Manges borders were closed, and commuters have been advised to take alternative routes via Lampur, Safabad and Singhu school toll tax borders while traffic has been diverted from Mukarba and GTK road.

Outer Ring Road, GTK road and NH-44 can be avoided, they said.

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India cancels bilateral talks with Canada days after Trudeau's remarks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an apparent rebuff, India on Tuesday did not take part in a high-level bilateral dialogue at the diplomatic-level with Canada claiming that the date was inconvenient. This came days after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau backed the protesting farmers in India.

India had termed the remarks by Trudeau as "unwarranted" and conveyed its displeasure while issuing a demarche after summoning Canadian High Commissioner to New Delhi. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar last week also pulled out of a Canadian-led initiative to fight coronavirus pandemic. Jaishankar did not attend the December 7 meeting organised by Canadian

Foreign Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne to formulate strategies to combat the global pandemic. "Scheduling issues" were cited as the reason for Jaishankar for not taking part in the meet. Incidentally, he had attended the last meeting in November. As regards the latest development, the diplomatic-level talks were to be held between Riva Ganguly Das, Secretary (East) and Canadian counterpart.

Foreign Minister S Jaishankar had last week skipped the Ministerial Coordination Group of Covid-19 organised by Canadian Foreign Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne to formulate strategies on the coronavirus pandemic.

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Pranab's son, daughter lock horns over his memoir

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The late Pranab Mukherjee's son and daughter are at loggerheads with each other over his memoir "The Presidential Years", one saying it should not be published without his consent and the other "requesting" her brother to not create "unnecessary hurdles" in the publication of his last book.

The book, which was in the news recently for Pranab Mukherjee's critical comments on the Congress, including his observation that the party lost political focus after his elevation as president, is set to be launched next month by Rupa, which published the two earlier volumes of his memoirs.

The late president's son Abhijit Mukherjee, a former Congress MP, said on Twitter he has written to the publishers to not publish the book till his nod. His sister Sharmista Mukherjee, national spokesperson of the party, shot back saying no one should try and stop

it for "cheap publicity" and doing so would be great disservice to the late leader.

"I, the Son of the author of the Memoir 'The Presidential Memoirs' request you to kindly stop the publication of the memoir as well as motivated excerpts which is already floating in certain media platforms without my written consent," Abhijit said on Twitter.

"Since my father is no more, I being his son want to go through the contents of the final copy of the book before its publication as I believe, had my father been alive today, he too would have done the same."

Being the son, he said he requested the publishers to immediately stop the publication. "...I have already sent you a detailed letter in this regard which will reach you soon. Regards - Abhijit Mukherjee," the tweet read.

His sister responded, also on Twitter. "I, daughter of the author of the memoir 'The

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UK PM accepts India's invite to be R-Day chief guest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will be the chief guest at the Republic Day next year. Making this announcement here on Tuesday, visiting British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said Johnson has accepted India's very "generous" invitation to honour the occasion.

Raab held extensive talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on various bilateral and international issues besides firming up Johnson's upcoming visit. Media including The Pioneer had reported about his likely visit in January next year on December two.

This will be Johnson's "first major bilateral visit" since he took charge last year, his office highlighted.

"I am absolutely delighted to be visiting India next year at the start of an exciting year for Global Britain, and look forward to delivering the quantum leap in our

Continued on Page 11

Be poised for vaccine's side effects, States told

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Ministry of Health on Tuesday did not rule out possibility of an adverse event following immunisation whenever Covid-19 vaccination programme is launched and has asked the States and Union Territories to strengthen the mechanism at district level to deal with these.

"Adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) is a critical aspect. Even during universal immunisation programmes, which have been going on for decades, some adverse effects are seen in children and pregnant women after vaccination.

"So, we can't deny the possibility of an adverse event when the Covid-19 vaccination begins. The countries where inoculation has already started, especially in the UK, adverse events took place on the very first day. So, it is essential that States and Union Territories prepare for this too," Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said at a presser here.

The apprehension of AEFI is realistic given that this is an adult vaccine. "Our AEFI system was targeted to children and women and those vacci-

Adverse events following immunisation a critical aspect: Ministry to State, UTs



nations take place in a certain way, starting with hospitals and then into the communities.

"But when we deal with adults, certain practical aspects have to be tackled. Secondly, these vaccinations are in multiple new platforms that bring in complexity. If a EUA (emergency use authorisation) is given, it calls for more responsibility," added Dr VK Paul, Niti Aayog member (Health).

Detailed instructions on infection prevention and control practices during vaccination and management of minor, severe, serious (AEFI) have been issued, he said.

Around 29,000 cold chain points, 240 walk-in coolers, 70

walk-in freezers, 45,000 ice-lined refrigerators, 41,000 deep freezers and 300 solar refrigerators will be used to store Covid-19 vaccines.

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'SHOCKING': SC NOTES GUJ GOT ₹90 CR MASK FINES BUT RULES LAX

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday expressed shock after learning the Gujarat Government collected around ₹90 crore in fines for not wearing face masks, yet it was not able to enforce the guidelines on Covid-19 appropriate behaviour.

Covid-19 IN INDIA
TOTAL
CASES: 99,25,062
DEATHS: 1,43,985
RECOVERED: 94,44,229
ACTIVE: 3,34,265



STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	18,86,807	48,339	17,66,010
Karnataka	9,03,425	11,965	8,75,796
Andhra Pradesh	8,76,336	7,064	8,64,612
Tamil Nadu	8,01,161	11,919	7,79,291
Kerala	6,77,256	2,681	6,16,666
Delhi	6,10,447	10,115	5,85,852
Uttar Pradesh	5,66,728	8,083	5,39,727
West Bengal	5,25,918	9,145	4,96,110
Odisha	3,24,389	1,868	3,19,458
Rajasthan	2,93,584	2,568	2,75,506
Telangana	2,78,599	1,499	2,69,828
Chhattisgarh	2,58,635	3,135	2,39,468
Haryana	2,54,207	2,751	2,43,224
Bihar	2,44,245	1,329	2,37,996
Gujarat	2,29,913	4,193	2,12,939
Madhya Pradesh	2,25,709	3,425	2,09,768

Govt calls off Winter Session over Covid

It's 'decimation of democracy' when polls, rallies allowed, alleges Congress

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday said the Winter Session of Parliament will not be held this year in view of the Covid-19 pandemic and that it will be appropriate to convene the Budget Session in January.

This has invited sharp reactions from the main

Opposition party Congress. The Opposition questioned the motive behind not calling the Session when elections and huge public rallies were allowed and even schools and colleges have been permitted to be opened.

In a letter to leader of Congress in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Prahad Joshi said, "Winter months are very crucial for managing the pandemic because of recent spurt in cases during this period, particularly in Delhi. At present, we are in the middle of December and a Covid vaccine is expected



very soon."

Slamming the Government for its decision to not hold Parliament's Winter Session in view of Covid-19, the Congress said the "decimation of Parliamentary democracy is

complete" and asked if election campaigning can be done amid the pandemic then why can't the session be held. Senior Congress leader and party's chief whip in the Rajya Sabha Jairam Ramesh said Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad was not consulted on the matter.

Joshi in his communication to Chowdhury said he had informally contacted floor leaders of various political parties and "they have expressed their concerns about the ongoing pandemic and opined of doing away with winter session".

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RAM JANMBHOOMI MANDIR RE ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL SELF RESPECT

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- Contributions can be made through : NEFT/RTGS/IMPS/ Quick Pay/DD/Cheque/Cash deposit to any these .

State Bank of India, Naya Ghat, Ayodhya Saving Account No. 39161495808 Current Account No. 39161498809 IFSC Code SBIN0002510	Punjab National Bank, Ayodhya Saving Account No.-3865000100139999 IFSC Code PUNB0386500	Bank of Baroda, Naya Ghat, Ayodhya Saving Account No. 05820100021211 IFSC Code BARB0AYODHY
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Online donations through website <https://srjbtkshetra.org>

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UP Empowering Women

👉 I salute the indomitable courage and stellar achievements of women. We renew our pledge to make women an equal and integral part of our development. 🇮🇳

Narendra Modi,
Prime Minister



U.P. GOVERNMENT'S INITIATIVES ENSURE WOMEN SAFETY AND EMPOWERMENT

Never before has a government been committed to the empowerment, self-reliance and security of women like U.P. government of Yogi Adityanath. Over the past 3.5 years, the state has witnessed many progressive schemes for girls and women such as Kanya Sumangla Yojna, Samoochik Vivah Yojna, pension to widows and destitute women, etc. The state has also performed with top ranks in implementation of various schemes of the central government such as PM Awas Yojna, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (construction of toilets), Ujjwala Yojna, PM Matru Vandana Yojna, etc. The government under Chief Minister, Yogi Adityanath has also followed zero tolerance policy for crime against women. The Anti-Romeo squad, 181 helpline and the strengthened 1090 have proved to be useful tools in giving a sense of security and pride to the women of the state. The recently launched Mission Shakti Abhiyan is fulfilling the aim to make women self reliant with security and respect in the state.

WOMEN SECURITY TO BE MADE A PUBLIC CAMPAIGN-YOGI ADITYANATH

Conviction in the cases of crime against women is highest in Uttar Pradesh. The state is in top position in taking strict action against people accused of crime against women. The latest crime data and rate of crime across 75 districts of the state shows that the situation of crime against women is better in U.P. than in other states.

The state government following its zero tolerance policy against crime is dealing with full force in cases of crime against women and is ensuring strictest of punishment to offenders. Since 2017, the Yogi government has been successful in controlling crime against women. As compared to 2016, rape cases have declined by 42.24 per cent in 2020 and 39 per cent reduction of abduction cases. The rape cases have declined by 27.32 per cent in 2020 against in the year 2019. People charged under POCSO Act have been effectively perused in the courts and taken to tasks with strict punishments. The Nirbhaya Fund established by the central government has the name of Lucknow also among 8 cities of the country. The women power line 1090 has been strengthened along with the police and is now more active and effective force. The Yogi government has also deployed women police in plain clothes and the anti-romeo squad at sensitive places besides UP 112 India mobile app, Ratri Suraksha Kawach Yojna, women help desks at every police station and pink booths for women. The state is in top position in taking strict action against people accused of crime against women. The latest crime data and rate of crime across 75 districts of the state shows that the situation of crime



against women is better in U.P. than in other states. The people accused of crime against women as conviction was ensured from courts in 15,579 cases "through effective investigation and pursuance". The state ranked 15th in crime against women with around 59,853 cases reported in 2019. The state ranked 26th in rape incidents with around 3,065 cases reported during 2019. Besides, the state ranked 23rd in sexual crimes against children with a total of 7,594 cases reported under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act during the same period. In other crimes against women, like outrage of modesty and dowry harassment, the state ranked 18th and 5th with

around 11,988 and 3,833 cases reported respectively.

RULE OF THE LAW

The directorate of prosecution has become a powerful weapon in the drive to punish offenders against women. Recently, in a span of two days 14 people were convicted for death penalty and 20 for life

imprisonment in the state. The directorate has ensured cancellation of bail of 117 accused person in 88 cases in the cases of women and child abuse while 101 goondas have been sentenced to remain outside the city. This has been possible due to sincere efforts of the prosecution directorate in the state. The state also ranks first in uploading data of

IMPORTANT STEPS FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- Conviction in cases of crime against women highest in Uttar Pradesh
- Establishment of 88 magisterial courts/session courts and 218 fast track courts
- Kanya Sumangla Yojna for girl child
- Establishment of Women and Child security Organization
- Anti-Romeo Squad
- One stop center for women

- redressal against violence
- Free education till graduation
- CM Samoochik Vivah Yojna
- Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao campaign
- Over 24 lakh women benefitted under PM Matru Vandana Yojna
- Target of associating 1 crore women under 10 lakh SHG's
- Appointment of 58,000 women as Banking Correspondent Sakhi

SAFETY AND SECURITY IS JUST A CALL AWAY

1076
Chief Minister Helpline

181
Women Helpline

102
Health Helpline

112
Emergency Services

1090
Women Powerline

108
Ambulance Helpline

1098
Child Helpline



👉 Women symbolise 'Shakti'. Women are revered in our Sanatan tradition. It is the need of the hour that the new generation becomes a vehicle to carry forward the Sanatan traditions and values in the changing times and spread the message of women safety, respect and self-reliance. 🇮🇳

Yogi Adityanath,
Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh



PEOPLESPEAK

SUMAN GETS APPRECIATION BY THE PM



Suman, a resident of bloc Trivediganj, gram Hasanpur Barabanki received an appreciation from the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Mann Ki Baat program. During the COVID-19 period, Suman bought Khadi cloth from the market and made 60 masks and distributed to the poor and needy people of the village. Her initiative showed the way, she bought a sewing machine and started making masks with her 11 group members. Later more women joined the group and the money received after selling these masks in the market has made them self-reliant. Suman has been able to stop the curse of unemployment amongst women in the village.



Manju Kashyap, a resident of gram Umrikalan, bloc Thekma, Azamgarh is a graduate who ran a business after her marriage in Mumbai. Her business was shut down and she was forced to return to her hometown. She wished to start her own business of traditional snacks and got associated with a self-help group under NRLM. She got all round support from the local authorities for packaging, marketing and arranging of the FSSAI license. Manju now earns between Rs 5,000 to 7,000 per month. She is now happy and is able to take care of all the needs of her family.

GOVERNMENT EMPOWERS WOMEN THROUGH SELF-HELP GROUPS

Uttar Pradesh Government is empowering the women self-help groups in the state by providing them the required facilities. Rural livelihood mission is working out plans with these women to help them sell their products in the market and on e-platforms.

To economically empower the rural women of the state, the number of self-help groups (SHG) is being increased to 10 lakhs. More than one crore women will be directly added to the livelihood mission's employment schemes on the establishment of these 10 lakh SHG's. Recently the Yogi government also signed a MoU between UPNRLM and UN-WFP (United Nations World Food Program). Women of about 2000 groups will become entrepreneurs with over 240 employment days. Under the programme, 7,20,000 man days will be created for the women with expected income of Rs 5,000 to Rs 7,000 per month.

RURAL WOMEN SET TO MAKE U.P. SELF-RELIANT

In the festive month of Navratri, Dussehra and Diwali, rural women of Uttar Pradesh are all set to lead and pave the way for a self-reliant state. These women are giving tough fight to the chinese products in the market by making decorative goods like worship items, diya, statues, light jhalars, etc. The state government is also empowering and facilitating them by providing space in cities and markets free of costs. The Uttar Pradesh rural livelihood mission has worked on a



well-drawn plan with these women and with their products being appreciated by the buyers. These women have been provided electric chaak, machines for making statues and diya, etc. The government has also arranged e-platforms for the groups to sell their products.

PRODUCTS

Artificial Lights (Jhalar) — 25 Women SHG's of Deoria, Maharajganj, Fatehpur, Aligarh and Gorakhpur are working with a target of 50 lakh Jhalars.

Clay statues and Diya — 110 Women SHG's of Jalaun, Muzaffarnagar, Jhansi, Lucknow, Barabanki, Pratapgarh, Hardoi, Chitrakoot and Ghaziabad are working to make 10 lakh diyas and 10 lakh

statues of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesh.

Dhoop Sticks — 1412 Women SHG's of Unnao, Gorakhpur, Lucknow, Firozabad, Badaun, Banda, Bijnor, Sultanpur and Varansi are working with a target of making 50 lakh dhoop stick packets.

Chunri and Hawan products — 65 women SHG's of Mirzapur, Barabanki, Firozabad, Bijnor, Banda, Gorakhpur and Aligarh are working to make 10 lakh packets which are in high demand.

Decorative Candles — Women SHG's of Kheer, Lucknow, Unnao, Gorakhpur, Badaun, Bijnor, Banda and Ghaziabad are working to make decorative, scented and designer candles.

GOVERNMENT PROMOTES WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

The state government has come up with good news for the half population of Uttar Pradesh. Under the new startup policy women have been given a priority and preference in the same with 50% extra facilities for women. The startups policy will have a facility of incubator. 10 startups in every incubator will get Rs 15,000 every month for a year. In case of a woman, this amount will increase to Rs 22,500. Reservation of 25% is provisioned in the government recognized incubation centres. There are about 500 seats in these centers and preference will be given to women for seat allotment in case of a partnership. Under the scheme, women entrepreneurs will also get benefits for capital investments. The initial starting amount is Rs 5 lakh and in case of women it is fixed to Rs 7.50 lakh. Similar facility will also be given to a person (man) employing 50% women, disabled or third gender in his startup.

50% EXTRA BENEFITS for women startups

Rs 15,000 EVERY MONTH to every incubator

Rs 23,000 EVERY MONTH for every women incubator

PEOPLESPEAK



Shakuntla Devi, a resident of Birji Mukundpur village, Mirzapur started the work of making masks during the COVID-19 period. Her earlier job of stitching came in handy for her to start this new enterprise. Initially due to lack of funds she found it difficult to arrange cloth material for making the masks. The Bhartiya Harit Khadi Gramudhyog supported her by providing the cloth material. Within a months' time she prepared 9,500 masks and supplied to the needy people. Shakuntla Devi is now having a regular income and has not only been able to attain income for family but also work for a social cause.



Sheela Singh, a resident of Sheshpur Nari village, Unnao lives in a joint family. Her husband is a farmer and the income of the family was barely enough to meet their needs. She convinced her husband and took a loan of Rs 5,000 from a group to buy a sewing machine to start a business of making carry bags. She got only 30 paise per bag which was not enough to sustain her expenses. She then got in touch with the local BMM official who helped her with a loan of 1.10 lakh and start a group with 15 women. She got additional loan of Rs 2 lakh and the group expanded to 100 women. Sheela now earns around Rs 20,000 per month.

CM stresses on effective prevention, treatment

185 test positive in city, 6 patients die

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Directing officials to continue effective management of prevention and treatment of COVID-19, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday said that there should be vigil at all levels and awareness programmes should be conducted continuously. The chief minister, who was presiding over a high level unlock review meeting at Lok Bhawan here, said that special attention should be paid to Lucknow and the treatment system should be further strengthened.

He said the Integrated Command and Control Centre should remain active and the district magistrates and chief medical officers should compulsorily hold meetings at the Covid hospitals in the morning and the integrated command and control centre in the evening and plan strategies for the future.

Directing officials to further strengthen contact tracing and surveillance, the chief minister said that testing had an important role in breaking the infection chain of COVID-19 and it should be carried out to full capacity. He said specialist doctors should regularly take rounds

of Covid hospital wards as this would make better treatment accessible to the patients.

Directing officials to further strengthen the ambulance services, the chief minister said that consideration should be given for its decentralisation at district or divisional level. He said that keeping in mind the availability of COVID-19 vaccine in the near future, training should be imparted to the vaccinators swiftly and it should be monitored continuously by senior officers.

Those present in the meeting included Medical Education Minister Suresh Khanna, Health Minister Jai Pratap Singh, Minister of State for Health Atul Garg, Chief Secretary RK Tiwari, Agriculture Production Commissioner Alok Sinha, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Director General of Police Hitesh C Awasthi, Additional Chief Secretary (Finance) Sanjiv Mittal, Additional Chief Secretary (MSME and Information) Navneet Sehgal, Additional Chief Secretary (Panchayati Raj and Rural Development) Manoj Kumar Singh, Additional Chief Secretary to CM SP Goyal,

Additional Chief Secretary (Infrastructure and Industrial Development) Alok Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad, Additional Chief Secretary (Medical Education) Dr Rajneesh Dube, Secretary to the CM Alok Kumar, Relief Commissioner Sanjay Goyal and other senior officials.

Meanwhile, 185 persons tested positive for coronavirus in the city on Tuesday while 273 patients recovered. With six more deaths, Lucknow's death toll climbed to 1,062 while there are 2,876 active cases in the district. The fresh cases included 19 from Indiranagar, 15 from Gontinagar, 13 from Chowk, 12 from Alambagh and 10 each from Jankipuram, Talkatora & Hazratganj. Across the state, 1,354 persons tested positive, including 68 in Kanpur, 75 in Ghaziabad, 75 in Gautam Buddh Nagar, 86 in Varanasi and 65 in Meerut, taking the UP tally to 5,68,064. There were 20 deaths in the state, including two each in Prayagraj & Kannauj, and one each in Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Jhansi, Ballia, Barabanki, Lakhimpur Kheri, Rae Bareilly, Sonbhadra, Sultanpur, Bahraich and Mainpuri.

Renovation work at immunisation centre completed

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The renovation work at the District Immunisation Centre in Aishbagh was completed on Tuesday and the training at block level for Covid vaccination will begin from December 17.

District immunisation officer MK Singh said they have completed the work within the deadline, which was December 15. "Training of the block-level officers will begin on Thursday and it will include the training of observers, vaccinators and those who will be maintaining the cold chain. Others will be health education officers and data entry operators for preparations of the vaccination to be carried out," Singh said.

Meanwhile, SGPGIMS director Prof RK Dhiman said on Tuesday that 2,300 Covid patients have been treated till date at the Rajdhani Covid hospitals 1 and 2. "Through ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) platform, our core intensive care and emergency teams started interactive Covid teaching and training virtual sessions connecting to 52 state medical colleges. Over 75 such sessions have been carried

out in which nearly 25,000 health workers of these colleges have been trained. Over 100 sessions have also been conducted for improvising patient care further under the e-CCS framework of the UP government," he said.

The SGPGIMS director said the Covid patients have received standard of care treatment at par with some of the finest facilities in the world with the support of the state government.

Head of the Endocrinology department, SGPGIMS, Dr Fesh Bhatia said that a research was being carried out on Covid-19 patients also suffering from diabetes. "Among the diabetics admitted in Covid hospitals, it has been seen that more of them have complications, more of them require to be in ICU and more of them require ventilators. The research is trying to focus on why it is so and why the manifestations of Covid-19 are more severe in diabetics," he said. He added this research is funded by a multi-departmental grant.

"Whatever help is required for management of the patients with diabetes at the Covid hospital is managed by the department. We provide all the consultation," he added.

Retired armyman opens fire at estranged friend, self

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A retired army man shot at a friend-turned-foe in full public view in Aashiyana and fled the scene unchallenged. Later, he shot at himself and both were admitted to KGMU Trauma Centre.

Sarvesh Kumar, who is a resident of Sector-H in Aashiyana and a clerk in PWD, suffered injuries under his left chest and his condition was said to be critical. The accused was identified as Shailendra Kumar of Sringarnagar in Alambagh and he retired from the army in 2018. Shailendra is presently working as a property dealer.

Sarvesh's wife Mamta Rani, in her complaint, stated that she, along with her son and

husband, was going to office when Shailendra intercepted them near their house around 10:20 am. She said Shailendra whipped out a pistol and fired several shots. "A bullet hit Sarvesh under his chest while Shailendra fled the scene," she alleged. She said her husband was shot at over a money-related dispute. Inspector, Aashiyana, KK Tiwari said Shailendra later shot at himself. "The bullet whizzed past his head and hand. He has also been admitted to KGMU," he said. The inspector was at a loss for words when asked the reason behind the attack.

ADCP Qasim Abdi said the attacker injured himself at some distance away from the crime scene. "He shot at Sarvesh in Sector-H and him-

self in Sector-K," he said. Shailendra, in his statement to the police, said he took the extreme step as he was under mental duress. He told the police that Sarvesh used to beat his wife and she had sought his help. The police could not talk to Sarvesh who underwent a surgery to get the bullet removed and wounds stitched.

Sources said both Sarvesh and Shailendra were friends for a long time and were also business partners. However, their relations had soured over the last few days.

Mamta is employed at secretariat. There were reports that Sarvesh was attacked when he was outside his house and both the attackers had their faces covered. However, police did not endorse this.

Two groups exchange fire in full public view

Lucknow (PNS): Two youths attacked a contractor and his friend while the contractor's friend returned fire in full public view at MIS crossing in Talkatora on Tuesday. Police registered a case in this connection and said the attack was a fallout of an old enmity between the two groups.

As per reports, the contractor, identified as Ranjeet Yadav of Rajajipuram, along with his friend Satyam, left in an SUV for Sadar tehsil for some work. When he reached jewelry shop at MIS crossing, two bike-borne youths intercepted the car. Ranjeet said the youths opened fire at him as soon as he stepped out of the car. He said his friend Satyam returned fire to force the attackers to flee the scene. Ranjeet lodged a case in this connection.

Inspector, Talkatora, said Ranjeet and his aides—Satyam, Raja and Anuj—were named in an FIR which was registered on the complaint of Sarita Chaturvedi of Rajajipuram in 2018. Sarita had then accused Ranjeet and his aides of attacking her son Vikas (21) on May 21 (2018) when the latter was in a park. A case of attempt to murder had been registered against Ranjeet and his aides.

A video with Ranjeet's SUV having 'Vidhyak' embossed on the rear window pane and Vidhan Sabha member inscribed on the number plate went viral. The police took cognisance of the same and challan Ranjeet's SUV under the Motor Vehicle Act.

Car attacked, youth suffers gunshot wounds

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Some miscreants opened fire at a car, leaving a youth injured in Bakshi-Ka-Talab police station area on the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday. However, police doubted the claims made by the victim, who suffered shoulder injuries, claiming there was no eyewitness to the incident.

The victim, identified as Vishal of Sitapur, was coming to Indiranagar locality to meet his sister and her husband. Around 1 am, when he reached near dhaba on Lucknow-Sitapur highway, the attackers surrounded Vishal's car and opened fire. A bullet hit Vishal and the attackers sped off the scene. Vishal, in his statement to police, identified one of the attackers as Gattu aka Ujjawal Singh of Shakti Nagar locality in Indiranagar. He said he kept driving the car despite bleeding through the wounds and reached Madaon police station to seek help. He said he was later rushed to KGMU Trauma Centre. The rural police had no information about the incident until it went viral on social media.

The media cell of SP (Lucknow Rural) said a case was registered against Gattu on the complaint of victim's father Rajesh Singh. The police said further probe was underway. They said Vishal was attacked over some personal enmity.

A 40-year-old woman

employee of a plywood factory was found dead at her rented room in Alambagh on Tuesday. Police sent the body for autopsy and an investigation was underway.


As per reports, the woman identified as Preeti of Hardoi was staying all alone at a house owned by one Anis Ahmad in Garhi Kanaura locality. The inspector Alambagh said Preeti had deserted her husband a few years back and worked at a factory manufacturing plywood sheets. He said the house owner called the police after Preeti did not open the doors of the room on Tuesday. "A stinking smell was emanating from the room. This made the inmates of the house growing suspicion and they informed the house owner," he said.

In another incident, a youth died in a road mishap in Gosainganj on Tuesday. Reports said Vishal Tripathi (20) of Fauji Colony in Alambagh police station area was returning home from Gangaganj locality in Gosainganj after meeting a relative. When he reached Rehmat Nagar, a speeding vehicle fatally knocked him down.

Another youth, identified as Santosh Kumar (22) of Kanpur, died after a truck which he was sitting in rammed into a road divider in Madaon early morning on Tuesday. The truck was being driven by Vikas of Kanpur.

STORES E-PROCUREMENT


Tender Notice No. S/18/2020-21, dtd. 10-12-2020. (1) All tenders have been uploaded on Indian Railways E-Procurement portal (IREPS): www.ireps.gov.in. For details & necessary guidelines for quoting against e-tender. Please visit IR-E-Procurement portal. (2) The prospective tenderers are advised to get them registered on the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> online. The registration is mandatory for participation in e-tendering and is free of charge. (3) Offers are to be submitted online only. Offers sent/submitted against such e-tenders through e-mail, post/fax or in person will be rejected summarily without any consideration. (4) This notice is for information during initial phase only. In future, no such notice shall be published. Vendors are requested to get registered with IREPS and visit portal www.ireps.gov.in for future tenders. (5) Please submit offers online for the following materials: **SN.1. Tender No.:** 30/20/1159/OT/749/2020. **Brief Description, P.L. No. & Quantity:** Speed Sensor as per IR-EB/2019/0012, or 1135456/20013 OR STN 31450/205 A 18U or FTIL PT-1/604501/2000. Qty-50 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop Depot, Qty-50 Nos. for Pandu/GSD, PL No.-33503230. **Closing/Opening Date:** 28-12-2020. **SN.2. Tender No.:** 30/20/1089/OT/50/2020. **Brief Description, P.L. No. & Quantity:** Shock Absorber (YAW DAMPER) for LHB RCF Drg. No. LW 05103 Alt-'c'. Specification No. RDSO-CG-18005 Rev-nil. Qty-370 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop Depot, Qty-40 Nos. for Pandu/GSD, Qty-100 Nos. for New Bongaigaon/Workshop Depot, Qty-4 Nos. for New Jalpaiguri/GSD, PL No.-3502420. **Closing/Opening Date:** 28-12-2020. **SN.3. Tender No.:** 50/20/0678 A/OT/51/2020. **Brief Description, P.L. No. & Quantity:** "Universal plug in type, AC lamp proving relay (M to C contact) for LED signal lamp, 4F/4B configuration, Specification BRS-941A, STS/RELAYS/ Amdt-I with latest amendments version (FOR ALL ASPECT ECR FOR AC LED SIGNAL)." Qty-60 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop Depot, Qty-521 Nos. for Pandu/GSD, Qty-366 Nos. for Kathihar/GSD, PL No.-56451118. **Closing/Opening Date:** 29-12-2020. **SN.4. Tender No.:** 30/20/1312 A/OT/52/2020. **Brief Description, P.L. No. & Quantity:** Ball joint Traction Lever, LHB DRG. NO. C 53973 REF BRED 8403 REV. 02 (F1521728). Qty-857 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop Depot, Qty-22 Nos. for Pandu/GSD, Qty-634 Nos. for New Bongaigaon/Workshop Depot, PL No.-33500010. **Closing/Opening Date:** 30-12-2020. **SN.5. Tender No.:** 30/20/1075/OT/53/2020. **Brief Description, P.L. No. & Quantity:** Ball joint Roll Link Flexible joint (Anti Roll Bar Link) Drg No. FIAT Drg. No-C 53973 REB BRED 8416 to be read with Tech. Spec. No. 17.53110003, Tech. Spec. No. 17.61710002 and MDTs-148 Rev-1 & MDTs-122 Rev-03. Qty-845 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop Depot, Qty-510 Nos. for New Bongaigaon/Workshop Depot, PL No.-33500022. **Closing/Opening Date:** 30-12-2020. **SN.6. Tender No.:** 30/20/0442/OT/54/2020. **Brief Description, P.L. No. & Quantity:** Foot Step arrangement for BG/ICF Coach. As per Drg. No. ICF Drawing No. ICF/STD-2-4-001, alt-'q' as per Specn. Mat. Spec. As per drg. Qty-1000 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop Depot, Qty-1000 Nos. for New Bongaigaon/Workshop Depot, PL No.-30246090. **Closing/Opening Date:** 30-12-2020. **SN.7. Tender No.:** 40/19/0468 A/OT/55/2020. **Brief Description, P.L. No. & Quantity:** Brushless DC Motor for Brushless Fan, 110V DC, 400 mm Sump fixed type. RDSO Specn. No. RDSO/PE/SPEC/TL/0021/0005 (Rev.3). Amdt-1 Qty-555 Nos for Dy.CMM/D/ Dibrugarh Town, Qty-290 Nos for Dy.CMM/Pandu, Qty-593 Nos for Dy.CMM/D/New Bongaigaon, Qty-98 Nos for Dy.CMM/D/New Jalpaiguri, Qty-23 Nos for AMMD/Kathihar. PL No.-45180570. **Closing/Opening Date:** 28-12-2020. **SN.8. Tender No.:** 37/20/0563 A/OT/56/2020. **Brief Description, P.L. No. & Quantity:** Modified Elastomeric Pad complete as per Drg. No. RDSO's Drg. No.-WD-95005-S-1, Alt-7 as per Specn. RDSO's Specn No. WD-20-MISC-95 (Rev-3) with amendment slip No. 1 of May 2006 & BIS Spec. IS: 2062, Gr. E 250 Quality-A. Qty-4000 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop Depot, Qty-7000 Nos. for Pandu/GSD, Qty-11000 Nos. for New Bongaigaon/Workshop Depot, Qty-11000 Nos for New Jalpaiguri/GSD, PL No.-38106322. **Closing/Opening Date:** 28-12-2020. **SN.9. Tender No.:** 30/20/0109/OT/57/2020. **Brief Description, P.L. No. & Quantity:** Double acting Hydraulic Shock Absorber (Vertical) (600 kg) as per Drg. No. ICF Drawing No. ICF/SO-5-015, B1P4 (Col-1), as per Specn. Material Specification: RDSO, C-8703 (Rev-2), Qty-750 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop Depot, Qty-600 Nos. for New Bongaigaon/Workshop Depot, PL No.-30058068. **Closing/Opening Date:** 31-12-2020.

**NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY**
E-Tender Notice

On behalf of the President of India, acting through Chief Administrative Officer/Con., North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur invites the following E-works Tender- S. No.: 1. **E-Tender No.:** DYCE2B58-2020-03 Dated 11.12.2020. **Name of work:** CTR (P) of UP BG main line with 60 kg, 90 UTS rails & PSC 60 kg sleeper (M+8) density including renewal of 52 kg Turn outs (switch, crossings, lead rails etc.) by 60 kg Turn outs in Tarain - Ghazipur City section to eliminate junction fish plates and maintenance of newly laid BG track - main line, loop lines and points and crossing between Aunnihar (incl.) to Ghazipur City (incl.) in Aunnihar - Gazipur City doubling work of Varanasi division of NE Railway, **Approximate Value:** 12988245.63, **Earnest Money:** Rs. 215000.00, **Cost of Tender Form :** Rs. Nil, **Completion Period:** 06 (Six Months) & Bidding Start date - 24.12.2020 & Last date of submission of above E-Tender up to 14.30 hrs on 07.01.2021 & Date of opening of above E-Tender on 07.01.2021 & Detailed tender notice, eligibility criteria, terms & conditions is available on website <https://ireps.gov.in> & In case any disparity arises between Hindi and English version of tender notice, English version will hold good and will be followed.

Shri D.P. Singh,
XEN/CON/MAU, M No. 9794844287
Dy Chief Engineer/Con/II,
CPROW-162 Varanasi
About any passenger amenity
complaint SMS on Mob. No. 097948445955
Do Not smoke Bid/Cigarette in train

कल्यानपुर, कानपुर
दिनांक-15.12.2020

**काहल सं.: 10(22)/2007-08/ESF/Pur-**
राष्ट्रीय शकरी संस्थान
आई.एस.ओ. 9001:2015 प्रमाणित संस्थान
उपभोक्ता मामले खाद्य एवं सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्रालय
(खाद्य एवं सार्वजनिक वितरण विभाग)
(भारत सरकार)
सूचना
विषय: निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि में विस्तार हेतु
संस्थान की प्रायोगिक प्रयोगशाला में "6500 कुतल शीरा" विक्रय हेतु निविदा सं 10(22)/2007-08/ESF/Pur. दिनांक 11.11.2020 के संदर्भ में निविदाएं प्रस्तुत करने की अंतिम तिथि बढ़ाकर दिनांक 31.12.2020 अपराह्न 01.00 बजे तक कर दी गई है. निविदाएं तदनुसार प्रस्तुत की जा सकती हैं। अन्य सभी नियम व शर्तें अपरिवर्तित रहेगी।
(महेन्द्र कुमार यादव)
कनिष्ठ तकनीकी अधिकारी

कल्यानपुर, कानपुर
दिनांक-15.12.2020

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice

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CPROW-162 Varanasi
About any passenger amenity
complaint SMS on Mob. No. 097948445955
Do Not smoke Bid/Cigarette in train

STF team nabs two punters

Lucknow (PNS): A team of STF nabbed two punters luring people for betting in Big Bash League (cricket tournament) from near a hotel in Krishnanagar on Tuesday. The accused were identified as Ravindra Srivastava and Dinesh Chaube, both of Krishna Nagar. Police said they were tipped off about the accused who had been into betting for a long time. The team recovered Rs 1.05 lakh in cash, a luxury car and two mobile phones. The police said the accused were using the mobile phones in gambling.

Meanwhile, Gudamba police on Tuesday arrested a retired police officer, identified as Naem Khan, who was accused of injuring his son by opening fire. He was arrested from near a shop in the area following a tip-off.

SGPGI to set up advanced diabetic centre

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences will soon be setting up an advanced diabetic centre, director Prof RK Dhiman said on Tuesday. A well-equipped centre will be set up for diabetics needing medical care, he added.

"The centre will have an open-door policy for patients needing diabetes-related care. The centre will have related sub-specialty clinics such as gestational diabetes, diabetes renal clinic, ophthalmological clinic, diabetic foot clinic etc," Dhiman said. About the vision for overall growth in the next five years, the director said that SGPGI will also operate like a hub-spoke model with a view to upgrading emergency care in other medical colleges of Uttar Pradesh.

"Emergency medical services will also have air ambulance service for quick transfer of trauma and critically ill patients from their location to the Emergency department at SGPGI. It will prove to be life-saving in touch-and-go situa-

tions," he said.

Dhiman added that the upcoming Emergency department building, along with a renal transplantation complex, is being designed to provide emergency services and state-of-the-art care to patients with kidney diseases, including giving a boost to kidney transplantations to the tune of 300 per year. He said that currently they have an active renal transplant programme, wherein nearly 3,200 transplants have been performed till date.

"Bone marrow transplantation is very active and the department will celebrate its 100th BMT shortly and stem cell transplantation programme is also underway," he said, adding that the institute has also started a dedicated department of Haematology.

"The DM and related courses in the field will soon be initiated. This department shall be able to provide much-needed recipient support and post-transplant care to the liver transplant unit and rejuvenate liver transplantation in SGPGI.

We are also looking at lung and heart transplants and hope that air ambulance and helipad services, once started, will give it a necessary boost," Dhiman said. He said the institute is also aiming to start centres of excellence for clinical infectious diseases and vaccine research, rheumatic diseases, breast health and transfusion medicine to name a few.

Talking about Unique Methods of Management of Inherited Disorders (UMMID), he said that the department of Medical Genetics has started an outreach screening programme for genetic disorders, including thalassemia and new-born screening for five disorders in district hospitals in Bahraich and Shravasti.

"This is funded by the department of Biotechnology and is an effort to provide patient care services for women and children, especially those belonging to the lower socio-economic strata. The state government is providing necessary factors free of cost to patients suffering from

haemophilia," he pointed out.

He said the institute has plans to utilise the full potential of tele-medicine in all aspects of patient care and teaching and training of healthcare workers.

"Experience gained using telemedicine services in Covid-19 times will certainly help improve the quality of healthcare delivery in the state," he said.

He added that on the training front, apart from the courses already running, some DM, MCh, post-doctoral certificate courses, post-doctoral fellowships and MSc programmes have been started in the departments of Clinical Immunology and Endocrine Surgery, Medical Genetics, Neonatology, Nephrology, Nuclear Medicine Paediatric Surgical Superspecialty and College of Medical technology and Allied health Sciences and Urology. The departments of Pulmonary Medicine and Plastic Surgery have received approvals for starting DM and MCh courses in their respective specialties," he added.

Girl killed for refusing to prepare food for pets

Lucknow (PNS): The refusal to make food (chapati) for the pet dogs allegedly proved fatal for a 23-year-old girl in Meerut after her own elder brother shot her dead. The incident took place on Monday night.

Reports said that Yogendra Kumar, a real estate businessman hailing from Kailash Vatika in Rajpura area of Ganganagar in Meerut, was living with his mother Saroj, sister, Parul, and younger brother, Asheesh (25).

On Monday, Yogendra had gone to New Delhi in connection with some work and other family members were at home. As per the information given by the police, Asheesh, who is a pet lover and is also engaged in selling dogs, had a tiff with his sister, Parul, over preparing chapatis to feed the dogs on Sunday evening.

Parul, however, prepared the food for dogs but the situation took an ugly turn on Monday evening when claiming that she was not well, Parul went to bed, refusing to prepare chapatis for the pets.

Asheesh, who later killed her, claimed that he asked his sister to prepare food but as she refused to do so, he lost his temper and shot her with a country-made. Hearing the gunshot, the family members came and found Parul lying in a pool of blood.

Having no regret for killing his sister, Asheesh happily surrendered before the police. He was arrested and the body was sent for post-mortem.

CITYBRIEFS

ONLINE QUIZ CONTEST

An online quiz competition is being organised by the Mathematics department of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University on the occasion of National Mathematics Day on December 22 to commemorate the birth anniversary of great mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan. BBAU spokesperson Rachna Gangwar said the competition would be held in two phases. The first phase will be held on December 19 in which 20 multiple-choice questions will be asked through Google Sheet. The 20 best contestants will be selected from this phase. Selected participants will enter the sec-

ond round. The second phase of the competition will be held on December 22 through Google Meet. Finally, the best three contestants will get awarded. Twenty participants in the second phase will be given away e-certificates. The last date to apply for the competition is December 17.

PLASMA DONATED

Aditya Akash Das, a student of class 12, has donated plasma. Before that, he was made to undergo several tests, including that for Covid-19, and was found to be medically fit. He then underwent an immunity test. Said to be

the youngest donor, Aditya is also preparing for engineering entrance examinations.

AWARDED

Founder of City Montessori School Jagdish Gandhi was honoured with 'Jeevan Gaurav Puraskar' (lifetime achievement award) on Tuesday. The award was conferred upon him at the 4th National Teachers' Congress, organised online by MIT World Peace University (Pune), supported by the Government of Maharashtra and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Maurya plays Opp for using farmers' agitation for political gains

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Defending the three farm laws, the Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya strongly criticised the opposition for trying to use ongoing farmers' agitation for their political gains. Alleging the parties like Congress, Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), he said that these parties are backing the agitating farmers as by the new farm laws, their involvement in corrupt practices would be checked. Now these parties are trying to target their guns on the government using the shoulders of the farmers whereas it is fact that in the farm laws, the role of middlemen would totally be checked and the famers would get good income from their farming. He was addressing a Kisan Sammelan at Jansa here on Tuesday which was attended by a good number of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers and others.

Highlighting the features of farm laws, Maurya said that by this the farmers would be free to sell their crops in any part of the country without any interference of middlemen. Besides, the farmers can also export their products for handsome earning. Praising the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said that the Central Government had courage for the interests of the farmers which could not be shown by any government during the



Deputy Chief Minister KP Maurya addressing farmers in Varanasi on Tuesday

Pioneer

last six decades, but fearing to lose their brokerages, the opposition parties without using their own flags are trying to mislead the agitating farmers. He challenged the opposition parties to come forward openly so that they can also face the anger of the farmers.

'If the farmers have any doubt about the new farm laws, then the doors of the government are open for talks,' he said, seeking the suggestions from the farmers so that the government can amend the laws by accepting their genuine demands. He said that the

farm laws are for the best interests of the farmers but the latter are being misled by the opposition parties for their selfish interests. According to him, the farm laws are not for the farmers of just two states, indirectly indicating the agitating farmers of Punjab and Haryana, but for the whole nation. He said that during the last 20 days of agitation the stir remained confined to two states only.

Earlier, when Maurya landed at the Police Lines helipad, he was welcomed by senior party leaders. Later, he was

given guard of honour by the police personnel. In an informal chat with the reporters during his visit, Maurya also criticised Aam Admi Party (AAP) for its claim to fight strongly in the next assembly elections in 2022 in UP. According to him, it is a fact that the population of Delhi is just two crores whereas the same of UP is 24 crores. He said that as Delhi Chief Minister (CM) Arvind Kejriwal failed on all the fronts, so by making such claims, he is trying to divert the attention of the people.

58 more test positive in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 58 more new patients have been detected in the district on Tuesday, increasing the total number to 20,374. The day also saw one more death, increasing the toll to 337. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 90 and all of them have been recovered from home isolation, increasing the number to 16,527. As no patient has been discharged from any of the hospitals, the number remained at

2,886. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 19,413, leaving 624 active cases. The recovery rate is 95.28 per cent, while the mortality rate is 1.65 per cent.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh has informed that in the first report of the day, 33 positive patients were found out of 2,051 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 4,71,815 and the results of 2,821 are awaited. Out of them, 4,51,466 were negative while 20,349

positive. The total number of samples collected was 4,92,841. Earlier, a male aged 42 from Ramnagar succumbed to COVID-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU). With the addition of eight new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,580 including 219 red zones. There are 2,361 green zones with seven new ones.

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 but all 48 and 32 tests there respectively have been found negative. Besides, all the 80 tests have been found negative at Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura apart from 110 at LBS Hospital Ramnagar, 117 at Government Women's Hospital, 27 at CHC Shivpur, 36 at Swami Vivekanand Hospital, Bhelupur and 75 at SSH BHU.

BLW GM inaugurates help desk

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A single window help desk 'Udisha' was inaugurated by the General Manager (GM) Anjali Goyal in Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) for the conveniences of the employees. Human Resource Management System (HRMS) has also been started in BLW as per the Central Government's guidelines, under which employees from the mobile-based app can see their service manual, complete details, get railway pass - PTO, do withdrawal from Provident Fund apart from changing addresses etc.

The main objective of the help desk is to provide HRMS to the BLW employee. All the problems of the employees related to the Personnel department can not only be resolved, but also help the employees



GM Anjali Goyal inaugurating help desk at BLW in Varanasi on Monday

Pioneer

become self-sufficient in the digital work. Also, it would also assist the employees who are not digitally awake to solve their problems. Several officers and employees of BLW were present on the occasion.

Meanwhile, under the aegis of the Electricity department

'Energy Conservation Week' was inaugurated by the GM. A short film made for domestic and industrial energy savings was screened. While addressing the employees, Anjali Goyal said that today the whole world is grappling with the problems of climate change. 'The effort

by BLW to tackle these problems is commendable,' she said, appreciating the video message, she added that it would effectively spread the message of energy conservation among all. She asked the engineers of BLW to design machines and buildings in such a way so that the energy consumption can be reduced.

Later, a rally was taken out from the premises of the Administrative Building to publicise the message of energy conservation. A large number of BLW staff, scouts and guides, members of St. John's Ambulance Brigade and others participated in the rally and publicised energy conservation measures throughout the BLW campus.

During the week-long campaign, various programmes will be organised daily till December 19.

Saurabh becomes 'Most Young Centurion Blood Donor'

VARANASI (PNS): In a noble cause, the founder secretary of social organisation Sadhna Foundation Saurabh Maurya has registered an achievement to become the 'Most Young Centurion Blood Donor' of the country by donating blood for the 100th times on Tuesday. The Indian Book of Records awarded the title of 'Indian Record' and 'First Indian' to donate the blood for the most times at the age of 31 years.

Saurabh made a donation of blood for the 100th time in a voluntary blood donation camp organised at a blood of a private hospital in Kakatmutta here. He dedicated his 100th blood donation to the nation, his team and family. A team of the Indian Book of Records was present on the occasion which awarded him with the titles of 'Indian Record' and 'First Indian' who donated the blood for the 100th times at the age of 31 years. With this, he also

achieved an achievement to become the Most Young Centurion Blood Donor of India.

The chief guest and Commandant of 95th Battalion of CRPF Narendra Pal admired Saurabh and said that his yeoman service to the society will inspire other youths for the noble cause. The chairman of hospital Dr Kaushik informed that Saurabh had also made his first blood donation in this blood bank. The founder of the organisation Kamlesh Singh Gautam and co-founder Amit Singh said that today is like a festival as Saurabh had dreamt of making blood donation for the 100th time on the same day eight years ago and the dream became a reality. Saurabh had donated all the parts of his body, they informed.

In the blood donation camp, 15 units of blood was donated. Among those who were present on the occasion

included Saumik Samant, Sanjay Sahani and Shiv Prakash Singh.

SAMPOORNA SAMADHAN DIWAS HELD: Finding the District Sugarcane Officer and Executive Engineer, Irrigation (canal) absent during Sampoorna Samadhan Diwas, the District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma on Tuesday directed the competent officer to deduct one-day salary of both officers.

The DM along with the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Amit Pathak reached Rajtalab Tehsil to listen to the grievances of people on the occasion of Sampoorna Samadhan Diwas. While inspecting the attendance register, the DM found the District Sugarcane Officer and Executive Engineer, Irrigation (canal) absent and taking a serious note of this laxity, he marked absent before their names in the attendance register

and directed the competent officer to deduct their one day salary.

A villager Deepak Kumar complained that some land mafias have grabbed the government land, approaching land, sports ground and pond in Kalyanpur village which leads to dispute on a regular basis and he applied for measuring the government land. Paying serious attention to his application, the DM directed SDM, Rajatalab to measure the land in a week.

Both the officers the DM and the SSP directed the departmental officers to address the grievances by maintaining the quality. In the meantime, the Divisional Commissioner Deepak Agrawal and IG Vijay Singh Meena also heard the grievances of people at Sadar Tehsil and directed the officers to address the people's complaints with sincerity and quality.

66 new Covid cases in Prayagraj 3 ILR machines to store Covid vaccines procured

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The number of new corona infected exceeded 50 for the second consecutive day on Monday. With this, one person died. However, 39 people have become infection-free. Dr Rishi Sahai, the Nodal Officer of Corona confirmed this.

CMO Dr Prabhakar Rai said that the total number of corona patients in the district has reached 27,351 after findings of 66 new infected on Monday. Out of them 26,473 people have become infection-free. Four people have been discharged from SRN and Beli Hospital of the 39 people, while 35 people have completed home isolation. On Monday, corona test of 6,125 people have been conducted. Among those infected, 91 patients are admitted to SRN, Beli and private hospitals whereas, 425 people are in home isolation. The total number of people who died due to corona has increased to 362.

According to the Health department report, those who

got infected on Monday were Professor of Allahabad University, instructor, lab assistant, Branch Manager of Civil

Lines based Axis Bank, senior auditor of AG office, Standing Counsel of High Court, advocate, teacher of Patanjali

mistake in keeping and administering the vaccine safely.

The first phase of Covid vaccine will be administered to government and non-government hospital personnel. This includes doctors and other health workers. ACOMO Dr Tirath Lal said that a list of health workers has been sought from 1,235 medical institutions in the district for vaccination.

About 800 medical institutions have sent details of their health workers while details of other institutions are yet to be found. About 30,000 health workers are working in these medical institutions. They will be given this vaccine first. In the second phase, front line workers such as Asha, Anganwadi, Police, Administrative officers, in the third phase, those above 50 years of age and those below the age of 50 years in the fourth phase will be administered who are vulnerable to this disease.

Two 20-bed hospitals to be set up at Magh Mela

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Visitors to Magh Mela will be able to seek treatment at two 20-bed hospitals that the Health department plans to set up on the venue of the fair when it is organised in January next year.

The department would also set up five medical units for visitors. Chief Medical Officer (Prayagraj) Dr Prabhakar Rai said that the Health department has chalked out an elaborate plan for medical facilities that would be available for devotees coming to the Magh Mela.

The department will set up two 20-bed hospitals in Jhushi and Quila Ghat road. Apart from these, there would be a medical unit set up in each of the five sectors of the Mela ground. The Health department has also planned to set up a Covid static booth in every sector for conducting tests. 'If any visitor tests positive for novel coronavirus, he/she would be immediately

shifted to a Covid hospital in the city. An adequate number of medical and paramedical staff would be assigned duties for the Magh Mela,' the CMO added.

PAID CLOAKROOM AT MAGH MELA : Pilgrims and tourists coming to Magh Mela 2021, for taking a holy dip, performing a religious ceremony or even sightseeing, need not worry about a safe place to keep their belongings.

On the lines of railway stations and some prominent religious sites, the district administration has decided to introduce the concept of a paid cloakroom. The 57-day annual fair will kick-start with Makar Sankranti bathing on January 14 and conclude with Maha Shivratri bathing on March 11, 2021.

Prayagraj Mela Authority has decided to introduce this facility for the annual fair on the lines of paid service provided during Kumbh-2019. Pilgrims would be able to keep their handbags, backpacks for safekeeping for ₹ 20

for 24 hours, ₹ 40 for 48 hours and ₹ 60 for 72 hours, while storing larger luggage items would cost them ₹ 40 for 24 hours, ₹ 80 for 48 hours and ₹ 120 for 72 hours, informed officials.

The fair would have cloakrooms of up to 600 sq feet at each of the 22 well-spaced out designated parking lots to thwart COVID-19, where the staff would remain in uniform with their identity cards on display. The parking lots will have boom barriers, and the parking tickets shall be issued using digital handheld ticketing machines, they added.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) for this has been issued by the Prayagraj Mela Authority inviting e-bids from interested parties with the technical bids scheduled for being opened on December 14. The agency entrusted with the task of setting up and managing the parking sites will set up and operate these cloakrooms.

This facility would free the pilgrims from the need of

carrying unrequired luggage to bathing ghats and religious ceremonies sites, said Vivek Chaturvedi, Mela Adhikari, Magh Mela-2021.

Each cloakroom would be set up as directed in the layout and have necessary infrastructure like power supply, lockers, boundary etc. along with waterproof material for safe storage of luggage.

Size of the cloakroom shall not exceed 600 square feet each with their number not exceeding one per every 5,000 car spaces, he explained.

The sites identified for parking lots include Sugar Mill, Mahuabagh, Triveni Puram, Navprayagam, Agriculture Institute, Deaf and Dumb School, Devrakh, CMP College, CAV College, GIC, Women's Polytechnic, Bada Bhagara, Colonelganj Inter College, MNNIT, Scout and Guide School and Hindu Hostel among others. Parking lots would also be set up at KP College, Government Press and Khushro Bagh, confirmed officials.

Webinar on energy conservation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

A webinar on energy conservation 'Save energy to save environment and earth' was organised by North Central Railway on National Energy Conservation Day, observed every year on December 14. It focuses on creating awareness among people regarding the importance of energy conservation and ways to achieve it in order to deal with the crisis of climate change and global warming.

Webinar focused on energy conservation efforts and future roadmap chaired by Satish Kothari Principal Chief Electrical Engineer was attended by Anupam Singhal CELE, Anurag Kumar Gupta CECE, Ashutosh Kumar Singh CESE, Anil Kumar Dwivedi CMPE, Rukmaiya Meena CEDE, DB Singh CEE(Con.) and other officials from HQ and three

divisions of NCR. As guest speaker in the webinar Prof Mohammad Rihan of Electrical Engineering department Aligarh Muslim University highlighted importance of renewable energy, emerging technologies in this field and future framework for energy conservation.

On this occasion Satish Kothari Principal Chief Electrical Engineer also released an e-book containing works done on NCR towards energy conservation and use of renewable energy. The webinar laid emphasis on maximising use of solar energy in railways, implementation of energy conservation measures and use of energy efficient electrical appliances in offices and homes. Addressing participant Kothari urged that all Railwaymen and their family members to take energy conservation measures

in mission mode in national interest and for a better tomorrow.

RAINS PREDICTED: The weather experts of the Meteorology department, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences (SHUATS) have made a forecast that Prayagraj and nearby districts may experience light to moderate rains between December 16 and 20.

They have studied the weather conditions and have cautioned the farmers to get ready for facing showers.

JAIL INMATES STITCHING COVERS FOR COWS: Inmates of Kaushambi district jail are stitching covers for cows for the winter seasons using old and torn blankets. The woolen covers will be supplied to gaushalas across the state.

These covers are being made from worn out blankets

collected from Kaushambi and other district jails of the state. A blanket allotted to an inmate during winter usually lasts around three years.

Superintendent of Kaushambi district jail BS Mukund said, 'A team of 10 inmates are stitching the covers for the cattle. A pack of 50 woolen covers is being supplied to a gaushala in Manjhanpur. We have collected old and torn blankets from many jails and are using those to make the cover for cattle by stitching them with a thick sheet of cloth/ polythene.' He claimed that this is the first time when inmates have started such an initiative.

We aim to prepare around 1,000 covers for the cattle in a month and are trying to make at least 400 covers this week, he added. Once the woolen cover is made, we put a logo on it and dispatch it to gaushalas.

Governor blesses Ganga Parikarma programme

ALLAHABAD (PNS): Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandi Ben Patel virtually blessed the 5100 km long Ganga Parikarma programme at MP Hall of Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology, Prayagraj on Tuesday. This Ganga Parikrama is being taken out by Atulya Ganga, a group of ex-army-men. She said on the occasion that this Parikrama will rejuvenate people to protect rivers. Ganga is a valuable treasure of the nation.

The Governor also expressed concern over pollution in the Ganga owing to blind race of development, and said that a joint and massive effort is needed to maintain 'Nirmal and Aviral Dhara' of the Ganga.

The Governor on Tuesday

virtually inaugurated 'Kumbh Study Centre' at GB Pant Social Science Institute in Jhusi. She reiterated that to clean the Ganga was the need of the hour, and the Namami Gange project of the Prime Minister and the Ganga Yatra by the UP Government were steps towards this mega project, and now the Ganga Parikrama would also extend all possible help in making people aware.

Prof Badri Narayan of the Institute said that this Kumbh Study Centre would provide fellowship to academicians, researchers and cultural activists for an elaborate study of Kumbh Mela.

GUEST HOUSE OF ZAKI DEMOLISHED: Under the Anti-Mafia Drive launched by the Chief Minister Yogi

Adityanath, the Prayagraj Development Authority bulldozers and JCB machines pulled down a huge property of Zaki Ahmad, close associate and brother-in-law of Atique Ahmed. This huge guest house was raised on 60 feet road in Kareli by pumping crores of rupees. Zaki Ahmad is also a history sheeter and was also involved in the Deoria Jail incident where a property dealer was beaten brutally in the presence of Atique Ahmed. After this incident Atique was shifted to Ahmedabad jail, and the court denied bail to Zaki who is also in jail.

According to PDA officials the above guest house was constructed without an approved plan, so it was an unauthorised construction.

The officials and JCB machines, backed by police force, reached Kareli in the morning, and the operation demolition began in afternoon hours after allowing the inmates to remove their belongings.

ACTING WORKSHOP ENDS: A five-day acting workshop by Anadi Foundation and Transformers Dance Institute Jhusi came to an end on Tuesday. Ajay Mukherjee and Arun Kumar Srivastava trained the participants and told them in detail about physical actions to make acting attractive. They also laid emphasis on games and exercise, and said that personality development needs extra-curricular activities besides bookish knowledge.



Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar, checking the records at Jal Nigam office in a surprise raid on Tuesday

Pioneer

Large number of Jal Nigam engrs, staff found absent

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar carried out a raid at the offices of the Jal Nigam general manager and chief engineer and found 90 per cent officials and 70 per cent staff absent.

He sought an explanation from the incharge chief engineer for reaching office 20 minutes late and directed that show cause notices be issued to the absentee officials and staff.

He also directed the officials concerned that the salary of these absent officials and

staff be stopped for the current month till a final decision was taken in this regard.

The divisional commissioner reached the offices of Jal Nigam general manager and chief engineer at dot 10:15 am and found them absent. He said what was more shocking was that 12 officials out of 14 were absent and 36 staff members out of 52 were absent.

He then collected data from the office and got entries in the attendance registers done in his presence. The official not found in the chief engineer's office included executive engineers, project engineers, assis-

tant engineers.

He said the raids were part of the drive as directed by the state government to regularly check the presence of officials and employees in their respective offices.

Shekhar said show cause notices had been issued to all absentee officials and staff.

He was apprised by the chief engineer that a few engineers were at the site but when the divisional commissioner inquired about the details of the officials at the site especially on Tuesday morning, the incharge chief engineer was unable to provide the necessary and rel-

evant details.

The divisional commissioner found that no field visit register was maintained in the office.

He expressed concern over the poor upkeep and maintenance of records.

He directed the incharge chief engineer to ensure scientific and proper record keeping and maintenance in the upkeep of the records.

He warned the officials that in one month's time it should be done and the pictures and videos should be submitted to the commissionerate.

All preparations made for Covid vaccination drive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Chief Medical Officer Dr AK Mishra on Tuesday said that preparations had been made for the launch of COVID-19 vaccination drive in the district.

He said a two-day training had been imparted by the special team through video conferencing. He said the Lucknow team was satisfied and had given a nod for the vaccination drive in Kanpur Nagar.

He said the moment the vaccine reached the city, the drive would take off without any further delay.

He said the two-day special training held at the NIC auditorium had come to an end.

He said the preparation for the storage of vaccine had been completed and assured that a foolproof cold chain was going to be maintained.

He said the vaccine would be stored in perfect temperature at the cold storage while those in transit would be placed in special boxes meant to keep the vaccine safe and maintain its cold chain.

He said as per the World Health Organisation representatives in India, special care had to be taken after administering the vaccine to an individual. He said although there were remote chances of reaction of the vaccine, yet as per the directive, four centres had been set up in the city which would attend to the vaccinated person in case there was any reaction.

The CMO said the four centres were Ursula Hospital, KPM Hospital, Kanshiram Hospital while LLR Hospital had been set up as a tertiary centre and a special trained team of doctors would always be available there to attend to any reaction case.

He said special directive had been issued to the four centres to keep a big stock of anti-allergy injections and medicines so that in an emergency it could be administered to the patient.

He said directive had also been issued to keep 10 properly equipped ambulances ready. He said each ambulance must have one doctor, one nurse, a pharmacist and a ward boy.

The CMO said that the indigenous vaccination trial had entered the third phase and the vaccines were being given at Prakhar Hospital. He added that till date 500 volunteers had been vaccinated and none of them had shown even minor reaction.

72 more test positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar reported 72 more coronavirus positive cases on Tuesday evening. Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 72 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Monday evening and Tuesday evening taking the tally of confirmed cases to 31,591 cases. He said that 8 patients were discharged from hospital. He said two COVID-19 deaths in the city were reported till Tuesday evening keeping the death toll to 803. The CMO said at present 719 active cases were undergoing treatment. Dr Mishra said 4293 samples were sent for testing in the city.

KDA grievance redressal camp from today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Development Authority is going to organise a 3-day grievance redressal camp at its premises from December 16 to 18.

Senior officers will hear the problems of the allottees and other people relating to freehold, illegal construction, registry, mutation, layout, possession, allotment and alternative plot and resolve them on the spot. For the solution of other problems, they will fix a time limit for their disposal.

It may be recalled that during the recent KDA Board meeting, Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar had directed the development authority to organise grievance redressal camps.

NER's Lko div first in saving energy

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

Under the Energy Saving Campaign in the category of government buildings the Lucknow Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) has received the first prize at the state level for its remarkable performance in the field of saving energy. On the occasion of Energy Conservation Day under Uttar Pradesh State Energy Conservation the UP Minister for Energy and Additional Sources of Energy Shrikant Sharma announced the award on Monday through a webinar, CPRO PK Singh said. It may be pointed out here that NER is taking many effective steps for saving energy such as LED lighting has been provided in trains and arrangements had been made for 100 per cent LED lighting in all stations and colonies too



resulting in a decrease in energy consumption. Solar energy, a non-conventional source of energy, is being used on a large scale and also energy consumption is being saved by ensuring the use of energy efficient devices. As a result railway revenue is also being saved.

STOPPAGE WITHDRAWN: The railway administration has withdrawn the stoppage of the 01015/01016 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Gorakhpur-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus special train, the 02167/02168 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus - Manduadih - Lokmanya Tilak Terminus superfast special train and the 02541/02542 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus — Gorakhpur — Lokmanya Tilak Terminus superfast special train at Igatpuri station with immediate effect.

NI work: Trains to remain cancelled

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

On the completion of the work of the third line between Pankidham and Bhaupur railway stations of North Central Railway (NCR) due to the non-interlocking work being done for remodeling of Bhaupur station yard the cancellation of the following trains will be done as follows, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said. As a result the 02569 Darbhanga - New Delhi clone daily special train to run from Darbhanga will remain cancelled from December 16 to January 06, 2021. Likewise the 02570 New Delhi-Darbhanga clone daily special train to run from New Delhi will remain cancelled from December 17 to January 7, 2021. The 04055 Ballia-Delhi triweekly clone special train to run from Ballia will remain cancelled on December 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29

and 31 and January 2, 2021. The 04056 Delhi-Ballia triweekly clone special train to run from Delhi will remain canceled on December 16, 18, 21, 23, 25, 28 and 30 and January 1, 2021.

Meanwhile the cancellations and reduction in frequency of the following trains will be done by the railway administration from December 16 to January 31, 2021, due to operational difficulties caused by dense fog and bad weather.

The 04005 Sitamarhi-Anand Vihar Terminus daily special train will remain cancelled from December 18 to February 2, 2021. The 04006 Anand Vihar Terminus-Sitamarhi daily special train will be canceled from December 16 to January 31, 2021. The 05909 Dibrugarh-Lalgargh daily special train will remain cancelled from December 16 to January 31, 2021. The 05910 Lalgargh-

Dibrugarh daily special train will be canceled from December 19 to February 3, 2021. The 05933 Dibrugarh-Amritsar weekly special train will remain cancelled on December 22 and 29 and January 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2021. The 05934 Amritsar-Dibrugarh weekly special train will remain cancelled on December 25, 2020 and January 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 2021.

PARTIAL CANCELLATION/REDUCTION IN FREQUENCY :- The 01803 Jhansi-Lucknow Jn special train will remain cancelled on December 19, 20, 26 and 27 and January 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 and 31, 2021 (every Saturday and Sunday). The 01804 Lucknow Jn - Jhansi special train will remain cancelled on December 19, 20, 26 and 27 and January 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 and 31, 2021 (every Saturday and Sunday).

DC reviews projects

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Divisional Commissioner Vindhyachal Preeti Shukla during a virtual meeting reviewed the 37 points of government priorities on Monday.

Reviewing the projects worth more than Rs 50 lakh the DC expressed her discontent over the progress of only 48 per cent in the work being carried out by State Bridge Corporation in Sonbhadra district. For the tardy progress in the construction of the roads in Bhadohi district the DC directed to the JDC to issue a show-cause notice to the EE PWD and directed the official concerned to complete the pending works by March next year. In the meeting the Mines department was asked to check illegal mining at any cost and for the work get the help from the other authorities if required. The Health department was asked to ensure the availability of medicines and complete all arrangements for the storage of Corona vaccine at safe

place in advance. Apart from all the departmental officials the meeting was attended by IG range Piyyush Srivastava, the DMs, SPs and the CDOs of the division.

SEMINAR ORGANISED: In the series of awareness programmes under Mission Shakti a seminar was held at Umaravati Devi Inter College



in Dhara village under Jamalpur police station on Monday. Addressing the girl students Jamalpur Station Officer (SO) Vijai Kumar Saroj said that women were considered with respect in our society since ages. Underlining the rights of women the SO told the girls that they should not bother about the anti-social ele-

ments and remain confident. Highlighting the purpose of Mission Shakti drive the SO urged the students to become self-confident, self-reliance, develop strong will power and instant decision making capacity etc. He said that the era of digital power had made the common man more powerful. Interacting with students, the SO underlined the proper use of different helpline numbers and appealed to use them for proper cause at the time of need.

NABBED: The Jamalpur police on Monday arrested one person who was accused of molesting a minor girl. According to the reports, a woman in a named FIR had lodged on December 9 had alleged that the accused had molested her minor daughter and when she protested he threatened her with dire consequences. Taking action the police arrested the accused, Arvind, a resident of Shahpur Mafi village under Jamalpur police station.

ADRM inspects stations, issues directives

PNS ■ VARANASI

Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Operations) SPS Yadav along with his team and Senior Divisional Commercial Manager (SDCM) Sanjeev Sharma inspected the Siwan, Chhapra and Chhapra Gramin stations for attracting more and more traditional and non-conventional loading of goods on Varanasi division, ensuring proper information to passengers according to the revised timetable of trains and compliance of the Covid-19 protocol, Public Relations Officer (PRO) Ashok Kumar said. On the

occasion senior commerce and operations supervisors were present along with him. ADRM SPS Yadav in order to ensure management of goods trains, to attract loading of maximum traditional and non-conventional loading of goods and to make goods management/ and freight traffic and loading/unloading simpler on the Chhapra, Siwan and Chhapra Gramin stations of Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) thoroughly inspected the siding, goods siding, goods shed, approach road of siding at Chhapra Gramin and Siwan stations. During this time he inspected

the approach routes of Siwan and Chhapra Gramin stations, barricaded at station premises, passenger waiting room, restroom for workers, places of commercial information such as booking counters, station parking, food stalls, food plazas etc. and gave necessary directives to the authorities concerned. Apart from it he had a meeting with regional traders and made them aware about the various facilities provided by the railways and tried to increase maximum freight traffic. On the occasion Sanjeev Sharma said that the NER was trying to provide maximum facilities to its traders.

CEPC shifts its regional office

PNS ■ VARANASI



The Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC) on Monday shifted its regional office at Bhadohi from Bypass Road, Hariyawan, to new premises at Bhadohi Carpet Expo Mart, Carpet City, Bhadohi. It may be pointed out here that the Bhadohi Carpet Expo Mart was built by the Government of Uttar Pradesh at a cost of approximately ₹225 crore and was allotted for its operation by tender to CEPC in the year 2018. Some works in the mart were incomplete which led to the delay while transferring to the council. The CEPC is committed to take the carpet industry to the next level by making maximum use of this mart. The 'puja' and inauguration ceremony were organised in the Bhadohi Carpet Expo Mart where CEPC Chairman Siddh Nath Singh, and members, Committee of Administration (COA), Umesh Kumar Gupta, Rajendra Prasad Mishra, Mohammad Wasif Ansari and Shree Ram

Maurya were present. Siddh Nath Singh said they wanted to organise a grand ceremony with all prominent personalities/dignitaries and member-exporters of the Bhadohi-Mirzapur-Varanasi but due to the Covid-19 restrictions they held a 'puja' in the presence of UP-based members of COA. He said with the shifting of CEPC office in the Mart, the Council will make all possible efforts to make it fully functional and start the process for allotment of shops in its mall area and organisation of mega show there. He expressed the hope that the state government would fulfil its commitment to provide the required infrastructure facilities to the Council to enable them to organise activity of international level which will ultimately again be a milestone in the development of Bhadohi-Mirzapur and Varanasi region. Singh requested the members for their support and cooperation in the larger interest of Indian handmade carpet industry.

KNN removes encroachments from Irrigation department land

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kanpur Nagar Nigam's enforcement squad removed encroachments from Irrigation department's land in Kalyanpur police station area on Tuesday. All the encroachments and illegal pucca constructions were bulldozed by the KNN team.

Heavy police force and PAC personnel were present to deal with the protesters.

Showing a copy of the high court orders to ACM (VI), counsel for residents, Mehar Deep Chaurasia, said nobody would be evicted and status quo would be maintained till the finalisation of a government policy. On this, ACM (VI) said this high court order was relating to encroachment from Chhapera Pulia to JK Temple whereas his team was removing the illegal possessions from Kalyanpur to Chhapera Pulia as per the orders from senior

officers.

It may be recalled that hundreds of people had encroached on the canal patri land of the Irrigation and made permanent constructions on it.

When the squad ordered to remove the illegal constructions in the absence of ACM and Kalyanpur SHO, the residents squatted before the JCB and staged protest. Immediately, Kalyanpur SHO Ajay Seth reached the spot and took the squad members to task. He said the drive should have been started in the presence of ACM and local police head.

YOUTH COMMITS SUICIDE: Upset by his prolonged illness and financial hardships, a youth committed suicide by hanging himself at his in-laws' house in Jalaun on Tuesday morning. The youth was identified as Shailendra Yadav (30), son of Rajendra Yadav of Amauli village in Maharajpur

police station area.

He was married to Sadhana of Naraipur in Jalaun about four years ago and at present he was suffering from cronic disease. He was living at his in-laws' place for the past one year.

According to reports, on Tuesday morning, when all the family members went to work in the field, he hanged himself.

ELECTROCUTED : A five-year old boy was electrocuted when he came in contact with a power transformer in Chakeri police area on Tuesday afternoon. He was identified as Aryan (5), son of e-rickshaw-puller Jitendra Kumar of Sanjay Nagar, Jajmau.

While playing outside, Aryan he moved towards the power transformer and suddenly got stuck to it and received severe burns. He was rushed to a private hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

TWO WOMEN ROB GOLD RING FROM JEWELLERY SHOP: Two women tricksters stole a gold ring worth Rs.30,000 from a jewellery shop in Sabzi Mandi in Barra police station area.

The CCTV footage showed them stealing the ring.

In his complaint to the police, jeweller Ramu Soni of Barra said on Saturday, two women visited his shop to buy a ring. Ramu said he showed several rings to the two women to select one of their choice but after some time, they left the shop saying that none of the rings were of their choice.

The jeweller said that after the departure of the two women, when he checked the weight of the ring box, it was less. In the CCTV footage, one of the women was found putting on the ring in her finger. Ramu said the missing ring weighed 5 grams and was worth around Rs 30,000.

Covid cases, deaths on the wane in India



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Tuesday said that Covid-19 cases and deaths are declining in India which is “a very reassuring trend”, but cautioned the citizens not to let their guard down as an overwhelming proportion of the country’s population is still “very very susceptible” to the virus and the situation may escalate unexpectedly.

“While there is a continuous increasing trend in Covid-19 cases and deaths globally, particularly in America and Europe and the situation in the world is becoming worrisome, in contrast the scene in India is satisfying as the cases and deaths are declining,” Dr V K Paul, member (health) at NITI Aayog, said at a presser here.

More than 94 lakh patients have recovered from Covid-19 in the country, while presently there are only about 3.4 lakhs active cases and it is declining further.

“Mortality is declining and it is well below 400 per day.

Cases have come down to almost 22,000. This is the kind of number we all experienced in July. So that is very reassuring. As a nation, we seem to be now doing very well.

“We are saving lives. But remember, this cannot be taken for granted. An overwhelming proportion of our population is still very very susceptible to the virus. And the situation can escalate unexpectedly,” Paul said while cautioning against any laxity.

He further said the reassuring thing is that people are saying the R0 has come below one which means the pandemic is shrinking. “So we should be happy about that but cautiously happy,” he said as he added that “looking at the present global scenario, a second or third peak may occur in India, though it is impossible to do a definite prediction.”

Dr Paul specially mentioned that Uttarakhand, Nagaland and Himachal Pradesh have a high proportion of cases that needs to be controlled.

Noting that Delhi has made progress, he said, “We congratulate the Delhi Government as also all the other governments who have done so well in contributing towards such a significant control (in cases) in recent times.”

Dr Paul, however, expressed concern over the Covid-19 situation in some states like Uttarakhand, Nagaland and Himachal Pradesh and stated all efforts to control the spread are being made in collaboration with these governments.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said that more than 15.55 crore tests have been conducted so far for detection of coronavirus infection in the country, and the cumulative positivity rate has declined to 6.37 while the average daily positivity rate during last week was 3.00 per cent.

India’s Case Fatality Rate (CFR) is also among the lowest in the world. At present, India’s CFR is 1.45 per cent, whereas globally it is 2.26 per cent, Bhushan said.

ED files chargesheet against HIRAK Biotech Ltd under PMLA



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a prosecution complaint (chargesheet) before the Special Court, PMLA, Ahmedabad against HIRAK Biotech Ltd and its directors Pratik R Shah and Niketa Baldevbhai Dave under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in a loan default case of Ahmedabad Peoples Cooperative Bank Ltd.

Besides HIRAK Biotech Ltd and its directors, Platinum Corporation Ltd. were involved in the siphoning of bank loan availed from Ahmedabad Peoples Cooperative Bank Ltd., the ED said.

On December 8, a provisional attachment order was issued under PMLA on identification of Proceeds of Crime in the form of 16 plots located at village Sachana, Taluka Virangam in Ahmedabad district worth Rs 10.07 crore . These attached assets were held in the name of HIRAK Biotech Ltd, Ahmedabad, the agency said.

ED initiated investigations under PMLA on the basis of a charge sheet filed by CID, Gandhinagar against various

persons for commission of offences Indian Penal Code Sections relating to criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust, cheating and forgery among others.

“The said charge sheet discloses that Pratik R Shah in conspiracy with other accused fraudulently availed loan/overdraft facility against FDs from the bank and also increased overdraft limit without any resolution and withdrew beyond the overdraft limit without any security. In this manner the accused defaulted the loan sanctioned by APCBL and thereby causing loss of ₹25.25 crore to the bank, it said.

Investigation under PMLA revealed that accused Shah and Niketa Baldevbhai Dave, directors of HIRAK Biotech Ltd. tried to transfer/dispose off 16 plots held in the name of HIRAK Biotech Ltd. Accused Dave, was arrested on October 13 this year and is in judicial custody. Now, after attachment of the Proceeds of Crime to the tune of ₹10.07 crore, Prosecution Complaint has been filed before the Special Judge for confiscation of the attached assets apart from awarding punishment to the accused persons, it added.

BJP party of dacoits: Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Amid reports that the Ministry of Home Affairs could send a notice to Bengal Chief Secretary Alapan Bandopadhyay seeking clarifications as to why the three IPS officers requisitioned on Central deputation were not released by the State Government, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday called the BJP a party of dacoits and slammed it for subverting federal norms.

The three IPS officers --- an IGP, a DIG and an SP-ranked officers --- in question were in charge of BJP national president JP Nadda’s security when his convoy was attacked by alleged Trinamool Congress men on December 10 while he was going to attend a meeting at Diamond Harbour.

“The security remains on high alert whenever there is a VVIP movement ... but one has also to explain why there would 50 vehicles in the VVIP’s convoy and why vehicles of criminals including a convicted person should follow him,” Banerjee said at a rally in Jalpaiguri in North Bengal.

Wondering as to why the Central Government would interfere in law and order matters which was exclusively a

State subject Banerjee said it went against the federal norms. “The question is why should the Central Home Ministry call IPS officers of a State cadre on deputation without the State’s permission ... why the State Government should be coerced to release the said officers,” she asked. The Bengal Chief

Secretary and Director General of Police had skipped an appearance in the Home Ministry after being summoned by it. This apart the State administration also failed to release the three IPS officers --- in charge of Nadda’s security --- called on central deputation.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ
ABSENTEE NOTICE
Traffic Branch
DRM/Prayagraj
No. T/GOODS/TU/UN.AB.-2019/10 Dtd. 07.12.2020
Sub:- Publication of Absentee Notice to
Shri Aankit Kumar Adarsh, S/o Shri Bagwan Prasad
Prob. ASM/MZP, Division-PRYJ.
This is to inform to Shri Aankit Kumar Adarsh, S/o Shri Bagwan Prasad, Prob- ASM/MZP, Division-PRYJ, R/O- Gangauli, P.O.- Gangauli, Distt.- Rohtas, (Bihar), Pin-821305 who has been running absent since **22.11.2018**, that you must report to the office of Sr. DOM (C&G)/PRYJ, Ground Floor, DRM Office, NCR, Prayagraj within ten (10) days from the date of publishing of this notice. Otherwise, it will be deemed that you are not at all interested to continue in Railway Service and Railway administration will be compelled to ex-parte decision against you as dismissal or removal from service.
Name- Shri Aankit Kumar Adarsh,
S/o Shri Bagwan Prasad, Prob: ASM/MZP,
Division-PRYJ, R/O- Gangauli, P.O.- Gangauli,
Distt.- Rohtas, (Bihar), Pin-821305
1363/20 FA
f North central railways North Central Railway@CPRONCR

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ
E-Tendering Tender Notice
Date: 11.12.2020
For & on behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W), Prayagraj, North Central Railway, Prayagraj invites E-Tenders in prescribed forms, from reputed contractors with adequate experience and financial capability for the under mentioned work up to **15.00 Hrs** of Date of opening of tender:-

E-Tender Notice No.	Name of work	Tender System	Tender Value (₹)	E.M.D. (₹)
NCR-M-PRYJ-HBD-21-20	Installation of intelligent way side rolling stock Monitoring system for measuring Axle Box temperature, Wheel Tread temperature and LHB Brake disc Temperature (HAHW/ HBD/ATES) based on specification RDSO-SPN-RE-HAHW-2017 (Rev.1) dated 19.09.2018 with alteration in para 5.2 m(i) operating speed 0-160 KMPH	Single packet system	1,57,93,402.11	2,29,000/-

Cost of Tender Form: Free, **Period of Work:** 12 months, **Date of publishing on IREPS website:** 22.12.2020, **Date of opening of tender:** 13.01.2021, **Similar work definition for minimum Eligibility Criteria:** Supply, installation and commissioning of any intelligent rail track side equipment for any railways/Metro railways, where intelligent trackside equipment means equipment erected alongside the rail track for real time measuring, monitoring and reporting of the condition of tracks or rolling stock. **Note:- (1)** The complete information along with tender booklet of above E-Tenders will be available/uploaded since Date of publishing on IREPS website and shall be remained on website www.ireps.gov.in up to **15.00 hrs.** on the due date of tender opening. **(2)** Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with **IREPS** website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by **CCA** under I.T. Act-2000. **(3)** Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightaway ignored and shall not be considered. **(4)** Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. **(5)** This tender notice have also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. **(6)** E-Tender Forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. **(7)** Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in respect of e-Tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only **(8)** Any firm recognized by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) as ‘Startups’ shall be exempted from payment of earnest money deposit detailed above. **(9)** In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of **IREPS** may be approached. **(10)** Online E-Tender can be submitted up to **15.00 hrs.** on the due date of tender opening. 1378/20 (R)
f North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @ CPRONCR

Punjab, Haryana, HP, J&K incur loss of ₹3,500 cr/day due to farmers’ stir



RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a blow to the financial health of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, the farmers protest has resulted in daily loss of ₹3,500 crore. This means these States reported to have incurred over ₹70,000 crore due to the ongoing protest. A traders body in Delhi has estimated over ₹5,000 crore loss while the Northern Railway has incurred losses worth roughly ₹2,000-₹2,400 crores due to the ongoing farmers’ protest.

According to top industry and commerce federations, a daily loss of ₹3,000 crore to ₹3,500 crore is resulting in economies of the region from the value chain and transport disruption because of protests. They said the detours due to blockades of highways are leading to 50 per cent more time and distance for movement of goods that can lead to 8-10 per cent increase in logistics costs, thus leading to rise in prices of daily items and essentials.

“The size of the combined economies of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and J&K is about ₹18 lakh crore. With the ongoing farmers’ agitation and blockade of roads, toll plazas and railways, the economic activities have come to a halt,” said ASSOCHAM President Niranjana Hiranandani said on Tuesday. Assocham urged the Government and farmers’ organisations to resolve the impasse over the new agri-laws as the disruption caused by farmers’ protests was resulting in a huge daily loss.

Though the economies of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh are predominantly based on agriculture and horticulture, several industries like food processing, cotton textiles, automobile, farm machinery,

IT have become their lifeline. Besides, vibrant services sectors including tourism, trading, transport and hospitality, have added to the strength of the regions, known for their enterprising farmers, entrepreneurs and innovators.

While the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) said the disruption in supply chain and logistics due to the agitation by farmers in many parts of India will have a bearing on the economy over the coming days and may impinge the ongoing recovery from the economic contraction due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The CII said the farmers’ protests, which have intensified over the past couple of weeks, have led to obstruction of traffic and road blockades across multiple checkpoints in the northern states of Delhi-NCR, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, and in smaller measure, in many other States.

As per the estimates, the impact of the agitation is more acute for industries in hilly regions of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Jammu and Kashmir which are dependent on transport of the goods by road.

There are fears that the uncertainty around the transportation of farm products to the major markets of Delhi-NCR could lead to significant losses to the farm sector in these States.

During winters, tourism sector is a major revenue and livelihood source in these contiguous States. But there is apprehension that the farmers’ protest is likely to adversely impact the sector this winter. The period from December to March is critical due to the vacation period and the snow-fall in the mountains.

First session of JEE Mains from Feb 22 to 25

New Delhi (PNS): The National Testing Agency on Tuesday (NTA) announced that the first session of the Joint Entrance Exam Main (JEE Main) 2021 will take place from February 22 to 25, 2021. As per the NTA notification the registration for JEE Main 2021 started on Tuesday. NTA has made multiple changes to the engineering entrance exam

to ensure its smooth conduct and to facilitate students who have studied under different state boards that may have altered their syllabi due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The JEE Main 2021 will be held in 13 languages -- English, Hindi, Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.

For Govt, crony capitalists ‘best friends’, protesting farmers Khalistanis: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday alleged that for the Modi Government, crony capitalists are “best friends” and protesting farmers are Khalistanis. His attack on the Government comes at a time when thousands of farmers have been protesting for more than two weeks on the borders of Delhi, demanding withdrawal of three new farm laws.

“For Modi Govt: Dissenting students are anti-nationals. Concerned citizens are urban naxals. Migrant labourers are Covid carriers. Rape victims are nobody. Protesting farmers are Khalistanis. And crony capitalists are best friends,” Rahul Gandhi said in a tweet.

Farmers are protesting against the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act.

Enacted in September, the three farm laws have been projected by the Central Government as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove the middlemen and allow farmers to sell anywhere in the country.

However, the protesting farmers have expressed apprehension that the new laws would pave the way for eliminating the safety cushion of Minimum Support Price and do away with the mandi system, leaving them at the

mercy of big corporates.

Senior Congress leader and a former Finance Minister, P Chidambaram, asked the government to repeal the new agri laws, which have sparked protest by farmers, and bring in a fresh bill after reaching an agreement with the agitating peasants. The farmers’ agitation against the three agriculture laws has reached almost a month, with many of them sitting in the cold and blocking traffic on the national highways around Delhi. “Government should climb down from its high horse and reach an agreement with the farmers quickly,” Chidambaram said on Twitter. “The simple way forward is to Repeal the present laws and Re-enact a new law based on the agreement. Repeal and Re-enactment is a well-known legislative tool,” he also said.

The former finance minister said it is obvious that any agreement between farmers and the government will necessarily require a new bill to be passed by Parliament. “It is shocking that after 20 days of farmers’ protests in the bitter winter of Delhi, the government continues to stick to the ‘no repeal’ stand,” he also said.

Opposition parties have also appealed to President Ram Nath Kovind to intervene and ensure the laws are withdrawn. The Government has been defending the laws, saying they will open new market avenues for farmers and raise their incomes, besides ushering in new technologies in the sector.

SC asks States to give ₹2K per month for edu of children restored with families

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Observing that COVID-19 has affected normal life since March and children did not have the opportunity to attend classes, the Supreme Court on Tuesday directed all the States to provide ₹2,000 a month for the education of each child who was in a child care institution (CCI) and has now been restored to his or her family during the pandemic.

The apex court was told that 2,27,518 children were in CCIs when the COVID-19 pandemic started and 1,45,788 have been restored with their families or guardians.

Taking note of the plight of children who are residing in CCIs during pan-

demia period, the top court stressed on the need to provide them requisite infrastructure for education and said that states should ensure that required number of teachers are made available to teach them.

A bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao also said state governments should provide necessary infrastructure, including books and stationery, to CCIs for the online classes of children living there on the basis of recommendation from district child protection units within 30 days.

The top court said that it might be necessary for the states to nominate a teacher for a batch of 20-25 children in CCIs so that they could get education during the pandemic time.

UCO BANK
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE
(FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)

Zonal Office: B-1/122, Virend Khand,
Gomtinagar, Lucknow - 226010 Phone: 0522-4937664
Email:- zo.lucknow@ucobank.co.in

Sale Notice For Immovable Properties “APPENDIX-IV-A [See Provision Rule 8(6)]
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 Read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Mortgagor (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below:
Described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of UCO Bank, Secured Creditor, will be sold on “As is where is”, and “Whatever there is” basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned accounts. The details of Borrower(s)/Mortgagor (s)/Guarantor (s) / Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction Date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below:-
Date & Time of Auction: 30.01.2021, 12:00 PM to 03:00 PM Late Date for Acknowledgment of EMD/Bid price : 29.01.2021

Sr. No.	Name of Borrowers/ Guarantors & There Address	Amount Outstanding	Description of the Property	Reserve Price Earnest Money Bid Increase Value.	Date & Time of Property verification	Date of Demand Notice/ Possession Notice
1.	Borrower: Saurabh Motors (Prop: Saurabh Verma), Shop No.2, Khuradi Bazar, Madernau, Bakkas, Gosainganj. A/c No.: 12590510003114. Branch: Bakkas	16,25,738.76 + Interest + Other Expenses	Land of part Khasra number 645 situated at Village Mahguan , pargana and Tehsil Mohanlalganj, Lucknow. Owner: Saurabh Verma s/o Brij Kishore, Area: 0.188 hectare or 1880 sq mtr. Bounded as under: North- Property of Arvind Verma, South- Property of Shashi, East- Mahesh Agarwal, West- Rasta, Possession -Symbolic	36,00,000.00 3,60,000.00	16.12.2020 - 29.01.2021 Between 10:00 AM to 04:00 PM	24.10.2019 03.02.2020
2.	Borrower: Vaishnavi Constructions (Prop: Mrs. Deepika Singh W/o Lt. Shiva Singh), A/c No.: CC-22810510004661, TL: 22810610006054 Branch: Rae Bareilly	28,84,435.90 + Interest + Other Expenses	Residential Plot located at Gata no.29, Saleempur Khas, Pargana & District: Raebareilly. Owner: Smt. Deepika Singh W/o Shri Shiv Pratap Singh Area: 2800 Sq mtr. Bounded as under: North- House of Ubaid Khan, South- Middle School, East- Kharanja Rasta, West- Harchandpur Maharajganj. Possession - Symbolic	22,00,000.00 2,20,000.00	16.12.2020 - 29.01.2021 Between 10:00 AM to 04:00 PM	24.05.2019 15.11.2019
3.	Borrower: M/S RAM & SONS, Prop. Manoj Kumar S/o Vinod Kumar R/o Ward No. 9, Prakash Nagar, Maharaj Ganj, District- Rae Bareilly-229006 Guarantor 1: Smt. Kalpana w/o Sri Manoj Kumar R/o Ward No. 9, Prakash Nagar, Maharaj ganj, Rae Bareilly-229006, Guarantor 2: Mrs Aneta w/o Surendra Kumar R/o Ward no.1, Ahiyarpur, Kishunpur Ramchandra, Rae Bareilly-229006, Guarantor 3: Mrs. Sangeeta w/o Shailendra Kumar R/o: Ward No. 4 Arya Nagar Town, Maharaj Ganj, Rae Bareilly-229006 A/c No.: 22810510001714 Branch: Rae Bareilly	33,78,285.00 + Interest + Other Expenses	Property 1: All the part and parcel of the property situated at Gate No. 283-286, Kishun Pur Ramchandra (Hanumant Puram) Rae Bareilly 229001, Owner: Manoj Kumar R/o Ward No. 08, Prakash Nagar, Maharaj Ganj, Rae Bareilly, Area: 126.50 sq.mtr Bounded as under: East: Kutcha Rasta, West: House of Thakur Sahab, North: House of Sarita, South: House of Suresh Singh. Possession -Symbolic Property 2: All the part and parcel of the property (Commercial shop) situated at House No. 1325, Ward No. 1, Ahiyarpur, Kishunpur Ramchandra, Rae Bareilly, Owner: Mrs. Aneta w/o Surendra Kumar R/o Ward no. 1, Ahiyarpur, Kishunpur Ramchandra, Rae Bareilly, Area: 64.17 sq.mtr Bounded as under: East: Bus stop to Tripura Road, West: House of Ram Krishna, North: House of Ram Krishna, South: House of Maya Mishra. Possession -Symbolic Property 3: All the part and parcel of the property situated at Ward no. 04 Arya Nagar Town, Maharaj Ganj, Rae Bareilly, Owner: Mrs. Sangeeta w/o Shailendra Kumar, Area: 68.02 sq.mtr Bounded as under: East: Road Nagar Panchayat, West: Road Nagar Panchayat, North: House of Mata Prasad and Shyam Sundar, South: House of Maya Mishra. Possession -Symbolic	14,52,000.00 1,45,200.00	16.12.2020 - 29.01.2021 Between 10:00 AM to 04:00 PM	22.11.2019 14.10.2020
4.	Borrower: Mrs. Santosh w/o Shri Shiva Kant Trivedi Guarantor : Shiva Kant Trivedi House No. 105, Sultanpura, Janauli, Daimau, Raebareilly-229001 A/c No.: 22810510002582 Branch: Rae Bareilly	10,69,622.84 + Interest + Other Expenses	Property situated at Residential Property Plot Khatian No 233, Khasra No 260, 105- Sultanpur, Januali, Daimau, Raebareilly. Owner: Mrs Santosh w/o Shri Shiva Kant, Area: 2350 sq.ft. Bounded as under: North: Concrete Road, South- Sharad Ram Nagar, East- Khet of Rameshwar, West- Khet of Bhim Singh. Possession -Symbolic	4,55,000.00 45,500.00	16.12.2020 - 29.01.2021 Between 10:00 AM to 04:00 PM	14.09.2016 24.03.2017

Note: This notice is also to be treated as 30 days statutory sale to borrower & guarantor (L/Rs.) under Rule 8(6) Rules, 2002.

For detailed terms and condition of the sale, please refer to the link provided in **UCO Bank secured website** <https://www.ucobank.co.in>, <https://ibapi.in>. Also prospective bidders may contact the authorised officer mobile no. 7903878330 & email on: zo.lucknow.rec@ucobank.co.in

Date: 16.12.2020 **Place:** Lucknow **Authorised Officer, UCO Bank, Lucknow Zonal Office**

Up for sale!

Will Air India finally find someone other than the Government of India to fund it?



Air India for years has been one of India's most glorious examples of a white elephant, not just because the airline operated Boeing-747 Jumbo Jets' painted in white. Much like other Public Sector Enterprises, the airline became a way for politicians and bureaucrats to repay favours with inflated leases and purchases of aircraft and services. And ever since the days of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government, the airline has been on the shop window and up for sale. Crippled by its own debt, Air India has found it impossible to not only turn a profit but also be competitive on a number of counts against domestic rivals such as IndiGo; on international routes

Air India has been hollowed out by massive route rights allotted to Arabian airlines whose growth has been predicated on the Indian passenger. While Air India has played a major role in the repatriation of Indian citizens from foreign countries since the pandemic began (and many other evacuation exercises on occasions even earlier, especially when Sushma Swaraj was the Minister of External Affairs), the airline has made a pretty penny from it. And that will not substitute as a policy once the pandemic begins to wear off and air travel begins in earnest again. But the flag-carrier airline is not competitive domestically and while it might gain on international sectors with the rise of non-stop point-to-point travel, it faces risks from other Indian carriers such as IndiGo and Vistara. However, make no mistake, Air India is a powerful brand and one worth saving especially if the Government of India takes a major hit and absorbs much of the debt associated with the airline. After all, why would any sane person buy an asset where he is crippled by prior debt when it would be cheaper to create an all-new asset. If the undisclosed bidders for Air India give the Government a fair price for the airline and absorb some of the losses and most of the employees, it could well be a win-win for everyone. Sure, writing off thousands of crores of debt might be a hard pill to swallow but it is a lot better than continuing to absorb losses or shutting down the airline completely, losing an iconic Indian brand and thousands of jobs. There already have been in the past decade massive layoffs and many lives ruined largely owing to the failures of airlines like Kingfisher and Jet Airways, and tens of thousands of crores of public money has been lost in these private airlines as public sector banks have borne the brunt of bad loans to the aviation industry.

While the Government of India has not disclosed the identity of those who have expressed interest in bidding for the airline, it has been suspected that a group of employees of the airline along with a private equity firm Interups and Tata Sons are among the suitors. As the Maharaja goes under the hammer, sources in the Government have confirmed that it has received multiple expressions of interest. We still believe that selling Air India piecemeal might be a way for the Government to realise additional value from the airline but those in power believe that such a step will only delay and needlessly complicate the sale. We cannot understate the importance of the aviation industry for India and while the Railways have been the lifeblood of the Indian passenger transport system for decades, in a country the size of India, an affordable, reliable as well as a profitable aviation industry is vital not just for connecting people and enabling the economy but most importantly, it is one of strategic importance. A large civilian air fleet — much like a large civilian merchant fleet in centuries past — is a way to move military and other strategic assets quickly. Many have argued that this is why India should retain a public airline but many large nations, particularly the United States, do not have any airline controlled by the Government. In fact, a professionally run Air India which is profitable and not a taxpayer-subsidised operation that competes with true private airlines will lead to a level playing field and the overall growth of the Indian aviation sector. However, as the saying goes, there is often a slip between the cup and the lip and it remains to be seen whether the sale goes ahead.

AAP's ambition

Having established itself in Delhi creditably, the party is now planning to test the waters in UP Assembly elections



The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), after initial hiccups in its ambitions to spread its wings nationwide, learnt the hard way that it had to first establish its political life's longness with proof of its governance skills. This is why it abandoned its pan-India efforts, considering its limited appeal among the civil society, and concentrated on securing Delhi. And now that it is into its third term in the city-State, riding a massive verdict and having managed to stave off the BJP creditably, it is now considering spreading its footprint across the country. Of course, in this effort, it is following a ground-up policy, proving its credentials in local Government polls. Emboldened by the party's maiden win in the Goa *zila panchayat* elections,

its convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has said that the AAP will contest the Uttar Pradesh (UP) Assembly elections in 2022. The Goa win is significant for the simple reason that although the BJP dominated the results, the Opposition Congress performed poorly and the AAP seemed to be gaining at the latter's expense. Of course, the AAP is playing it big in UP by harping on its comparatively superior performance in citizen-friendly governance. In fact, Kejriwal almost launched a campaign yesterday, asking why people from UP would have to look at Delhi for health services and education in an obvious reference to his successful run with *mohalla* clinics, free electricity, water, education and healthcare facilities. It would enter the contest as an outlier, hoping to encash on the vacuum created by the Congress. But the question is whether it would be open to alliances to push up its tally and relevance. Already Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav has said that his party would form an alliance with smaller parties. His reason: his experience has not been good with the bigger parties. The AAP is now also eyeing Punjab, where it has significant presence with 19 MLAs. It has already won 62 of the 70 seats in Delhi with a vote share of nearly 54 per cent, a few of them on Punjabi-dominated seats. And now it has thrown its lot with the farmers' agitation, dominated as it is by agriculturists from Punjab, and even thrown barbs at Congress Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh for toning down his attack despite the initial fury. Of course, Singh has been at the forefront of the farmers' agitation, passing amendment Bills to the three Central Farm Acts in the Assembly, insisting on meeting the President and sending his legislators to Delhi to stage a dharna. He has been one of the leading Congress voices in articulating protests against the farm Acts.

However, the AAP hopes to make gains from the anti-incumbency factor against him and benefit from the erosion of the base of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). Though the latter has now walked out of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) over the farm laws, it has been too little a move to wrest control in the State. The AAP wants to use this disappointment with the SAD to its advantage. Kejriwal's party, however, still has to work on its base in Punjab. It has to rebuild connect with the Malwa region — the epicentre of agrarian distress — which it has lost since 2014. The AAP has to take care of factionalism in the State unit, which has not been quite at peace with the central leadership. If the party is serious about pushing itself to the forefront, it has to work on consolidating a political base that's different from the existing players who have been seen as championing the interests of the elite. This has alienated much of Punjab's masses from the political class and the AAP wants to spearhead that change. The farmers' protests are just the beginning. The question is can it wrest the alternative space?

Repeated failures

The ongoing India-China standoff yet again points to Intelligence lapses amid reports that the Chinese got winter warfare training from Canadian forces



ASHOK K MEHTA

Rebel News, a Canadian far right news network, has obtained 34 pages of documents called 'China Files' establishing that Canada has been training the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) in cold-weather warfare at its military institution in Kingston, bases in Ontario and at the Canadian Forces College, Toronto. Further, it sent to China flag-rank Canadian officers to teach PLA officers tactics and techniques in high-altitude fighting. Nearly 200 Canadian soldiers participated in the October 2019 World Military Games at Wuhan and Canadian sailors and naval ships celebrated the PLA Navy's 70th Raising Day at Qindhao. Defence and security relations between the countries were particularly active during 2018-19 despite the Chinese taking two Canadian civilians hostage. It seems that the Canadian Government under Premier Justin Trudeau was keen to maintain warm relations and not to displease the Chinese overlooking objections raised by the Trump Administration over unintended consequences of transfer of knowledge and information to the Chinese though Canada's Five Eyes partners were not perturbed.

The news network obtained redacted documents, some classified secret and for Canadian eyes only, 19 months after it sought them on a Freedom of Information request but as the documents were not properly redacted, they were legible. When there was resistance to implementing the exchange programmes — the Chief of Defence Staff put on hold one joint section-level exercise in winter warfare in Canada — orders were given that no training was to be suspended without consulting the Chief of Privy Council. These documents, made public last week, clearly tell India that the Chinese had been preparing for high-altitude warfare since 2018-19 — especially in the winter of 2019 — and have received training, expertise and equipment from Canadian Defence Forces during bilateral military exchanges in China and Canada.

The Trudeau Government's record of sensitivity towards India's security concerns has at best been lax, given that its Defence Minister and Leader of the Opposition are both Khalistani sympathisers.

These revelations fit in neatly with the US-China Economic,



Security Review Commission report of December 1 which describes the eight-month-long India-China standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) as the most severe border crisis in decades and accuses China of planning the Galwan clash with the blessings of Defence Minister Gen Weng Fei. Two weeks before the clash, *Global Times* warned that India would suffer a devastating blow if it got involved in the US-China rivalry. The report notes that while the "Chinese Government might deem its Ladakh venture to acquire territory a success, it failed to dissuade India from building infrastructure or aligning with the US, where results have been counterproductive". The Indian Government, though, has denied both loss of any territory or alignment with the US. Although no clinching evidence was presented in the report, tell-tale signs were there that China was working to a premeditated grand design of forcibly altering the LAC in Ladakh for which preparations had started in mid-2019, if not earlier, as the 'China Files' indicate. These predate the Mahabalipuram/Chennai summit and are akin to Prime Minister AB Vajpayee's historic Lahore visit coinciding with Gen Musharraf's planning of Kargil.

Lies and deceit are ingrained in the Chinese Communist Party and PLA's

psyche. Foreign Minister S Jaishankar has said that the Chinese have given India five differing explanations for deploying large forces along the LAC. In its latest response to Jaishankar speaking at a virtual session with Sydney-based Lowy Institute where he blamed China for the standoff and breakdown in relations, Beijing Foreign Office repeated its standard response: "The merits of the situation are very clear. India is totally responsible for the situation." The standoff has hit an impasse with no prospect of any thaw this winter; the Chinese and Indian tanks are just 20 metres apart near Kailash range. The Chinese cancelled the joint release of a stamp on the 70th anniversary of bilateral relations. The date for the ninth military dialogue has not been communicated by Beijing and while channels of communication remain in suspended animation, both sides are talking at each other.

Russia, which enjoys the best of relations with both India and China, has entered the fray not in helping to break the logjam but adding fuel to the fire by accusing the West of "anti-China games". Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov set the cat among the pigeons by saying that the western powers were promoting Indo-Pacific Strategy and Quadrilateral Security Dialogue to engage India in anti-China games and also trying to under-

mine Russia's partnership with India. His remarks were directed at the US which has been threatening India with sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) for the purchase of \$5.4 billion S400 air defence system from Russia. This is a direct challenge to India's strategic autonomy and one of the sticking points in the India-US Defence Partnership on which the Trump Administration remained discreetly silent.

Although India is still sitting on the fence in deference to China, it has indicated to Beijing both in words and deeds the options available to it for crossing the Rubicon. US Democratic lawmaker Mark Warner, speaking last week at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit, said: "India should join a 'Coalition of the Willing' with the US and other democracies to confront China's model of State-sponsored authoritarian capitalism." Just as Trudeau wants to be nice to China, India does not wish to offend Beijing as it cannot independently deter Chinese coercion on the Himalayan frontiers due to conspicuous power asymmetry.

Jaishankar's continuing reliance on diplomacy stems from ground reality and realpolitik. When asked by a journalist about India's reaction to Chinese intrusions being diplomatic rather than a pushback, he

rebutted that "there has been an enormous military response in our force deployment", deflecting the initial omissions of any counteractions following delayed detection of intrusions. The Government is making a virtue of necessity in its counter-deployment. In the same interview, he said the standoff could go the Sumdorong Chu way (1986) which took nine years to resolve. But then while the geopolitical context and limited scale of deployment were vastly different, India was tactically in a commanding position having surrounded the PLA intrusion at Wangdung which was beyond the Indian limit of patrolling. Still Wangdung was an Intelligence lapse!

The Intelligence and operational failures on the LAC this year are compounded by the *Rebel News* revelations of the Chinese getting winter warfare training from the Canadian armed forces in 2018-19. In a similar situation in 1984, India got a tip-off that Pakistan was buying snow clothing in Europe and pre-emptively occupied Siachen. The last GOC Ladakh Sub-Area, Maj Gen Yash Mor who was there at the time of intrusions, lamented this week about "our repeated failures to read Intelligence".

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff)

SOUNDBITE

Why is the Government running away from the Winter Session and hiding behind a pandemic? They are subverting democracy.

Former Union Minister
—Manish Tewari



It is the clearest demonstration of the will of the American people. In this battle for the soul of America, democracy prevailed.

US President-elect
—Joe Biden



Dhyani Chand is one of the greatest hockey players in the history of our national sport, and it is a matter of pride to direct his biopic. Hoping to announce the lead actor soon.

Film director
—Abhishek Chaubey



I think it (getting hit and suffering concussions) is more to do with the fact that everybody has got their front-press where technically they are moving forward.

Former India captain
—Sunil Gavaskar



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

There's a time to stop

Sir — This refers to the editorial 'Now, hunger strike' (December 15). The protests against the agrarian laws represent a significant movement in mass political mobilisation in India. The Government, on the other hand, believes that the movement has been taken over by "political" elements.

While the movement's strengths are clear, the problem with it is not too much of politics but too little of it. Politics entails different elements and agitation is only one of them. Good politics also involves the ability to negotiate, reconcile the demands of a movement with the possibilities of what can be attained, recognition of the balance of power, and when to declare victory. This element of politics is missing in the movement. Once the protests escalated and the Government had no choice but to engage and offer concessions, good political leadership among the protesters would have meant leveraging the movement.

But no group wants to be seen as "compromising" for fear of being seen as "sold out" to the Government or corporates or has the courage to tell the farmers that the deal on offer is reasonable.

N Sadhasiva Reddy
Bengaluru

Angry farmers deserve a sympathetic ear

This refers to the article 'A swift end to farmers' stir desirable' (December 15) by Kalyani Shankar. Walking down the memory lane on the food crisis in India post-Independence to its self-sufficiency after the Green Revolution, which was brought about during the leadership of former Prime Ministers Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi, the writer has touched upon every significant development causing ups and downs in the country's agriculture sector all these decades while her solicitude over the ongoing standoff between the Union Government and 30-odd farmer unions following the promulgation of the new farm laws also stands justified.

This is really a matter of great public concern that many a round of talks between the farmer leaders and the Government and the siege around the national Capital's borders have remained inconclusive even as many national celebrities from various fields have decided to return their State honours in a show of solidarity with the agitating farmers.

Ironically, the Centre's claim that the new farm laws are meant for the amelioration of farmers and the latter negating it underscores a 'misunderstanding' between the



two that seems to have culminated in the ongoing stir. Hence, the writer's observation that the sooner a swift solution to the protests is found the better holds good and merits attention in the national and public interest.

Farmers have always borne the brunt of natural calamities like floods, drought or marauding animals and they labour endlessly in inclement weather. It's really a pity that these *annadatas* themselves have to sit on roads to get their voices heard.

Azhar A Khan
Rampur

Unfettered population

Sir — It refers to the Health Ministry unexpectedly opposing the much-required two-child norm when, in an affidavit filed in the Supreme Court, the Ministry stated that any such step could be counter-productive leading to demographic distortions.

The absence of any such pol-

icy is leading to a fast-changing demography in the country where the population of a particular minority community is increasing at a faster rate and thus decreasing the population percentage of the majority community.

At least the incentives given for small families should be replaced by disincentives for larger families. All Government facil-

ities — including reservation benefits, freebies, subsidies, Government jobs and service/promotions — may be auto-terminated on the birth of the third child in a family. Such parents should be barred not only from the right to contest elections but also the right to vote.

Subhash Chandra Agrawal
New Delhi

Le Carre: A master class

Sir — The great English novelist John Le Carre, whose real name was David Cornwell and who passed away recently aged 89, will probably be known as the greatest spy writer of any era, anywhere.

Before him, it was Ian Fleming and his flamboyant spy character James Bond, who ruled the roost. Le Carre was a wholly different story, no bang-bang stuff but provoking reflection. Le Carre's intricate plots came from the Cold War, in which for a time he was himself a participant as a junior British spy. Le Carre shunned literary awards and State honours.

When the Cold War ended, he wrote grippingly, fluently and with understated eloquence, following his deep on-location research about the drug trade, big pharma and torture in the wake of America's questionable interventions in Iraq and its 'war on terror'.

He was among the rare breed of writers whose characters teetered on the fine line between right-wrong and good-bad.

Shovanlal Chakraborty
Kolkata

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

A wave in favour of choice

Abortion is currently an issue in many countries and in almost every one of them there's a majority in favour of it among the younger population



GWYNNE DYER

Get your rosaries off our ovaries," chanted the women marching in support of the referendum that made abortion legal in Ireland in 2018. Two years later the 2020 election broke the century-long stranglehold on power of the two Centre-Right parties, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael. They got fewer than half the votes even together. Did the 2018 mass mobilisation against the anti-abortion law radicalise Irish politics and trigger that shift? Probably. Another country where the Catholic Church has traditionally dominated politics, Poland, is now seeing a mass mobilisation, too. Abortion on demand was legal in Poland under Communist rule but since democracy came in 1989, the Catholic Church has been steadily pushing back abortion rights.

Soon after the Law and Justice Party won the 2015 election, it tried to push a law through Parliament banning abortions in cases of foetal abnormality but the politicians retreated in the face of mass protests, particularly by women. So the Government tried a different approach. (Americans will recognise this strategy.) The Law and Justice Party packed the constitutional court with party loyalists and last October the court effectively banned almost all abortions. But the country exploded in protest. Suddenly a lot of Poles are openly angry at the Catholic Church, although it is as closely linked with Poland's identity and nationhood as it was with Ireland's.

The late Pope (and Saint) John Paul II is revered as the only Polish Pope and a great national hero, but a statue of him near Warsaw recently had its hands daubed with red paint. Only 35 per cent of Poles now have a positive view of the Catholic Church, and among the young it's down to nine per cent. Will this end up reshaping Polish politics? Probably yes. And in Argentina the Lower House of Congress has just passed a Government-backed Bill to legalise abortion, currently considered a crime in almost all circumstances. Even women who had spontaneous miscarriages have been accused of abortion and jailed for homicide.

But tens of thousands of women came out in Buenos Aires last Friday to greet the passage of the legalisation of abortion: A local news website called it a "tsunami of joy." They will be out again in strength later this month to ensure that the Senate passes the new law (which it probably will) — and that will unleash a wave of demands for similar reforms all over Latin America.

Most countries in Central and South America only allow abortion in cases of rape or risk to the mother's life, thanks to the traditional power of the Catholic Church. Until now, only Cuba and Uruguay have allowed abortion on demand. But for the majority of Latin countries where most people are no longer rural peasants, the writing is now on the wall.

Which brings us, naturally, to the US, where very few people think of themselves as peasants. The landscape is quite similar, with evangelical Christians even more militantly opposed to abortion than Catholics. Yet the abortion rate among Catholic women matches the national average and even among evangelical women it is about half that. Abortions in the US are now at the lowest rate since the key Supreme Court decision that legalised abortion, Roe vs Wade, back in 1973 but that's mainly due to better contraception. Nevertheless, almost a quarter of American women (23.7 per cent) will get an abortion at some point in their lives, most when they are in their 20s.

A great many of these women have abortions because of their life circumstances: Three-fifths of them already have at least one child, and half of them are living below the poverty line. All that would happen if abortion were made illegal is that the backstreet abortionists would reappear and lots of women would die or end up maimed in some way.

US President Donald Trump is gone now with the Electoral College putting Joe Biden firmly in the White House. Biden formally won 306 Electoral College votes as electors voted in State capitals around the US either virtually or in person, fulfilling a pro forma responsibility that wouldn't have received so much public attention but for Trump's refusal to acknowledge his defeat. Trump expectedly won 232. However, even though Trump is out, he has packed the US Supreme Court six-three with Conservatives who are thought to be "pro-life." If they decide to re-ban abortion, they will certainly unleash mass protests on a scale that the US has not seen before, just like in Ireland and Poland. The "pro-life" movement is noisy, but 80 per cent of Americans support abortion rights. A ban in the US might even trigger a women's general strike. The right is already radicalised in the US but the rest of the country is ripe for it, too.

Abortion is currently an issue in many countries and in almost every one of them, there's a majority in favour of it among the younger population. What message does this have for Right-wing governments that cling to power by waging "culture wars" to cobble together narrow majorities? Stay away from the abortion issue. It will explode in your faces.

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

THE SO-CALLED FARMER AGITATION HARDLY REMAINS A FARMERS' AGITATION. IT HAS GOT INFILTRATED BY LEFTIST AND MAOIST ELEMENTS.
—UNION MINISTER
PIYUSH GOYAL

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



FOR THE MODI GOVERNMENT, DISSENTING STUDENTS ARE ANTI-NATIONALS AND PROTESTING FARMERS ARE KHALISTANIS.
—CONGRESS LEADER
RAHUL GANDHI

Miles travelled, yards to go

Goods and Services Tax rates can come down only when the rate of compliance improves for this grand tax reform



SUBHASH CHANDRA PANDEY

The Narendra Modi-led Union Government is cracking the whip on tax evaders in the country to ramp up Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections. Nationwide raids by the Directorate-General of GST Intelligence unearthed 4,586 fake entities registered under the GST regime. Countrywide 132 people were arrested in 1,430 cases related to illegally availing or passing on of bogus Input Tax Credit. Plus, more than six months' default in filing monthly tax returns led to the cancellation of GST registrations of 1,63,042 entities.

Tax evasion in the country is rampant and strong anti-evasion measures are needed as GST collections are way below expectation and potential. This is at a time when the economy of the nation, which was already in the red, has taken a crippling blow due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The Government, which is trying to combat the pandemic, needs all the money that it can garner to keep the anti-COVID momentum going.

The Lok Sabha was informed in March that GST evasion of ₹70,207 crore had been detected between July 2017 and January this year, of which ₹34,591 crore had been recovered. The Directorate-General of Analytics and Risk Management has identified over 12,900 business entities suspected of availing Input Tax Credit since July 2017 through bogus invoices worth over ₹1,00,000 crore till March this year.

Collection from taxes subsumed in the GST was about six per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2016-17. In contrast, the GST collections to GDP ratio was 6.25 per cent in 2018-19 and six per cent in 2019-20. GST collections were about ₹7,40,650 crore in 2017-18, ₹11,77,370 crore in 2018-19 and ₹12,22,131 crore in 2019-20.

GST collections were about ₹32,000 crore and ₹62,000 crore during April and May. The next four months saw an average collection of ₹90,000 crore per month, which improved to ₹1,05,000 crore per month in the last two months, showing a robust recovery.

If the GDP at factor cost (proxy for the total base of indirect taxes) is assumed to be ₹160 lakh crore and 60 per cent of this GDP pays an average GST of 15 per cent, the GST revenue should be ₹1,20,000 crore per month. Obviously, at the moment, the GST revenue is below expectations and its potential.

The Centre and State Governments across the country are taking steps to overcome resistance to formalisation and digitalisation, rationalisation of GST rates and curbing tax evasion through claims of fake or excess Input Tax Credits, misinvoicing or undocumented sales. The GST system includes certain checks on tax evasion like mandatory audits, matching of returns, E-Way Bills, reverse charge mechanism and invoice matching. These are being gradually introduced. To check the practice of setting up shell firms for fraud, the Government has mandated Aadhaar authentication for GST registration. The GST law permits deemed registration 21 days after an application is filed. Authorities will now physically inspect and verify entities obtaining deemed GST registration without Aadhaar.

Ever since the Economic Administration Reforms Commission, chaired by LK Jha in 1984, highlighted how 80 per cent of Excise manpower then guarded gates of low revenue yielding factories, tax administration in India has been moving away from physical controls to self-assessment. However, the truth is that a trust-based tax assessment system is effective only when there is the deterrence of test checks and fear of penal action on detection of breach of faith in test checks.

Otherwise, the tax system will be no different than managing the collection boxes placed in religious places. Since tax inspectors no longer guard

“AFTER FULL AUTOMATION IS ADOPTED BY TAXPAYERS, EVEN 'ASSESSMENT' AS UNDERSTOOD IN THE MANUAL SYSTEM MAY NO LONGER BE NECESSARY. THE TAX RETURNS CAN BE GENERATED BY A SYSTEM THAT MATCHES INVOICES. TAX EVASION CAN BE DETECTED BY APPLYING ANALYTICAL TOOLS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO THE MASSIVE DATA THAT CRORES OF INVOICES GENERATE



gates of factories and godowns the E-Way Bills system was rolled out in April 2018 to track the movement of taxable goods. This also reduces Income Tax evasion by transporters as they need to get registered. Capturing the vehicle registration numbers into a trackable IT system, the E-Way Bills and the FASTag system help check other malpractices. For instance, in the Bihar fodder scam, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) detected that certain vehicles supposedly used for fodder transport were actually registered two-wheelers, proving fake procurement.

Officials have found lakhs of E-Way Bills being cancelled within a few hours, indicating undocumented delivery to intra-city or nearby destinations or multiple trips being made against a single E-Way Bill to transport excess undeclared goods. To curb misuse, E-Way Bills are now being integrated with the FASTag system being used for electronic collection of tolls on National Highways and the Vahan database, too.

There have been instances where unscrupulous dealers have used fake invoices for inputs not received to claim undue Input Tax Credit. Such invoices don't have any corresponding supply of goods/services or not to the full extent and do not involve actual payment of GST on them. This practice also leads to defrauding of banks by exaggerating turnovers and money laundering.

The July 2019 CAG report on GST, expressed concern over the continuing delay in the full invoice matching system which has made the system prone to Input Tax Credit frauds. The system was intended to be designed based on 100 per cent invoice-matching to ensure system-verified Input Tax Credit, correct settlement of the Integrated Goods and Services Tax and for minimising direct human interface with assessee. After full automation is adopted by taxpayers, even "assessment" as understood in the manual system may

no longer be necessary. The tax returns can be generated by a system that matches invoices.

Tax evasion can be detected by applying analytical tools and Artificial Intelligence to the massive data that crores of invoices generate. In fact, the GST system should reach the same maturity in terms of providing visibility of Input Tax Credit as is now available for verification and tracing of TDS/TCS credits by Income Tax assesses.

One common problem, especially for small businesses, is that the GST system is not designed to distinguish a sale on full upfront payment and a sale on credit and a sale on Equated Monthly Installments. Why force a seller to pay GST even before he gets paid for the supplies? Even allowing quarterly filing of GST returns with monthly payments does not address this problem.

Small businesses selling to big buyers, including governments and Public Sector Undertakings, routinely face payment delays though some progress has been made recently. It would be desirable if in a GST2.0 upgrade, a receipt-based GST system can be implemented where the GST would be payable to the Treasury only on receipt of full or *pro rata* payment for the supplied goods/services. One theoretical option to implement this, at least for small businesses, could be to allow them to opt for Cash Accounting rather than Accrual Accounting. However, that will create problems when they grow and have to leave the small business tag. A better option will be to introduce payment tracking, whose benefits will go beyond the GST sphere in checking defaults and delinquencies.

It is a creditable achievement that the number of registered businesses under taxes subsumed in the GST has increased from 72 lakh to 1.28 crore, despite significant de-registrations due to increased thresholds for registration and voluntary

deregistration by some Central Excise-exempt units located in the Himalayan/North Eastern States whose business became unviable under the destination-based GST. Some 82 lakh registered sellers filed detailed returns for November and over 20 lakh GST taxpayers opting for the Composition Scheme are exempt from filing detailed returns. As a taxpayer facilitation measure, almost 94 lakh small GST taxpayers are now allowed quarterly filing of return with monthly payment.

The GST rate rationalisation is also on course. Almost 99 per cent of all commodities are now taxed with GST at the rate of 18 per cent or lower. Consumers tend to compare GST rates with erstwhile Sales Tax/Value Added Tax (VAT) rate not realising the basic fact that the GST subsumes Central Excise which has been hidden in the price of products on which VAT was applied. When the invisible Central Excise and other taxes are subsumed in the visible GST, it is bound to be seen higher than VAT.

For instance, the pre-GST taxation of goods was a typical standard VAT at the rate of 14.5 per cent, Central Excise at the rate of 12.5 per cent and CST at the rate of four per cent. With the cascading effect of tax on tax, the total levy paid by the end consumer was over 30 per cent. Inclusion of petroleum products in GST, if necessary by adjusting non-GST taxes like Customs duty, allowing Input Tax Credit across full value addition chains, further lowering of rates with continuing strict action against tax frauds can make GST more acceptable and yield more revenues.

Digitalisation and formalisation of businesses poses some short-term costs and hassles, but it is inevitable and it alone holds the promise of giving long-awaited justice to the overtaxed. GST rates can come down when compliance improves for this grand tax reform.

(The writer is former Special Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry)

A just cause buried in the sand

Palestinians look up to Saudi Arabia as the only remaining ally in their dream of a homeland but the friend seems to be betraying them



PRANAY KUMAR SHOME

The last few months of the outgoing Trump Administration were very hectic, especially seen from the foreign policy perspective. In an otherwise turbulent and highly-fragile four years of the Trump presidency marked by foreign policy disasters, the last six months were landmark *vis-à-vis* Trump's West Asia policy. In early August, the Trump administration oversaw the signing of the Abraham accords which are a series of peace-normalisation agreements between Israel with three Arab States,

namely Bahrain, the UAE and Sudan.

However, one issue that remains unaddressed that can have ubiquitous ramifications for peace and stability in West Asia and the Middle East is the two-State solution. The normalisation agreements have covertly sidelined the issue of the Palestinians.

Transformation of West Asian politics: One thing that is very clear from the normalisation agreements between Israel and the Gulf Arab States is that the politics of West Asia has undergone drastic transformation. It will not be the same any more. Henry Kissinger in his famous book 'World Order' wrote that geopolitics and strategic considerations triumph religious issues.

These diplomatic agreements are symptomatic of a Zionist-Sunni alliance against Shia Iran. Iran finding itself isolated is desperately trying to find a way out of this stranglehold because Arab-Zionist bonhomie is clearly in the US' strategic interest.

To undermine the impact of the agreements, Iran stitched a \$400 billion strategic partnership with China in late September. Iran approved China's access to its defence and financial systems so much so that Iran is now a *de jure* part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) much to India's chagrin. The scales appear firmly tilted in Israel's favour however. With the change of regime in the US, it will be very interesting to see what happens with the new Biden Administration.

Should it choose to follow a more reconciliatory policy towards Iran and think about resurrecting the Iran nuclear accord, it would end up alienating Israel and the Sunni Gulf monarchies. If Biden follows a hard line towards Iran, the outcome will be a recalcitrant Iran pursuing a virile policy using its proxies to destabilise the entire Middle East and West Asia. In such a context the old fissures in West Asia will be aggravated.

No justice for Palestinians: The

result of these diplomatic agreements was the Palestinians being left high and dry. For decades they have been fighting for the two-State solution. First, Britain betrayed them through the Balfour Declaration of 1916, then the Sykes-Picot Agreement, followed by the formation of Israel in 1948 with utter disregard for the rights of the Palestinian people. These agreements have not only alienated the Palestinians who are almost facing an existential crisis but also point to a deeper schism within the Muslim world.

The Palestinian cause has been jettisoned by the Gulf monarchies who earlier were the most vocal endorsers of the two-State policy. In fact, the height of irony is the *volte-face* by the Gulf monarchies *vis-à-vis* the Israeli occupation of West Bank. Israel promised to postpone the building of new settlements as a part of the recognition agreement considerations but never said anything about bringing the construction work to a halt. The

international community gave a muted response to all this. However, despite the opprobrium from the UK and Germany, Israel continues to violate Palestinian rights. The United Nations is powerless to act as the West calls the shots at the world body. Perhaps it is pretty clear that Palestinians will face further rights violations in the coming years.

Saudi recognition of Israel a potential death knell?: The recent "esoteric" meeting between Israeli and Saudi officials and the subsequent allowance given to Israeli flights to use Saudi airspace, generated a new churn in West Asian geopolitics. However, when seen from the prism of the Palestinian cause, it potentially signals its death knell. The primary reason for this is the fact that Saudi Arabia is the core State in the Islamic world despite the emergence of fissures in Muslim unity, following the emergence of a parallel grouping led by Malaysia, Turkey and Pakistan.

The hush-hush Saudi recognition of Israel signals a paradigm policy shift, for it could lead to the creation of new history and may signal a dramatic change in the way the Jewish-Muslim relations evolve. What, however, needs to be remembered is that Palestinians look up to Saudi Arabia as the only remaining ally in their dream of a homeland and their ally seems to be slowly betraying them.

As of now, there appears little hope for the Palestinian cause. The only remedy for them is perhaps an urgent course correction by the international community. The new liberal US leadership under Joe Biden must pressurise Israel into halting all settlement building works and ask the Jewish State to respect Palestinian rights. If that fails, the international community should think about imposing sanctions on Israel. One thing is very clear, Palestinians have to dig in and fight for their cause.

(The writer is a columnist)

FOREIGN EYE



THE WORLD IS WATCHING

Beijing believes that the grotesque human rights abuses of the Uighurs in Xinjiang have nothing to do with foreigners. But China's economic might has made its business everyone's business. Though Chinese officials show signs of unease at western pressure, economic means have their limits.

(The Guardian editorial)

Farmers' protest causing loss of ₹3,500 cr a day: Assocham

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Industry body Assocham on Tuesday urged the Centre and farmers' organisations to resolve the impasse over the new agri laws, saying that the protests are inflicting a heavy blow to the economies of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and J&K.

"A daily loss of ₹3,000-3,500 crore is resulting in the economies of the region from the value chain and transport disruption because of the protests," according to a rough estimate by the chamber.

Assocham President Niranjan Hiranandani said, "The size of the combined economies of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and J&K is about Rs 18 lakh crore. With the ongoing farmers' agitation

and blockade of roads, toll plazas and railways, the economic activities have come to a halt."

On Monday, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) had said the farmer agitation has led to supply chain disruptions, which will impact the economy in the coming days and may impinge upon the ongoing recovery from the economic contraction due to COVID-19.

Assocham's Hiranandani observed that industries such as textiles, auto components, bicycles, sports goods which cater significantly to the export markets would not be able to fulfil their orders, ahead of Christmas, harming the industry's goodwill among the global buyers.

Recovering from the harsh COVID-19 blow, the Indian economy needs to double down on growth which is possible only with a conducive environment for industrial activities, investment including the Foreign Direct Investment, Assocham stated.

The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said in the last 20 days, trade and other activities of about Rs 5,000 crore have been affected in Delhi and its surrounding states.

According to an estimate, about 30 to 40 per cent of the goods coming to Delhi have been affected by the movement of farmers, which is adversely affecting the trade and other activities of Delhi and neighbouring states, the traders' body stated.

S&P betters India growth forecast; economy to contract 7.7% this fiscal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

S&P Global Ratings on Tuesday raised India's growth projection for the current financial year to (-)7.7 per cent from (-)9 per cent estimated earlier on rising demand and falling Covid-19 rates.

For the next financial year 2021-22, S&P projected growth to rebound to 10 per cent. Its revision in growth forecast for the current fiscal reflects a faster-than-expected recovery in the September quarter.

"Rising demand and falling infection rates have tempered our expectation of COVID-19's hit on the Indian economy. S&P Global Ratings has revised real GDP growth to negative 7.7 per cent for the year ending March 2021, from negative 9 per cent previously,"

S&P said in a statement.

A faster recovery keeps more of the economy's supply side intact and can set India up for more prolonged above-average growth during the recovery phase, it added. India's gross domestic product (GDP) fell 7.5 per cent in the July-September quarter, against a contraction of 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter.

Earlier this month, Fitch Ratings also revised its growth forecast for India to (-)9.4 per cent, from (-)10.5 per cent, on signs of economic revival, while the Asian Development Bank said the economy is likely to contract 8 per cent as against the earlier forecast of 9 per cent contraction, on faster recovery. Last month, Moody's upped India's growth forecast to (-)10.6 per cent for the current

financial year, from its earlier estimate of (-)11.5 per cent.

In the statement, S&P on Tuesday said India is learning to live with the virus, even though the coronavirus pandemic is far from defeated. However, the reported cases have fallen by more than half from peak levels, to about 40,000 per day. "It is no surprise that India is following the path of most economies across Asia-Pacific in experiencing a faster-than-expected recovery in manufacturing production," S&P Global Ratings Asia-Pacific Chief Economist Shaun Roache said. Manufacturing output was about 3.5 per cent higher in October 2020 when compared to the year-ago period, while the output of consumerdurables rose by almost 18 per cent.

Benchmarks inch up to fresh highs; HDFC twins sparkle

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex recovered from early losses to end marginally up at its new closing record on Tuesday, led by gains in index majors HDFC twins. The 30-share BSE index ended 9.71 points or 0.02 per cent higher at 46,263.17.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty rose 9.70 points or 0.05 per cent to close at its fresh all-time high of 13,567.85. Bajaj Finance was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, surging around 5 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finserv, HDFC, Tech Mahindra, HDFC Bank,

UltraTech Cement and Tata Steel. On the other hand, HUL, Nestle India, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, SBI, TCS and ITC were among the laggards. S&P Global Ratings on Tuesday raised India's growth projection for the current fiscal to (-) 7.7 per cent from (-) 9 per cent estimated earlier on rising demand and falling COVID-19 infection rates.

Meanwhile, retail inflation declined to 6.93 per cent in November on softer food prices, though it remained above the comfort level of the Reserve Bank, official data released after market hours on Monday showed.

₹ skids 8 paise to end at 73.63 against US \$

Mumbai: The Indian rupee depreciated by 8 paise to settle at 73.63 against the US dollar on Tuesday, taking cues from weaker Asian peers against the American currency. Besides, subdued trading in domestic equities also put pressure on the domestic currency, forex traders said. At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened at 73.62 against the US dollar and witnessed an intra-day high of 73.59 and a low of 73.67. The local unit finally closed at 73.63 against the American currency, registering a fall of 8 paise over its previous close. "The Indian rupee depreciated marginally against the dollar this Tuesday tracking weakness in most regional currencies as risk appetite waned as many countries are imposing fresh COVID-19 restrictions which could derail a global economic recovery," Sriram Iyer, Senior Research Analyst at Reliance Securities, said.

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank would have limited options for policy easing of interest rates as inflation would continue to remain at elevated levels in the current fiscal, analysts tracking the development have said.

According to a research report by Emkay Global

Financial Services, while inflation may have peaked, consistent supply shocks have meant the inflation series is estimated to average around 6.3 per cent in FY21. This is well above the RBI confront zone and would shape easing in FY22 for some policy action to come into play by the RBI.

According to the Emkay report, retail inflation is expect-

ed to trend towards 5.8 per cent by the end of March, 2021. However, the report said that favourable base effect, the wide output gap and rebalancing of effective demand-supply dynamics will further help inflation ease to 4.8 per cent by FY22.

The RBI has projected CPI inflation at 6.8 per cent for the third quarter, 5.8 per cent for

the fourth quarter 2020-21; and 5.2 per cent to 4.6 per cent in H1 of 2021-22.

While growth concerns and sub-optimal fiscal response may keep the MPC's stance accommodative and liquidity adequate, the inflation trajectory still remains above four per cent in FY22 and thus, hints at dimming chances of further rate cuts in

the coming year, the brokerage report said.

CPI inflation surprised in November 2020 with better-than-expected moderation at 6.93 per cent, driven by sharp easing in sequential food inflation, while core inflation was down marginally. Food inflation dropped to below 10 per cent, helped by easing in vegetables and cereals. The seasonal easing

in perishable vegetable inflation is likely to continue as suggested by high-frequency mandi prices, and should add further to the disinflationary momentum in food. However, cost-push factors like demand-supply mismatch, higher operational and labour costs, and higher administrative fuel costs continue to keep core inflation relatively stickier.

BSE 500



Script	Open	High	Low	LTP
ICICIPRULI	485.1	490.8	478.4	479.6
BAJFINANCE	4894.9	5152.85	4868.15	5128.05
ICICIBANK	524.9	524.9	513.15	517.9
HDFC	2296.4	2357.75	2283	2350.9
VEDL	146.45	147.2	142.8	145.75
ZEEL	215.95	233.9	213.1	231.8
CANBK	123.95	124	116.4	122.15
ITC	215.35	216.3	211.55	213.4
SBIN	274.25	274.25	268.3	270.6
TATASTEEL	625.3	636.4	617.8	635.2
IDEA	10.03	10.05	9.73	9.9
BAJAJFINSV	8915	9332.95	8876	9301.85
RELIANCE	1992.9	1992.9	1961.5	1974
MTL	1252.9	1252.9	1216.35	1246.3
LFSL	633	643	633	639.7
HDFCBANK	1383	1395	1365.05	1390.4
COALINDIA	143.95	144	140.75	143.1
HCLTECH	873.5	888.55	873.1	886.1
TATAMOTORS	176.8	179.5	173.3	178.8
MARUTI	7712	7788	7653.6	7767.75
INDUSINDBK	923	931.6	908.5	926.65
KOTAKBANK	1949.45	1958	1919.05	1950.45
SAIL	59	59	56.65	58.25
IRCTC	1497.85	1497.85	1431	1440.55
AXISBANK	615.1	615.1	602.5	606.9

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP
IGL	499.95	504	481	483.25
NAVINFILOR	2500.05	2565	2500.05	2524.1
SOUTHBANK	9.68	9.68	9	9.19
NHPC	22.45	22.6	22.1	22.4
BSOFT	196	201	194	199.2
BEL	789.8	789.8	770	774.6
EXIDEIND	195	195.1	190.35	193.4
CASTROLIND	128.05	128.5	125.6	125.85
KRBL	80.15	80.35	76.15	78.15
JKPAPER	620	620	606.3	612.85
UJIVANSFB	38.65	39.05	38.5	38.85
UJIVAN	289	289	279.8	285.1
COCHINSHIP	360.3	362.5	358	360.05
SPARC	189	189	183.5	184.5
OBEROIRPLT	519.25	521.8	510	512.3
NETROPOLIS	1950	1984.8	1931	1952.3
ABFRL	160.2	161.9	158.95	160.15
MPHASIS	599.7	604.2	592	593.75
BAJAJELEC	1087	1087.75	1068	1075.6
APLLTD	69.75	69.75	67.2	68.45
IBALEAST	1379.05	1399	1336.4	1360.2
POWERINDIA	39.95	40	39.05	39.45
HUDCO	1395	1395	1357	1369.35
FORCEMOT	370	375.9	367.05	370.4
KEC	956	956	945.05	946.55
NATCOIPHARM	483.75	489.05	478.05	482.4
QUESS	2340.05	2415	2327.6	2355
VMART	1337	1337	1311.75	1324.9
MPHASIS	3607.3	3787	3607.3	3764.65
MAHSCOOTER	1340	1344.6	1325	1328.15
BBTC	800	800	766.8	779.5
CREDITACC	2494	2520	2471.7	2485.05
FINEORG	140.5	140.5	135	136.05
ALLCARGO	811.85	818.15	804.95	814.65
JUBILANT	255.95	255.95	243.4	244.65
REPCOHOME	119.9	123.75	118.75	122.15
GET&D	1936.35	1947.9	1911	1937.85
JKCEMENT	1016.1	1044.45	1016.1	1037.85
GICRE	142.05	142.3	139.5	140.8
CERA	3183.3	3481	3183.3	3437.5
FINOLEXIND	646	646	622	626.8
GHCL	193.65	196.9	192.9	195.85
KANSAINER	557.95	563.3	544	549.7
JSWENERGY	68	68	66	66.5
MOIL	145.25	146.05	140	144.15
NESCO	540	556.3	540	543.6
ESABINDIA	1749.95	1784.95	1659.1	1696.4
SHOPERSTOP	210.75	210.75	204.4	206.15
AMBER	2340	2340	2306	2325.05
GILLETTE	5996	6035	5800	5872.35
CESC	628.45	628.45	610.1	612.4
KALPAPOWR	321.6	321.6	314.35	315.25
BIRLACORPN	738.85	741.95	721.05	726.55
VTL	987.4	1035	982.25	1019.75
LEMONTREE	44.3	44.3	43.05	43.35
NAM-INDIA	305	305	298.4	303.25
ZYDUSWELL	1880	1892	1864	1867.8

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ELECTORS CONFIRM WIN

Time to turn the page: Joe Biden

Washington: US President-elect Joe Biden has told election-weary Americans that it is time to “turn the page”, after the Electoral College affirmed his triumph over President Donald Trump, who has refused to concede and filed a litany of legal challenges to overturn the poll results.

The 538-member Electoral College on Monday pushed Biden past the 270-vote threshold to win the bitterly-contested race for the White House. It was one of the crucial steps required for the 78-year-old Democrat to take office on January 20 as the 46th US President.

Under the US system, voters actually cast their ballots for electors, who in turn, formally vote for candidates weeks after the presidential election. Biden won the November 3 election with 306 electoral college votes to incumbent Republican President Trump’s 232.

The Electoral College votes will now be sent to Congress to be counted formally next month. Though some House Republicans have indicated they will object to the results in key states, they can do little more than delay the process during a joint session of Congress on January 6.



President-elect Joe Biden walks offstage with his wife Jill Biden after the Electoral College formally elected him as President

AP

In a speech from his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware after the announcement of his victory in the election, Biden said the US democracy had been “pushed, tested and threatened” and “proved to be resilient, true and strong”.

He criticised President Trump’s attempts to overturn the result and said the “will of the people prevailed”.

“The rule of law, our Constitution and the will of the people prevailed” over Trump’s efforts to undo the results of the election, the former US vice president said.

“The flame of democracy

was lit in this nation a long time ago. And we now know nothing, not even a pandemic or an abuse of power, can extinguish that flame,” Biden said.

“In this battle for the soul of America, democracy prevailed. We the people voted. Faith in our institutions held. The integrity of our elections remains intact. And so, now it is time to turn the page. To unite. To heal,” he said.

Biden said the election outcome should be celebrated, not attacked, that more than 81 million votes were cast for him and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris.

PTI

In a first, leading Republicans confirm Biden president-elect

Washington: For the first time, a groundswell of leading Republicans have said that Democrat Joe Biden is the winner of the presidential election, essentially abandoning President Donald Trump’s assault on the outcome as the Electoral College certified the vote.

With states affirming the results, the Republicans faced a pivotal choice — to declare Biden the president-elect, as the tally showed, or keep standing silently by as Trump wages a potentially damaging campaign to overturn the election.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., was quiet on the issue Monday. But a number of senators said the

time has come to move on.

“At some point you have to face the music,” said Sen. John Thune of South Dakota, the second-ranking GOP leader. “Once the Electoral College settles the issue today, it’s time for everybody to move on.”

Sen. Roy Blunt of Missouri, the chairman of the inaugural committee, said the panel will now “deal with Vice President Biden as the president-elect.” Just last week, the Republicans on the inauguration committee had declined to publicly do so. He said Monday’s Electoral College vote “was significant.” Texas GOP Sen. John Cornyn said barring further legal challenges it appears Biden will be president.

AP

PUTIN CONGRATULATES BIDEN

AP ■ MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday congratulated Joe Biden on winning the US presidential election after weeks of holding out.

Putin’s message to Biden

came a day after the Electoral College confirmed Biden as the nation’s next president, ratifying his November victory in an authoritative state-by-state repudiation of President Donald Trump’s refusal to concede that he had lost.

Australian PM says China coal ban would breach WTO rules

Canberra (Australia): Australia’s prime minister said Tuesday that China would be in breach of World Trade Organization rules as well as a bilateral free trade agreement if it banned Australian coal.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison was responding to a report in the Chinese state-owned Global Times newspaper that the Chinese National Development and Reform Commission had given power plants approval to import coal without restrictions except for Australian coal.

Morrison said he was treating the report as “media speculation” because the Chinese government had yet to clarify its position.

“If that were the case, then that would obviously be in breach of WTO rules,” Morrison told reporters.

“It would be obviously in breach of our on free trade

agreement and so we would hope that’s certainly not the case.” Coal and iron ore are Australia’s most lucrative exports. But Australian exports appear to have suffered due to deteriorating bilateral relations since Australia called for an independent inquiry into the coronavirus pandemic.

Trade Minister Simon Birmingham said Australia was close to finalizing a complaint to the World Trade Organization over Chinese tariffs imposed on barley.

“We see these reports and obviously are deeply troubled by them,” Birmingham told Australian Broadcasting Corp. Referring to the reported coal import ban.

“They, if true, would indicate discriminatory trade practices being deployed by Chinese authorities and we would urge them to rule that out swiftly,” he added.

US blames Iran for abduction, death of ex-FBI agent Levinson

Washington: The Trump administration for the first time has formally blamed Iran for the presumed death of retired FBI agent Robert Levinson, publicly identifying two Iranian intelligence officers believed responsible for his abduction and imposing sanctions against them.

Levinson disappeared in Iran under mysterious circumstances more than a decade ago, and though US diplomats and investigators have long said they thought he was taken by Iranian government agents, Monday’s announcement in the final weeks of the Trump administration was the most definitive assignment of blame to date.

The announcement is the latest in a series of tough actions the Trump administration has taken toward Iran as it works to cement an aggressive posture that may complicate any efforts by incoming President Joe Biden and his national security team to radically change course once they take office next month. US officials pre-emptively made clear Monday that no deal with Iran should be finalised without providing for the release of Americans who remain detained there.

Besides calling out two high-ranking intelligence officers by name, US officials also said the Iranian regime sanctioned the plot that led to Levinson’s abduction and lied

for years about its involvement in his disappearance through disinformation campaigns aimed at deflecting responsibility and covering up the government’s role.

“The abduction of Mr. Levinson in Iran is an outrageous example of the Iranian regime’s willingness to commit unjust acts,” Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement.

The Iranian intelligence officers, Mohammad Baseri and Ahmad Khazai, are alleged to have been involved in Levinson’s abduction and probable death. Under the sanctions, any property or assets they hold in the United States would be frozen.

AP

Around the Globe

Nairobi: Somalia’s Government says it has severed ties with strategic neighbor Kenya “to safeguard the unity, sovereignty, stability of the country”.

Islamabad: Pakistan’s national flag carrier cleared 110 pilots out of the 141 whose licences to fly were suspended in the backdrop of the fake degrees controversy, according to a media report on Tuesday. Senior advocate Salman Akram Raja informed the Supreme Court about it on Monday while representing the airlines.

Kabul: A bombing and a shooting attack in Kabul killed at least three people, including a deputy provincial governor, while a deputy provincial council chief was killed in western Afghanistan on Tuesday, officials said.

Brussels: The European Union’s anti-fraud body said almost 1,40,000 liters of dangerous hand sanitiser have been seized across the region.

Maldives considers burying Lanka Muslims dying of Covid

Colombo (Sri Lanka): The Maldives president’s office says it is discussing how to provide a “humane response” to a request from neighbouring Sri Lanka to allow burials for Muslims who die of Covid-19.

Presidential spokesman Ibrahim Hood said on Tuesday that President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih has received a request from Sri Lanka to look into the possibility of allowing such burials.

“The request has been received. At present we are considering and discussions are ongoing with regard to what would be the appropriate and

humane response,” Hood told The Associated Press.

There was no immediate confirmation from Sri Lanka of such a request. Sri Lanka’s government in March announced it will cremate the bodies of all people who die of Covid-19, saying the coronavirus could contaminate underground water.

Sri Lankan Muslims have urged the government to allow burials, citing their religious beliefs. They accuse the government of denying Muslims a basic right without scientific grounds, since many countries in the world allow burials.

Sri Lanka’s confirmed cases

since March reached 33,477 on Tuesday, including 154 fatalities.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region: — Authorities in Sri Lanka said on Tuesday that more than 3,000 Covid-19 cases have been detected in the country’s highly congested prisons, as infections also surge in the capital and its suburbs. They said that 2,984 inmates and 103 guards have been confirmed to have the disease in seven prisons around the country. Sri Lankan prisons are highly congested, with more than 26,000 inmates crowded in facilities with a capacity of 10,000.

AP

Cuomo denies former aide’s sexual harassment allegations

Albany: New York Govoner Andrew Cuomo has denied a former aide’s allegations over that he sexually harassed her by making inappropriate comments about her appearance.

Cuomo told reporters on Monday the claims that former economic adviser Lindsey Boylan made in a series of tweets Sunday were “not true.”

“I fought for and I believe a woman has the right to come forward and express her opinion and express issues and concerns that she has,” the 63-year-old Democrat said, making his first comments on the allegations. “But it’s just not true.” Cuomo’s press secretary previously denied the claims on his behalf.

AP

US Attorney General William Barr resigns

Washington: US Attorney General William Barr, who of late had publicly differed with President Donald Trump on allegations of voter fraud in the November 3 presidential elections, has resigned.

Trump has appointed his deputy Jeff Rosen as the Acting Attorney General.

“Just had a very nice meeting with Attorney General Bill Barr at the White House. Our relationship has been a very good one, he has done an outstanding job! As per letter, Bill will be leaving just before Christmas to spend the holidays with his family...” Trump announced on twitter Monday night.

“Deputy Attorney General



Jeff Rosen, an outstanding person, will become Acting Attorney General. Highly respected Richard Donoghue will be taking over the duties of Deputy Attorney General. Thank you to all!” Trump said as he tweeted the two-page resignation letter of Barr.

Barr, in his letter, said, “As discussed, I will spend the next week wrapping up a few remaining matters important to the administration, and depart on December 23.”

PTI

Scientists warn of catastrophic oil spill from ship in Red Sea

New York: Scientists have called for action to remove the oil from an abandoned taker in the Red Sea that holds approximately one million barrels of oil — four times the amount contained in the Exxon Valdez tanker which had a disastrous environmental oil spill in 1989. According to the analysis, the tanker named Safer is a float-

ing storage and offloading unit (FSO) abandoned for years in the Red Sea. “The time is now to prevent a potential devastation to the region’s waters and the livelihoods and health of millions of people living in half a dozen countries along the Red Seas coast,” said co-author Karine Kleinhans at Stony Brook University in the US.

PTI

FROM PAGE 1

BE POISED FOR VACCINE’S SIDE EFFECTS...

“All necessary resources of vaccination have been delivered to the States,” said Bhushan.

“States have been asked to identify at least one AEFI management centre in each block. PHCs, CHCs, district hospitals, private health facilities or any other fixed health facility with medical officers and para-medical staff can be identified as AEFI management centres,” he said.

Speaking about AEFI, Dr Paul said, apart from the importance being given at Government level on tackling, saving, reporting and taking action in such cases, the vaccine manufacturers conduct a Phase IV Clinical Trial or Post-Marketing Surveillance where they monitor and track the effects of the vaccine systematically after it has been passed.

Replying to a query about AEFI for Covid-19 vaccine, Dr Paul said, “This is an adult vaccine. Our AEFI system was targeted to children and women and those vaccinations take place in a certain way, starting with hospitals and then into the communities.

“But when we deal with adults, certain practical aspects have to be tackled. Secondly, these vaccinations are in multiple new platforms that bring in complexity. Further, if a EUA is given, it calls for more responsibility. Lastly, there are always new aspects, side-effects, situations that have to be kept in mind. “Above all, a large number of beneficiaries and target-groups are to be tackled over a short period of time in a mission-mode. Therefore, there is a need to build on the standard principles of AEFI and make it specific to the fuller dimension of the requirements of this particular set of vaccines,” he added.

In a recent communication to States/Union Territories, the Ministry has called for involvement of over 300 medical colleges and other tertiary care hospitals across the country to handle adverse events or cases of side effects on people post-vaccination. In addition, States have been told to keep ready neurologists, cardiologists, respiratory medicine experts, obstetrics, gynecologists and pediatri-

cians to deal with post-vaccination side effects.

The Union Health Ministry, according to the letter has recommended that the membership of State AEFI committees should be revised to include neurologists, cardiologists, respiratory medicine specialists who can recognise such events and differentiate them from events related to vaccines or vaccinations.

Also, States have been told to ramp up the already existing adverse events following immunisation committees or AEFI Committees. States have been told to include drug inspectors in these AEFI committees to help investigate the reason of side-effects due to vaccination, sources said quoting the letter.

FARMERS HARDEN STANCE...

The Ghazipur border also remains closed for traffic coming from Ghaziabad to Delhi due to the protest. Commuters have been advised to take other routes via Anand Vihar, DND, Chilla, Apsara and Bhopra borders.

Multi-layered cemented barriers, additional police force and barbed wires formed the first layer of security at the Singhu border protest site.

The second layer of barricades deployed by the Delhi Police is being guarded by a team of Rapid Action Force along with personnel from the paramilitary forces. Water cannons, trucks, containers and iron barricades have also been deployed.

On Monday, leaders of around 32 farmer unions observed a day-long hunger strike at the Singhu border as part of the protest.

22 PROTESTERS DIE IN LAST 20 DAYS

As per the farmers, the deceased have been identified as Gurpreet Singh (24) and Labh Singh (65), from Safera village in Patiala district. As per the farmers, Gurpreet died on the spot, while Labh Singh died in Patiala.

“Saddened to learn of demise of our 5 farmers. Labh Singh Ji & Gurpreet Singh of Patiala met with an accident in Karnal, Sukhdev Singh & Deep Singh of Fatehgarh Sahib near Mohali, & Makkhan Khan of Moga who died of a heart attack in Delhi,” Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh tweeted on Tuesday.

The first such casualty took place on November 24 when a large group of farmers was covering tractor-trailers with waterproof sheets in Mehalkalan town of Barnala district. Kahan Singh, an activist of the BKU (Dakaunda) from Dhaner village, was hit by a car and he died on the spot.

He was followed by Dhanna Singh, who died in an accident near Hisar when after breaking barricades, they were speeding the tractor towards Delhi.

Since then, on an average, one name is being added to the list every day, which is getting longer by the day. As per the list compiled from various sources, at least 15 farmers have lost their lives ever since the Delhi stir began.

Not just men, even women have lost their lives during the ongoing stir. Like Gurmail Kaur of Chand Patti village near Talwandi Sabo in Bathinda district, who died due to a heart attack while sitting in a protest at a toll barrier in Sangrur’s Kalajhar village. Similarly, Rajinder Kaur of Gangohar village died at the Mehak Kalan toll barrier due to a heart attack.

Besides, a large number of protesters have suffered serious injuries while marching to Delhi. BKU (Ugrahan) general secretary Sukhdev Singh Kokri fractured his arm. Similarly, a photo of Mahinder Kaur, a protester from Alorakh village in Sangrur district, had gone viral when her leg was fractured in an accident but she refused to return without winning the battle in Delhi.

INDIA CANCELS TALKS WITH CANADA

These reactions from India came after Trudeau during a video interaction to mark the 551st birth anniversary of Guru Nanak in Canada described the ongoing protests as “concerning.” He also said

Canada will always be there to defend the right to peaceful protest.

Taking exception to the Canadian Prime Minister’s remarks, India in its demarche said “comments by the Canadian Prime Minister, some Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament on issues relating to Indian farmers constitute an unacceptable interference in our internal affairs.”

India also said statements by the Canadian leadership “encouraged gatherings of extremist activities in front of our high commission and consulates in Canada that raise issues of safety and security.”

New Delhi said comments by the Canadian leadership could have a “seriously damaging impact” on ties between India and Canada. India also said Trudeau’s remarks were “ill informed.”

GOVT CALLS OFF WINTER SESSION OVER COVID

“Government is willing to have the next session of Parliament at the earliest; it would be appropriate to have the Budget Session, 2021 in January 2021 keeping in mind the unprecedented circumstances created by Covid-19 pandemic,” Joshi wrote.

Talking about the Monsoon Session which was delayed due to the pandemic, Joshi appreciated cooperation from all political parties for a productive session held under extraordinary circumstances by making special logistical arrangements. The Winter Session of Parliament normally starts from the last week of November or first week of December.

Responding to the Parliamentary Affairs Minister’s remarks, Ramesh tweeted, “The Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha was not consulted. Mr. Pralhad Joshi is as usual departing from the truth.”

Hitting out at the Government, Congress’ chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said on Twitter, “Modi ji, decimation of ‘parliamentary democracy’ is complete. NEET/JEE exams can be held during COVID. Schools can be opened, universities can hold exams. Rallies can be

held in Bihar-Bengal. But the winter session of Parliament can’t be held. Any semblance of democracy left?” he asked.

The Constitution broadly stipulates one major rule that there should not be a gap of more than six months between two sessions of Parliament. However, it has been a convention to hold three sessions of Parliament -- Budget, Monsoon and Winter -- in a year.

On its official Twitter handle, the Congress said, “Another step in the BJP’s attempt to destroy democracy.”

“The BJP brought crisis on democracy is not limited to parliamentary sessions, but is a crisis on every common person’s life, their independence, their wishes. We will fight this crisis,” the party said in a tweet in Hindi.

Congress spokesperson Jaiveer Shergill said, “Bihar election -- not postponed. New Parliament building ceremony - not postponed. BJP Bengal rallies- not postponed. But Parliament winter session- postponed due to COVID-19. Winter session postponement is BJP’s expected sinister strategy to avoid debate, questions on farmers’ protest.”

Senior Congress leader and former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan said the Inter-Parliamentary Union data shows more than 105 countries across the world held multiple Parliamentary sessions amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. He asked why the Modi Government is evading accountability by cancelling the Parliament session.

PRANAB’S SON, DAUGHTER ...

Presidential Years’, request my brother Abhijit Mukherjee not to create any unnecessary hurdles in publication of the last book written by our father. He completed the manuscript before he fell sick.” The final draft, she said, contains her father’s handwritten notes and comments that have been strictly adhered to.

Stating that views expressed by him are his own and no one should try to stop it from being published for any cheap publicity, she said, “That would be the greatest disservice to our departed father.”

“Btw bro, the title of the book is ‘The Presidential Years’, not ‘The Presidential Memoirs’, she said.

Abhijit Mukherjee corrected the title of the book in another tweet after his sister pointed out the mistake.

The former president and long-time Congress leader died on August 31 at the age of 84, following COVID-19 complications.

UK PM ACCEPTS INDIA’S INVITE ...

bilateral relationship that Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi and I have pledged to achieve,” the British Prime Minister said in a statement.

He is only the second British Prime Minister since India’s independence to attend the Republic Day parade in Delhi as guest of honour after John Major in 1993.

Jaishankar said his presence at the annual celebrations “would be in a way symbolic of a new era, and a new phase of India-UK ties.” Boris Johnson has also invited Modi to join the G-7 summit next year in Britain, said Raab. India will be one of the three guest countries.

Johnson “will use his visit to India to boost cooperation in areas that matter to the UK and that will be priorities for our international engagement throughout 2021 - from trade and investment, to defence and security, and health and climate change,” his office said.

“The UK and India are significant investors and markets for each other’s economies and our growing trade and investment relationship is worth around 24 billion pounds a year, supporting more than half a million jobs. There are 842 Indian companies in the UK with a combined turnover of 41.2 billion pounds, creating jobs in all four corners of the United Kingdom,” it added.

Calling India “an increasingly indispensable partner for the United Kingdom”, Johnson described the country as “pharmacy of the world” in remarks that assume significance at a time when the fight against coronavirus is raging.

Willingness to learn is the way forward to upcoming opportunities. Those who continue updating themselves seldom encounter failures, says DEEPSHIKHA KUMAR ANAND

Amidst rising vulnerabilities in the pandemic-hit world economy, atmanirbharta (self-reliance) is a recovery-cum-growth strategy not only for countries but also for the working professionals. Both businesses and employees are facing tough competition in the market today. In such a turbulent time, entities with advanced and futuristic skills are incredibly exceptional.

Willingness to learn is the way forward to upcoming opportunities. Those who continue updating themselves seldom encounter failures. Today, to counter the ramifications of COVID-19 on the world economy, there is an urgent need to adopt an open talent economy based on intellectual & skill collaborations. The onset of e-learning platforms has enabled companies and human resources to adopt cutting-edge skills from certified coaches and industry experts. The user-generated content on these platforms plays a pivotal role in business learning in the current scenario, especially for businesses interested in digital transformation.

The competency level of a business depends on how competent its employees are. That's why the HR managers of progressive firms always show interest in candidates equipped with advanced professional skills and are willing to up-skill themselves further. As per the latest study by Robert Half, a global staffing firm, 84 per cent HR managers prefer hiring employees whose skills can be honed easily through training. Sometimes, candidates willingness to learn new skills helps them to secure a desired job despite lacking the exact job qualifications. Here, HR managers believe that a persona proclivity for developing skills matters more than his/her qualifications to accept additional responsibilities.

Digitalisation of businesses has increased the role of technology in various operations to manifolds. From marketing to manufacturing, almost every business activity today is managed by technology. Hence, to make their employees tech proficient, companies are facilitating learning for them. On the other hand, many traditional businesses which have heavily borne the brunt of the current pandemic have no better option than going digital to compete in the market. This is where e-learning programmes for entrepreneurs and managers are ensuring a smooth transition for them. By pursuing these skill-oriented courses, the victims of layoffs are re-entering into the job market.

E-learning training programmes are useful in developing both hard and soft skills among employees. Business skills such pertaining to Data Analysis, Financial Accounting,



Networking, Decision-making, Negotiation, and Leadership Skills, which every successful professional needs can be acquired and polished through bespoke e-learning programmes. They are useful in developing both hard and soft skills among employees.

Detailed and interactive videos by the seasoned trainers can be viewed again and again by an individual to derive maximum from a course module. Besides, s/he has the option to choose more than one online coach or subject matter expert. The content can be further customized to topics of business relevance depending on an organisation's requirements. Moreover, with the unprecedented developments in region-specific virtual training programmes, the industry is receiving immense benefits of localised content in vernacular languages.

It is always difficult for an organisation to

UPSKILLING IS NO MORE AN EXPENSIVE AND STRENUOUS AFFAIR. THANKS TO THE DIGITISATION OF COMMUNICATION THAT HAS MADE LEARNING AND UPSKILLING IMMENSELY AFFORDABLE FOR BOTH COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS

lose its valuable and essential people because their presence is imperative to achieve long-term goals and objectives. But, to keep them engaged and motivated, the employer must ensure their personal and professional growth. Upskilling is no more an expensive and strenuous affair. Thanks to the digitisation of communication that has made learning and upskilling immensely affordable for both companies and individuals. Availability of e-learning content in various formats and in different languages is greatly benefiting them while serving well-informed and sophisticated customers. Also, accessing industry leaders and thought leaders is no more a luxury for small businesses. Like corporates, small businesses too can empower their employees with the experience and insights of eminent personalities and consultants.

The writer is Founder & CEO of SpeakIn

QUOTE OF THE DAY

College is the best time of your life. When else are your parents going to spend several thousand dollars a year just for you to go to a strange town and get drunk every night?

— David Wood

For a meaningful college life

The curtain 'The Grand Beginning of College Life' unfolds,

The gladness wave keeps gushing leading to so much delight all around

New campus, new friends, new style of learning and training & lifestyle too,

There will be so much happening around you, in you and through you,

Some of you may be care-free, some overly busy and some make history!

Blended learning, cutting across disciplines is an art for you to explore,

Classes, labs, clubs, fests all of many a kind, competitions and programs galore

Including networking, industrial visiting, camping, representing, winning and losing,

Also learn new languages, skills, art and explore your talents while you are here,

It may keep you occupied, preoccupied too but will aid to career building.

Some under estimate you and some overdo, but never worry about it

You don't have to be the version of their opinions! Your goal to be your priority!

Make good memories, eat well, exercise, learn new things regularly,

Also plant saplings, contribute to animal care and engage in research too

Above all never shy away as participation will endorse a nice learning.

It's a demanding world out there and to have an edge over others,

You need to be the best of yourself! So, explore and experiment ardently,



Dr. Anderleen Diana Lazarus-Philimis
Assistant Professor, SRMIST

Ensure your resume is exclusive to attract the best prospects available,

Bring out the author, poet, dancer, lyricist, researcher, and the player in you

You will certainly enjoy the thrill as you fill your heart, soul and mind.

Soon it will be time to bid adieu to your alma mater and move on

The curtain 'The End of College Life' will drop and there'd be no replay,

So be prudent and engage in crafting the supreme version of you.

Serve the society wholeheartedly and do it free as far as possible;

For to live in the happy memories of people is one great form of victory.

The writer is Assistant Professor, SRM Institute of Science and Technology

While work and business has moved to operating virtually, the pandemic also has impacted on how companies need to approach employee growth and learning. With social distancing and gathering limits in effect, eLearning has become the norm, and workplace training has turned into webinars and online classrooms.

E-Learning gives the benefit to learn anytime and anywhere. The biggest advantage that eLearning provides for organisations is flexibility. Over the last decade, eLearning has found its way in the corporate circuit and now will become a necessity. A LinkedIn Learning report points how 66% of learning and development professionals say that their roles within their organisations have grown significantly since COVID-19 outbreak. Around 68% respondents also indicated that employers have stressed on learning programmes and improve internal collaboration. The appetite for learning programmes along with the remote working scenarios has pushed for companies to develop and prioritise eLearning. Further, upskilling of employees using virtual and eLearning has become necessary in the wake of coronavirus crisis. There has been a need to enhance learning mechanisms for employees while working remotely.

Companies are already on this path. The learning and development approach has also gone completely digital and virtual. Some examples include virtual instructor led trainings, or webinars or webcasts and podcasts- virtual collaborations is

Let's be online

With time, even eLearning is evolving. Companies are blending newer ways to create an interesting mix of eLearning methods, says PRASOON NIGAM



helping employers train employees, but also in make it interactive and a two-way process. Some companies are also enabling personalised or customised learning and trainings to help employees learn specific skills to graduate to new roles. There is also been a transition to rejig the standard presentation and excel handout content and digitalise it and make it more interesting and interactive.

The pandemic scenario has also brought mental and psychological health in the spotlight. Many com-

panies as a part of their new L&D initiatives are also helping employees to expand their skillset and explore new capabilities online. Whether it is via massive open online course (MOOC), sabbaticals and external coaching — these avenues are enabling employees stay high-spirited during the challenging times.

With time, even eLearning is evolving. Companies are blending newer ways to create an interesting mix of eLearning methods — to keep the workforce motivated and

enthused. Gamification or Game-based learning is being used to both engage and educate.

Given the uniqueness of eLearning and making any piece of content available, there are no limits to the possibilities and benefits of eLearning. It is not just enriching for employees but for organisations too, by saving operation costs and time investments. It is an opportunity to develop new skills and promote creativity, making the employees feel more empowered in the roles.

However, good eLearning is not just about content curation and delivering it but speaks of the organisation's overall competence development agenda. While organisations have transitioned to eLearning to suit the needs of the present scenario, a solid eLearning strategy is a must to make employees fit for better and higher roles. With the objective to nurture future ready skill sets, it would be key to witness how companies chalk out their eLearning strategies that helps employees harness the eLearning opportunities.

The writer is Prasoon Nigam, CTO & Co-founder, Stratbeans

Decode a secure future

The practice of programming learning and coding is not limited to any age. It is a secure career option in the new world, says SHIVRAM CHOUDHARY

Over the last decade, new technology has transformed almost every aspect of our lives. In every home, each hand, on every desk, transportation to meditation, Artificial intelligence and coding has proved to be humanity's greatest innovation of man and machine partnership. With the progressing world, we know it is never too late for anything. As in the field of coding, well, the doors of new learning are always open.

The practice of programming learning and coding is not limited to any age. It is a secure career option in the new world and develops an appreciation for how things work therefore helps mind growth in a positive direction. Some studies show that the coders develop high cognitive skills and they have lesser chances of having memory loss.

It improves the coders brain health and lets them think actively. Other studies have revealed that coding uses parts of the brain associated with memory, language processing, attention and logic. It acts as a good brain exercise although many believe that coding is just logic and math but it is much more than that, it involves memory, logic, math, creativity, language and attention. Few of the points say that coding is essential for the brain and it is a good brain



exercise. Coding helps in shaping your mental models

When choosing the language of coding be it Java, Python, C, Cobol, Fortran, or Basic you have to be careful. Starting with the language can be very hard, but once you start with one language, the coding dictates and helps in thinking about data structures, algorithms, etc. The language helps your mind work in a constant way that one can tell who wrote it just by looking at the anonymised code.

Coding isn't just about Math and Logic

Many believe that coding is all about math and logic but it is not limited to this. The area spans more than this. The coders also need to have better creativity, attention, reasoning, and

language. It involves constant use of brain parts for different functions of coding. As coders also learn other programmers code, they try to write it again with a new way. So in this way coding also keeps the brain active.

As all these studies prove that coding is good for cognitive development it is essential for the young students to learn it from an early age. Coding keeps the mind active and running all the time. Coders often program while hiking, jogging, biking, or even eating. Also, as you keep on coding your mind gets familiar to the language and you will find it less essential to refer to the guide. This brain exercise lets you be creative and lose your burdened mind.

The writer is Founder, CodeVidhya

Crest Olympiads to rescue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

When the education scenario has turned digital globally and remote learning is the new norm in students, leading competitive exams Crest Olympiads has made it possible for the school students to be a part of the prestigious Olympiad exams from the comfort of their homes during the unprecedented times of coronavirus pandemic. Through this online platform, the students also have the liberty of choosing the date and time for appearing in the exam according to their convenience.

The Crest Olympiads, considered to be the foundations of exams like JEE, NEET, among others, has been conducting online Olympiads for quite some time in various

subjects even for those students who may not have an option from the school for the same. It conducts exams in Mathematics, Science, English, Logical Reasoning, Cyber, and Spell Bee for students of classes 1 to 10. There is something for little kids from Prep/KG as well. They can appear for Math, Science and English Olympiads.

Students from more than 4000 schools in over 25 countries participate in the Olympiads conducting by them. Crest Olympiads has helped students to maintain continuity even in the pandemic. The platform enables the students to view the answer keys and, more importantly, allows challenging them. This way, the students can rectify themselves and can evaluate where they went wrong.

Diploma in Luxury Brand Management

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The International School of Design launches a Masters Diploma programme in Luxury Brand Management. The course aims to help students learn and adapt the skills essential for understanding the journey of a luxury product and giving it a voice through branding elements. The course duration is 12 months and is starting from mid-January 2021 at the INSD Paschim Vihar Campus.

Speaking on the launch of the course, Harsh Mann, Program

Director, MLBM, said: "The Luxury Brand Management is a new concept for the education industry in India. It is one of the least explored segment as it is considered to be expensive, few colleges able to offer high quality education. There is a lack of qualified individuals with a solid foundation in technical and managerial skills. We at INSD, have turned it as an opportunity for students where we are bringing courses that will help carve a niche for oneself and impart first-hand knowledge regarding the rapidly proliferating Asian and Indian luxury markets."

The course focuses on varied luxury verticals individually and extensively — fashion, hospitality, lifestyle, automobile, and real estate. These courses will offer intricate working of the luxury industry around the world and the psychology behind why it is a coveted thing.

The fee structure is competitive in the market and registration has already started where the students will have to go through a registration process by getting themselves registered on insd.edu.in/luxury-brand-management.

Typeset ties-up with Turnitin

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Typeset, an integrated platform for writing, collaborating, and publishing research papers has joined hands with Turnitin to become a full-service plagiarism checking resource for writers, researchers, educators, and students.

The integration creates an authoring platform for setting up scientific or educational papers, complete with text similarity checks. Typeset made the move to integrate

with Turnitin in order to make the writing process easier.

With over 100,000 journal templates, researchers and authors can write papers and articles in the appropriate and expected format—without the need to worry about typesetting and style.

"It has been a true pleasure partnering with Turnitin. We are especially thankful for Mark Harnor at Turnitin, who helped us through the integration workflow," said SaiKiran Chandra, Founder and CEO of Typeset.

Important to choose wisely

E-learning has effectively blended institutional learning. While the platforms have a gush of courses, selecting the right fit can be challenging, says GAGAN ARORA

The COVID-19 pandemic is a paradigm of humans learning to adapt new ways of life and change nature of day to day operations. The way online space has taken over academic and non-academic learning, business operations, exchange of information, there is no going back for most.

E-learning has effectively blended institutional learning as well as professional upskilling, while maintaining a nuanced approach for all. The openness of individuals and corporates to understand and analyse the impact of edtech has broaden the scope for the industry. While the platforms have a gush of courses, selecting the right fit can be challenging.

With the help of this checklist, you will be able to set yourself on the path of a successful online learning experience.

GOAL SETTING

Assess and opt for an online course that elevates your growth trajectory. Finding a course that meets all expectations can be a tedious process, hence it is important to filter your criteria. It is important that individuals should be able to determine the reason for choosing a particular course — to become employable, to crack a competitive exam or just a new hobby. This will ensure that the time and amount spent is adequately used.

Whereas, corporates and entrepreneurs should evaluate who needs the course and why, for example, a marketing team might need a training for digital marketing while leadership might need resilience training.

Think about why do you need a certain course and how will it strike your growth ambit in the short or long run.

COURSE CREDIBILITY

Accreditation is like a protective layer for your online course and can help you mark a difference between good and brilliant coaches and platform. Identify your skill gap and look for a skill set that will enhance



your capability and augment your operations.

Picking up non-academical course help in adding an edge to overall persona, hence select a platform that offer certified course of courses by certified coaches. The course must offer valuable course material, interactive classes and a more trusted experience with personalised attention.

EXPERTS AND METHODOLOGY

While browsing the e-learning learning platform, keep an eye on course variety and its pedagogy. It is ideal to enroll into non-traditional courses like Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Machine Learning alongside leadership and soft skills. While researching, look for platforms that offer live courses with expert coaches instead of just pre-recorded lectures. Live courses amplify learning and ensures effective engagement between the learner and the coach.

The emergence of multiple industry players has enabled learners to identify and distinguish platforms in accordance with quality and price. Learners should calculate the ROI by determining the type of course

Coaches are the backbone of any e-learning platform, therefore seek for coaches who are experts in the domain and whose insight is not only academic but offer comprehensive insight.

FLEXIBILITY & AFFORDABILITY

The online platforms foster independent learning. Online platform should be able to design a course journey for the learner. Considering factors like user interface, course accessibility post completion, course availability in low internet bandwidth, etc. are imperative as it defines your learning experience. To ensure effective learning for corporates, platform should be able to customize the course in accordance to the organisation.

The emergence of multiple industry players has enabled learners to identify and distinguish platforms in accordance with quality and price. Learners should calculate the ROI by determining the type of course.

For example, due to increased demand, digital marketing courses have suddenly surged prices, however, explore platforms that offer the same course at competitive prices. Very often there are hidden costs embedded into the format of a course, hence one must read reviews and do a diligent research before investing.

Often online learning platforms overpass the approximately 15 per cent of the billion population in the world, this population is specially-abled who need dedicated coaches and platforms for better future. Talented individuals with certain disability are masters of multiple traditional and non-traditional subjects. Find platforms that cater to varied audience to experience holistic learning. An excellent e-learning course is an eminent opportunity to be in control of your destiny.

The writer is CEO & Strategic Growth Leader, Vertex Global Services

‘Experimental learning is the way forward’

The present pandemic has opened the gateway to a new wave in the education sector bringing a fresh of breath air for many students, says VIVEK GAUR

The COVID-19 pushed entire India into lockdown in March including schools and colleges, to prevent the spread of the deadly virus. The entire education system was brought to a halt. Now, the lockdown has been lifted gradually but there is no certainty in when the educational institutions will re-open.

The present pandemic has opened the gateway to a new wave in the education industry. While most sectors are struggling to keep up with lesser demands in the pandemic, the edtech industry is seeing a significant increase in their consumer base.

The new changes in the National Education Policy (NEP) rolled out by the UC are prominent aspects of this wave. The policies have altered the entire education system that was being followed in the country since decades by modifying the existing 10+2 model by 5+3+3+4 format. Another major change is diminishing the rigid boundaries between the three streams- arts, commerce, science, now students are free to choose their set of subjects. All these changes have created a new type of learning — experimental learning which emphasizes on critical thinking with discovery-based, discussion-based and analysis-based learning, eliminating the concept of carrying heavy books to schools.

The new wave of education has come as a breath of fresh air for most students but also as an obstacle for others. Quality education for all sectors of society has been an on-going battle in India. UNESCO stated that around 320 million learners in the country have been impacted by the pandemic, the majority of them belong to socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

On the other hand, concise learning and the freedom of choice has given a chance for students to elect their courses, teachers, and tune into video lessons according to their needs. With the abundance of courses that are available online, learning more in less time is the need of the hour. Parents, the key decision-makers want their children to stay ahead of time and expand their learning capacities. Education is no more limited to a single field of study; current times ask stu-



Vivek Gaur
CEO-co-founder of PrepOnline

dents to be enriched in multiple disciplines. The digital shift is influencing parents and students to enrol in tech-oriented short-term courses such as designing, coding, and many more. With the current situation and consumer behaviour patterns, concise learning is certainly the future.

Concise learning helps students in practical learning and improves their understanding, self-organisation and time-management. It keeps them engaged and motivated and enhances independent learning. Concise learning benefits students by improving their active learning, it eliminates the time that is wasted while passively studying. Students do not feel the need to cram their books and ultimately ace their exams. With concise learning, students can focus more on topics that are difficult for them to understand instead of going through the entire lesson. It also maintains the curiosity in students and motivates them to solve problems. In other words, concise learning is effective and meaningful learning.

We offer online live classes, along with class and subject-specific course content and Test series. The dedicated and experienced team of tutors supports students through both online and offline mediums with its course material available on the app, YouTube and the website.

Just months after the outbreak of Covid-19, the World Bank declared that the pandemic had caused more than 1.6 billion children and youth which constitutes around 80% of children enrolled in educational institutions across the world, to be out of school across as many as 161 countries, including India.

Going by how the later part of 2020 unfolded, it is only obvious that the situation must have aggravated by now. The unprecedented pandemic and the prolonged lockdown situation have posed innumerable challenges with regard to the education system. Given the state of the education system in our country, the situation becomes more worrisome in India.

A major challenge that came fore with the onset of remote learning was lack of right tools and technical knowhow on students part as well as parents and teachers. Most institutions relied heavily on third-party applications that had the provision of video conference calling. While these tools turned out to be conducive for office meetings, they failed to solve the purpose when it came to education.

The technical nuances acted as a hindrance in effective utilization of the tools and adding to the woes was lack of strong internet bandwidth. An effective way to deal with these roadblocks is going for the right Edtech platform, which has its own host server for conducting classes and doesn't

MIND IT

rely on other third-party applications. This would not just cut down on the technical complications but also require lesser internet bandwidth.

A few experts have raised concerns that the increased reliance on online specific strategies would entail reaching only children from better-off families. However, this concern holds little relevance in the wake of technological advancements taking place at a rapid pace around us.

While most education providers have focused on popular modes such as video

tutorials, the need of the hour is to integrate mechanisms such as podcasts and similar tools that require less data usage as well. The online strategy devised must be such that it effectively reaches people from all strata of society.

At the administration level, governments and institutions can look towards working with telecom players to introduce zero-rate policy to fulfill educational needs. Factors pertaining to students' families play a pivotal role in determining a teacher's ability to provide

education. What goes on at home impacts a student's propensity to learn.

Some of these factors include poverty, existence of domestic violence-like situations and separated parents. To tackle these situations, teachers and institutions need to enhance communication with parents and guardians. While the frequency of parent-teacher meetings needs to be increased, teachers must ensure that they effectively communicate the concerns and make the parents or guardians aware of the lasting impact on students' education as well as life. Parents on their part need to be responsive to the concerns raised and take effective remedial solutions.

A significant component of education

module is conducting assessments and examinations. It's easier to assess the students on the basis of multiple choice questions in the context of online learning and that is what most edtech platforms rely on. However, an effective way to ascertain the acumen or aptitude of a student?

The answer is no. Real learning can be measured through subjective assessments. Also, an effective tool is also needed for teachers to check these assessments. To overcome this major obstacle in the prevailing education system, we provide an Edtech platform that comes with a comprehensive assessment system, which addresses all the aforementioned concerns.

The writer is Dev Roy, Founder, Digital Aristote



The British Council invites applications for scholarship to support women and girls in STEM around the world. Each of these scholarships covers full tuition fees, monthly stipends, a return economy class ticket and other study-related costs like IELTS exam fee, visa application, NHS surcharge and study materials.

No of scholarships for Indian students: 1

Eligibility: To be eligible for the scholarships for women in STEM, you must: Be a woman (cis-gendered or trans) or identify as non-binary.

Be a passport holder and permanent resident of one of the eligible countries — India. Have submitted an application to study on one of the eligible University of Strathclyde postgraduate programmes.

Have completed all components of an UG degree that will enable you to gain entry onto a PG programme at the University of Strathclyde. Demonstrate a case for financial support need via a means-test conducted by the University of Strathclyde.

Have not previously studied at degree level or higher in the UK or lived recently in the UK.

You must not be in receipt

of financial support or funding towards your study programme in the UK from any other source.

Meet the English language requirement.

Return to your country of citizenship for a minimum of two years after your scholarship award has ended.

You are required to show in your application that you are active in the field with work experience or with a proven interest in the programme area you are applying for.

You are willing to demonstrate future contribution to capacity-building and socio-economic advancement through the benefits achieved after graduating from UK higher education and returning your home country.

You must demonstrate a plan and passion to engage other women and girls in STEM from your home country.

You agree that your personal data being shared with the British Council as a condition of applying for the bursary.

If you are awarded a scholarship, you agree to maintain contact with the British Council and act as an ambassador for the UK and engage with activities as part of a STEM alumnus. Any involvement in these activities during your study in the UK will take up no more than five hours per term.

Application deadline: It is March 1, 2021.

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) AT CROPIN TECHNOLOGIES

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹12,000 per month
Link: [internshala.com/i/6479995](https://www.internshala.com/i/6479995)
Deadline: December 24, 2020

EDITING OPERATIONS AT CACTUS COMMUNICATIONS

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹21,100 per month
Link: [internshala.com/i/6479997](https://www.internshala.com/i/6479997)
Deadline: December 24, 2020

CONTENT WRITING AT VITALITY LIVING COLLEGE

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: [internshala.com/i/6480000](https://www.internshala.com/i/6480000)
Deadline: December 24, 2020

E-COMMERCE MANAGEMENT AT LOOMCR

Location: Delhi, Gurgaon
Stipend: ₹7,000-₹10,000 per month
Link: [internshala.com/i/6480001](https://www.internshala.com/i/6480001)
Application deadline: December 24, 2020

PYTHON DEVELOPMENT AT EDUGORILLA

Location: Lucknow
Stipend: ₹12,000 per month
Link: [internshala.com/i/6480003](https://www.internshala.com/i/6480003)
Application deadline: December 24, 2020

UI/UX DESIGN AT VOLUMETREE

Location: Chandigarh
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: [internshala.com/i/6480004](https://www.internshala.com/i/6480004)
Application deadline: December 24, 2020

.NET DEVELOPMENT AT CSM TECHNOLOGIES

Location: Bhubaneswar
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: [internshala.com/i/6480006](https://www.internshala.com/i/6480006)
Application deadline: December 19, 2020

STUDY ABROAD

‘Get unique experience to expand perspectives’

The pandemic hasn’t dampen the spirit of students to study abroad. SADIQ BASHA tells you why studying in foreign university is rewarding

Our vision can sometimes be limited to what we’ve experienced in life, but studying abroad can be a fantastic chance to change this.

Studying internationally offers a host of unique experiences to expand our perspectives and provides students with global career opportunities that have the potential to transform their lives.

So why is studying abroad so rewarding that, even in such an unprecedented situation?

High-quality, research-centric education: The fundamental reason that a large number of Indian students travel abroad is to accomplish high-quality research.

Be it engineering, technology, sciences, or any other field, foreign institutes offer advanced research programs in almost all subjects. Research prospects are magnificent and students get an opportunity to

work with top-notch faculty members.

Universities abroad also have an extensive network of partnerships with research institutes, thereby providing modern research facilities to students. For instance, while studying at an international university, you may receive the opportunity to work in the research wing of the world’s largest firms such as Apple, Microsoft, or Adobe.

Access to hands-on, experiential learning: This is a good way to boost college learning outcomes. Almost all colleges abroad have hands-on learning integrated into their curriculums. Programs with applied activities offer interesting experiences that you can include on your CV or resume.

Moreover, students have the leverage to access high-tech laboratories for research activities. They also enjoy the benefits of libraries, packed with books on all subjects.

The writer is CEO-founder of Edvoy

IN BRIEF

SMARTPHONE AI-BASED APPLICATION FOR FARMERS

An agri-tech start-up, co-founded by the students of IIT Guwahati, and alumni of NIT Silchar and Dibrugarh University, Assam, has developed AgSpeak, a multi-lingual smartphone application for farmers to smartly manage their farms and remotely monitor distress activities.

Developed with a goal of optimising the in-farm productivity through AI, this application will help the farmers in making decisions and managing farm activities by the click of a single button on their smartphone or computer. AgSpeak was launched by Professor TG Sitharam, Director, IIT Guwahati. Driven by hyper local crop data

coming from satellite and smart IoT devices, AgSpeak considers up to 20 local crop parameters which are key indicators of their health like temperature, rainfall, sunlight hours, soil health status, among others, to alert farmers about probable crop threats in advance and suggest best practices to tackle the incoming threat.

The app along with the IOT hardware has been tested for the past three months with 500 farmers and two tea estates. Nearly 250 farmers have already been provided hands on training in utilizing the full potential of the app. The mobile app is completely free for general small farmers.

IIT ROORKEE HONOURED

The IIT Roorkee has been adjudged as the ‘The Most Innovative Institute of the Year’ for its innovation quotient, in the CII Industrial Innovation Awards 2020.

The award ceremony was held today during the 26th DST-CII Technology Summit. The award was

presented by Professor Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, DST, and Kris Gopalakrishnan, past president, CII and chairman, CII National Start-up Council.

Sharma congratulated all winners and other applicants for their innovation and urged

them to continue their innovation to revolutionize our industries for future.

He said: “The Government and industry should realise that disruption through convergence of technology and enterprise can be a game-changer for the economy.”

GAMING FOR PROFESSIONAL E-SPORTS PLAYERS

The BenQ announced the launch of new gaming monitor sub-brand MOBIUZ and new XL-K series under ZOWIE range.

The company introduced BenQ EX2510 in the MOBIUZ series and XL2546K and XL2411K in ZOWIE range.

The MOBIUZ range is designed for gaming enthusiasts who demand immersion and performance in PC and Console games. ZOWIE XL range is specifically designed for e-Sports players. Combined with a stylish design,

powerful performance and fast refresh rate, the new range of monitors create an immersive playing field that enhances the gaming experiences.

The new Zowie XL-K Series brings an amalgamation of comfort and competitive edge that will further elevate our presence in the gaming monitor market in India.

With this range, we aim to facilitate gamers with the most comfortable gaming gear to hone their skills and excel in tournaments.

Fully fit Bumrah key to India's chances: Border

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former Australia captain Allan Border believes a fully fit Jasprit Bumrah will be the key to India's prospects of retaining the four-match Test series Down Under.

Calling himself a big fan of the India pace spearhead, Border said Bumrah has the potential to make a difference between the two sides in the much-anticipated rubber, starting in Adelaide from Thursday.

"Well I am a huge fan of Bumrah. If he keeps himself fit. We are talking of a guy who can win games for you fellows. I worry about him because on our pitches you get a little bit of bounce and sideways movement," said Border.

"For India to win, I am worried about Bumrah. If he fires up like he did last time, get important wickets, ruffe a few feathers with the ball, I reckon he could be the real difference," he added ahead of the series.

Bumrah accounted for 21 wickets in four matches in 2018-19, playing a key role in India's first-ever Test series win in Australia.

"You always think that your batting line-up will get enough runs, you need the 20 wickets to win the Test. If he stays fit, he is the one who is going to be a key," the former Australia skipper added.

From Australia's point of view, Border picked young all-rounder Cameron Green as the player to watch out for in the series.

"For Australia, Cameron Green, he is a really good young cricketer. He is someone to watch. He is a big tall lad and his batting is really good, gives the ball good whack and he's got great technique," he said.

Border also said the Indians will feel the absence of Virat Kohli once he returns home after the opening Test to attend to the birth of his first child.

"I agree, there will be a huge gap in that line-up — just his (Kohli's) presence around that team and out on the field. I think the Aussies will really enjoy that they don't have to bowl to him for three of the Test matches.



Indian pacer Jasprit Bumrah celebrates after he dismiss Australian batsman Shaun Marsh (lbw) during 3rd Test of 2018-19 Border-Gavaskar trophy series at Melbourne Cricket Ground

AP/File Picture

"So he will want to hit the ground running at Adelaide and try and get India off to a flying start and see what happens from there," he said.

"It's hard to replace anyone like him. So we have to wait and see the impact it has but

surely the Aussies will be favourites for the games where he is not playing. That is for sure."

Smith leaves practice early due to sore back

Adelaide: Australia's batsman Steve Smith on Tuesday missed a crucial net session due to a sore back as the home team's tumultuous build-up to the four-match Test series experienced another major injury scare.

After having warmed up for 10 minutes with his teammates by doing a few stretching exercises and running drills at the Adelaide Oval, Smith skipped the routine football session and headed straight to the dressing room in some discomfort after tweaking his back while bending down to pick up a ball.

The day-night first Test starts here from Thursday and Smith is not expected to return



to training until at least Wednesday. According to the Australian media, a team spokesman said the 31-year-old is likely to bat at the nets on Wednesday and there is no doubt about his availability for the much-anticipated series opener.

PTI



Punter sticking with Burns for 1st Test

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Former Australia skipper Ricky Ponting wants the team management to show faith in under-fire Joe Burns and retain him in the Test series opener against India.

The 31-year-old Burns has been going through a terrible phase, having scored just 62 runs at 6.89 with a highest score of 29 in his last nine first-class innings.

He scored 4, 0, 0, 1 in his last four innings during the two warm-up games ahead of the four-Test series against India.

"I'm sticking with Joe Burns. I've heard a lot of suggestions that he hasn't scored enough runs to stay in the side but I'm keeping him in there," Ponting said on *Channel Seven*.

"He made 40 in his last Test innings, he's made four Test hundreds, averages almost 40 — I'm sticking with him and showing some faith. I think he's good enough to get through it."

"What Marcus Harris hasn't done is score (Test) hundreds — (his) highest score is 70-odd, (whereas) Joe Burns can score Test match hundreds. I'm sticking with him," Ponting said.

Ponting also believes that wicketkeeper-batsman Matthew Wade should be elevated to the opener's role, which will pave the way for 21-year-old all-rounder Cameron Green's inclusion in the playing XI.

It's time Smith returns as Oz captain: Mark Waugh

Melbourne: Former batsman Mark Waugh believes Steve Smith has repented enough for his role in the ball-tampering scandal and needs to be handed Australia's Test captaincy after the retirement of incumbent Tim Paine.

Smith was removed from captaincy due to his involvement in the scandal in 2018.

However, ahead of the four-Test series against India, there has been discussions and debates on whether it was time to reinstate Smith as captain.

"I would have made Steve Smith captain. He is one of the best players in the team, so he is always going to be picked in the team," Waugh said on *Fox Sports' Heavy Roller Podcast*.

"Plus he has captained Australia for a number of years. He's got a great cricket brain and

young bloke, obviously an excellent talent, he's earned the right for selection through his performances.

Another call that the home team needs to make is whether

to show faith in opener Burns — who has managed a meagre 62 runs in nine innings this season.

"He is a very good player, you don't lose your talent overnight, he also understands that runs are the greatest currency or value to any player.

"He has been a bit lied on, but we will have a look, get eyes on him today, we will see how he is going, have a chat with him today and we will make our decision on who is going to open in the next day or so," said Langer.

The former Australia player also said clear that Marnus Labuschagne would not open the batting.

"Talking about Marnus, he won't be opening, he has done an amazing job at number three. Steve Smith does an amazing job at number four. We'll try and stay as settled as possible while *Davy* (Warner) is injured. We've got some tough decisions to make."



Gavaskar's pick: Pant over Saha as keeper, Gill over Shaw as opener

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The legendary Sunil Gavaskar feels the Indian team management should prefer an aggressive Rishabh Pant over a technically sound Wriddhiman Saha for the wicket-keeper's role in the four-match Test series against Australia, starting Thursday.

Gavaskar said that with a blistering 73-ball 103-run knock in the second warm-up game under his belt, Pant will give India more flexibility in the first Test, the only day-night game, to be played in Adelaide.

"It is going to be a tough one for the tour selection committee because Rishabh played in all the 4 Test matches four years ago. He also got a hundred and seemed he got under the skin of the Australian players with his chirping behind the stumps.

"...When you just came off a hundred few days earlier, he would be the choice of the management I think," Gavaskar said.

Gavaskar said he preferred Pant over a more-accomplished keeper in Saha, as Australian pitches are not so demanding when it comes to keeping wickets.

"When you are playing on pitches where the wicketkeeper has to stand upto the stumps, where the ball turns out a little bit that's when you tend to take your best wicketkeeper, in which case Wriddhiman Saha would be the obvious choice," he explained.

"But here, India will have pacers where you can stand behind and have little more time, my feeling is that they will go for Rishabh," Gavaskar said while previewing the series named after him and Allan Border.

Both Gavaskar and Border batted for Shubman Gill over Prithvi Shaw to open along side Mayank Agarwal in the series.

"...India is a little bit shaky at the top of the order. They don't know who they are going to go with. Mayank Agarwal is of course a certainty. But who's the other opener — Shubman Gill or Prithvi Shaw?" said



Gavaskar.

"So with uncertainty at the top, they would like to strengthen their batting and so Rishabh Pant will play. I am hoping he (Rishabh) plays at 6 because then that will allow you to pick 5 bowlers to try and get 20 Australian wickets," he added.

In the two warm-up games, Gill's scores — 0, 29, 43, 65 — got better with every knock while Shaw — with scores of 0, 19, 40, 3 — looked out of sorts.

And Border was mighty impressed by

how Gill has shaped up.

"I've been in Sydney the last couple of days, watching the Indian team against Australia A. I was impressed with Gill," said the former Australia captain.

"I really think he's got something about him, his technique. I know he's young so he can play a few rash shots here and there, but he looks a seriously good player, this kid. He would be my pick out of the guys I saw.

"I know you guys (rate) Shaw but it seems to me like he plays a shot-a-ball. Against the new ball, he looks good on flat tracks, but in Australia, you've got to be a little bit more watchful about your shot selection," he added.

Gavaskar agreed with Border and said Shaw needs to get back to the drawing board and work on his weaknesses — inconsistency and poor shot selection.

"I think he's (Shaw) got to spend a little more time assessing his batting. Because as an opening batsman, you've got to give yourself time to see what the pitch is doing, see what the bowlers are doing," he said.

"Trying to bat the way he's batting at the moment is not going to make him a consistent player. Yes, he's going to make runs once in a while but he's got to tighten up his defence."

Gavaskar, however, was pretty sure about other opener, saying Mayank Agarwal is the player to watch out for in the series.

"For me the player to watch out for from India will be Mayank Agarwal. He came to Australia for the last couple of Test matches two years ago and he actually, showed the way because till then India had not got any start," the Little Master said.

"He showed how to tackle Nathan Lyon. He has gone from strength to strength. Look at the season he had last year, where he scored a double hundred against South Africa.

"So he's the guy I really am looking forward to in this series," Gavaskar added.

We have attack to get 20 wickets: Rahane

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane on Tuesday conceded that pacer Ishant Sharma's absence is a "big miss" but side-stepped queries on his team's possible first XI combination for the opening Day/Night Test against Australia.

"I think, we do really have a strong attack but yes we will definitely miss Ishant, being the senior fast bowler," Rahane, who is expected to lead in the last three Tests after regular skipper Virat Kohli goes on paternity leave, said during a virtual press conference.

Ishant is recovering from a rib injury sustained during the IPL.



Rahane, however, is confident that despite Ishant's absence, the pace attack comprising Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami will step it

up for the Australians. "The guys who are here Umesh (Yadav), (Navdeep) Sani, (Mohammed) Siraj with Jasprit (Bumrah) and

(Mohammed) Shami, they are all really good and experienced and they know how to bowl in these conditions," he said.

"...This is a new series starting with the Pink ball, so it is all about getting that momentum, but I do believe that we have the attack to get 20 wickets," he said.

On the possible opening combination among the four available options (Mayank Agarwal, Prithvi Shaw, Shubman Gill and KL Rahul) and two options for wicket-keeping (Wriddhiman Saha and Rishabh Pant), Rahane said a decision will be taken on the eve of the match.

"See, we have still not decided what's our combination going to be. We will sit

tomorrow (Wednesday), there is another day to go, one more practice session to go, we will sit tomorrow (Wednesday) and discuss what's our combination," Kohli's deputy said.

"...But see whoever plays, it is going to be like, everyone is equally there, everyone is equally talented, whoever plays, they can win the match for us, so it is all about trusting our players," Rahane said.

He also didn't give any definitive answer on what would be senior spinner Ravichandran Ashwin's role although he did acknowledge that his all-round skills will be very handy going into the first Test.

We'll have our plans in place for Kohli: Langer

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Australia coach Justin Langer on Tuesday asserted that his team will "have plans in place" for Indian talisman Virat Kohli as cricket's heavyweights renew one of the sport's greatest rivalries with the opening day-night Test.

The four-match series opener at Adelaide Oval on Thursday will be the only time Kohli will play Test Down Under this summer as he will return home after the game to attend the birth of his first child.

Langer, however, is determined to stop Kohli from setting the tone for the series.

"He is a great player and an equally great leader. I have got so much respect for him but we are going to be really well planned for him because we

know how important he is for India as a leader and as a batsman. So, we will have our plans in place.

"The next trick is to execute them, hopefully, keep him out of the game with his runs. At the end of the day, that's where he is going to have the biggest impact. We've seen a lot of him now, and he has seen a lot of us too," Langer said.

Langer also made it clear that his team will focus more on the skill part and look for ways to get Kohli out instead of needlessly engaging with him.

"What we talk about is how to get Virat out. He is such a great player, we don't talk about whether we taunt him or not. That's rubbish... We play on the skill, not on emotions, at least we try to." "There is obviously emotion in the game, no doubt about that, we are going to control our emotions."



Pink ball zips more under lights: Cummins

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Australia pace spearhead Pat Cummins feels the series opener against India will test the tactical acumen of the captains as day-night matches move at a "slightly different pace" with the pink ball zipping around a bit more under lights.

Australia have won each of their four day-night Test matches so far. India, on the other hand, have played just one pink ball Test, winning it convincingly against Bangladesh last year.

Cummins, who played for Kolkata Knight Riders in the IPL, said there is always a sense of excitement when they approach a pink ball Test. "... We are just a little bit, won't say nervous but excited, knowing that the game moves at a slightly different pace to a normal Test match. You can have some sessions under the lights where the balls just zip around," Cummins told kkr.In.

"After dinner, when the light



takes effect, just for whatever reason it seems like the ball zips around a bit more.

"You can have some periods in a Test match a bit like a one-dayer, where the ball doesn't swing, doesn't seam and all of a sudden out of nowhere, it starts zipping around under the lights.

"It's just another dynamic of the game. It's a tactic that the captains have to manage — when to bat and when to bowl," Cummins said.

LOCAL EVENTS

UPOA, KGMU JOIN HANDS



Uttar Pradesh Olympic Association signed a pact with King George Medical University to help injured players during their rehabilitation. "There are many players, who are not eligible for any medical grant from the government and face many hindrances on their road to recovery," said UPOA general secretary Anandeshwar Pandey. "We have tied up with KGMU to provide the medical support to such players and all the expenses will be borne by UPOA," he added. Present on the occasion were KGMU's sports medicine department head Ashish Srivastava and Syed Rafat Rizvi of Iconic Olympic Games Academy.

UNITY ACADEMY LIFT TROPHY



Unity Academy defeated Avadh Strikers by 124 runs to win the RBT Friendship Cricket Series at Pt Ras Bihari Tiwari Stadium on Tuesday. Aman Razi bagged the man of the match award while Akarsh Gupta walked away with man of the tournament. JB Saxena and AK Singh gave away the awards to the winners.

BRIEF SCORES:

Unity Academy: 221 (Adeel Baqar 57, Mohd Danish 52, Akarsh Gupta 49, Soman Mahanti 29; Anand Sahai 26/2, Kunal Singh 42/1) **Avadh Strikers:** 97 (Anurag Pal 29, Manpreet Singh 15, Dharendra Singh 11; Aman Rizvi 19/3, Aman Jaiswal 26/3, Vasu Tripathi 10/1)

PARA BADMINTON CAMP

National coaching camp of para badminton consisting of eight athletes and seven coaches & support staff has been started at SAI Regional Centre from Tuesday. The camp will get over February 6, 2021. Four players and four staff members reported on first day and they will be undergoing quarantine for seven days as per revised SOP and on 6th day RTPCR test will be done.

The campers who reported are: Pramod Bhagat, Palak Kohli, Parul Parmar, Sukant Kadam (players), Gaurav Khanna (Chief coach), J a i Prakash Mishra (Physio), Lakshya (physical trainer), Nitesh Gaikawad.