

LANDMARK 7
COVID-19 MUCH MORE SEVERE
THAN INFLUENZA: STUDY**WORLD 9**
ARMY TAKES ORDERS
FROM GOVT: IMRAN**SPORT 12**
SHAMI SUFFERS
WRIST FRACTURE

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**USUAL SUSPECTS**
SWAPAN DASGUPTA

BJP's challenges in Bengal turf war

Historians have traditionally banked on newspapers and magazines as primary sources. However, future chroniclers of the period after 1995 will find that printed sources have to be supplemented with material drawn from electronic archives. It is likely that YouTube will acquire a great deal of importance for future historians.

Clips from TV shows from the second half of 2013 will reveal that there was a broad consensus among political pundits on two things. First, it was widely believed that while the momentum was with Modi, the tally of the BJP and its allies would fall short of the majority mark. This deficit, in turn, would prompt the BJP to select a less "polarising" figure than Modi as the Prime Minister. Secondly, while it was conceded that the BJP would do exceedingly well in northern and western India, it was believed Modi would fail to make a dent on the imagination of voters in eastern and southern India. The belief that the BJP is primarily a party of the upper caste Hindus — with a sprinkling of support from the backward castes — was widespread in the punditry.

The election results of 2014 and 2019 disproved both assumptions but never entirely. Despite the BJP's inroads in Karnataka, the feeling that eastern and southern India were out of bounds for the saffron party remained a firm belief among many BJP-watchers. Under the circumstances, the BJP victory in 18 seats in West Bengal and a majority of seats in Assam was a shock.

This shock may well escalate into a larger conceptual turbulence in the coming days. In West Bengal, the big battlefield for the Assembly elections of 2021, the Trinamool Congress has based a big chunk of its campaign on the plank of the BJP being a party of "outsiders". As the fissures within the TMC escalate, the dissidents are being advised to avoid looking at the BJP as an alternative because the party has no links with the culture and ethos of Bengalis. Yet, the inward flow into the party has persisted and turned into a flood.

If the BJP is to upstage the TMC in the Assembly polls, it has to supplement certain tendencies with the neo-conservatism of aspirational India that also finds expression in the growing Bengali Hindu exasperation with economic decline and a new 'Muslim question'. Integrating these different traditions is the political challenge before the BJP

by the Left and its fellow-travellers.

The argument is facile and based on a narrow, "progressive" interpretation of the past. Apart from the obvious fact that the Bharatiya Jana Sangh — the political precursor of the BJP — was born out of Bengali political impulses by Shyama Prasad Mookerjee in 1952 and won its first Lok Sabha seats from West Bengal in 1951-52, there is the intellectual ancestry of modern Indian nationalism. Despite the implicit suggestion of some historians that West Bengal's turn to Left politics after Independence was a consequence of the 19th century Bengal Renaissance, the linear movement is not obvious.

The exposure to European ideas did certainly steer a small section of Bengali Hindus in the direction of British Anglican theology — although these influences didn't necessarily lead to the growth of Christianity — but the deeper impact was that of nationalism. The nationalism that influenced Hindu Bengalis stemmed from the imagery of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the Hindu pride of Swami Vivekananda and the political imagination of the likes of Sri Aurobindo and Bipin Chandra Pal. This strand of political thought was naturally at odds with both Gandhism and the progressivism promoted by the Communist parties, not to mention the liberal cosmopolitanism fashionable in a section of Hindu Bengalis.

The dominant hold of Mahatma Gandhi on India's nationalist imagination led to intriguing developments in Bengal. The leadership of the Mahatma was grudgingly accepted in Bengal but this was not accompanied by the internalisation of the Gandhian imagination. What further complicated matters was the "Muslim question". As many historians have noted, the Bengali Hindu heart was with the Hindu Mahasabha and the body with the Congress.

Subhas Chandra Bose personified the conflicting pulls and pressures on the Bengali Hindu: his political imagination was unquestionably pre-Gandhian, his local politics was dictated by alignments with conservative nationalism and his national profile was linked to the socialist critics of Gandhi.

With Partition and Independence, the fog partially lifted and competitive politics was reduced to a straight fight between the "progressive" Left and the conservative Congress dominated by the likes of BC Roy and Atulya Ghosh. The electoral growth of the Left after 1967 witnessed two developments. First, the economic basis of conservative politics was undermined by land redistribution and industrial collapse. Secondly, whether it was Siddhartha Shankar Ray in the early-1970s or Mamata Banerjee four decades later, the anti-Left forces chose to fight the Communists by painting themselves a pale shade of red.

The BJP in West Bengal, despite its national lineage, is a relatively new formation. The accretion of its strength, post-1990, drew from various streams. There was first the fallout of the Ayodhya movement, the BJP's emergence as the principal alternative to the Congress and, most important, the appeal of Narendra Modi. In the past few years, the most significant stream has come from the TMC defectors, at home with the BJP's old anti-Left credentials and its new populism. If the BJP is to upstage the TMC in the Assembly election next year, it has to supplement these tendencies with the neo-conservatism of aspirational India that also finds expression in the growing Bengali Hindu exasperation with economic decline and a new "Muslim question". Integrating these different traditions is the political challenge before the saffron party.

You will be left alone: Shah to Didi

10 MLAs, MP, 2 ex-Mins, ex-MP, 45 municipal heads & councillors et al join BJP at Midnapore rally

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ MIDNAPORE

The BJP on Saturday netted its biggest ever catch in Bengal grabbing a large swarm of Opposition leaders led by powerful TMC satrap Suwendu Adhikari — a Mamata Banerjee man Friday and her sharpest spearhead in Nandigram movement that catapulted her to power in 2011.

A massive saffron rally at the historical town of Midnapore presided over by Union Home Minister Amit Shah witnessed 10 MLAs — 7 of the ruling outfit — a sitting party MP, two ex-Ministers, a former parliamentarian, 45 municipal chairmen and councillors, and two district board chairpersons switching sides prompting Shah to predict a "landslide victory" for the saffron party in 2021 Assembly elections in Bengal.

The only rebel face who apparently could not make it to the BJP on Saturday was former Asansol Mayor and MLA Jitendra Tiwari who backed off hours before switching sides reportedly after Union Minister and Asansol BJP MP Babul Supriyo and some other saffron leaders objected to his joining

the outfit. Tiwari then offered his apology to the Chief Minister saying he would work for her.

Cut to Midnapore: Seeking five years' time for his party to smarten up Bengal, Home Minister Shah said, "You gave 27 years to the Congress, three decades to the Left and 10 years to Mamata Banerjee but nothing happened... now afford us five years and see how we convert your State into Sonar Bangla (golden Bengal)."

Launching a scathing attack on Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, he said "The desertion will continue in the TMC till she is left with none before the elections." Advising her retrospection he said, "The people are quitting the TMC in large numbers because of the misrule, corruption, (tolabaji) extortionist culture, nepotism with the singular aim of making the nephew (read Diamond Harbour MP Abhishek Banerjee) the next Chief Minister."

The long queue of defectors suggested that the BJP was going to come to power with 200-plus legislators, Shah said buttressing party vice president Mukul Roy's argument that the ruling outfit would not



Union Home Minister Amit Shah, along with party leaders, during an election rally ahead of West Bengal Assembly polls 2021 in West Midnapore district on Saturday

cross three figure in the elections. Apart from the TMC leaders two Left MLAs and a Congress legislator too joined the BJP.

Attacking the State Government, he said, "Mamata Didi should feel ashamed of the rampant corruption... so much so that they would not even spare the poor men's relief materials for which Prime Minister Narendra Modi had sent Central funds... they even gobbled down the relief mate-

rials sent during the pandemic times..."

The Home Minister, who along with Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh and senior leader Kailash Vijayvargiya, had lunch at a farmer's house, complained how "the State Government is blocking the Central schemes like Ayushman Bharat and Kisan Samman Nidhi" aggravating the crisis in a job-starved State.

Adhikari too referred to the growing discontent in the

party and among the people saying the TMC was formed with an ideal but all that had been sacrificed at the altars of corruption and nepotism. "The only goal seems to be to make Bhaipo (nephew Abhishek Banerjee) the Chief Minister," Adhikari seldom known for mounting personal attacks thundered raising the slogan, "Bhaipo Hatao Bangla Bachao" (Remove the nephew and save Bengal).

Hitting out at the Chief

Sonia paves way for Rahul to take up reins of Cong

Holds meeting with party leaders and dissenters

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress interim chief Sonia Gandhi conducted a meeting of senior party leaders, including dissenters, on Saturday to apparently facilitate her son Rahul Gandhi's re-appointment as the party president.

Rahul relinquished the post after the dismal performance of the Congress in 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

Speaking to the media after the meeting, former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan stated that 30 leaders had deliberated on the path ahead for the party in a "constructive" atmosphere.

Flanked by former Uttarakhand CM Harish Rawat and Congress treasurer Pawan Bansal, Chavan added that more such meetings will be held to strengthen the party. He also said that a Chintan Shivir shall take place in Pachmarhi

or Shimla.

Clear indications regarding Rahul's comeback in a month's time emerged after party leaders shared to media that the Gandhi scion conveyed in the meeting that he is "ready to work for the party as all desire". The comment was greeted by prolonged applause in the presence of the Congress "dissenters" who had written a letter criticising the leadership and calling for an overhaul earlier this year.

The members of the meeting also decided to convene a Chintan Shivir (brainstorming session) at Pachmarhi or Shimla soon.

This was Sonia Gandhi's first meeting with dissenting leaders who had raised concerns about the functioning of the party. The five-hour meeting between Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and the so-called "rebels" on the lawns of the Congress interim president's 10 Janpath residence marked the first move towards reconciliation after months of feuding, revolt and resignations.

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RSS ideologue MG Vaidya dies at 97

Nagpur: RSS ideologue and the organisation's first spokesperson Madhav Govind Vaidya died here on Saturday, his family said. He was 97.

Vaidya, who had recovered from coronavirus infection, died at a private hospital in Nagpur. The last rites will be held on Sunday.

Vaidya, who became a volunteer of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh almost two decades after the organisation was set up, had seen it all during his eight decade-old association with it: the three bans, isolation, internal conflicts over joining politics, ferment and resurgence, changing power equations with the BJP, and the latter's storming to power at the Centre in 2014.

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India poised to OK Covid-19 vaccines, says Harsh Vardhan

Covid cases cross 1-cr mark, but recovery rate peaks at 95.46%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As India crossed the one crore infection mark, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Saturday announced that the country is on the cusp of authorising the first set of Covid-19 vaccines and expressed the need for an expeditious vaccination drive to cover all the target populations estimated to be 30 crore.

"We should follow coronavirus guidelines even at a time when the country is on the cusp of authorising the first set of vaccines," said the Minister while chairing the 22nd meeting of the high-level Group of Ministers (GoM) on Covid-19 through a video-conference.

Expressing gratitude to all Covid warriors, Vardhan shared with his colleagues the progress made by the country's public health system against the pandemic and the encouraging results so far. The Minister said that India's Covid-19 pandemic growth has dropped to 2 per

cent and the case fatality rate is amongst the lowest in the world at 1.45 per cent. "India's Recovery Rate has peaked to 95.46 per cent, while the strategy of testing 1 million samples has decreased the Cumulative Positivity Rate to 6.25 per cent," he added.

Harsh Vardhan was virtually joined by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep S Puri, Minister of State Health & Family Welfare Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai, Member NITI Aayog Vinod K Paul, Advisers to the PM Amarjeet Sinha and Bhaskar Khulbe.

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Kejriwal: Delhi has overcome 3rd Covid wave

New Delhi: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday said the third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in Delhi is under control now, as the city reported over 1,100 fresh cases of the infection at a positivity rate of 1.3 per cent.



quality to dismantle the visitors.

The sequence of 4, 9, 2, 0, 4, 0, 8, 4, 0, 4, and 1 on the scorecard will rankle the fans but more so this team, for a very long time.

"Very hard to put those feelings into words. We had a lead of 60-odd coming and just

collapsed," said Kohli, who would be heading home on maternity leave now.

India's earlier lowest score was 42 at the Lord's in 1974 against England, known in Indian cricket parlance as the "Summer of 42".

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Investors' mindset has shifted to 'Why not India', says PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Asserting that investors' mindset has changed from "Why India?" to "Why not India?", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said his Government's reforms had changed the world perception and the farm reforms brought by his Government six-month ago have begun to deliver benefits to the farmers.

Speaking at industry association ASSOCHAM's Foundation Week event here, Modi said, "From a non-existent culture for innovation to a new ecosystem promoting and nurturing startups has given the world confidence to say 'why not India'."

The Prime Minister also presented the "Assocham Enterprise of the Century Award" to Ratan Tata, who received the award on behalf of the Tata Group. He said that the Tata Group had contributed to the development of the country under the able leadership of Ratan Tata.

Ratan Tata thanked the Prime Minister for the award and appreciated his strong leadership during the coronavirus pandemic.

"There was a situation in



the past when investors would question 'why India' (for investing in the country). With reforms (of past six years) and their effects, its proposition has changed to 'why not India', Modi said.

He cited scrapping of 1,500 old and obsolete laws and farming new ones that in tune with the changing investment order as an example of his Government's outlook.

"Red tape previously made investors say 'why India' but a red carpet is now making them say 'why not India', he said.

In the backdrop of farmers' protests on the outskirts of Delhi, the PM said agriculture reforms brought by his Government six months back have started benefiting farmers.

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Farooq's ₹12 cr assets attached in JKCA money laundering case

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Cracking its whip in the money laundering case of Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Association, the Enforcement Directorate on Saturday attached eight properties worth ₹11.86 crore of former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah.

The attached properties include three residential houses, one at Gupkar Road, Srinagar, one at Tehsil Katipora, Tanmarg, and one at Bhatindi, Village Sunjwan, (Jammu) and commercial buildings at posh Residency Road, Srinagar.

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Mercury drops to 4.3 deg Celsius

Lucknow (PNS): Icy north-west winds resulted in numbing cold in the state capital on Saturday as the minimum temperature plummeted to 4.3 degree Celsius, which was 4.4 degree below normal. MeT director JP Gupta said cold conditions would continue and relief is expected in a day or two.

Meanwhile, in the state, Churk and Fursatganj recorded the lowest minimum temperature at 2.6 degree Celsius each while Bareilly recorded that at 2.8 degree Celsius and Shahjahanpur at 3 degree Celsius. Low minimum temperatures were also recorded at Hardoi, Lakhimpur Kheri, Kanpur, Varanasi, Etawah, Bahraich, Banda and Sultanpur.

Yogi govt plans to increase farmers' income through organic crops

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Consistently and seriously working for the welfare of the farmers of the state, the Yogi Adityanath government is now preparing to give another big gift to the villages and farmers settled on both the sides of the Ganges. With the help of organic crops, the state government is working on a plan to increase the incomes of the farmers in this belt.

A plan for organic farming and horticulture has been prepared for the villages falling within a radius of 5 kilometres



NOTICE

JC 769242A Sub Jairam Singh Yadav R/o 880 FW COY C/o 99 APO Changed in Army record my son name Prabhat Kumar to Prabhat Kumar Yadav

सूचना

हमने अपना नाम सीम अहमद से बदलकर सीम खान पुत्री श्री अदील अहमद खान कर लिया है निवास मोहल्ला पितौरा कायमगंज फर्रुखाबाद।

NOTICE

I, Sunita Devi W/o Shyam Bihari Yadav R/o Shahinor Colony, Nilmatha, Cantt., Lucknow, wrongly updated my daughter name in school (K.V.A.M.C.) Kindly updated correct name Swati Kumari to Swati correct name is Swati.

NOTICE

To whom it may concern. It is publicly announced that the actual names of my sons which are wrongly mentioned as Bhipinder Singh and Pushpendra Singh in government Documents must be known and recognized as Bhipendra Singh and Pushpendra Singh as mentioned in their educational documents. Indal Singh S/o Late Raj Bahadur Singh, Village - Inchha ka purwa, Post - Patti Shah (kasenuwa), Tahsil-Khaga, District-Fatehpur.

NOTICE

This is to inform one and all that I have got registered the Land Gata no. 25Mi in village Ramnarmohuddinpur, Pargana, Tehsil Sadar, Distt. Raebareilly with registry dated 14-05-2001 while getting the land registered I got the original documents of earlier registry of Smt. Mithlesh Tripathi W/o Shiv Kumar Tripathi from Smt. Surjeet Kaur Widow Balbeer Singh, through Mukhtar Aam Mr. Gurdeep Singh S/o Sardar Ranjeet Singh. The original registry of Smt. Mithlesh Tripathi W/o Shiv Kumar Tripathi is lost around Hathi Park and if some one misuses the document then it will be considered illegal and incorrect. Vineet Awasthi S/o Kirti Prakash Awasthi R/o 28/10 Acharya Dwivedi Nagar, Raebareilly.

NOTICE

I, SUSMA W/o of Late Vinodheshwari Prasad (No. 1293507, Rank - G.N.R.) R/o Village - Subedar Ka Pura, Post - Yakee, Tehsil - Akbarpur, PS - Ahirauli Dist. - Akmebedkar Nagar, 224151, UP have changed my name from SUSMA to SUSHMA DEVI vide affidavit dated 24/09/2020 before court of Notary Public Akbarpur, Akmebedkar Nagar.

आवश्यकता

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किरणलता सिंह महाविद्यालय कौंडर, असोस फतेहपुर (कॉलेज कोड 02040) सम्बद्ध-प्रो राजेन्द्र सिंह (रज्जू मइया) विश्वविद्यालय प्रयागराज (उ०प्र०) में प्राचार्य-योग्यता-55%, पीएचडी/डी. फिल, अनुभव-महाविद्यालय में 15 वर्ष का शिक्षण अनुभव सहायक आचार्य - विषय-हिन्दी साहित्य, अंग्रेजी साहित्य, अर्थशास्त्र, शिक्षा शास्त्र, गृह विज्ञान, समाज शास्त्र, इतिहास, भूगोल, संस्कृत व ड्राइंग एंड पेंटिंग, योग्यता संबंधित विषय में परास्नातक 55% व Net / SLET / P.H.D. वेतनमान-यूजीसीए के मानकानुसार, नोट - इच्छुक अभ्यर्थी अपनी 04 फोटो, समस्त शैक्षिक प्रमाण पत्रों सहित 15 दिनों के अन्दर महाविद्यालय के हेड ऑफिस 371 हरिहरगंज, फतेहपुर (उ०प्र०) में सीधे जमा करें या पंजीकृत डाक से भेजें। प्रबन्धक - संजय कुमार सिंह, मो-9510530270, 983837225

on both the sides of the river Ganga in the state.

The state government is working on a strategy to increase farmers' income manifold through organic crops. The Agriculture and Horticulture department along with the Jal Shakti Ministry has rolled out the spadework on the ambitious plan.

According to the plan, fertiliser will not be used within 5 km radius of the river Ganga. The farmers in these areas will be trained in organic farming of grains, fruits and flowers. They will be provided with necessary equipment along with training and information for this. The government plans to identify organic crops, products and provide special markets.

Considering the large market demand of organic products in the country as well as abroad, it is considered as a special benefit scheme for the farmers.

The Yogi government is working on three major goals simultaneously through this scheme. The first is the cleanliness of the river Ganga, the second is the income of the farmers and the third is the production of large quantities of organic crops in the state.

According to officials of the Jal Shakti Ministry, a large market will be made available for the crops produced on the banks of the Ganga in collaboration with the Agriculture and Horticulture department so that the farmers get better than normal prices for their produce. Significantly, to free the Ganga river from pollution, the Yogi government has decided to take strict steps to stop the use of chemical fertilisers. The state government is preparing to ban the use of chemical fertilisers in the districts through which the river Ganga passes.

By promoting organic farming, natural farming and

horticulture in the Gangetic plain, the Yogi government is going to give a new income platform to the farmers.

Along with proper management of solid waste and disposal of garbage in the villages along the Ganga, polythene will be banned completely. According to a senior official of Namami Gange department, the use of chemical fertiliser is a major cause of pollution in the Ganga. The effort of the state government is now to stop it completely.

Cabinet minister and state government spokesperson Sidharth Nath Singh said that the Yogi government was committed to the betterment and progress of the farmers of the state along with the success of the Nirmal and Aviral Ganga Mission.

Trees will be planted on both sides of the river to protect it from erosion. Along with prohibiting chemical fertiliser, plants like Peepal, Pakad,

Mango, Jamun and Banyan will be planted along the river to protect the river from erosion.

Besides, Ganga nurseries will be developed in every district to have maximum plantations along the Ganga. Geo-tagging of all the plants along the Ganga will be done to prevent theft of the plants. For this, help from the Forest department will also be taken. A campaign will also be launched to free Ganga embankments from encroachments.

Reports said that by making the banks of the Ganga beautiful by removing encroachments, tourists can also be attracted. Not only this, Ganga stadium will also be built in the villages along the river Ganga so that the spirit of sports is developed in the youth of the villages. Renovation and beautification of the ponds along the Ganga will also be done.

UP tops in digital transactions

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With sustained and focused emphasis of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on assimilation of technology with economy, Uttar Pradesh has become the number one state in the entire country in digital transactions.

This year, about 126 percent more digital transactions took place than last year as the people in the state have embraced digital transactions like nowhere else in India.

An official communiqué of the state government released on Saturday claimed that Yogi Adityanath had instructed banks to promote digital transactions in the era of novel coronavirus pandemic, specially as it would help in maintaining safety protocol issued by the Union Health Ministry.

He had stressed that as the present era was of technology, the people should know and use technology for speed and transparency in work.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, under the direction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the work that the state government did was in the best interest of the people, and this was made possible only by embracing technology.

The effect of the chief minister's appeal is also visible in data and statistics — till September, Rs 1,76,46,00,00,00 worth of transactions have been done, which is Rs 98.53 crore, more than the total transactions done in the same

Digital agenda gains momentum in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Adding another feather to the cap of Uttar Pradesh, the Food and Civil Supply department has been chosen for the Excellence in Digital Governance award.

President Ram Nath Kovind will give away this award on December 30, 2020.

In order to push the agenda of UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to bring in transparency in every field, the Food and Civil Supply department has used online and transparent techniques in procurement, payment to farmers and public distribution system in the state.

According to Food Commissioner Manish

Chauhan, the state government has implemented an online system of procurement of wheat, paddy and maize, the despatch of these items from purchase centres and the despatch of paddy from centres to FCI depot, billing and payment in the accounts of farmers through PFMS portal.

The portability facility under 'one nation, one card' for ration cards has also been provided online. He said that the Government of India had sought presentations from different states and ministries with regards to project/innovative techniques for digitisation and on the basis of the assessment, the department of Uttar Pradesh had received this honour.

period last year, official sources here said on Saturday.

The people in the state have made the highest payment of Rs 60.31 crore from UPI. After this, payment of Rs 47.79 crore has been made by the people with debit cards. Similarly, a transaction of Rs 20.43 crore has been done from the net and Rs 16.36 crore has been transacted through other means.

Apart from this, payment of Rs 11.47 crore has been made from NEFT. Payment of Rs 6.90 crore has been made through credit card, Rs 6.61

crore from IMPS, Rs 6.59 crore from Aadhaar.

The State Bank of India has identified Siddharthnagar and Firozabad districts as digital districts. The objective is to promote digital payments in both the districts in a quick and convenient manner within a year by expanding and strengthening the digital payment ecosystem. Siddharthnagar district is one of the statistical districts selected by the Government of India. The RBI has fixed the deadline of 31 March, 2021 for this.

‘BJP weakening constitutional institutions’

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party president Sakhilesh Yadav said the Preamble of the Constitution, secularism and socialism and democracy were under grave threat. He said the struggle for the restoration of democracy in the country was going to be a long haul.

Yadav said the Bharatiya Janata Party government was steadily sabotaging and weakening the constitutional institutions and democratic conventions. He said the BJP had to be thrown out of power if the destiny of the country was to be protected.

Addressing a meeting at the SP state office-here on Saturday, Yadav said the BJP was running a consistent campaign to weaken the Samajwadi Party through myriad organisations sponsored by it. He alleged that it was not a campaign against the Samajwadi Party but a conspiracy against the poor, youth and the farmers.

He said the Samajwadi Party was ready to pick up the gauntlet as social tension prevailed in the changed political situation.

The SP chief alleged that there was a sharp rise in incidents of injustice and exploitation of the common people and the freedom of expression was being trampled upon.

Maya demands relook at new farm laws

Lucknow (PNS):

Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati reiterated her demand for a relook at the three farm legislations that have sparked a furore among the country's farmers who have launched an agitation for the repeal of these laws.

The demand was made on Saturday amid the ongoing farmers' protests against the three laws brought by the Central government.

"The Central government should not be dogmatic about the three new farm laws recently enforced in the country but must adopt a sympathetic attitude towards the farmers and accept their demands. The three farm laws should be withdrawn immediately, this is the only demand of the BSP," Mayawati said in a tweet in Hindi on Saturday.

Earlier on November 29, Mayawati had announced support to the farmers' agitation and had demanded withdrawal of the new agriculture laws. She had also lent her support to the 'Bharat Bandh' observed by the farmers in the national capital against the new farm laws. She had said that the farmers were protesting all over the country to withdraw the three new laws related to agriculture and the BSP supported the Bharat Bandh call of the farmer organisations.

He said besides the growing economic inequality, there was no let-up in the rise of unemployment and the galloping inflation. He expressed the hope that the Samajwadi Party

would be the sole option before the people in the 2022 UP assembly elections and the electorate of the state would get rid of the BJP government.

UP launches P2P trading platform for rooftop solar power producers

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh has become the first in India and South Asia to launch the block chain-enabled peer to peer (P2P) trading platform for rooftop solar power producers.

Such power producers are also the consumers of solar power.

The Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) and Uttar Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Development Agency (UPNEDA) are hosting the first-of-its-kind pilot project involving energy generated from solar rooftop systems installed on buildings in Lucknow. India Smart Grid Forum along with two other organisations will execute the project.

In 2019, state power regulator Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission had approved a pilot project for transactions of power from

rooftop solar systems using block chain-based technology. It had then stated that under this pilot project, government buildings or consumers would carry out peer-to-peer transactions for the trading of rooftop solar power.

The fees for the block chain technology will be recovered in the account rate of return (ARR) of the distribution licensee concerned. By using block chain technology, the participants can transfer funds, settle trades, or vote without seeking the approval of the central certifying authority.

The P2P trading platform's first 12 participants would comprise nine customers with rooftop solar systems (prosumers) and three customers without rooftop solar systems (net buyers). Identified in consultation with the UPPCL, the participants will engage in mock trading (no money transactions) for the next three

months. The customers have been trained on the block chain platform's functions and the procedures that need to be followed to participate in the trading activities via online training sessions held by the ISGE.

The pilot project's results and recommendations will be submitted to the UPPCL and the UPERC for framing of regulations to promote P2P trading of rooftop solar power amongst prosumers and consumers in the state.

To promote innovations and peer-to-peer energy transactions using block chain technology between the rooftop solar prosumers, the state had earlier introduced the concept in its Rooftop Solar PV Grid Interactive Systems Gross/Net Metering Regulations, 2019 issued in January 2019.

The block chain-based technology has been gaining increasing popularity globally.

**UCO BANK**

ZONAL OFFICE :
DHANSHREE COMPLEX, 1ST FLOOR,
D 63/8-1-M, TULSI PUR,
MAHMOORGANJ, VARANASI - 221 010

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR GOLD AUCTION NOTICE
LAST DATE & TIME OF SUBMISSION OF EMD (THROUGH NEFT/RTGS) AND DOCUMENTS 30/12/2020 UPTO 2:00 PM

Auction Sale of Gold Ornaments Mortgages to the Bank under in the Borrowal Accounts Mentioned with a right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS" AND "WHAT IS WHERE IS" basis for realization of Banks Dues.

Sr. No.	Name of Branch Borrower(s) Guarantor(s)	Gross Weight of the Ornaments	Detail of Officer Concerned	Date & Time of Auction
1.	Allahabad Katra			
	Smt. Reena Pandey w/o Mr. Anil Pandey Address- 53 16, Puradalel, Allahabad, Sadar	143.360 (Gram)	Akash Deep Shukla	30/12/2020 03.00 PM. to 04.00 PM. * The Auction will take Place at UCO Bank Katra Allahabad
	Account No. :02990610009710 Balance O/S : ₹200539/- pluse pending charges & interest thereon			
Terms & Conditions : The above mentioned Gold Ornament UCO Bank is under sale in its "as is where is condition" Public auction will be held on 30.12.2020 at 2:00 pm at respective Branch Premises. For further details, Contact Concern Officer mentioned above.				
20.12.2020		Place : Allahabad	Branch Manager -UCO Bank, Katra	



**विकास से मिली नई पहचान
उन्नत कृषि. समृद्ध किसान**

जनपद अयोध्या, गोरखपुर, बस्ती, बहराइच, बाराबंकी, बलरामपुर, सिद्धार्थनगर
अम्बेडकरनगर, अमेठी, सुल्तानपुर, जौनपुर, गाजीपुर, मऊ, चंदौली और सोनभद्र की

₹89.90 करोड़ की
**कृषि, कृषि विज्ञान एवं अनुसंधान, पशुपालन
मत्स्य पालन, सिंचाई आदि की 40 परियोजनाओं
का**
लोकार्पण/शिलान्यास

**प्रधानमंत्री रोजगार सृजन कार्यक्रम
मुख्यमंत्री युवा स्वरोजगार योजना के लाभार्थियों को ऋण
श्रम विभाग के लाभार्थियों को सहायता राशि
महिला स्वयं सहायता समूहों को सहायता राशि व सामुदायिक शौचालय अधिकार प्रमाण-पत्र
किसानों को किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड और कृषि यंत्रों पर सब्सिडी का
वितरण**
एवं
कृषक भाइयों से संवाद

योगी आदित्यनाथ
मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश द्वारा

सूर्य प्रताप शाही
मंत्री, कृषि, कृषि शिक्षा एवं
कृषि अनुसंधान, उत्तर प्रदेश

लाखन सिंह राजपूत
राज्यमंत्री, कृषि, कृषि शिक्षा एवं
कृषि अनुसंधान, उत्तर प्रदेश

मिशन रोजगार

अन्य गणमान्य महानुभाव

दिनांक : 20 दिसम्बर, 2020 | समय : पूर्वाह्न 11:30 बजे
स्थान : डी.ए.वी. स्कूल ग्राउण्ड, आचार्य नरेन्द्र देव कृषि एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विश्वविद्यालय, कुमारगंज, अयोध्या
कृषि, कृषि शिक्षा एवं कृषि अनुसंधान विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

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Covid vaccination to be a pin code-based activity

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Covid-19 immunisation will be a pin code-based activity in Lucknow as slight changes have been made in the planning. Earlier, it was decided that the vaccination would be a unit-based activity.

"The pin codes will be used to check the load and calculations will be done accordingly. The number of centres where the vaccination will be carried out has yet to be finalised," a senior health official said. He added that the vaccine would be sent to the designated places through vaccination vans.

With the conclusion of the block-level training for Covid-19 immunisation on Saturday, the Health department is now planning to hold tehsil and block task force meeting next week. Trainers who have already been trained at district level will go to the blocks to train the staff there.

"The district task force which has been created for the immunisation drive will meet once again after all the preparations are completed. We have already held a meeting in this regard," he said.

He added that as far as containment activity is concerned, specialised doctors sent to the blocks having maximum coronavirus cases are looking into the issues individually. "We expect the cases to go down further in Lucknow. We are also planning to have a new round of testing for the health workers and hospitals shortly," he said. Under the current trend of declining coronavirus

CM for more concentrated efforts to contain Covid

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Expressing satisfaction over the 95.5 percent recovery rate of COVID-19 in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed the officials concerned to further improve it. He said the state government was committed to protecting people from COVID-19 and concentrated efforts should be continued to contain the novel coronavirus infection.

The chief minister, who was presiding over an unlock review meeting at the Lok Bhawan here on Saturday, stressed that it was necessary

to maintain vigilance until an effective medicine for treatment of COVID-19 arrived as even a little bit of carelessness could prove to be expensive. He also said that an effective arrangement for treatment of COVID-19 should be maintained. The chief minister expressed satisfaction over 2.23 crore Covid tests being conducted in the state and said that the testing work should be increased further.

He said the surveillance system and contact tracing should also be kept active and the recovery rate of Lucknow should also be improved.

Yogi Adityanath asked the officials to widely publicise the eSanjeevani app so that more and more people could get the benefit of online OPD medical counselling facility.

Minister of State for Health Atul Garg, Chief Secretary RK Tiwari, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue) Renuka Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary (MSME and Information) Navneet Sehgal, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad and other senior officials were present in the meeting.

cases and with most of the people pondering on whether or not to allow domestic helps to resume their work, People's Health Organisation secretary Dr Ishwar Gilada said there is no problem provided precautions are ensured.

"Get your domestic helps' Covid antibody tests done. If they test positive for IgG antibodies, it means they had already been infected and are least likely to spread the infection. They are neither vulnerable to get re-infected or transmit infection to others. However, if they test IgG negative, it means they are vulnerable to contract and transmit infection," he explained.

"Rapid antigen test or

RTPCR test report comes out positive only 10-15 days during infection, so the window of that test is only 10-15 days. However, testing positive is surely an indication of Covid infection and negative test is unreliable. Domestic helps should wash their hands and feet and ensure that they mask up right from entry to exit, as also in lifts and common areas," Dr Gilada said.

Meanwhile, 209 persons tested positive for coronavirus in Lucknow on Saturday while 232 recovered. With five more deaths, the death toll climbed to 1,078 while there are 2,874 active cases in the district. The fresh cases included 20 from Gomtinagar, 19 from

Indiranagar, 14 from Rae Bareilly road, 13 from Hazratganj, 12 from Chowk, 11 from Talkatora, and 10 each from Alambagh, Ashiyana, Jankipuram & Hasanganj.

Across the state, 1,226 persons tested positive, included 39 in Kanpur, 71 in Ghaziabad, 45 in Gautam Buddhagar, 77 in Varanasi and 62 in Meerut, taking the UP tally to 5,73,401. There were 24 deaths in the state, including three in Kanpur, two each in Prayagraj, Varanasi & Chandauli, and one each in Gautam Buddhagar, Meerut, Gorakhpur, Muzaffarnagar, Ballia, Hardoi, Etawah, Mainpuri & Kanpur Dehat, taking the toll to 8,177.



Nagar Nigam carried out a special cleanliness campaign for Gomti river at Kudia Ghat on Saturday in the presence of mayor Sanyukta Bhatia and municipal commissioner Ajay Kumar Dwivedi. Additional municipal commissioner Archana Dwivedi, zonal officers of all eight zones, executive engineers, zonal gangs and 110 ward champions, along with 350 employees, were present at Kudia Ghat for cleaning of the river. Five trucks of water hyacinth were removed with the help of three machines, one robot and five boats.

Pioneer

Gujarat native held for duping retired engineer of ₹58 lakh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A team of cyber crime cell on Saturday nabbed a Gujarat native who had fraudulently transferred Rs 58 lakh from the bank account of a retired chief engineer of Irrigation department. The accused, identified as Avesh Shekhani, was arrested from Thane in Mumbai. Police recovered Rs 10 lakh in cash, a high-end car, a laptop, five ATM cards and seven mobile phones from the accused who owned his crime during investigation.

Police said the name of the accused surfaced during the investigation of a case in which retired chief engineer Amar Kumar had lodged a case. The accused had got the money transferred in his bank account from that of the retired engineer by luring the victim into investing in share market.

The accused told the police that he used to purchase the data of people into share trading. He would then lure them into investing the money as per his plan. He would initially give attractive profit to the investors

and then take away the money showing losses. He later used to switch off the numbers which he used for talking to the victims.

Meanwhile, the Gomtinagar police claimed to have arrested a person on the charges of raping a minor girl and thrashing her brother to stop him from going to police station. The accused was identified as Dheeraj Yadav of Gwari. He had allegedly raped the minor girl after luring her on some pretext and later called his friends who, along with

him, thrashed the victim's brother to terrorise him to not approach police for help.

In another success, eight persons were arrested on the charges of selling illicit liquor during raids conducted in Mohanlalganj, Gosainganj and Nagam on Friday night. A total of 80 litres of illicit liquor and several equipment used for distillation it was recovered. In another case, the Aliganj police arrested a man, identified as Arvind Kumar Gautam, and recovered 14 bottles of desi liquor from him.

President to attend KGMU convocation virtually

Lucknow (PNS): President Ram Nath Kovind will attend the 16th convocation of King George's Medical University virtually on December 21. The convocation will be held at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Scientific Convention Centre and will be attended by Governor Anandiben Patel and Medical Education Minister Suresh Khanna in person. Forty-six students will be awarded medals on the occasion.

Besides, KGMU will be holding its 114th and 115th Foundation Day at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Convention Centre on December 22. The chief guest on the occasion will be Defence Minister Rajnath Singh while the special guests will include Additional Chief Secretary, Medical Education, Rajneesh Dubey, former head of Neurology department Prof Devika Nag and director of Centre for Biomedical Research Prof Alok Dhawan.



Christmas preparations underway at Cathedral church in Hazratganj on Saturday

Pioneer

Mystery shrouds death of youth

Lucknow (PNS): A youth died under mysterious circumstances in Ghazipur police station area on Saturday. The deceased was identified as Alankrit Chaudhary (25) of Jankipuram (Sector-H). As per reports, Alankrit, along with two of his female friends, had gone to a hotel in Ghazipur police station area around 1:30 pm to celebrate some occasion and booked room number 202.

"Between 2 pm and 2:30 pm, Alankrit fell from the staircase and suffered grievous injuries. He was initially rushed to a nearby hospital from where he was referred to Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences. He was declared brought dead at the hospital," the police said.

Meanwhile, body of an unidentified man was recovered from railway tracks in Gosainganj early morning on Saturday. Report said a trackman, identified as Ranjeet Kumar of Bakkas railway station, was on patrol when he spotted the mutilated body around 3:20 am and alerted the station master.

UP govt to promote pvt universities, institutes

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government will promote the establishment of universities and institutes of higher studies in the private sector. UP already has over two dozen private universities.

For ensuring the availability of land for the university building, the government has directed the Higher Education and Revenue departments to make the process of land allotment for such projects totally transparent. The government has also directed both the departments to coordinate and ensure that the land allotment is hassle-free.

Chief Secretary RK Tiwari on Saturday reviewed the progress of the Higher Education department. He said that investors should be encouraged to set up universities and centres of higher studies in the private sector.

He directed the additional

chief secretary of the Higher Education department to hold weekly meetings with organisations and private bodies sponsoring the private university project. He also said the formalities in all the pending cases should be completed as early as possible.

The Higher Education department has been directed to consult the Finance department before granting approval to private university projects where the promoter has contracted loan from financial institutions and the land is hypothecated.

Meanwhile, the state government, to promote research work by the teachers of the state universities, government-run and aided degree colleges, has announced a three-year research and development scheme. The scheme is promoting research by the permanent teachers of the state universities and degree colleges.

The subjects of the research

works in the context of Uttar Pradesh will be given priority. The teachers of the state universities and the government degree colleges already involved in research work will be given priority. The thrust areas of the research work will be identified on Indian culture and its heritage, health, environment, technology in education.

Additional Chief Secretary (Higher Education) Monika S Garg said that the research proposals for the current fiscal should be submitted to the state government by December 30 and by May 30 for the next financial year 2021-22.

She said for major research projects, the state government would provide grants of Rs 15 lakh and for small projects the amount would be Rs 5 lakh.

It will be mandatory to complete the research project in three years and publication of two research papers in journals.

Varasat to end nagging land-related disputes

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a first of its kind campaign to end the nagging land related issues in the rural areas, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched the special 'varasat' drive which aims at ending the exploitation of villagers in the name of natural succession of land and property.

This will not only end the long-pending land disputes but also put a check on the land mafia who generally target disputed lands especially in the rural areas. The new initiative is expected to settle cases pending for years in the 1,08,000 revenue villages of the state.

The villagers also feel that the campaign, which was started by the Yogi government on December 15, will not only help in ending the land disputes but also put a check on the irresponsible behaviour of lekh-pals who generally do not take interest in these matters and are ignorant towards land disputes.

It is also to be mentioned that on every Tehsil Divas, most of the complaints are cases related to land disputes and in the police stations also most of the cases and complaints in the rural areas are related to land

disputes. The main reason for such disputes is at the level of lekhpal who does not take timely decisions on matters of land and is generally ignorant towards issues related to land. Because of this, the villagers keep taking rounds of his office and it is after much difficulty and efforts that their names get registered in the government documents. Due to this tedious exercise, many villagers give up the idea of 'varasat' and most of them, who are generally farmers, do not get loans from banks.

This is also the main reason for the disputes within families and relatives and a majority of villagers also face lawsuits that sometimes continue for generations. To overcome these difficulties, the Yogi government has come up with a scheme in which the villagers will not have to go to the government offices and instead the officials of the Revenue department will approach them and take their applications online. With this system, the villagers will not be exploited at any level and can get their names registered in the land records (khatauni).

Under the arrangements made on the instructions of the chief minister, the people will get

both online and offline facilities for registering the varasat. For the people who have land in the village but are living at some other place, a special counter will be opened at the tehsil level where they can apply for the same. Besides this, the lekhpal will also visit the villages and verify the successors of the people who are dead and assist them in filing the application online.

Besides this, the government is also giving the facility to people to apply from community facility centres. In addition, a helpline is also being launched for assisting people who face any kind of difficulty in filing the application. Under the campaign, all the information related to the varasat will also be uploaded on the website of the Revenue Board based on which the progress of the scheme will be reviewed.

At the end of this two-month scheme, the district magistrate, at the district and the tehsil level, will randomly identify 10 percent of the revenue village randomly and check the facts given in the report of the lekhpal through the sub-divisional magistrates, additional district magistrates and other district level officers.

Design of mosque, hosp to be built in Ayodhya unveiled

Lucknow: The design of a mosque and a hospital to be built on a five-acre land in Ayodhya's Dhannipur village allocated by the Supreme Court in the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case was unveiled on Saturday at the IICF office here. The Uttar Pradesh State Sunni Central Waqf Board had formed the trust, Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation (IICF), to construct the mosque and other utilities on the plot.

Prof SM Akhtar of Jamia Millia Islamia, who joined the programme through video conferencing, displayed the designs of the mosque and the 200-bed hospital that will come up at the site. A community kitchen (saarvanjnik bhojnalaya)

and a modern library will also be set up in the complex.

"The design of the mosque has been prepared using modern technology, and it will be egg-shaped without any dome. The two-storeyed mosque will not have any minaret. Solar power will be installed in the mosque, and around 2,000 people will be able to offer 'namaaz' at the same time," he said. The hospital will provide state-of-art facilities, much needed in the surrounding population, with a focus on the needs of the children who are suffering from malnourishment and expectant mothers, the IICF said in a statement here. The building structure will also house the trust office

and publication house focusing on research and a publication house of Indo Islamic Cultural-Literature Studies.

"The construction work of the mosque was scheduled to begin from January 26, but in this period getting the map approved seems to be difficult, hence the construction is likely to begin from August 15," Athar Husain, secretary of Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation (IICF), told reporters. Asked whether the Uttar Pradesh chief minister will be invited for the foundation laying programme, Hussain said that as per Islamic traditions, no big function is organised while laying the foundation stone of a mosque.

"After the hospital mosque is constructed, prominent people of the country and the state will be invited," he said. To a question on the name of the proposed mosque, Hussain said, "The mosque will not be named after any king or nawab. Personally, I have suggested that the mosque be named as Dhannipur Masjid."

He also said that the work on the mosque will begin soon. "The mosque will be eco-friendly, and plants from across the world will be planted. The hospital will be a different building, which will have a ground floor plus four floors," he said.

Prof Pushpesh Pant, a consultant curator for the archives and museum at the site, said

that there is a need for a good museum to showcase the joint accomplishments and struggles of the Hindu and Muslim communities in India.

After a protracted legal tussle, the Supreme Court had on November 9 last year ruled in favour of the construction of a Ram temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya, and directed the Centre to allot an alternative five-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for building a new mosque at a "prominent" place in the holy town in Uttar Pradesh. The mosque in Ayodhya was demolished on December 6, 1992 by 'kar sevaks' who claimed that an ancient Ram temple stood at the same site. **PTI**

FSDA lodged case against five for sale of spurious oil

Lucknow (PNS): The Food Safety and Drug Administration lodged an FIR against five — three directors, a CEO and a nominee of a private company — at Mohanlalganj police station for selling spurious oil which was seized in March earlier this year.

FSDA official Suresh Mishra said that on March 2 and 3, they had seized spurious

oil (27,537 litres) from Yashodhara Oil Mill under Yashodhara Group of Industries at Mohanlalganj. "This company was buying expired oil from branded companies and then repackaging it in bottles and selling them under its own brand name. We took 22 samples of the seized oil which became court property, as a case was registered," he said.

HC to hear plea challenging criminal proceedings against Uma on Jan 6

Allahabad: The Allahabad High Court will hear on January 6 next year a plea filed by former union minister Uma Bharti challenging the criminal proceedings initiated against her in 2012 for allegedly obstructing a public servant from performing his duties.

Earlier on October 17, 2020, the high court had directed the lower court to

proceed with the trial in accordance with the law. It was alleged that Bharti and her supporters, during a political event at Charkhari, Mahoba in 2012, forcibly stopped a public servant from discharging his duty and violated prohibitory orders.

Justice Suneet Kumar passed the order on Thursday, fixing the hearing for January

6 on a petition filed by the BJP leader and six others. In the petition, it was claimed that Bharti and her supporters were falsely implicated in the case due to political rivalry as she was a candidate in the assembly elections. An FIR was registered against Bharti and her supporters under Indian Penal Code sections 353 and 188. **PTI**

Training begins for COVID-19 vaccination in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Regarding vaccination of COVID-19, the Health department has started training the medical officers and health workers in the district. In this direction, the Training of Trainers (ToT) for COVID-19 vaccination was held here on Friday under the chairmanship of Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Singh informed that a continuous review meeting of preparations is being done by the higher officials of the district with the Health department regarding the vaccination of COVID-19.

According to him, online training has been given to the higher officials of the district by state level officials for the vaccination of corona in the past. In the same sequence, ToT was started for COVID-19 vaccination which continued on Saturday in which medical officer-incharges (MOICs) of urban and rural primary and community health centres were trained.

After this, all the MOICs will train the health workers of the respective blocks. He stat-



CMO Dr VB Singh addressing a training meeting on COVID-19 vaccination in Varanasi

Pioneer

ed that to win over Covid coWin portal will function like an electronic vaccine intelligence (eVin).

Just like the real-time vaccine is located through the eVin portal, the actual location, consumption and temperature are available, similarly the coWin portal will provide information about the vaccine, logistics session site, vaccine and beneficiary.

Through the coWin portal, the registered beneficiary will get all the information related to vaccination through a mes-

sage on their mobile phones, such as time, date, venue and location of the vaccine.

District Immunisation Officer Dr VS Rai said that in the first phase, about 12,600 health workers including 4,600 from government and 8,000 private sector units will get the vaccine and about 8,700 health workers have already been listed on the portal for vaccination.

This data has also been uploaded on the portal. Duty of five personnel will be deployed at the venue of the session. In

the first session, the beneficiary will be identified from the due list and then kept under doctor's supervision for 30 minutes after vaccination. The second vaccine will be administered on the 28th day after the first vaccine. Later this data will be uploaded in ANM portal. The training was attended by Deputy CMO Dr Suresh Singh, ACOMO Dr AK Maurya, ACOMO Dr Rajesh Prasad, DMC Manoj Kumar of UNICEF, MOICs and district representatives of WHO and UNDP.

42 new Covid cases in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 42 new patients have been detected in the district on Saturday, increasing the total number to 20,598. There was no casualty reported during the day and the death toll remained at 341. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 116 and 108 of them have been recovered from home isolation while eight from the hospitals, increasing the number to 16,924 and 2,898 respectively. The total number of patients

who have been recovered so far is 19,822, leaving 435 active cases. The recovery rate is 96.23 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, 30 positive patients were found out of 2,394 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 4,84,171 and the results of 2,964 are awaited. Out of them, 4,63,585 were negative while 20,586 positive. The total number of samples collected was 5,05,424.

Earlier, a male aged 60 from Hukulganj succumbed to Covid-19 at Medwin Hospital, while a female aged 65 from Bhagwanpur died at Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU). With the addition of six new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,597 including 200 red zones. Two green zones have been converted into red zones again. There are 2,397 green zones with 15 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 42 and 30 tests conducted there respectively have been found negative. Besides, all the 190 tests have been found negative at Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura apart from 26 at CHC Shivpur, 120 at LBS Hospital Ramnagar, 137 at Government Women's Hospital, 41 at Swami Vivekanand Hospital, Bhelupur and 75 at SSH BHU.

Energy Conservation Week concludes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As per the instructions of Railway Board, the Energy Conservation Week organised under the aegis of the Electrical department of Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) concluded here on Saturday with a short drama related to energy conservation. On the occasion, the chief guest of the programme and General Manager (GM) of BLW Anjali Goyal while highlighting the history and rationale of energy conservation in Indian Railways said that without energy our sustainable development is not possible.

She further said that unnecessary exploitation of energy would lead us to unbalanced development as apart from harming the environment it would also make our future vulnerable so we have to stop such unnecessary exploitation. The GM appreciated the efforts being made by the Electrical department of BLW towards energy conservation and said that grid energy consumption has decreased by 26% in the last three years and BLW today produces three phase electric locomotives



GM Anjali Goyal giving certificate to a winner of Energy Conservation Week at BLW in Varanasi on Saturday

Pioneer

equipped with modern technology which is playing an important role in the direction of environmental protection by 20% regeneration. She also honoured and awarded the winning participants in the competitions organised during the week.

Presiding over the function, Chief Electrical Engineer (Service and Progress) MK Gupta elaborated on the achievements of BLW during the week and highlighted the achievements of BLW saying

that saving energy is to generate energy. At the end, the vote of thanks was proposed by Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer (Maintenance) KM Singh. A large number of departmental heads, officers, staff council members, supervisors and employees were present on the occasion. The entire programme was conducted by Senior Translator Amlesh Srivastava.

Earlier, during the week a stall of Solar Energy Efficient Panels was set up by the Uttar

Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Development Agency on the BLW campus under the week. While visiting there Anjali Goyal advised all to use BEE recognised electrical equipment of high star rating as such electrical appliances reduce energy consumption as well as reduce carbon emissions. In order to propagate the message of energy conservation, a street play titled 'Energy Conservation' was staged by BLW artistes at BLW Inter College crossing. The artistes urged the local people to focus on energy conservation.

Meanwhile, Safety department and Railway Protection Force (RPF) jointly organised the demonstration and training to use firefighting properly during the fire accident in which 147 employees working in the Block and Plant Division and RPF participated.

This is the fifth such event. Prior to this, similar training was organised on November 20 and 27 at Administration building and Engine division while on December 4 and 11 at Store and Loco divisions respectively.

Demonstration by e-rickshaw drivers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Distressed with the decision taken by the district administration and Traffic department to restrict the plying of e-rickshaw on Maidagin-Godowlia route to ensure the smooth traffic on this busiest route, the e-rickshaw drivers on Saturday staged a protest and submitted a memorandum demanding the permission for the operation of the same. Under the banner of E-Rickshaw Chalak Kalyan Samiti, Varanasi, the e-rickshaw drivers gathered at the district headquarter here and staged a protest against the restriction imposed by the district administration and Traffic department on the plying of the e-rickshaw on the above mentioned route.

The families of the hundreds of e-rickshaw drivers are now facing starvation-like situation because of the restric-

tion, the agitated e-rickshaw drivers said blaming the police for making their exploitation if they try to go on this route. They have no other option except this, they lamented and demanded the District Magistrate to lift the restriction and allow them to drive their vehicles on this route. They also submitted a memorandum to the district administration regarding their demand.

CORPORATOR STAGES DHARNA: Annoyed with the gross negligence made by the officers of the Municipal Corporation, the BJP corporator of Hukulganj Ward Brijesh Chandra Srivastava along with local residents on Saturday staged a dharna in the area in protest against the leakage in water pipe causing the drinking water flowing on the road and supply of contaminated water for the last many days. He ended the dharna after the assurance by Municipal

Commissioner Gorang Rathi solving the problem at the earliest.

The corporator Brijesh informed that there are leakages in the water pipe at three places between Tadiikhana trijunction and Durga temple on Pandeypur-Hukulganj road for the last many days and due to which, the water is flowing on the road causing inconvenience to passers-by. The road has also caved in almost 2 feet because of water flowing continuously, he said adding, it also caused the road accident here. The local residents blamed the officers of the corporation for paying no need towards this acute problem despite the repeated complaints.

When Rathi came to know about this he held a talk with the corporator and urged to end the agitation by assuring that the problem would be addressed at the earliest.

JOB OFFERS: The Placement Cell, Faculty of Law, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) organised its first round of placements with Tata AIG on Friday via Microsoft Teams app. Tata AIG had also recruited several students from Faculty of Law, BHU in the previous years and again this year, the Placement Cell of Faculty of Law was approached for a virtual placement round. The recruitment process began with 65 applicants sharing their curriculum vitae and details which were further communicated to the company. The applicants sat for the first round of the selection process which was the group discussion. The students gave their very best and 10 students qualified for the next round of personal interview. The Placement Cell is jubilant to announce that two of the candidates- Ankur Bhatt and Harsh Vardhan Srivastava secured the placement.

Police recruitment exam: STF busts cheaters gang, 8 held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The STF busted cheaters gang involved in the Police Recruitment and Promotion Board examination. Just a day before the examination, the local unit busted the cheating gang and arrested eight people, including three candidates. Apart from cash, five admit cards and other items have been recovered from their possession. All the arrested were being grilled till late in the night.

Written examination was conducted by the board on Saturday and also is to be held on Sunday under the direct recruitment 2016 for the posts of jail warders, firemen and constable among others. STF was also directed to maintain the exam purity. In the same sequence, the local unit got information that some people are trying to break into the

exam. Following which, on Friday night, the team arrested eight people including five gang members from the Civil Lines area. In their search, in addition to the admit card and cash, the original educational certificates and other items of two dozen candidates were recovered from their possession. STF was engaged in interrogation of them till late night.

Among those arrested by the STF were Man Singh Yadav resident of Anapur Nawabganj, Vikas Patel resident of Lohta Bazar, Varanasi, Dilip Kumar, Mangal Yadav, Shiv Kumar, all the three residents of Kiraon Mouaima, Satyam Patel resident of Jagdishpur Soraon (candidate), Mahesh Kumar resident of Bhanka Mauaima (candidate), Rajgabar Saidahan resident of Soraon (candidate).

According to the STF, during interrogation it was found that three candidates and the remaining others were members of the gang. The gang members said that they took a contract from the candidates for passing their exam with a hefty amount. After getting the candidates, they visited the centres and did the setting. They lured the management or an employee by money and then got a copy of the question paper through the solvent copy and got it to the candidate.

According to the STF officers, during interrogation of the gang members, it has also come to light that they had decided to facilitate copying for their candidate sitting in an examination centre in Varanasi. They had a deal with a person named Sonu Yadav at CNG Inter College, Shivpur Lodhan, Varanasi,

who was to be paid on Friday itself. But before that he was nabbed by the STF. Officers said that information has been given to the Varanasi unit as well. It is trying to find out what is the relation of the above college to a person named Sonu Yadav.

The STF had recovered five admit cards, basic educational certificates of 22 candidates, four bank cheques to the tune of ₹ 5 lakh, 10 mobiles, one residence certificate, six voter IDs, seven ATMs, four Aadhaar cards, four PAN cards, four DL, two cheque books, one passbook, RC of a bike, a Tavera and ₹ 2.70 lakh in cash. Preliminary investigation revealed that the gang was preparing to facilitate the candidates by taking money from them. Inquiries are on with the arrested members and candidates, added Neeraj Pandey, ASP STF.

5 members of ATM card hacker gang held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

In UP's Pratapgarh district, the SWAT team in collaboration with Lalganj police arrested five members of ATM card hacker gang from Lalganj area during a checking drive in the wee hours on Saturday. Two laptops, seven mobiles, 44 ATM cards, ₹2.73 lakh, magnetic card reader and a car have been recovered from them.

On a tip-off by an informer the Lalganj police and the SWAT team on Saturday said that five members of ATM card hacker gang were coming

by car from Rae Bareilly. On this, at around 4 o'clock in the morning, SHO Sanjay Yadav, sub-inspector Pramod Singh of the SWAT team along with his team stood in front of the first shops of Indira Chowk in Lalganj town. After a while the car appeared, the police indicated to stop. The driver then tried to run away by turning the car over. Police personnel then cordoned off the car. When the police searched the five occupants of the car, two laptops, seven mobile phones, magnetic card readers, 44 ATM cards and ₹2.73 lakh were

found from them.

Police arrested Akhilesh Pal son of Nanhelal Pal resident of Ramgarh Raila Pakdia, police station Lalganj, Rahul Pal son of Anil Pal resident of Mandhata of Tikri police station, Ramu Bharti alias Aditya son of Dayaram resident of Khapariya Handia, district Prayagraj, Ramashankar alias Babbu son of Umashankar Chauhan resident of Handia and Ajay Yadav alias Jokhu's son of Tejbal resident of Ramaipur Bajhamishran police station Handia, district Prayagraj confessed to have

been involved in a gang who fraudulently grabbed the ATM cards of gullible persons and then scanned the data of the ATM card with a mini device hidden in the palm. During this, the other partner saw the PIN code of the card holder. Then after preparing a clone of the card, they withdrew money from people's accounts.

SP Anurag Arya told the reporters that the gang targeted such ATM booths where guards were not appointed. Such people were targeted who seemed to be belonging to the rural environment, SP added.

78 more test positive in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Three teachers including the Principal of Arya Kanya Inter College were found infected with the COVID-19 in a special testing drive conducted by the Health department on Friday. The Covid report of a total of 78 people, including CO Chakbandi, two doctors of SRN Hospital, deputy manager of SBI Civil Lines Branch, has come positive. 50 people beat the corona infection. During the treatment, two patients died.

According to the Nodal Officer for Corona Dr Rishi Sahai, teams have been set up for random testing with the

Target Group. After two days, the number of infected has reduced again. There have been 78 new cases of Covid infection in 24 hours. CMO Dr Prabhakar Rai said that on Friday, a corona examination of 6,602 people was done. Out of them 50 people who got infection-free, 10 were discharged from Covid hospitals. At the same time, 40 people defeated corona infection by staying in home isolation. He said that as many as 19,963 people living in home isolation have become healthy.

The infected also included two High Court officers and a staff nurse from CHC Dhanupur. The Covid report

of an assistant professor posted in the computer science department of a private college has come positive, added the CMO.

DIESEL BUSES TO BE REPLACED WITH CNG ONES : To discard diesel buses in a phased manner and replace them with Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) operated ones for minimising air pollution in the state, the Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) has decided to replace 1,525 buses in the first phase including 150 of Prayagraj.

Fifteen cities have been chosen to initiate this process

including Prayagraj, Kanpur, Meerut, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Jhansi, Ayodhya, Lucknow and Ghaziabad. The UPSRTC owned buses will not be touched in the first phase, but the diesel buses hired from private operators, will be replaced by CNG ones.

Lucknow and Ghaziabad will replace 200 such buses each, while Kanpur, Meerut, Varanasi, and Prayagraj will have to do away with 150 diesel buses each in the first phase. Gorakhpur, Jhansi, and Ayodhya will replace 50 buses each. This step of the government is expected to improve the quality of air in big cities of the state.

Automatic signaling commissioned in Aung-Bindki Road section

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Automatic Signaling has been commissioned in Aung-Bindki Road section of Prayagraj division. North Central Railway (NCR) is moving towards seamless automatic signaling on New Delhi-Howrah trunk route to ensure smooth mobility of trains.

NCR operates and maintains 751 Kms of busiest New Delhi-Howrah trunk route falling on Prayagraj division. Mobility on this route is critical for overall operations of trains from North to Eastern part of the country. To increase train handling capacity in this critical section, many important works including tripling,



quadrupling, flyovers, yard

remodeling, automatic signaling have been under taken and major sections between Kanpur to Ghaziabad and Bamraui-Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Jn. are already equipped with automatic signaling system. For seamless automatic signaling from Gaziabad to Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Jn., work for provision of automatic signaling is currently underway in Kanpur-Fatehpur section. In this connection, automatic signaling system for 5.8 Kms between Aung-Bindki Road has been completed successfully through joint efforts of Project Unit of North Central Railway and Prayagraj division on December 18, 2020. This is

fourth block section in Kanpur-Fatehpur section where automatic signaling has been commissioned in current financial year.

This important work has been executed by the multi-disciplinary team lead by CSTE/Project/NCR Bholendra Singh, Sr DEE TRD Prayagraj, Sr DEN II Prayagraj, Sr DSTEs of Prayagraj and Kanpur. Automatic signaling in Bindki Road-Kanpur Gugauli section is also targeted for commissioning within December-2020 and entire section from Kanpur to Fatehpur is targeted for completion by March-2021. This will enhance train handling capacity of this section significantly.

VHP holds Sant Sammelan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

To ensure mass participation in Ram Janmabhoomi Temple construction in Ayodhya, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad organised a Sant Sammelan here at Prayagraj on Saturday. Saints drawn from Prayagraj and nearby districts directed the VHP to send its small groups (Toli) to every village and street to contact Hindu families, and collect fund for temple construction. One such Sant Sammelan is scheduled to be held at Varanasi on December 21.

There is no dearth of money as a good number of

capitalists have opened their coffers for Ram Janmabhoomi Temple, but just to ensure mass participation, this mass contact and fund collection drive will be launched, said the saints. The VHP leaders informed that no pressure will be built on any one to donate money, and they will accept donations of minimum 10 rupees. Those who want to pay more will be welcomed.

The Sant Sammelan was organised at Kesar Bhawan, Prayagraj where saints including Akhara Parishad chairman Mahant Narendra Giri, Hari Chaitanya Brahmachari and many more participated under the chairmanship of

Swami Vasudevanand Saraswati.

Saints also chalked out strategies for the coming Magh Mela 2021.

PRAYAGRAJ TO GET NEW FIRE STATION: Prayagraj will get a new fire station besides modernisation of the existing ones. The state government has sanctioned 1,716 posts for fire services, and has released budget to create 66 new fire stations in different districts including Prayagraj.

Chief Minister is of the view that the state should be protected from fire accidents in a better way, and for this he has sanctioned budget and posts

for fire stations.

New fire stations are created at Gorakhpur, Mau, Banda, Rampur, Kanpur Nagar, Gonda, Unnao, Kushi Nagar, Badaun, Agra, Sultanpur, Jaunpur, Deoria, Bahraich, Sant Kabir Nagar, Varanasi, Chitrakoot, Hardoi, Rae Bareilly, Etawah, Sonbhadra, Bulandshahar, Chandauli, Muzaffarnagar, Mahoba, Ghazipur, Sitapur, Mirzapur, Etah, Auraiya, Hathras, Ballia, Maharajganj, Kaushambi, Jhansi, Balrampur, Amroha, Siddharth Nagar, and Prayagraj districts.

Construction work is in progress at 101 sanctioned fire stations.



Chief Development Officer, Mahendra Kumar inspecting the cold chain chamber at Kanshiram Hospital on Saturday.

Pioneer

CDO inspects COVID-19 vaccine storage facility at Kanshiram Memorial Hospital

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Chief Development Officer Mahendra Kumar carried out a surprise inspection of the COVID-19 vaccine storage facilities at Kanshiram Memorial Combined Hospital on Saturday.

He took a first hand feedback and directed the officials to complete the work on a war footing. He said four ice lined refrigerators had already been received and the fifth one

would arrive soon.

The CDO said the ice lined refrigerators would be fitted with a logger device which would refer it to the cold chain handler in case of low or high power fluctuation and thus handle it automatically.

He directed the hospital authorities to ensure that they had generator sets for an uninterrupted power supply.

Cold Chain Manager Dhananjay Singh said that if the power supply or the gen-

erator set power failed, the ice lining would maintain the inside temperature of the refrigerator at a safe level for vaccines.

Singh said an ice lined refrigerator had a top-opening lid which prevented loss of cold air when the door was opened. He said vaccines were stored in baskets hanging into the refrigerator cabinet and the vaccines were arranged according to their freeze sensitivity; the least freeze-sensitive vaccines placed

at the bottom of the basket and the most freeze-sensitive vaccines placed at the top.

Singh said all personnel who would handle or administer vaccines would be well versed with the storage and handling policies and procedures.

He said written instructions would be given to each person and training would be imparted to the special staff of this section.

52 more test positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar reported 52 more coronavirus positive cases on Saturday evening. Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 52 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Friday evening and Saturday evening taking the tally of confirmed cases to 31,790 cases. He said that 13 patients were discharged from hospital. He said two COVID-19 deaths in the city were reported till Saturday evening keeping the death toll to 809. The CMO said at present 655 active cases were undergoing treatment. Dr Mishra said 3313 samples were sent for testing in the city.

Showcause to four for embezzling ₹29 lakh from Parag Dairy funds

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Four persons, including two brothers, were found involved in the embezzlement of ₹ 29 lakh in the funds of Parag Dairy's Farrukhabad unit.

The investigation team has served showcause notice on them and will decide about the penal action to be initiated after a week.

During the tenure of former general manager of Parag Dairy, GC Singh, Shivam and his elder brother Vinay of Palaria, Farrukhabad, were engaged in collecting milk from Kannauj Cow Milk Plant and supplying it in the market. During the lockdown, instead of depositing the cash received against the supply of milk in the dairy account, they kept it with them. They used to send photos of fake cheques to GC Singh and manager (finance) Manoj Kumar to prove remittance of the amount to the dairy's account. After some time, when a dairy employee checked the account, the fraud came to light. Immediately, GC Singh apprised the IG Range and his Kanpur headquarters about the fraud. Later, an FIR was lodged with the Govind Nagar police against the guilty employees.

Suspecting the involvement of some other employees of Farrukhabad and Kanpur headquarters, the managing director had set up a two-member committee consisting of senior general manager AK Singh and deputy manager (finance) Sanjay Bharti who had regularly been quizzing the guilty employees.

They served showcause notices on three employees of Farrukhabad and one of Kanpur headquarters, seeking their replies within a week.

The committee will soon submit its report to the managing director for his final decision in the matter.

Parag Dairy General Manager Rajiv Varshney said the investigation committee had sought reply from the guilty employees on five points within a week.

He said on receipt of their reply, a report would be sent to headquarters for further action against the guilty employees.

Driver killed in dumper-truck collision

KANPUR (PNS): The driver of a dumper was killed while its cleaner was seriously injured when the vehicle collided head-on with a truck near Uriyara Chauraha in Vidhnu police station area late Friday night.

The police had to use gas cutter to retrieve the body of the dumper driver and also the injured cleaner trapped in the mangled driver's cabin of the dumper.

After the accident, the truck driver and cleaner escaped.

The deceased dumper driver was identified as Nagendra Yadav of Ashoha Malakheda, Unnao, and the cleaner as Deepak of Jahangirabad, Ghatampur.

After collecting maurang (coarse sand) from Hamirpur, the dumper was going to Lucknow when it met with the mishap.

NER GM reviews works

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

General Manager of North Eastern Railway (NER) Vinay Kumar Tripathi reviewed various works related to maintenance of signals, electricity and bridges, including passenger facilities being provided to the Divyangians on NER at GM's auditorium here on Friday. Additional General Manager (AGM) Amit Kumar Agarwal, Principal Chief Operations Manager (PCOM) Anil Kumar Singh, Principal Chief Commercial Manager (CCM)



GM Vinay Kumar Tripathi addressing the review meeting.

SC Prasad, Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer AK Pandey, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)/ Construction RK Yadav, Principal Chief Engineer Satish Kumar Pandey, Principal Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer Anil Kumar Mishra, Principal Financial Adviser Tanuja Pandey, Principal Chief Security Commissioner/ Railway Protection Force (RPF) Atul Kumar Srivastava, Chief Project Director/Station Development SK Mishra, Chief Personnel Officer/ Administration Nuruddin Ansari, secretary to GM DK Khare, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh and Deputy General Manager/General Krishna Chandra Singh and through video conferencing Divisional Railway Manager (DRM)/Lucknow Dr Monika Agnihotri, DRM/Izzatnagar Ashutosh Pant and Additional Divisional Railway Manager (ADRM)/Varanasi Praveen Kumar participated in the meeting.

While reviewing the facilities being provided to the Divyang passengers, the GM said that they should be provided to them as per the standard set at the stations. This includes facilities like ramp, parking system, non-slippery walkway, signage, a drinking water tap, toilet on the

removed on a priority basis. He directed to complete the works of replacement of point machines and making a provision for electric lifting barrier. For improving the power supply system besides rewiring and replacement of old fittings at Lalit Narayan Mishra Railway Hospital, Gorakhpur, as early as possible, he set a target to provide a lift there by March 21 next year. Where the work of installing glow sign boards had been approved, there, slim LEDs and glow sign board should be installed, he said. During the meeting various aspects related to facilities to be developed in workshops were discussed in detail. Discussing in detail various works and schemes related to employee welfare, the GM asked to ensure quality in the work to be done in their interest. While discussing the safety-related works approved by Nirbhaya Fund, he emphasised on their speedy completion. The GM clearly directed the officers that all works should be completed within the stipulated time-frame. The officials assured the GM that they will take action on his instructions, goals and suggestions on a priority basis and would contribute towards the direction of improving rail movement and passenger amenities.

NCL CMD honoured

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD) of Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) Prabhat Kumar Sinha was honoured by IIT Kharagpur, a world-renowned prestigious technical institute, recently. He was honoured for his unique contribution to the mining sector during a three-day-long international webinar organised by IIT Kharagpur. Sinha as a distinguished guest in the webinar shared his experiences in the mining sector with the participants. Mining giants from all over the world joined the international webinar based on the topic 'Safe Mining and Advanced Resources Technology-2020 (SMART-2020)'. Presently PK Sinha along with NCL is also holding the responsibility of Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Coal India's Odisha-based subsidiary Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL). Having strong managerial skills, Sinha has over 37 years of experience as a mining engineer in the field of opencast and underground coal mining.



Keeping the future and present challenges of the mining sector in mind under his leadership the NCL has established the Science & Applied Research Alliance and Support (SARAS) as the company's Research & Development (R&D) centre. The main emphasis of SARAS is on mining technologies, clean coal technology,

climate change, waste management, new and renewable energy, improvement in production and productivity and providing scientific support to NCL units. It may be pointed out here that PK Sinha has been awarded many well-known awards and honours earlier too, including the prestigious Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) PSE Excellence Award. Sinha,

who has a vast understanding of the global coal industry, has presented technical papers on various topics related to the coal industry in various national as well as international fora. Under the leadership of CMD PK Sinha the NCL along with production by doing CSR work on a massive scale has connected people with the mainstream of society.

Three killed in road accidents

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Three persons lost their lives in separate accidents in the district on Friday. As per the reports received here, Doodh Nath Tiwari (70), a resident of Samogra village under Dehat Kotwali police station, found lying in an injured condition 500 metres away from his house on the Mirzapur-Rewa road when he had gone for a morning walk. Two hours after the accident his family members came to know about the matter and took him to a hospital where the doctors on duty declared him as brought dead. In the second incident a vegetable seller died under Kachhawaan police station when he fell into a drain along with his motorcycle near Katka village on the national highway. Rajendra Paswan (50), a resident of Barwaan village in Bhadohi district used to do vegetable business. In the morning he was going to Kachhawaan market when he fell into a drain along the national highway. The passerby got him out

from there, informed the police which took him to a private hospital at Kachhawaan where he was declared as brought dead. In the third incident which took place under Adalhat police station Pappu Singh (35), a resident of Parsiya village, died on the spot when he was hit by a truck while he was easing himself near Naraipur market. The locals caught the truck and handed it over to the police along with its driver. The deceased, Pappu Singh, is survived by his wife and two children aged seven and six years respectively. When his family members came to know about his premature and untimely death they were shell-shocked and inconsolable.

DIRECTIVE: Technical adviser NABARD Ajay Kumar Singh said the state government was committed to ensuring development so it paved the way to get irrigation facility from Bansagar Canal Project in the district. These views were expressed by him while interacting with mediamen at VIP inspection house of the Irrigation department on

Friday. Appreciating the positive approach of the state government that it succeeded in getting ample fund from NABARD for its projects and as a result the Kanahar irrigation project which was remaining pending for more than four decades was going to irrigate the area in 2022. He said that the practical approach of the state government was very helpful in utilising the fund. Giving details about the ambitious Kanahar project he said that under it not only the problem of rehabilitation was solved but the dispossessed persons were provided a developed colony equipped with civic amenities, school, hospital, roads etc. He directed the officers of the district related with irrigation department to submit a plan to check the erosion caused by Ganga river, construction of the ghats for the beautification of the city and prepare a plan to develop Shiwal Ghat as a tourist spot. He made it clear that NABARD was ready to release the fund but it should be feasible and useful in the larger interest of the district.

Kumar inaugurates LIC's new building

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Life Insurance Corporation of India Chairman MR Kumar, while inaugurating the newly-constructed seven-storey building named Jeevan Nidhi at Vasundhara Ghaziabad (NCR) virtually on Saturday, said the LIC continued to be a global giant in life insurance and its assets were increasing at a rapid pace and this was mainly because LIC worked as a team. He expressed the hope that the LIC would continue to go up the success ladder each day.

Regional Manager Kanpur (NCR) AK Sharma said it was a matter of great pride that this modern and magnificent building spread on 7,310.95 metres was among the biggest buildings possessed by the LIC. He said the new building stood fourth at the national level.

He said the NCR was focused on acquisition and creation of properties. He said on the one hand LIC's assets were increasing and on the other, the LIC received huge revenue earnings as rent in return.

Sharma said the Jeevan Nidhi was a huge palatial build-



ing and stood tall in the region and concretised the faith in its customers and clientele.

He said the Income Tax Department had rented a floor in this huge building and thus

the LIC had started earning rent from the current time.

He added that NCR was dedicated to acquisition and creation and this could be made possible because of its officials, dashing development team and agents. He extended his wishes to the entire team. Prominent among those who took part in the event were LIC's Mumbai MD Vipin Anand, Mukesh Gupta, Raj Kumar, PK Sangam, SS Nadkarni, AK Sharma, Gulshan Kumar and Bhagwan Singh.

CRIMINAL NABBED : A notorious criminal, who was on the lam after being released from Lucknow Adarsh Jail on parole, was arrested on Saturday afternoon. Circle Officer, Sisamau, Tripurari Pandey said the Lucknow police had arrested the criminal, Noor Alam of Colonelganj, Kanpur, last year and sent him to Adarsh Jail there. During lockdown, in a bid to prevent other inmates from being infected by coronavirus, Noor Alam was released on the directive of the state administration. He was to report his entry in the jail in November but did not do so.

Sonia paves way for Rahul to...

From Page 1

“I am willing to work for the party as all of you desire,” senior Congress leader Pawan Bansal said quoting Rahul after the meeting. The former Congress president reportedly also agreed that “better communication” was needed and the party needed to strengthen itself at the booth-level.

When asked whether Rahul Gandhi’s comment and the cheers that greeted it meant his return as chief, Bansal said: “No one has an issue with Rahul Gandhi... don’t put words in my mouth. The process of electing a Congress

president is in the process.”

The dissidents reportedly remained firm on their position of demanding an election for the post of Congress president, the Congress Working Committee and the parliamentary board. A letter in August by 23 Congress leaders noted the leadership drift and called for an “active and visible leadership” and collective decision-making.

“A positive discussion was started by Sonia Gandhi. She talked about defining the narrative, deciding the top leadership,” Bansal said. “Sonia Gandhi said we all are one big family and should work to strengthen the party. There is no dissidence in Congress, all are committed to work unitedly to energeise the party.”

The dissenters, including Ghulam Nabi Azad, Shashi Tharoor and Anand Sharma,

spoke directly to the Gandhis for the first time since the letter bomb. AK Antony, Ashok Gehlot and Ambika Soni were among the loyalists at the meeting while Kamal Nath reportedly played a big part in getting Sonia Gandhi to agree to the meeting. This was first of a series of meetings - to be held over the next 10 days - between the Gandhis and senior party leaders ahead of organisational elections. Some of the leaders outside the rebel group, like P Chidambaram, reportedly asked for a shift from the “general secretary approach” of running States. The state Congress chief should be empowered and booth level committees must be strengthened to help the Congress retain its voters, they suggested in what was described as a “free and frank discussion.”

Rahul Gandhi’s sister

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, the Congress general secretary in charge of Uttar Pradesh, talked about rebuilding the organisation and “taking care of grass-roots workers”. She reportedly called for “better inner party communication”. Congress leaders said “no one was critical of Rahul Gandhi” at the meeting and the rebels “supported him”.

Rahul Gandhi quit as Congress president after the party’s national election defeat last year, forcing Sonia Gandhi to take over as interim chief until the party elected a new chief. Since then, he has given no indication of any change of heart. Sources said Rahul Gandhi did not mince his words as he addressed veterans like Kamal Nath, who lost power in Madhya Pradesh after senior leader Jyotiraditya Scindia rebelled and switched

to the BJP. He reportedly told Kamal Nath that even though he was Chief Minister, “RSS officers” ran Madhya Pradesh. To former Union Minister a party veteran P Chidambaram, Rahul Gandhi reportedly remarked that in his State Tamil Nadu, the Congress, at the booth level was only an adjunct to ally DMK. The fall-out of the farmers’ agitation and the strategy to be adopted by the party in this regard also came under discussion.

“Congress president Sonia Gandhi also addressed the meeting. Former president Rahul Gandhi also addressed the meet. Priyanka also expressed her views. Senior leaders talked about the state of the party and gave good suggestions to strengthen it. The Congress president will take forward the suggestions,” he added.

You will be left alone: Shah to Didi

From Page 1

“The very people on the backs of whom the party was created are now being sidelined, humiliated and outcast... The party was filled with “Sakam Karma Bhogis” (those concerned with self-aggrandisement individuals) who are not bothered about anyone but themselves, individuals who will take monetary compensation for their services and disappear as soon as the elections conclude.”

Meanwhile, faced with a large number of desertions the TMC put up a brave face saying those who had left the party were all redundant. Calling

Adhikari a “coward” Trinamool MP Kalyan Banerjee said, “Instead of bringing the issue of Bhaipo he should have named him and seen the consequence.”

On his quitting the party, another senior Minister Firhad Hakim said “If he feels that the TMC has rotted and that he could not perform here then why he did not leave earlier ... why he waited for the past 10 years and consumed the cream before leaving ahead of the elections. He will have to explain a lot of things to the people.”

A deft organiser Adhikari’s exit could hit the TMC hard as he has a good following in a number of districts including West Midnapore, East Midnapore (from where he belongs), Bankura, Purulia, Murshidabad, Malda, Burdwan and North Dinajpur, insiders said.

India poised to...

From Page 1

Observing the fact that despite festivals in October and November, Vardhan said no new surge of cases was observed in this period due to comprehensive testing, tracking and treatment policy implemented on the ground. Sujeet K Singh, Director (NCDC), presented a detailed report on how the data-driven graded government policies have helped India achieve significant control over the pandemic. Singh presented a granular analysis of the trajectory of the pandemic in each state pointing out critical parameters like positivity, RAT and RT-PCR per cent breakup, the concentration of cases in particular districts and other trends like a fatality, and fatality within 48 and 72 hours of hospitalisation. He also presented data on the total dedicated Covid-19 facilities in the country.

Investors’ mindset has shifted...

From Page 1

He asked industry to link today’s goal with that of future of the country saying “coming 27 years will not only set our global role but also test dreams and dedication of Indians”.

The Prime Minister said, “This is the time for you to show your capability, commitment and courage to the world.”

Looking out the change brought about by his Government over the years, Modi said there was so much Government interference that investors said ‘why India’. Today the faith reposed by the Government in the private sector and encouragement of foreign investors have made the same people say ‘why not India’, he said. Modi stated that new India is pushing towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India). The Government’s main focus is on manufacturing and production linked incentives have been given to boost domestic capabilities and capacity, he said. “The world trusts the Indian economy. Record FDI and FPI during pandemic testimony of that”, Modi said. The Prime Minister asked the industry to adopt the best corporate governance and profit-sharing practices. He also said investment in research and development (R&D) must be increased and the private sector must scale up investments. “There is a great need to increase investment in R&D. In the US, 70 per cent of investments in R&D is done by the private sector, in India the same is done by the public sector. A big chunk of this is in the IT, pharma and transport sectors. Today the need is of increasing the private sector share of investment in R&D,” he said. “Today when we are on mission mode to make local-global, we have to react fast to geopolitical developments. A mechanism has to be developed to see how India can meet any sudden spurt in demand in the global supply chain,” he said adding there was a need for better coordination between the Ministry of External Affairs, Commerce and Trade, and industry associations.

RAJASTHAN STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
Head Office, Parivahan Marg, Jaipur
E-Tender Notice
RFP for implementation of Integrated Central Bus Enquiry System in RSRTC Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation, Jaipur invite Bids from eligible bidders who have necessary qualification and experience to carry out the work of implementation of Integrated Central Bus Enquiry System in RSRTC in a time bound manner. The bidders who are interested in bidding can download the RFP from our website www.eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in, www.rsrtc.rajjasthan.gov.in and www.sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in from 14th Dec, 2020 onwards.
Raj.Samwed/C20/877 Advt. No. 150/2020-21 Executive Director (Traffic)

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
Dy. Chief Engineer/C/ HQ/Northern Railway, Lucknow for & on behalf of the President of India Invites open e-tender under Two-Packet system for the following work:

1. Name of work and location	Varanasi Jn. : Additional P. Way works including dismantling and linking of BG track & turnouts, ballast insertion, leading of P-way material, BN/NI including working of track machines and other allied (P-Way) works in connection with “Varanasi-Yard remodeling work (Phase-II)” of Lucknow Division on Northern Railway.
2. Completion period of work	15 (Fifteen) Months
3. Approx. Cost of the work	Rs. 1576.85 Lakh
4. Earnest Money amount (to be deposited online)	Rs. 9,38,400.00
5. Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tenders may be uploaded up to 11.30 hrs on 13.01.2021 on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in . The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the tender will be opened at 11.30 hrs on 13.01.2021.
6. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document	The detailed e-tender notice and tender document is available on www.ireps.gov.in w.e.f. 22.12.2020. Above tenders document will be available for submission of offer on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 30.12.2020 to 13.01.2021. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice can also be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

No. 9-Tender/Dy.CE/HQ/LKO Dated : 18.12.2020. 2828/20
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
(See Section 82 Cr. P.C.)
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused persons (1) **Interpal S/o Basant R/o Vill.-Akrauli, P.S. Baniyather, Distt. Sambhal, (U.P.)** (2) **Shahadat S/o Ahsan R/o Vill.-Akrauli, P.S. Baniyather, Distt. Sambhal, (U.P.)**, 2nd Add. Mohalla-Abdullah Bilari, Distt. - Muradabad (U.P.) (3) **Khusi Ram S/o Sh. Devi Ram R/o Vill.-Shahpur Dev, P.S. Shahbad, Distt. Rampur, (U.P.)** and (4) **Abhiraj S/o Sh. Khusi Ram R/o Vill.-Shahpur Dev, P.S. Shahbad, Distt. Rampur, (U.P.)** have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case F.I.R. No. 426/20 u/s 457/380/411/34 IPC registered at P.S. Kirti Nagar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said (1) **Interpal** (2) **Shahadat** (3) **Khusi Ram** and (4) **Abhiraj** have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused (1) **Interpal** (2) **Shahadat** (3) **Khusi Ram** and (4) **Abhiraj** are required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **05.02.2021**.

By Order
Ms. Chhavi Kapoor,
DP/290/WD/2020 Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (West Distt.),
(Court Notice) Room No. 146, 1st Floor, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi,

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ
E-TENDER NOTICE
Dy. Chief Engineer/RSW, North Central Railway, 2nd floor Old. G.M. Office, Nawab Yusuf Road Near Balmiki Chauraha Prayagraj-211001, acting for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-tenders for the following work through E-Rev Auction - Open Tender - Two Packet System & Joint venture / Consortium / MOUs applicable with closing date/time 11.01.2021 up to 15.00 hours. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Tender No.	Brief Description of work	Approx. Cost of work (INR)	Amount of EMD (INR)	Tender Closing Date and Time
RSW0101 RYJ1002	Construction of Road over Bridges (ROBS - End to-end including approaches) at 2 locations in lieu of LC No. 10B at KM 855/27-856/1 & LC No. 72 at KM 99/13-15 in PRYJ-CNB section in PRYJ Division of NCR.	Rs 59.84 Cr.	Rs 3141800/-	11.01.2021 15:00

Note: For complete details and submission of tender please see Indian Railway’s website: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.
Cost of Tender Document: 0.00, **Completion Period:** 24 Months. **Similar Nature of Work for Eligibility Criteria:** Construction of bridges having span 18.30m or above with PSC/Steel Girder. **Note:** (1) The complete information along with tender document of above E-works tender will be available on website <https://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 class III Digital signature certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Rate entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall only be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head attached by tenderer shall be straight away ignored and shall not be considered. (4) Documents being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (5) In case of any difficulty, helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached.

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRO NCR 1400/20 (A)

Virat disaster in Australia

From Page 1

Saturday’s total was also the lowest score in the brief history of D/N Tests and the joint fifth lowest overall. The easy target of 90 runs was achieved by the home side in only 21 overs without much fuss. They only lost Matthew Wade (33) and Marnus Labuschagne (6) in pursuit of the easy goal and in the process, opener Joe Burns (51) got a confidence-boosting half century. The home team collected 30 World Test Championship points from the win, while its skipper Tim Paine was adjudged player of the match for his gritty first innings knock of 73.

“I said this morning in the media that both these attacks have the ability to take quick wickets. Didn’t expect them to come this quick,” said Paine, grinning from ear to ear after the rather remarkable triumph. India have now lost three successive Tests well inside three days with two being in New Zealand earlier this year. To make matters worse for the visitors, star pacer Mohammed Shami’s series could well be over due to a wrist injury from a short ball from Pat Cummins, which could potentially be a fracture. Shami could not continue and the Indian innings was terminated at 36 for 9 in 21.2 overs. The likes of Sunil Gavaskar and the late Ajit Wadekar had long carried the

baggage of that English Summer, inarguably one of the worst in the annals of Indian cricket. It will now be replaced by the “Summer of 36”.

Call it irony, but just like Gavaskar then, a modern day great like Virat Kohli will have this bit of avoidable history in his legacy, a day when one could hardly figure out what went wrong. At one stage, India were reduced to 26 for 8 and looked like equalling the lowest ever Test score (26 by New Zealand vs England) but Hanuma Vihari’s boundary helped them evade entry into the dark pages of cricketing history. The Indian batting was completely exposed by the extra bounce generated by Australian pacers, who bowled every delivery on the off-middle channel after landing on the seam. In an inexplicable collapse, India’s much vaunted batsmen fell like nine pins with not a single one able to reach double figures.

Once nightwatchman Jasprit Bumrah (2) was out in the first over, Hazlewood and Cummins (10.2-4-21-4), literally decimated the tourists and also caused lasting damage to their pride. The likes of Mayank Agarwal (9), Cheteshwar Pujara (0) and Ajinkya Rahane (0) were all out in similar fashion. All the deliveries were almost identical, angled in, which forced the batsmen to jab at them and just bounced a wee bit more. They

deviated a shade taking outside edges to Tim Paine behind the stumps. Kohli (4) was dismissed in the manner he used to get out in England back in 2014, trying to drive a delivery on the fifth stump and caught at gully. To sum it up, the Indian batsmen failed to factor in the pitch suddenly becoming more livelier with extra bounce. The two Australian pacers bowled deliveries that the visiting batsmen had to play and the ultra-defensive mindset that they carried from the first innings didn’t help their cause. Never has a Test match changed so dramatically in an hour’s play like it did at the Adelaide Oval on Saturday. Worse, a collapse like this could effect the performance in the next Test match at the MCG, beginning December 26, and not to forget they won’t have a Kohli to look up to as he would be on paternity leave. Ajinkya Rahane, the captain in waiting, has been in wretched form for the longest time and one would prefer to discount his hundred against a below-par West Indies attack in the interim. Even the South Africa attack at home wasn’t the best in the business. Prithvi Shaw’s confidence is in shambles in terms of both technique and temperament. Mayank Agarwal, with that pronounced back-lift and a dodgy technique against deliveries with extra bounce, will also have his share of problems.

Farooq’s ₹12 cr...

From Page 1

Besides, lands at four different places in J&K have also been attached. The timing of the action against Dr Farooq Abdullah is bound to trigger political reactions in Kashmir valley as the same had come ahead of the counting of votes in the District Development Council polls on December 22. Enforcement Directorate had recently grilled Dr Abdullah in Srinagar on October 19 for over seven hours in connection with a money laundering case linked with a multi crore scam in the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association. Sharing the information Enforcement Directorate in a tweet said, “ED attaches 3 residential houses in Jammu & Kashmir, a commercial building in Srinagar, 4 lands in J&K totaling to ₹ 11.86 crore of Farooq Abdullah, former Chief Minister of J&K under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in a case of laundering of funds of Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Association”.

According to a separate press statement issued by the Enforcement Directorate, “Between years 2006 to January 2012, when Dr Farooq Abdullah

was the President of JKCA, he misused his position and clout by illegal appointments of office bearers at JKCA to whom he gave financial powers for the purpose of laundering of JKCA Funds.” “During investigations it is disclosed that out of the aforesaid attached properties the residence & land of Dr. Farooq Abdullah at Gupkar Road and commercial buildings at Residency Road, at prime upmarket locations, are basically State lands obtained on lease”. “It was also disclosed that the attached house at Bhatindi, Village Sunjwan, (Jammu) had been constructed by Dr Farooq Abdullah on State land and forest land, where he has also grabbed State land and forest land”, the statement said. Between 2005 - 2006 to December 2011, JKCA received funding totaling to Rs. 109.78 from BCCI. Investigation clearly brings out that Dr Farooq Abdullah was instrumental as well as beneficiary of the laundered funds of JKCA. Sharing details of modus operandi, the ED statement said, “Despite existing regular bank accounts of JKCA, six new bank accounts were opened for parking of JKCA Funds and siphoning of the same. One dormant bank account in the name of Kashmir Wing of JKCA was also made operational for the same purpose”.

**कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत वितरण खण्ड, लेसा, मर्याचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि०, ११ केडी, सिविलिंग स्टेशन, महानगर, लखनऊ शुद्धिपत्र**
दिनांक १९.१२.२० को इस समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशित ई-निविदा ०१/वि००० ख०-लेसा/२०२०-२१ में धरोहर राशि (रु० में) २७,०००.०० गलत प्रकाशित हो गयी है। पाठकारण इसे सुधारकर धरोहर राशि (रु० में) २७,००० सही पढ़ें अन्य नियम एवं शर्तें यथावत रहेंगी।

RSS ideologue MG Vaidya...

From Page 1

A former chief editor of the city-based pro-RSS Marathi daily ‘Tarun Bharat’, Vaidya became a member of the RSS in 1943 while at the Morris College in Nagpur. He was the first RSS ‘pracharpramukh’ (spokesperson), a former editor of Tarun Bharat said. Vaidya was also a former Akhil Bhartiya Bauddhik Pramukh of RSS, he added. In January this year, Vaidya triggered a controversy with his demand of dividing Maharashtra into four parts, and came in for attack from various quarters over the demand. Born in Taroda tehsil in Wardha district, Vaidya was a gold medalist in his Master of Arts course, and taught at the Hislop College in Nagpur from 1949 to 1966 while also being associated with the RSS. He joined the editorial department of Tarun Bharat in 1966. He was a nominated member of the Maharashtra Legislative Council from 1978 to 1984, and also a senate member of Nagpur University. He wrote several books and also a column in Tarun Bharat for 25 years. He was among the few who witnessed most of the journey of the RSS, from early stages and expansion. Vaidya, who saw all six Sarasangchalhalks of RSS, including RSS founder Keshav Baliram Hedgewar is survived by wife Sunanda, three daughters, and five sons including RSS Sah Sarkaryawah (joint general secretary) Manmohan Vaidya. “MG Vaidya, my father breathed his last today at 3.35 pm at Nagpur after completing 97 years of active, meaningful and inspiring life. He was a veteran journalist, a Hindutva “Bhashyakar” and active Sangh (RSS) Swayamsevak for 9 decades,” Manmohan Vaidya tweeted.

**shubham**
Corporate Office : 425, Udyog Vihar Phase IV, Gurgaon-122015 (Haryana)
Ph : 0124- 4212530/31/32 E-Mail: customercare@shubham.co website : www.shubham.co

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMovable PROPERTY(IES)
Sale Notice for sale of immovable properties as per proviso to Rule 8(6) and Appendix-IV-A (Under Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002)
Whereas the undersigned being one of the Authorized Officer of the Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited (hereinafter called the Company) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (The Act) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (The Rules) issued demand notices calling upon the borrowers, whose names have been indicated in column (C) below on dates specified in column (D) written against each of them, calling upon them to repay the outstanding amount indicated in column (E) below within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken voluntary surrendered/possession of the property mortgaged with the company, described in column (F) herein below, to recover the said outstanding amount, in exercise of powers conferred on me under section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 9 of the Rules on the date mentioned in column (H).
The Borrower In particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties mentioned in column (F) below and any dealings with these properties will be subject to the charge of the Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited for an amount mentioned in column (G).
Now, the borrower and the public in general is hereby also informed that the said properties would be sold by public auction on date, time and venue as specified in column (K) against each of the property by inviting bids in the sealed envelopes as per the procedure and terms and conditions stated below:

Sr. No.	Application Number	Name & Address Of the Borrowers	Date of Notice/ Us 13(2) D	Demand Notice Amount	Property Possessed	Current Due Amount	Date of Possession	Reserve Price (Rs.)	EMD (Rs.) (10% of RP)	Date, Time & Venue of auction
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1.	0ALB1706 00005506 513	Sangam Lal Pandey, Deepak Pandey, Gayatri 125, Mukta Vihar, A. D. A. Naini, Allahabad - 211008	15-06-2018	Rs. 6,40,500/-	Arazi No. 44. Plt. No. 125, Naini, Allahabad - 211008	Rs. 9,97,863/-	30-09-2019 Physical Possession	Rs. 43,67,672/-	Rs. 4,36,767/-	22-01-2021 11:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Plot No 18-A, 29, Civil Lines Station, Civil Line, Back of MAX Show Room, and Front of Rudra Enclave Housing Allahabad
2.	LKW 1601 049987	Hasan Ali, Shariq H. No- Nayia Ram Vihar, Para Lucknow 226008	05-11-2018	Rs. 7,44,554/-	House Under Construction At Plot No-4 Land Khasra No- 1957/203, deupur Ward- Kesar, Khera, Lucknow, UP 226008	Rs. 10,90,645/-	30-04-2019 Physical Possession	Rs. 17,56,400/-	Rs. 1,75,640/-	22-01-2021 11:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Plot No 18-A, 29, Civil Lines Station, Civil Line, Back of MAX Show Room, and Front of Rudra Enclave Housing Allahabad
3.	LKW 1505 040096	Shakeel Rehman, Vaseem Bhat, H. B. Nehru Road, Union Bank Sadar Cantt Dilkusha, Lucknow 226002	19-07-2017	Rs. 13,01,998.95	Plot At Land Khasra No- 1915 (Minjuria) Village Derwaria, Gomti Extension Pargana, Tehsil & Distt. Lucknow-226001	Rs. 20,18,078/-	31-09-2019 Physical Possession	Rs. 14,24,000/-	Rs. 1,42,400/-	22-01-2021 11:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Plot No 18-A, 29, Civil Lines Station, Civil Line, Back of MAX Show Room, and Front of Rudra Enclave Housing Allahabad

Note: To the knowledge of the company, there is no encumbrance on the above properties. Terms and conditions of auction sale notice
TERMS & CONDITIONS OF PUBLIC AUCTION:- PROCEDURE AND TERMS & CONDITIONS OF PUBLIC AUCTION BY INVITING BIDS:
1. The properties can be inspected on 15.01.2021 from 10.00 AM. to 4.00 PM.
2. Sale is subject to the conditions prescribed in SARFAESI Act/Rules 2002 and the terms and conditions mentioned hereunder as also subject to conditions in the offer/bid documents to be submitted by the intending/participating bidders.
3. The bids shall be submitted in a sealed envelope to the office of undersigned along with a Demand Draft/Pay Order towards the Earnest Money Deposit favouring Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited, payable locally. The Earnest money deposit shall not carry any interest. Along with Bid form the proposed bidder shall also attach his/her identity proof/ KYC norms and proof of residence such as copy of the passport, Aadhar Card, election commission card, ration card, driving license etc, and a copy of the PAN card issued by the Income tax department.
4. Last date to submit the bid along with Earnest Money Deposit is on or before 21 January 2021 from 11 AM. To 2 PM.
5. In no eventually the property would be sold below the reserve price indicated against each of the property.
6. On the date of sale all the, bids so received would be opened and the bid of the highest bidder, provided it is above the reserve price, may be accepted by the company. However the bidders personally present at the auction site shall have the right to further enhance their bid price, subject to a minimum of (Rs. 5,000/-) (Rupees Five Thousand Only) and in the event of higher bid price being offered the company shall have the right to accept the same. Thereafter, the Purchaser will be required to pay deposit of 25% (Twenty-five Percent) of the sale price, after adjusting the earnest money deposit, immediately at the fall of hammer with the undersigned upon receipt of said amount the company will confirm the acceptance of the bid. The request for extension of time may be allowed by the Authorised officer at his sole discretion subject to such terms and conditions as may be deemed at and proper by him. In the event the highest bidder fails to tender 25% of the bid amount immediately at the fall of hammer then the earnest money deposited by the highest bidder will be forfeited and the property would be offered to its second highest bidder. The balance amount of the purchase price shall be paid by the Purchaser to the undersigned on or before the fifteenth day of confirmation of the sale of the said property or such extended period as may be agreed upon in writing by the parties. In default of payment & within the time as mentioned above, the company shall be at liberty to forfeit the Earnest Money Deposit and/or any other deposit made by the purchaser and proceed with re-auction of the Property. That defaulting purchaser shall forfeit all claims to the property or to any part of the sum for which may be subsequently sold.
7. All the payments shall be made by the purchaser by means of the Demand Draft/Pay Order favouring Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited.
8. On receipt of the sale in full, the company shall be issuing a Sale Certificate in favour of the purchaser and would hand-over the possession of the property to the Purchaser.
9. The said Immovable Property described in the Schedule shall remain and be at the sole risk of the Purchaser in all respects including loss or damage by fire or theft or other accidents, and other risk from the date of the Confirmation of the sale by the undersigned authorised officer. The Purchaser shall not be entitled to annul the sale on any ground whatsoever.
10. The Demand Draft/Pay Order deposited towards the earnest money shall be returned to the unsuccessful bidders.
11. For all the purposes sale of these Properties is strictly on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS"AND WITHOUT ANY RECOURSE BASIS". The company is not aware of any encumbrances of any nature whatsoever on the aforesaid properties.
12. All expenses relating to Stamp Duty, Registration Charges, Transfer Charges and any other charges in respect of the above referred property shall be borne by the Purchaser.
13. The Authorised officer is not bound to accept the highest offer or any or all offers/bid(s) and the company reserves its right to reject any or all bid(s) without assignment any reasons thereof.
14. No person other than the bidders themselves or their duly authorised representative shall be allowed to participate in the sale proceedings.
15. In case all the dues together with all cost charges and expenses incurred by the company are tendered or settled by the above name borrower at any time before the date fixed for sale for the properties, under Sec 13(3) of the Act, then the property will not be sold and all the bids received from the prospective bidders shall be returned to them without any liability claim against the company.
16. This notice is also a notice to above said Borrowers under Rule 8(6)and Appendix IVA of the security Interest Enforcement Rules 2002 to the Customer at their respective address as mentioned in Column "C" & "F".
17. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the Secured Creditor's website i.e. www.shubham.co.
18. For further information, clarify or any assistance, same can be approached to Pawan Shukla (Authorised Officer) at mobile no. 8858108151
PLACE : Gurgaon
DATE : 19/12/2020

Authorized Officer
Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited

National monuments' footfall curbs eased



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Saturday eased the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for visitors at the national monuments protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) by removing the cap on number of visitors at the sites while giving powers to concerned superintending archaeologists to decide the per day footfall in concurrence with respective district magistrate. The new SOPs mentioned that the sale of physical tickets to these centrally protected monuments and sites may be resumed where there is problem in QR code and network. As many as 3,691 central-

ly-protected monuments and archaeological sites maintained by the ASI were shut from March 17 in view of the coronavirus crisis. There were reopened on July 6.

The order also gave approval to the sound and light programmes that has been banned since March 17 this year—days before Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced countrywide lockdown from March 24 to avoid the spread of Covid-19 that has so far infected over 1 crore people in the country.

All ASI protected monuments across the country reopened for the public from July 6 with full security and precaution. The rules of the

states and the districts, in which the monuments are located, are being followed since they opened, said a senior official from the ASI.

The entry since the opening was allowed only through e-tickets. Even the mode of payment in the parking lots, cafeterias were accepted only digitally. A cap on the number of visitors and mandatory wearing of masks was also applied as per Covid guidelines.

According to the SOP issued by the Centre, only those monuments and museums which are in the non-containment zone have been allowed to open up, the official added.

NIA files chargesheet against 6 Pak nationals in narcotics seizure

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed chargesheet against seven accused, including six Pakistani nationals, in the case of seizure of 237 kg of narcotics in Gujarat.

On December 18, the NIA chargesheeted the six Pakistanis and one Indian arrested in the case before NIA Special Court, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

The NIA case bearing number RC-24/2020/NIA/DLI (seizure of 237 kg narcotics drugs) registered under Indian Penal Code Sections relating to criminal conspiracy and disappearance of evidence besides provisions of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act as also certain Sections of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

Those charged in the case include Safdar Ali, Alahi Daad Angiyara, Azim Khan alias

Azeem Khan, Abdul Aziz, Abdul Gafur, Sakidad Angariya and Mohamad Malah, all residents of Karachi, Pakistan and Ramjhan, a resident of Beyt-Dwarka, Gujarat.

The case relates to seizure of 237 kg of narcotics from Pakistani vessel Al-Madina, near Jakhau Port, Kutch, Gujarat.

“Investigation in the case has revealed that the arrested accused persons had conspired and attempted to bring a total of 330 kg of narcotics drugs into Gujarat, who were eventually intercepted by Indian Coast Guards on May 21, 2019 and resulted in the recovery of nearly 237 kg of narcotics, several incriminating articles and Pakistani currency notes,” the NIA said in a statement.

Further investigation against nine absconding Pakistani accused persons is continuing, it added.

Sonia appoints 3 AICC secretaries each for poll-bound Assam, Kerala

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Saturday appointed three All India Congress Committee (AICC) secretaries each for Assam and Kerala where Assembly polls are slated for early next year.

The newly appointed secretaries will assist the general secretaries in-charge of the two States — Jitendra Singh for Assam and Tariq Anwar for Kerala.

Assembly polls in the two States, where the Congress is the main opposition party, are slated for April-May.

Upcoming Assembly polls in five States: EC issues advisory

No officer connected directly with election duties should be allowed to continue in his/her respective home districts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A head of Assembly polls in five States — West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Assam and Puducherry due next year, the Election Commission (EC) has issued an advisory saying that no officer connected directly with election duties should be allowed to continue in the respective district if he/she is posted in her/his home district.

The Commission wrote to the chief secretaries and chief electoral officers of these five states regarding the transfer and posting officers associated with conducting the elections.

According to the EC, the decision follows the consistent policy of the Commission that officers directly connected with conduct of elections in poll-bound State/Union Territory are not posted in their home districts or places where they have served for considerably long periods.

The terms of the Assemblies in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Puducherry and Assam will end on May 24, 2021, June 1, 2021, May 30, 2021, June 8, 2021 and May 31, 2021 respectively.

Meanwhile the EC has begun poll preparation for Assembly elections in April-May next year. While senior



officials of the poll body are already in West Bengal, a team would visit Tamil Nadu next week.

Deputy election commissioner Sudip Jain is already in Kolkata and EC secretary general Umesh Sinha and deputy election commissioner Ashish Kundra will leave for Chennai next week.

The poll-bound States are likely to see a heated battle, with BJP campaigning in full swing in Bengal. In Tamil Nadu, the latest entrant into the political fray is actor Rajinikanth and Kamal Hasan for the upcoming polls.

“Officials who completed three years in the respective district during the last four years or would be completing three years on or before May 31, 2021 would also be not allowed to continue in the same district,” the EC said in its advisory.

The Commission made clear that officers/officials against whom it had recommended disciplinary action in the past, especially those who had been charged for any lapse in any election or election relat-

ed work should not be assigned any election related duty. Similarly, no officer/official against whom criminal case was pending in any court of law should be associated with or deployed on election related duty.

Further, any officer, who is due to retire within the coming six months, should not be associated with any election related duty. The officers posted on recommendation of the Commission during the Lok Sabha elections 2019 may be exempted from this transfer policy.

In case of any need for any transfer of any official due to extra ordinary reasons, prior approval of the commission was mandatory, the EC order said.

The instructions would also be applicable to police officers in different ranks who would be responsible for security arrangements or deployment of police forces in the districts at election time. Police officials posted in functional departments like computerisation, special branch, training and related wings would not be covered under the instructions but steps should be taken to ensure that officers in the rank of police sub-inspectors and above were not posted in their home district.

Khattar calls on Tomar over farmers' stir

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar called on Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Saturday and discussed about the farmers' protest against new farm laws that entered the 24th day. After the meeting, Khattar said that talks between farmers and the Government could be held in the next 2-3 days.

“I believe that the talk could be held in the next 2-3 days. A solution to this issue (farmers' protest) should be found through discussion. I have said that this issue should be resolved soon,” Khattar he said.

The meeting comes a day after BJP leader and former Union minister Chaudhary Birender Singh joined a protest in support of the farmers at Haryana's Rohtak.

The dharna was organised by the members of the Sir Chhotu Ram Manch. Singh is the grandson of Sir Chhotu Ram, a prominent Jat leader of



the pre-independence era who championed the interests of farmers.

This is the second time the Haryana Chief Minister met Tomar at his residence since the protests broke out.

Khattar had earlier met

the Union Minister earlier on December 8.

The two leaders are believed to have discussed about the ongoing protest at Delhi's borders and the way forward to resolve the issue at the earliest, sources said.

Farmers from different parts of the country, including Haryana and Punjab, have been camping at various border points of Delhi for three weeks to demand a repeal of three recent farm laws.

NGT extends time for setting up biodiversity management panel

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal has extended the time limit for the constitution of biodiversity management committees (BMCs) and preparation of people's biodiversity registers (PBRs) on account of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel was assured by the member secretary of the National Biodiversity Authority that monitoring will be faithfully conducted with all the state biodiversity boards concerned and necessary steps for compliance of law will be taken.

“We also find that in view of COVID situation, it will be necessary to take a liberal view about the delay caused. Accordingly, the time for remaining compliances is extended up to June 30, 2021, and compensation amounts will stand waived if compliances are ensured by that date,” the bench said.

The green panel noted that it has already monitored the matter for the last more than four years and there is substantial progress in compliance with the requirements of setting up BMCs and maintaining PBRs.

The order was passed after some states sought extension of time on account of the pandemic and also waiver of the requirement to pay compensation for the delay.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Researchers have said that Covid-19 causes much more severe disease than seasonal influenza, a conclusion they reached after comparing data from over 130,000 hospitalised patients.

The study was based on French national data from 89,530 patients hospitalised with Covid-19 between 1 March and 30 April 2020, and 45,819 patients hospitalised with seasonal influenza between 1 December 2018 - 28 February 2019.

Published in The Lancet Respiratory Medicine, the study also found that death rate among hospitalised Covid-19 patients was not only three times higher than seasonal influenza, more Covid-19 infected patients required intensive care. Also, the average stay in ICU with Covid-19 was nearly twice as long.

The researchers analysed that fewer children aged under 18 years were hospitalised with Covid-19 compared with seasonal influenza, but a larger proportion of those aged under 5 years required intensive care for Covid-19 vs influenza.

Also, nearly twice as many people were admitted to hospital for Covid-19 at the height of the pandemic than were for influenza at the peak of the 2018/2019 flu season, the study found.

The authors noted that the difference in hospitalisation rate may be partly due to existing immunity to influenza in the population, either as a result of previous infection or vaccination. In contrast, Covid-19 is a new virus where very few people would be expected to have any previous immunity.

Nevertheless, they said their findings reinforce the importance of measures to prevent the spread of both diseases and are particularly relevant as several countries prepare for the Covid-19 pandemic to overlap with outbreaks of seasonal influenza.

Professor Catherine Quantin, from the University hospital of Dijon and from L'Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale (Inserm), France, who jointly

Covid-19 much more severe than influenza: Study

Covid vaccination drive: COVAX lines up two billion doses for global use

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

COVAX, the global vaccine partnership, has lined up almost two billion doses of existing and candidate Covid-19 vaccines for use worldwide, including 200 million doses of the AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine through a pact between the Vaccine Alliance Gavi, the Serum Institute of India (SII) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

COVAX is the global initiative to ensure rapid and equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines for all countries.

It announced that it had arrangements in place to access nearly two billion doses of Covid-19 vaccine candidates on behalf of 190 participating economies.

This includes delivering at least 1.3 billion donor-funded doses of approved vaccines in 2021 to the 92 low- and middle-income economies.

“This is fantastic news and a milestone in global health,” World Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters at WHO Headquarters.

“This is a time for taking comfort that the end of the pandemic is in sight, but taking care that we do not let down our guard. We are all responsible for taking the measures to keep ourselves and each other safe, including during this holiday season. “With today's news the



light at the end of the tunnel has grown a little bit brighter, but we are not there yet. And we will only get there together,” he said.

The goal of COVAX is to deliver two billion doses of safe, effective vaccines that have passed regulatory approval and/or WHO prequalification by the end of 2021. These vaccines will be offered equally to all participating countries, proportional to their populations, initially prioritising healthcare workers and then expanding to cover vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and those with pre-existing conditions.

Further doses will then be made available based on country need, vulnerability and Covid-19 threat. The COVAX Facility will also maintain a buffer of doses for emergency and humanitarian use, the WHO said in a statement.

Adar Poonawalla, CEO of the Serum Institute of India (SII), said in the statement that his company has signed for a 100 million doses of Novavax and another 100 million doses of AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccines with

COVAX, with an option of extending it by 900 million doses.

“The advance purchase commitments under COVAX initiative is encouraging as it will further bolster our fight and ensure equitable access at the most affordable price from Serum Institute of India,” he said.

For the vast majority of these deals, COVAX has guaranteed access to a portion of the first wave of production, followed by volume scales as further supply becomes available. The deals will enable all participating economies to have access to doses in the first half of 2021, with first deliveries anticipated to begin in the first quarter of 2021.

Before Friday's announcement, COVAX had already lined up more than 1 billion doses of vaccines under development for 2021.

Of the 92 economies eligible to be supported by the COVAX AMC, 86 have now submitted detailed vaccine requests, offering the clearest picture yet on actual global demand for covid-19 vaccines.

Severe cold wave likely to sweep Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), severe cold wave conditions are likely to persist at various places over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi.

IMD said that Kashmir will get the next spell of snow with the onset of Chillai Kalan. Kashmir's winter pans out in three stages, starting with the 40-day intense period from December 21(Chillai Kalan) followed by 20 days of Chillai khurd, which translates to small cold and 10 days of Chille bache (literally, baby cold). Chillai-Kalan is the 40-day period of harsh winter. The winter solstice happens on Monday, December 21, 2020, first day of “Chillai Kalan”. This is the astronomical first day of winter in the Northern Hemisphere and the shortest day of the year.

On this day, the sun reaches its highest or lowest point in the sky at midday, marked by the longest and shortest days. Chillai Kalan known as Chilla' in Delhi, 'Chilla Jada' in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

Interestingly according to Persian tradition, night of 21st December is celebrated as Shab-e Yalda.”Night of Birth”, or Shab-e Chelleh. - “Night of Forty”. Iranian Azerbaijanis call it Chilla Gejasi, which marks the beginning of the first 40 days of winter. The Iranian



concept also survives in Kashmir, where Chillai Kalan designates the 40-day harshest winter period.

The bone-chilling cold conditions continue in the Kashmir valley where night temperatures are continuously dipping. Srinagar city witnessed the coldest night of the season with a freezing night temperature of minus 7 degree Celsius while mercury at world famous Dal Lake plummeted to minus 6 degree Celsius on Saturday. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Ladakh recorded a worse fall in temperature, where Drass recorded the coldest night in the country at minus 29 degrees Celsius. Similarly, other parts of Leh recorded minus 18.3 degrees Celsius. The temperature in Kargil was minus 21.1 degrees Celsius.

The IMD update said that ongoing cold to very cold spell over North-West and Central

India is now fraught with an associated risk of ground frost over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, West Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh during the next two days.

“The cold spell will also be accompanied by strong surface winds speed reaching 10-20 km/hr adding to the frigid conditions. The wind chill factor would, in turn, lead to severe cold wave conditions during this period, said IMD.

Keylong, Kalpa, Manali, Solan, Chamba and Mandi in Himachal Pradesh shivered at sub-zero temperatures in the last 24 hours in Himachal Pradesh. The tribal district Lahaul-Spiti's administrative centre Keylong continued to be the coldest place in the state at minus 12.1 degrees Celsius. Kalpa in Kinnaur district recorded a low of minus 3 degrees Celsius.

September 5.

It went past 50 lakh on September 16, 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, 80 lakh on October 29, and surpassed 90 lakh on November 20.

The health ministry's data updated at 8 am on Saturday showed that the total number of cases mounted to 1,00,04,599.

days, Gandhi tweeted, “1 crore Covid infections with almost 1.5 lakh deaths! The unplanned lockdown did not manage to ‘win the battle in 21 days’ as the PM claimed, but it surely destroyed millions of lives in the country.”

The country's COVID-19 case tally had surpassed the 20 lakh-mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As India's COVID-19 case-load surpassed the one crore-mark, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday alleged that the unplanned lockdown did not manage to “win the battle in 21 days as the PM claimed”, but it “destroyed” millions of lives in the country. India's COVID-19 case-

load surpassed the somber one-crore mark on Saturday, adding 10 lakh cases in nearly a month, while the total number of recoveries surged to 95.50 lakh, according to the Union Health Ministry's data.

Taking a dig at the prime minister's remarks in March that the Mahabharata war was won in 18 days and the war against coronavirus will take 21

INDIA-CHINA BORDER STANDOFF

Want peace, but won’t tolerate any harm to India’s self-respect: Rajnath

Hyderabad: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said India’s handling of the border standoff with China showed that the country was not weak and could give a befitting reply to any kind of transgression, aggression or unilateral acts.

With the two countries having held several rounds of talks to resolve the issue, Singh said India wants peaceful resolution of disputes, but asserted no harm to its self- respect will be tolerated.

India and China have been locked in an over seven-month standoff at eastern Ladakh.

In his address at the Combined Graduation Parade at the Air Force Academy at Dundigal on the outskirts of the city, Singh also said China’s “attitude reflected that country’s intentions” dur-

ing the COVID-19 crisis.

“But we have shown that India is not weak. This is new India that will give a befitting reply to any kind of transgression, aggression or any unilateral action,” he said. India has found the support of many countries, even as it has received accolades, he said.

Pointing out that rounds of talks have been held at the diplomatic and military levels to solve the issue, the Defence Minister said “let me reiterate, we don’t want conflict, but peace.

“But we will not tolerate any harm to the country’s self-respect,” the Defence Minister asserted. The country was prepared to face any situation, he said.

Referring to the western sector, Singh said Pakistan was indulging in skirmishes on the borders and charged the

neighbour with indulging in a “proxy war” using terrorism, despite being defeated by India in four wars.

The armed forces and police were effectively dealing with terrorism, he said. The country was not only handling terrorism effectively within, but even taking action beyond the borders, he said.

Referring to the air strikes at terror camps in Balakot in Pakistan, he said they demonstrated India’s military strength to the world and the country’s firm intentions against terrorism.

Stressing the need to change the strategies of war according to evolving times, Singh said the country may face challenges not only across the borders and the seas, but also Space and Cyber domains, for which it needs to be prepared. **PTI**



Leopards inside an enclosure at Sarthana Nature Park in Surat on Saturday

PTI

Tiwa Autonomous Council: BJP wins 16 seats, leading in many others

Guwahati: The ruling BJP has won 16 seats out of 36 seats of the Tiwa Autonomous Council while its ally Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) is leading in one constituency in the ongoing counting of ballot papers for the autonomous body on Saturday.

BJP defeated the Congress in most of the seats it won and humbled Independent contestants at three places, according to Assam State Election Commission (ASEC) counting

updates.

BJP’s Moniram Patar from Gobha constituency has won uncontested, it said. The saffron party nominees are leading in many other segments.

Congress as per the report is not leading in any constituency of the Council spread over four districts of Nagaon, Morigaon, Kamrup and Hojai.

Over 71 per cent of the 3,08,409 voters exercised their franchise on December 17 to seal the electoral fate of 124

candidates in the ballot boxes for the 36 constituencies.

The saffron party is performing impressively in back-to-back elections to Bodoland Territorial Council and now in the autonomous body of Tiwa, ahead of the state polls early next year.

In the recently concluded elections for the 40-member Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), the BJP formed the government in alliance with two other local parties. **PTI**

Karnataka to reopen schools, colleges for Classes X, XII students from January 1

Bengaluru: The Karnataka government on Saturday decided to reopen schools and Pre-University Colleges that were shut due to the prevailing COVID-19 situation, for class 10 and second year PUC (class 12) students from January 1.

It also decided to start the Vidya-gama programme, which enables continued schooling for students from classes six to nine, from that date.

The decisions were taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on reopening schools and PU colleges in the state. He said the advice given by the state’s Technical Advisory Committee for COVID-19 on reopening schools and colleges was discussed in detail for about an hour.

They suggested starting classes 10 and 12 (second PUC) from January 1 and for imparting education for students from classes six to nine through the Vidya-gama programme, he said.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Yediyurappa said “Everyone has unanimously agreed to it..So, it has been agreed to start classes 10 and 12 from January 1 and Vidya-gama for classes 6 to 9 students.”

In a tweet giving information about it, the Chief Minister

Will CPM shine in Assembly polls in Kerala?

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The five decades long political rhythm in Kerala is likely to see a change in the next assembly election which may take place in the months of April-May 2021. Since the 1977 Assembly election in the State, the electorate in Kerala has been voting alternately for the Congress-led United Democratic Front and the CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front. No fronts have succeeded in retaining power once they completed the five year term and had to sit in the Opposition for the next five years.

But the assembly election in 2021 may see a change in this pattern, according to seasoned political commentators. The LDF made impressive gains in election to the municipal corporations, district panchayaths and block panchayaths while the

“Earlier we had leaders like K Karunakaran who was trusted and believed by party activists. But not anymore. The present leaders are fighting among themselves and there is no cohesion in the party or in the UDF,” said TN Saseendran

UDF had to content with the marginal gains in municipal councils. Since the assembly elections are just five months away, there is a general feeling that the LDF is likely to repeat the performance, according to them.

“There isn’t much time left for the assembly election. The Congress that leads the UDF is in crossroads. There is a leadership crisis in the party which is unlikely to blow over in this interregnum,” said P Rajan,

author and former editor of Mathrubhumi. He said the Congress-led UDF had swept the 2019 Lok Sabha election in the State because the minorities voted en masse hoping that the Congress would win a big majority all over the country.

Situation has worsened in the Grand Old Party’s Kerala unit. There is no leader in the party who is acceptable to all sections. “Earlier we had leaders like K Karunakaran who was trusted and believed by party activists. But not anymore. The present leaders are fighting among themselves and there is no cohesion in the party or in the UDF,” said T N Saseendran, former DRDO scientist and a keen watcher of Kerala politics.

He pointed out that though the situation was not favourable, the CPI(M) registered good show because the party has a strong leader like Pinarayi

Vijayan. “As on today, he is the most powerful person in the party and there is no one to challenge him. Hence the CPI(M) is likely to repeat the show,” said Saseendran.

K Sudhakaran MP, has declared that he would quit as the working president of the KPCC as there was no collective responsibility in the party. Rajmohan Unnithan MP, made it known that he would resign as MP and work as Pracharak for the revival of fortunes of the Congress. K Muralaedharan, MP and son of late K Karunanakaran is on a pilgrimage praying at Lord Ayyappa Temple at Sabarimala. On Friday evening he prayed for more than 15 minutes standing in front of the sanctum sanctorum by removing his face mask. He is in the race for the KPCC chief’s post which he hopes would come in his way.

Our Govt living up to expectations of people: Raj CM on 2nd anniversary



Jaipur: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has said that the State Government has stood up to the aspirations and expectations of the people, despite the challenges of the Code of Conduct, Covid-19 epidemic and economy due to various elections. Even in such odd circumstances, we have fulfilled more than 50 per cent promises in manifesto in just two years. Now it is our effort to increase the pace of development and fulfill all the promises made to the people and establish Rajasthan as a model of good governance.

Gehlot was addressing a state level function organized at the Chief Minister’s residence on Friday to mark the completion of two years of the state government. He and members of the State Council of Ministers inaugurated, laid and inaugurated 1362 development works costing Rs 11 thousand 230 crore through video conference.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister also announced the conduct of the REIT exam on 25th April. 31 thousand third grade teachers will be recruited through this examination. As an important initiative in the direction of e-governance, he dedicated the public welfare portal giving information about the schemes and programs of all the departments. Along with this, he also released the literature published by the Information and Public Relations Department with an aim to inform the public about the welfare schemes of the state government.

The Chief Minister said that about 22 years ago, when I became the Chief Minister for the first time, our government started to make the Election Manifesto a policy document. This was the first example of the

commitment shown by any government to fulfill its promises. We have also made the public manifesto this time as a policy document of the government.

Gehlot said that the Covid-19 epidemic has had a profound impact on all the economies and development works of Rajasthan as well as the entire country and the world. Despite this, our government is working to provide relief to every section by efficient management. Turning this disaster into an opportunity has strengthened the state’s medical infrastructure with far-reaching thinking. We are making strong arrangements for safe transport, storage and vaccine.

The Chief Minister said that while there was no power in the state at the time of independence, today we have become self-sufficient in the field of energy.

FARMERS’ PROTEST

Transporters feel pinch as borders are closed for traffic movement

THEY ARE SUFFERING LOSSES OF ₹1 TO 2 CRORE ON DAILY BASIS

STAFF REPORTER ■ GHAZIABAD

The ongoing farmers’ protest on Delhi borders is causing immense hardships. With the protest entering 24th day, the transporters are feeling the pinch as borders are closed for traffic movement.

Transporters say, they are suffering losses of Rs 1 to 2 crore on daily basis.

“The entire business has been stalled for 24 days, on the other hand the transporters are facing penalty due to non-payment of government tax on time. Apart from this, about five thousand unorganized daily laborers and pull-dars



associated with this business have reached the brink of hunger,” alleged transporters.

The President of the Transport Association, Kamlesh Pandit said at this time a large number of trucks are standing on the highway

toll tax filled with goods.

“They have also exhausted their money which was for their daily needs and food. Our employees are eating food in the langars at the protest sites. A large number of trucks are lined up in the Transport City. Every day, people associated with this business are losing one to two crores,” said Pandit.

“Due to lack of work, the laborers and pullers have been forced to cut the shanks. They barely get only one or two vehicles to load. If this movement stays for a few more days, then vegetables, fruits and all the items of ration will become expensive,” he said.

UP: On court directive, married woman’s body exhumed in dowry death

Muzaffarnagar (UP): The body of a married woman has been exhumed from a graveyard and sent for a post-mortem five months after she was allegedly killed by her in-laws for more dowry in Jamia Nagar area here following a local court’s intervention, police said.

The body of Shaista Begum, wife of Abbar Ahmad, was dug up and sent for a post-mortem on the complaint of her mother V Sanjida on Friday after the magistrate court ordered an FIR to be registered regarding the matter, police added.

A case has been registered in Kotwali police station under Section 304 (punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder) of the Indian Penal Code and provisions of the Dowry Prohibition Act against six members of Shaista’s in-laws, including her husband, on the directive of the magistrate court.

According to the complaint, it is alleged that Shaista was killed over demand for further dowry and buried without giving information to her parents or the police in Bhopa village in the district on July 5.

The deceased woman’s mother had filed a petition in the court for registering the FIR as the police had refused to book the in-laws under CrPc Section 156(3) (judicial magistrate’s power to investigate cognisable case). The court ordered the police to register the FIR earlier in the week.

According to Kotwali police station SHO Anil Kapervan, an investigation is underway after registering the case on the court’s directive. **PTI**

Temp drops to 3.9°C in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Cold conditions prevailed in Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR) as the minimum temperature dropped to 3.9 degree Celsius - lowest of the season so far, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD).

“The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative data for the city, recorded a low of 3.9 degrees Celsius, four degrees below normal. The maximum temperature is likely to settle around 21 degrees Celsius,” an IMD official said.

The mercury dipped to 3.3 degrees Celsius and 3.4 degrees Celsius at Lodhi Road and Ayanagar, respectively, as icy



winds from snow-laden Western Himalayas continued to sweep the city, the India Meteorological Department said.

On Friday, the minimum temperature had plunged to 2.7

degrees Celsius at Jafarpur.

Delhi had recorded a “severe” cold day on Thursday as the maximum temperature dropped to 15.2 degrees Celsius, seven degrees below

normal and the lowest this season so far.

Meanwhile, overall air quality recorded at the lower end of the very poor category. Surface-level winds moderate and Westerly.

According to SAFAR, the cold day conditions have been forecasted to intensify in the Delhi region and moderate surface winds are forecasted only till Sunday and likely to slow down after that. So the current better dispersion conditions are likely to continue only for the next 24hrs and then the ventilation coefficient will decrease to deteriorate AQI. Hence, AQI forecasted to stay in the poor to very poor category on December 20, deteriorate in the lower end of very poor.

Public looks for details of Hathras chargesheet

PNS ■ HATHRAS

In the Bulgadhi case, the public and media are eager to know about the CBI charge sheet. The chargesheets have been filed against the four accused who were sent to jail by the police. The lawyer of the accused Munna Singh Pundir told the media that the CBI has filed a charge sheet against the accused.

The news of the filing of the charge sheet caused a lot of anxiety among the four accused and they began to walk in the jail. Senior Jail Superintendent Alok Singh said that on completion of 14 days quarantine time on the orders of the court, the accused will be shifted to separate barracks. Congress leader Shivraj Jeevan said that by conducting a fair investigation, CBI gained the trust of the entire country. As said earlier that there has been humiliation with the girl and the truth has come in front of everybody, now the accused will surely be punished. After the Bulgadhi case, the way I was charged with the tag of the rioter, today everything is in front. I am always with justice and will stand with justice till the last time of life.

After the charge sheet was filed by the CBI, Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said that once again the truth has come out.

She said that serious questions are being raised on the UP’s Yogi government from this charge sheet. Priyanka released a statement stating that CBI has filed a charge sheet against 4 accused of the Hathras case. In it, it is said that a 19-year-old girl was gang-raped and murdered.



Farmers gather at Tikri border during their sit-in protest against the Centre’s farm reform laws, in New Delhi on Saturday

Ranjan Dimsi | Pioneer

Army takes orders from Govt: Imran

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has asserted that the Army is a state institution which works under him, amidst Opposition's allegations of the powerful military establishment's interference in the country's politics and elections.

Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), a 11-party opposition alliance, has been holding massive rallies since its inception in September to seek Khan's ouster and press the military to stop interfering in politics. The PDM has been accusing the Pakistan Army of installing "puppet" Prime Minister Khan through a manipulated election in 2018.

The Army, which has ruled Pakistan for more than half of its 70 plus years of existence, has hitherto wielded considerable power in the matters of security and foreign policy. However, the military has denied meddling in the country's politics. Khan also denies that the army helped him win the election in 2018.

According to the 'Lahore Declaration' signed by the Opposition parties on Monday, the military establishment had



stolen the people's mandate in the 2018 election and imposed a "hybrid and inefficient" government on the masses.

In an interview to SAMAA TV on Friday, 68-year-old Khan rebutted accusations that he does not have any real authority and said that the Pakistan Army is a state institution, which works under him.

On Opposition's claims that the government wouldn't hold if not for the support from the powerful establishment, the cricketer-turned-politician said he is the country's democratically elected prime minister and so the institutions back him.

The PDM has set a January 31 deadline for Khan to step down or face a long march to Islamabad. The coalition pledged that it will make sure

that there is no interference of the institutions of "the establishment and intelligence" in politics and at the same time it will make the security institutions stronger on the professional lines.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supremo and three-time former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, 70, has been repeatedly blaming Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and spy agency ISI chief Lt Gen Faiz Hameed of meddling in Pakistan's political affairs.

Sharif was ousted from power in 2017 by the Supreme Court court on graft charges. The PML-N chief, currently out on bail, has been living in London since November last year after he was allowed by the courts and the government to go there for a period of eight weeks for medical treatment. But he did not come back, while his lawyers told the court that he was still recovering.

Khan said the Opposition does not want to hold talks with the Government and is instead pressuring the Army to send a democratic government packing. This can be called treason, he said. **PTI**

Biden transition team criticises lack of Pentagon cooperation

Wilmington: President-elect Joe Biden's transition team has expressed frustration with the level of cooperation they're getting from political appointees at the Department of Defense, saying there has been "an abrupt halt in the already limited cooperation there."

Biden's transition team has been meeting with officials at various agencies to get detailed reviews of the programmes and challenges the new administration will inherit, a process that was delayed when the General Services Administration declined to issue an official ascertainment that Biden had won the election.

The delay occurred as President Donald Trump, whose appointee ran the GSA, refused to concede.

Yohannes Abraham, executive director of the transition, told reporters that Biden agency review teams at DOD learned Thursday of meetings "being pulled down" and immediately reported it. Abraham called for meetings and requests for information to resume immediately.

"A failure to work together can have consequences well beyond January," Abraham said.

The Pentagon on Friday offered a different assessment. It issued a statement saying there was a "mutually-agreed

upon holiday pause," which begins Saturday.

Defense officials said that some meetings had been postponed so that department personnel could concentrate on the issues associated with the possibility of a partial government shutdown Friday evening if Congress was unable to agree on Covid-19 relief legislation. Congress passed a two-day stopgap spending bill Friday night, averting a shutdown. Officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

"Our key focus in the next two weeks is supporting essential requests for information" on Operation Warp Speed and Covid-19 to "guarantee a flow-

less transition," said acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller.

"Let me be clear: There was no mutually agreed upon holiday break," Abraham countered. "In fact, we think it is important that briefings and other engagements continue during this period as there's no time to spare." Miller was put in the job a little over five weeks ago, after Trump fired then-Pentagon chief Mark Esper. Miller quickly replaced a number of top policy advisers with Trump loyalists who may be less willing or able to participate effectively in the transition process.

Miller said the department remains committed to a full

and transparent transition and is working to reschedule about 20 interviews with 40 officials until after Jan. 1. He said the department has already done 139 interviews and provided 5,300 pages of nonpublic or classified information.

Abraham made it clear that Biden's transition team was not satisfied with that decision. Biden becomes president the afternoon of January 20.

"There have been many agencies and departments that have facilitated the exchange of info and meetings over the past few weeks," Abraham said. "There have been pockets of recalcitrance, and DOD is one of them." **AP**

US: China obstructing WHO probe, peddling questionable vaccines

Washington: Urging the international community to demand transparency from China about the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, the US has accused Beijing of "obstructing" a World Health Organisation (WHO) probe into the origin of the deadly virus in the central Chinese city of Wuhan and "peddling" questionable vaccines one year after

the disease broke out.

The US leads the world with over 17,442,100 confirmed coronavirus cases and more than 313,000 deaths. "Even today, nearly a year after the world first learned of the outbreak, the Chinese Communist Party is still spreading disinformation regarding the virus and obstructing a WHO investiga-

Rockets hit US base in Afghanistan, no casualties reported



Kabul: Five rockets were fired at a major US base in Afghanistan on Saturday, but there were no casualties, NATO and provincial officials said.

The rockets hit Bagram Airfield, said Wahida Shahkar, spokeswoman for the governor in northern Parwan province. Shahkar said that 12 rockets were placed in a vehicle and five of them were fired while police were able to defuse seven others.

She couldn't provide other details on any possible casualties or damage within the U.S. Base. She said there are no casualties among civilians in the area.

A NATO official confirmed the attack and said initial reports indicated that the airfield was not damaged.

No one has immediately claimed responsibility. In April, the Islamic State group claimed responsibility for five rocket attacks on the base. There were

no casualties. The IS also has claimed responsibility for multiple attacks in the capital Kabul in recent months, including on educational institutions that killed 50 people, most of them students.

Violence in Afghanistan has spiked even as the Taliban and Afghan government negotiators hold talks in Qatar, trying to hammer out a peace deal that could put an end to decades of war. At the same time, The Taliban have waged bitter battles against IS fighters, particularly in eastern Afghanistan, while continuing their insurgency against government forces.

Earlier this week, US Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, held an unannounced meeting with Taliban leaders in Doha to discuss military aspects of last February's US-Taliban agreement. **AP**

12 killed, 6 injured as train hits bus in Bangladesh

Dhaka: At least 12 people were killed and six others injured when a train ploughed into a bus at a railway crossing in Bangladesh on Saturday, according to media reports.

The incident happened at Joypurhat district when the Rajshahi-bound Uttara Express train, en route from Parbatipur, hit the passenger bus at Purnanapoli railway crossing, the Daily Star reported.

The train dragged the bus on the railway tracks for about half a kilometre, the Dhaka Tribune reported. The bus was going to Panchbibi from Joypurhat.

Preliminary investigation found that the level crossing was open and the on-duty line man was absent, causing the accident, said AKM Alamgir Jahan, officer-in-charge of Joypurhat Sadar Police Station. Joypurhat Deputy Commissioner Shariful Islam said bodies of 10 people were recovered from the spot. Eight people were rescued, of which two succumbed to their injuries at a government hospital in Bogura. Six of the injured have been admitted to Joypurhat Sadar Hospital.

All the victims were passengers of the bus, bdnews24.Com reported. **PTI**



People attend a memorial church service for the victims of the conflict with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh in Yerevan, Armenia on Saturday

Armenia honours Nagorno-Karabakh dead, some demand PM's resignation

Yerevan: Both opponents and supporters of Armenia's Prime Minister rallied on Saturday as the nation paid tribute to the thousands who died in fighting with Azerbaijan over the region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Critics demanded that the leader resign and tried to pelt him with eggs.

The Azerbaijani army pushed deep into Nagorno-

Karabakh in six weeks of hostilities that ended with a Russia-brokered peace deal on Nov. 10 that saw Azerbaijan reclaim large parts of the separatist region and surrounding territories. The loss of lands that had been controlled by ethnic Armenian forces for more than a quarter-century has traumatized Armenians, triggering weeks of protests demanding

the resignation of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

On Saturday, thousands of protesters rallied near the Yereblur military memorial cemetery on the outskirts of the Armenian capital of Yerevan as Pashinyan visited it to honor the soldiers killed in the latest fighting. The nation is observing a three-day mourning period for the dead. **AP**

Switzerland OK's Pfizer vaccine

Berlin: Switzerland has approved the Covid-19 vaccine from Pfizer and German pharmaceutical company BioNTech.

The country's health agency Swissmedic said in a written statement Saturday that the vaccine had been approved for the small Alpine country after a careful examination by expert teams. The agency did not say when vaccinations in Switzerland would begin.

The approval comes shortly after Britain, Canada, the

United States and other countries allowed the use of the vaccine in their respective countries.

The director of Swissmedic said "Thanks to the rolling process and our flexible teams we could quickly decide and fully accommodate the three most important requirements security, efficacy and quality." Raimund Bruhin added that, "The safety of the patients is a required condition especially regarding the approval of vaccines." **AP**

UK confirms new coronavirus strain spreads more quickly, informs WHO

London: England's chief medical officer Chris Whitty confirmed Saturday that a new coronavirus strain which surfaced in the country could spread faster and called for greater public vigilance to reduce transmission.

Whitty said London had informed the World Health Organization of its findings.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock on Monday said scientists had identified a "new

variant" in the south of England that could be causing infections to spread faster.

Britain has seen rising cases and hospital admissions this month and Prime Minister Boris Johnson was set to give a press conference on the virus situation on Saturday afternoon.

The prime minister was reportedly to announce new travel restrictions for London and southeast England in the run-up to Christmas. **AFP**

EXPLAINER

Iran, despite sanctions, has routes to vaccines

Dubai: Although Iran faces crushing US sanctions, there are still ways for Tehran to obtain coronavirus vaccines as the country suffers the Mideast's worst outbreak of the pandemic.

After earlier downplaying the virus, Iran has since acknowledged the scope of the disaster it faces after 1.1 million reported cases and over 52,000 deaths. Getting vaccines into the arms of its people would be a major step in stemming the crisis.

But while Iran is able to obtain vaccines, challenges remain ranging from sanctions imposed under President Donald Trump to the logistics of making mass vaccinations happen.



HOW COULD IRAN GET THE VACCINE?

Iran has signed up for COVAX, an international program designed to distribute coronavirus vaccines to participating countries around the world.

That programme is run in part by Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance. Gavi says the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control has already

issued a license for Iran to take part. The Treasury declined to comment.

For its part, Iran has alleged US Sanctions have affected its ability to purchase medicine and vaccines. President Hassan Rouhani has said Iranians "should curse Trump a hundred times" over the difficulties. US Sanctions do have specific carve-outs for medicine and humanitarian aid to Iran. However, international banks and financial institutions hesitate in dealing with Iran transactions for fear of being fined or locked out of the American market.

Those sanctions, however, would not stop Iran from flying a load of cash to Geneva to pay for its participation in

COVAX. Gavi declined to offer any information about Iranian payments or orders, though Iran under its rules at a maximum could order vaccines for 50% of its 82 million people.

Alireza Miryousefi, a spokesman at Iran's mission to the United Nations, criticised the US for its sanctions and banking restrictions, which he said "cruelly put many obstacles in the way of Iran receiving the Covid-19 vaccine.

"Nonetheless, along with our own indigenous vaccine trials, we fully expect the international community and the relevant international drug companies to fulfill their humanitarian obligation and expedite all our orders," Miryousefi said. **AP**

Beijing (PTI): Chinese President Xi Jinping has appointed a new General as the Commander of the People's Liberation Army's Western Theatre Command which oversees the China-India border, amidst the military standoff in eastern Ladakh.

President Xi, who heads the Central Military Commission (CMC), the overall high-command of the two million-strong People's Liberation Army (PLA), appointed Gen. Zhang Xudong as the Commander of the Western Theatre Command, according to the official media here.

Xi has promoted four senior Chinese military and armed police officers. Among them was Gen. Zhang, Commander of the Western Theatre Command of the PLA, state-run Xinhua news agency reported on Friday.

The other officers who were promoted include Guo Puxiao, Political Commissar of the Logistic Support Department of the CMC; Li Wei, Political Commissar of the PLA Strategic Support Force and Wang Chunning, Commander.

The new appointments at the top of the PLA Western Command comes in the midst of the standoff between the Chinese and Indian military

in eastern Ladakh since May.

Not much is known about Gen. Zhang, especially his association with Western Theatre Command, as he reportedly served mostly in other theatre commands of the PLA.

He succeeds 65-year-old Gen. Zhao Zongqi who headed the Western Theatre Command during the 2017 Doklam standoff where the Indian Army stood up against the PLA's plan of laying a road close to the Indian border in an area claimed by Bhutan.

The Ladakh standoff also happened under the watch of Gen. Zhao. It began in May after China dispatched thou-

sands of troops which were mobilised for military exercises to eastern Ladakh borders, sparking a new round of tensions with India.

India and China have held several rounds of talks at the diplomatic and military-level to resolve the prolonged standoff.

At the latest round of foreign ministry-level talks on December 18, the two sides said that they have agreed to continue work towards ensuring complete disengagement of troops in all friction points along the LAC. The meeting also decided to hold the next round of military dialogue at an early date.

Palestinian foreign minister urges Israel to return to talks

Cairo (AP): The Palestinian foreign minister on Saturday urged Israel to return to talks based on a two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, ahead of the transition to a new US administration.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Malki was speaking at a joint news conference in Cairo with Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shukry and Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi, who both joined him in his call for a return to talks.

Al-Malki said that the Palestinian Authority is ready to cooperate with U.S. President-elect Joe Biden, on the basis of achieving a Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital on territory Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war.

We are ready for cooperation and dealing with the new U.S. administration, and we are

expecting that it would redraw its ties with the state of Palestine, he said.

Palestinian negotiators have suffered numerous setbacks under the Trump administration, and complained about what they say are biased pro-Israel steps from Washington.

Trump has sidelined the Palestinian Authority, recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, moved the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv, slashed financial assistance for the Palestinians, and reversed course on the illegitimacy of Israeli settlements on land claimed by the Palestinians. Israel captured east Jerusalem and the West Bank in the 1967 war. The international community considers both areas to be occupied territory, and the Palestinians seek them as parts of a future independent state.

Israel annexed east

Jerusalem and considers it part of its capital a step that is not internationally recognized.

Israel has built a far-flung network of settlements that house nearly 700,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Jerusalem since their capture in 1967. The Palestinians want both territories for their future state and view the settlements as a violation of international law and an obstacle to peace a position with wide international support.

Al-Malki also said they have returned to security coordination with Israel, after Israeli authorities sent a message, for the first time, that they are abiding to all agreements made with the Palestinians.

In May, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas announced that the PA would cut ties with Israel, including security coordination, following Israel's pledge to annex

large parts of the occupied West Bank.

In a statement following their meeting, the three ministers said they would work to rally international support against Israel's illegitimate measures that include settlements' expansion, demolishing dozens of Palestinian homes and seizing their land.

These are illegitimate Israeli actions on the ground that affect all chances to reach a comprehensive peace process that can only happen by the two-state solution, said Safadi, Jordan's top diplomat, at the news conference.

The ministers said in their statement that Jerusalem's status should be resolved in the negotiations, calling for Israel as the occupying power, to stop all violations that target the Arab, Islamic and Christian identity of Jerusalem and its sanctuaries.

HOME THEATRE

Funny but melancholic too



VIR DAS: OUTSIDE IN — THE LOCKDOWN SPECIAL
Netflix
***ing: Vir Das**
Rated: 5.5/10

We all know how funny stand-up comedy is. We also know that Vir Das has perfected this craft. The latest 50-odd minute virtual session on Netflix on how he entertained people in order to raise money for charity is everything that he is known for—being funny and ensuring that his audience got plenty of laughs.

What is brilliant about this show that Das conducted over Zoom is it managed to

raise over ₹35 lakh for 17 different charities— a commendable feat — and that over a period of three months via his virtual stand-up.

We get to see a very different side to him as well as he lams his camera to show the audience his personal space — something that his fans would love to get a sneak peek into including his collection of caps. Then there is the whole headband that he supports which he carries off with elan. One also gets to see how the lockdown affected this comedian — making this show a bit melancholy as well.

Of course there is bound to be plenty of laughs as he goes

about asking people a simple question— what is the first thing you would do once lockdown opens? The answers, someone wanting to eat ice cream to another wanting to ride his bike to yet another wanting to eat Asian food from her favourite restaurant, besides bringing a smile are extremely real and relatable.

He is engaging, making his audience laugh at their own expense.

He is also sams the stage and tells you that he longer has the advantage of being shrouded in the shadows and that it is nice to see inside his audiences' home.

— Shalini Saksena



Retelling Peter Sutcliffe's crimes

THE RIPPER
Netflix
Documentary
Rated: 6/10

It is a no-brainer that documentaries are interesting to watch provided they are told in an engaging manner. What can be more engaging than following an investigation by the West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police in what is considered to be one of the biggest man hunt for a serial killer that terrorised the women of North England for more than five years and killed 13 women and attacked seven others who lived to tell the tale.

What makes this documentary interesting, absolutely fascinating and riveting is the way it has been told through various people who were part of the investigation and some of the women who were willing to talk about their bear brush with death. Then there are accounts of reporters who give you an inside of what was happening in the society at that time and how the once thriving area of this part of England due to Industrial Revolution fell on bad times and people lost their jobs and women stepped out to roam on the streets at night to make money to support their family. It also tells you how a patriarchal

mindset of the police showed these women as loose, how the police's warning to women to stay indoors after dark was met with resistance because they were not able to catch a killer. It was also the time when England saw its first woman Prime Minister in Margret Thatcher and the changing polity of England.

But perhaps the most fascinating thing about this four-part mini series is how the killer was always a few steps ahead of the police and managed to evade them even though no stone remained unturned and millions of pounds were spent to catch him. What is even more bizarre is that it was a bit of luck that landed him in police net — in a totally unrelated offence — a wrong number plate; the car didn't match the number plate it supported. Finally, the man who had terrorised the women was caught — his name Peter Sutcliffe, a lorry driver.

His neighbours were shocked that he was the Yorkshire Ripper — a name given to him by the Press due to the fact that most of his victims were prostitutes — and killings similar to *Jack The Ripper*.

So why this documentary now when the killings took place almost 46 years back? Sutcliffe finally died in prison at age 74 on November 13, 2020.

— Shalini Saksena

Plan Your Day

Twinkling lights, ornaments for the Christmas tree, bells and candy canes- it is beginning to look a lot like Christmastime and Oberoi Hotels The Oberoi Amarvilas, Agra; The Oberoi Rajvilas, Jaipur; The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur; The Oberoi Vanyavilas Wildlife Resort, Ranthambhore; The Oberoi Sukhvilas Spa Resort, New Chandigarh; Wildflower Hall, Shimla in the Himalayas — An Oberoi Resort and The Oberoi Cecil, Shimla: are paving way for a jubilation to welcome the New Year. This festive season promises to be the most joyful yet as a sense of cheer unfurls with the onset of the celebratory period.

Plan your getaway with Oberoi Hotels & Resorts and enjoy this momentous occasion to the fullest.

The Oberoi Amarvilas, Agra: Located merely 600 metres from the Taj Mahal, The Oberoi Amarvilas is a tribute to the legacy of Mughal architecture; accentuating awe-inspiring vistas of the exquisite mausoleum. When staying at the hotel on New Year's Eve, you can indulge in a gala dinner at Bellevue, the all-day dining restaurant, which will be offering a wide array of world cuisine; Indian, Asian and Western preparations, accompanied by live music from a two piece band. You can also choose to dine privately by the poolside; the perfect setting to for a romantic dinner or a party with loved ones.

The Oberoi Rajvilas, Jaipur: The Oberoi Rajvilas is the perfect base from which to explore one of India's most vibrant cities. This idyllic retreat evokes princely Rajasthan with luxury villas and royal tents in a fort-like setting. On New Year's Eve, witness a royal Rajasthani ceremonial welcome. The evening will be a gastronomic feast featuring an array of Indian and international favourites. Live Rajasthani folk music, traditional dance performances and toe tapping music from a DJ will keep you entertained into 2020.

The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur: Udaipur is home to many beautiful lakes and is set against the dramatic backdrop of the Aravalli Hills. Located on the banks of Lake Pichola, The Oberoi Udaivilas magnificently recreates the nostalgia of royal romance. Framed by beautiful trees and demurely lit, our vast, manicured lawns are the perfect venue to usher in the New Year. The menu for the evening is an exciting mélange of Indian and Western cuisines, served with our warmest hospitality under starry skies. The evening's entertainment will range from traditional Indian dance performances to upbeat DJ music.

The Oberoi Vanyavilas Wildlife Resort, Ranthambhore: The Oberoi Vanyavilas Wildlife Resort is a luxury jungle resort located adjacent to Ranthambhore National Park. Between the Aravalli and Vindhya mountain ranges, the resort is 180 kilometres from Jaipur and is the ultimate destination for adventurers. New Year's Eve is celebrated with an array of regional Indian and international cuisines served in the main dining room and starlit inner courtyard, around a glowing bonfire. There will be enthralling performances by a live band along with dance performances from different states of India.

Wildflower Hall, Shimla in the Himalayas — An Oberoi Resort: The former residence of Lord Kitchener, Wildflower Hall exudes the ambience of a grand stately home. Framed by cedar forests and towering over Shimla at 8,250 feet above sea level, it provides a unique opportunity to lose yourself in the romance of nature. Stay with us and enjoy a sumptuous New Year's Eve dinner buffet, featuring an extensive selection of Indian and Western gourmet delicacies. Our chefs will be at hand at live cooking stations, to prepare you the perfect dish, just as you like it. There will also be a four piece live band for your exclusive entertainment.



ACTORSPEAK



Christmas is such positive festival I love all the things related to Christmas. Every year I make sure I decorate the tree visit the church and in the evening me and my mom bakes a cake. This year I would be celebrating with my Indian Idol family and I am planning to bake a cake for everyone . I wish Santa helps me win Indian Idol 2020 that's my only wish from him.

— Shanmukha Priya from Indian Idol 2020



May this Christmas season bring you closer to all those that you treasure in your heart. Since I was young I have been celebrating Christmas I love the entire vibe of the festival and this time also I will make sure I take out sometime and celebrate it with my family. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas.

— Madrakshi who plays Parvati in SET's Vighnaharta Ganesh

The best thing about Christmas is the nip in the air, the festive atmosphere and lots of yummy food. While most of us have outgrown the Santa phase, I still feel we are each other's santa in a way. It's always great to receive gifts but to see the smile on someone's face while receiving a gift is a feeling that cant be described in words. This year, I will be a part of the Secret Santa celebration on the set of *Story 9 Months Ki*. While I am curious to know what my santa will get me, I am equally stressed about being a Santa for someone. But I promise to be a good Santa. And I would like to wish all our fans and viewers 'Merry Christmas' and hope for a bright & healthy future for everyone.

— Aashay Mishra who plays Sarangdhar in SET's Story 9 Months Ki

Christmas has always been very special for me with all of us singing carols, Mom baking cakes and stocking out on goodies while Dad decks up our home with the Christmas tree and all the decoration. This used to be our tradition since we were kids, and we used to attend the early morning church service as well. Add to this list the visiting relatives, friends and neighbours who come to distribute cake, giving gifts to children and it goes on and on. Amidst all this flurry of activity what stands out always is the happiness we get by sharing what we have with others. This is a

lesson that our parents taught us quite early in life. We used to host friends and family for lunch every year, spend time with them, give them cake and gifts. This made us really happy. I feel the true spirit of Christmas is sharing and caring. That's what makes it so special. With these memories of mine, I set out to reminisce special childhood memories of friends, colleagues and relatives. I have the same plan this year too, decorate the house with a Christmas tree, invite friends over, celebrate the festival with plum rum cakes, yummiilicious food and dance.

— Sanjay Gagnani who plays



Christmas calls for celebrations and I want everyone to have fun this festive season. Everyone has a childhood memory associated with Christmas. In fact, we associate it with red colour, cakes and Santa. It is a day of hope and everyone as kids used to wish that Santa would come to their home and make their dream come true. I hope everyone still believes in this and has that child-like innocence in them. Merry Christmas! Although it will be relatively different this year but I hope every one enjoy with all precautions taken.

— Rajveer Singh who plays Neel in Zee TV's Qurban Hua



I have a lot of friends who have their birthday around Christmas, so this time I am thinking that I will plan their party themed around the festival. I have never done something like this before but I am sure it will be a lot of fun. We also have an interesting sequence on Christmas coming in our show, so that too will add a lot of festive feel on the set.

— Helly Shah who plays Riddhima in Colors' Ishq Mein Marjaawan



Christmas for me is eating cookies and plum cake as well as wearing all the jackets and sweaters that I have! I grew up singing Hymns and Carols and I absolutely love Christmas and also watching Christmas Movies these days is fun. The best part is that Christmas is followed by New year and this year has been quite a ride for everyone. I hope the new year brings in joy and health and happiness in everyone's lives.

— Mugdha Chapekar who plays Prachi in Zee TV's Kumkum Bhagya

Let the festivities begin! Our team is planning a 'Secret Santa' on-set as a part of the celebrations and I am very excited. In times like these, becoming each other's Santa and getting a chance to make someone happy is a beautiful thought. I am looking forward to surprise that one person on the set and I promise to go all out. The whole atmosphere is happy and forward looking towards a new beginning. As a tradition, I will set up a tree in my house and decorate it with a lot of love and hope and buy presents for my family.

— Sukirti Kandpal who plays Alia Shroff in SET's Story 9 Months Ki



‘You are as good as your last show’

MUSBA HASHMI chats up SHAKTI ANAND, who plays Mukund Tiwari in Zee TV's Hamariwali Good News, about what attracted him towards the role, his takeaways from the industry and whether he have any regrets

■ What is your role in Zee TV's Hamariwali Good News?

I play Mukund Tiwari, who is based out of Agra and is a shopkeeper. He has lost the X-factor in life because of being extremely busy in fulfilling his family's desires and earning money. This responsibility has put everything else in his life on the backseat. Hence, he has become stern towards everything. He has lost his mission in life. He is rude towards everyone and doesn't gets along well with his wife or children, but his sister whom he has given the status of nothing less than a God. The story talks about how the transformation happens in his life.

■ What attracted you towards this role?

The storyline of course. Whenever an actor is narrated about a show, the storyline catches his attention at first. Then comes the character.

■ From X-Zone Saheli to now Hamariwali Good News, how has the journey been?

It has been good. I have got to play a lot of different roles and got a chance to work with different production houses. Whenever you see a photo celebrating an anniversary of your show, it feels good that people still remember you and appreciate your work that you have done 20 years back. It has been an amazing journey. Even today, people watch my shows with a lot of expectations. This is a big achievement for an actor.

■ What has been your takeaway from the industry?

This industry is volatile. I belong to a non-filmy background and when I came to the industry everyone told me that times are very dicy here. Sometimes it happens, sometimes not. But when you get into the



industry, you think that you can make it there. Then, when you start comparing yourself with people who started with you, you realise that the industry is volatile. You are as good as your last show, shoot or award. This has been a big learning that you have to be on your toes and try out different characters.

■ You have been a part of the industry for about 20 years now. Do you think you have got your due?

Yes of course. I don't have any regrets. I never see what I wanted, instead I look at what I have got. To dream is something that will never end, but as an actor you have too see whether you have been able to make a place for yourself or not. Even today, I am giving interviews to the press, this means that people want to know about my life and journey. Everyone doesn't become ShahRukh Khan or Hrithik Roshan. One in a million people shine in this field. I am happy and positive about whatever I have achieved and wherever I am. In the last eight months, life too has taught us to be content with whatever you have.

■ A role that comes close to you?

Saara Aakash is a show that comes close to my heart. That was my first show as a lead. Back then, I was a bit flamboyant and risk-taking, so I enjoyed being a part of it.

■ How easy or difficult is it to shoot during Corona?

It is quite a task. Right now I am shooting for a daily soap in a confined space so it is fine, but for my other action-based shows that I am shooting for OTT platforms is tough.

Earlier, we used to rehearse for the action sequences, but now to rehearse with a mask on becomes tedious. We have a crew of 110 people, who are juniors forget about other people. It is scary.



WHY WE CHICKEN OUT ON TURKEY

Cooking and eating turkey is associated with festivities like Thanksgiving and Christmas especially in America and many parts of Europe. Elsewhere, in India, while the fowl finds its way into restaurant menus, households continue to prefer the good old chicken. SHALINI SAKSENA speaks with chefs to tell you why

Did you know that turkey was originally thought to be from India? Did you know that this bird has nothing to Turkey, the country? Did you know that since the Turks knew that this fowl was not theirs, they made a completely different mistake and called it hindi. They thought the bird was probably Indian. The French, too, to begin with, called this bird poulet d'Inde literal translation — chicken from India. The Dutch called it the word kalkoen — Calicut-hoen — hen from Calicut or modern-day Kolkata. It is thought that all this stems from the mistaken belief that turkey trade passed through India.

Yet, this bird, has nothing to do with India and everything to do with America. Stranger yet, fowl's scientific name doesn't make much sense either — Meleagris gallophe, name of wild turkey that was domesticated, which found its way from the forests of Mexico, where they were first domesticated by the Mayans.

The ancient Aztec and Mayan civilisations revered the bird. The Aztecs honored wild turkey, and believed it to be a manifestation of Tezcatlipoca, the trickster God. The Mayans revered and honoured turkeys in similar ways.

When Europeans saw wildlife of the New World, wild turkeys caught their eye which was similar to their game birds. Turkey was then transported in 1519 to Europe where it was highly prized for its unique flavour.

So why is that India, which tends to follow trends of what is happening globally, has yet to adopt this bird as part of the regular food chain? Chef Tarun Dacha, corporate

chef, The Claridges Hotel has a simple answer.

"Turkey is a gaming bird and traditionally it was hunted to be served on the table for Christmas and Thanksgiving festivities in the West. Even in Europe turkey is not the first choice of meat to be served on these occasions. In America Thanksgiving and Christmas are mostly celebrated between family and the entire bird is cooked whole and served with vegetables and sauces. Turkey is a big bird and now it is also reared on farms rather than only being hunted," Dacha explains.

He tells you that the bird was easy to hunt since it is a big bird and finds it difficult to fly. The total weight of the bird is eight to 10 kg. After dressing it is 4-5 kg.

"Christmas is a family festival where everyone comes together. It is a tradition to eat a meal together on this day. Unlike in India, traditionally and it is still followed by many, the mothers and the daughters are cooking and will eat food only once the men of the house have eaten. In the West, all the family member sit down together and share a meal. You roast the turkey, put it on the table, add the accompaniments and enjoy the feast. If it is a small bird, the whole sense of sharing goes away. That's the reason why the fowl is popular in America. However, the same is not true for some European countries. Like in Germany, the turkey is replaced by goose or pork; for Nordic countries, it is all about fasting and associated with eating fish; in the UK it is duck or a roast suckling pig. But due to marketing, turkey has found its way here as well, he tells you.

As a meat, turkey is not popular in India for many reasons. First,

it is a gaming bird and hunting of these birds is now allowed in the country. Second, India is a Hindu country originally and Christianity is mostly an adopted religion. As such the eating habits of the Indians are very regional and are different from the eating habits of America and the European nations.

"Turkey as a meat is not very juicy. It is dry and also a hot meat. We like our meat juicy and mostly enjoy it with curries. Even our tandoori meats are soft, moist and juicy. In India Turkey is found on the menu of the 5-star hotels and properties which cater to the expats clientele for Christmas. Also, we don't have the tradition of cooking or eating big joints. Even a tandoori chicken is cut into pieces before it is served. One doesn't carve out a tandoori chicken," Dacha says.

One is told that traditionally, in Indian homes, roasting is not huge even though baking is. The homes are equipped to deal with oven where one can roast meat. "Indian food is all about gravies and masala. Homes are not well-equipped where one can roast a big bird. However, we love to eat roasts when we go out; doing the same at home is not high on the cards in our kitchens," Dacha tells you.

In India, 5-star hotels cater to a wide range of guests, they ensure that they have everything to offer to their guest. Guests who come here want to experience the cuisines of the world and the celebrations from across the world. Even chefs want to showcase their culinary talent. The chefs like to showcase what they know best. They serve turkey, suckling pig and cold cuts like salami and ham.

"If one were to look at homes,



THE TURKEY IN INDIA IS MORE BONY. IT IS STRINGY. THE IMPORTED TURKEY THAT MOST HOTELS BUY IS FAR MORE JUICY IN COMPARISON. DESPITE THE FACT THAT LOCAL TURKEY IS REARED IN SOME REGIONS OF NORTH-EAST AND ASSAM, IT IS NOT THE PREFERRED MEAT SINCE IT IS CHEWY. EATING THIS IS NOT A GREAT EXPERIENCE

what is eaten during this time varies from region to region. In coastal Andhra Pradesh, dominated by Christianity, it is biryanis and mutton curry or fish curry with rice as a special of the day. In Kerala, Alappuzha region where there are Christians, it is be duck curry and appams. They will also make Rose cookies which is made from a batter of rice flour and sugar and then deep fried. In the North-east they will do a whole pork The basic idea is less about feasting and more on community feeling, charity and donations. Foods are centred around what is available in that region. For example in Alappuzha duck farming is huge and hence it finds its way into the homes. These are Indian ducks; more bony and less meaty. They make curry and even duck eggs are popular," Dacha tells you.

The Indian turkey is more bony. It is stringy. The imported turkey that most hotels buy is far more juicy in comparison. Despite the fact that local turkey is reared in some regions of North-east and Assam, it is not the preferred meat since it is chewy.

Eating this is not a great experience for people. The high quality fowl is on the expensive side. One full bird can cost up to ₹5,000. "If one were to cook such a large bird, one needs a huge gathering as well. Mutton is a preferred meat for festivals; it is preferred even over chicken," Dacha says.

Chef Sanjay Dasari, Executive Chef, The Ashok has a similar take. He tells you that turkey has yet to find popularity in the country. According to him, what has gained popularity is duck. This preference of duck over turkey is because duck

is leaner. Of course it depends on the variety of duck. "Peking duck is gaining popularity. Turkey on the other hand is a meat that is only eaten during festivities like Christmas and New Year's. This bird is still confined to festivals. We, at our hotel, serve the bird during these festivals. It is not the supply but the demand where the issue lies," Dasari says. Interestingly, while the duck has since then been Indianised and one find a hotel doing a duck curry or even a tandoori duck, the turkey continues to be roasted full and has yet to be moulded to Indian taste.

The reason Chef Dasari tells you why turkey is yet to be experimented with is because the guests who come in are not asking for this fowl. However, there is a market for the same. "If there was a demand, like there is for ducks, we, as chefs, would like to serve the same and experiment and change it so suit Indian palate. But this is not the case. For now, it is a bird that people want to eat only during Christmas. Also, not many people know that this bird can be eaten. If we promote it, people will see it as an option. Many hotels shy away from doing the same due to lack of demand, unlike duck. Since people are asking for duck, we are Indianising the same," Dasari explains.

This year, The Ashok instead of doing a buffet as was being traditionally done on New Year's eve, they are going to serve per plate which is visually more appealing. The change in serving style is due to the present pandemic and fall in footfall. "We are going to serve turkey; we will serve the bird with foods that boost immunity like

fresh orange juice and ginger. We will use fresh herbs to roast it, rather than using dry herbs. This will be served with walnut jaggery chutney," Dasari says and tells you that turkey meat can be Indianised.

Chef Rubal Pupneja, junior sous chef at the Samrat opines is that despite this bird being a popular dish at Christmas and Thanksgiving, the fact that it is not easily available and is on the expensive side means that there are fewer takers.

"Then there is the whole process of cooking this bird. Since it is much larger than chicken, it takes a longer time to cook. If the full roast chicken gets cooked in 30-35 minutes at 300 degrees, this bird takes over an hour to cook. Also, one has to cook it slowly so that it gets cooked from inside out. There is a misconception around this bird as well. People think that it has more carbs; it's just the opposite. If one were to eat the same amount of chicken and turkey, the latter would have more protein.

"This means turkey is a healthier option. Since it is a large bird, it has more bones and one can make soup with it. One can cook its meat, shred it and make taco. Like one makes chicken tikka, one can make turkey tikka. One has to however, keep a few things in mind. It has to be marinated longer and cooked slowly," Pupneja explains.

Another factor why turkey doesn't find its way into our homes is because of its shelf life. At best it will keep for two-three days in the refrigerator. But with hotels doing roasts, salads, soups and continuing to serve the bird right from Christmas up to New Year's night, turkey may soon find its way into our homes as well.

LET'S GET COOKING

WALNUT JAGGERY SAUCE

Onion	1 large
Garlic	2
Salt	To taste
Paprika	1 tsp
Walnut	40gm
Jaggery	30 gm
Salted Butter	20 gm
Fresh Thyme	2 strands

METHOD

- Collect the *jus de roti* (roast juices) from the roast turkey.
- Heat butter and sauté finely chopped garlic and onion.
- Add paprika and sauté further.
- Add puree of walnuts and *jus de roti*.
- Simmer for some time; add the grated jaggery and fresh thyme.
- Adjust the seasoning and serve hot garnished with roasted walnut flakes.

— Chef Sanjay Dasari, Executive Chef, The Ashok, New Delhi

ROAST TURKEY

Turkey	1
Salt	5 gm
Crushed black pepper	5 gm
Onion	100 gm
Celery	100 gm
Orange	2
Lemon	2

For herb butter:

Unsalted butter	100 gm
Lemon zest	2
Thyme	5 gm
Rosemary	5 gm
Sage	5 gm
Garlic chopped	10 gm
Fresh parsley (Chopped)	100 gm

METHOD:

- Let the turkey rest at room temperature for an hour.



- Adjust your oven rack so the turkey will sit in the center of the oven, preheat oven to 170 degree Celsius.

- Make the herb butter by combining butter, mince garlic, salt, pepper, rosemary, thyme, sage.
- Remove the neck and giblets from the inside the cavities of the turkey.
- Seasoned the turkey with salt, pepper and stuff with the quartered lemon, onion, celery, orange and leftover herbs.
- Apply the herb butter all over the outside of the turkey.
- Roast the turkey in the oven at the temperature of 175 degree Celsius for 2 and half hour to 3 hours with aluminum foil.
- Allow turkey to rest for 20-30 minutes before carving.

— Chef Tarun Dacha, Corporate Chef, The Claridges Hotel

CHEESY TURKEY PATTY

For patty	
Cooked minced turkey	200 gm
Eggs	2
Chopped bellpeppers (red; yellow)	30 gm
Chopped parsley	1 tbsp
Chopped garlic	1 tsp
Parmesan cheese (Grated)	50 gm
Crushed peppercorn	½ tsp
Mozzarella cheese (Stuffing)	20 gm
Cornflour (For binding)	2tbs
Salt	A pinch
For batter	
Refined flour	100 gm
Milk	100 ml
Eggs	1
Salt	A pinch
Dry oregano	1 tsp

For coating and frying

Bread crumbs	100 gm
Refined oil	To fry
For honey and Dijon mustard dip	
Dijon Mustard (paste)	100 gm
Honey	15 gm
Maple syrup	1 tsp
Olive oil	1 tbsp
Dry chilli flakes	1 tsp
Salt	To taste

METHOD

- In a mixing bowl put all the ingredients — cooked minced turkey, eggs, chopped parsley, chopped garlic, chopped bellpeppers, Parmesan cheese, crushed peppercorn and cornflour.
- Mix them all well.
- Make patty and stuff Mozzarella cheese and reshape.

Keep aside.

- Make a batter made of refined flour, milk, dry oregano and salt.
- Dip patties in this batter.
- Coat the turkey patties with bread crumbs.
- Set aside.
- In a deep pan. heat oil.
- Deep fry the patties.
- For making a healthy version of it we can do it in Air Fryer.
- Garnish the plate.
- Make sauce with honey and Dijon mustard dip.
- Serve hot.

Note: To make mince out of cooked turkey simply put cooked turkey, add eggs and blend to coarse paste.

— Chef Rubal Pupneja, Jr Sous Chef, The Samrat, New Delhi

Seven heaven at Selhurst

Salah, Mane, Firmino score in Liverpool's 7-goal rout of Crystal Palace; Manchester City beat Southampton away

AFF ■ LONDON

Liverpool ended a three-month wait for an away win in the Premier League in comprehensive fashion with a 7-0 thrashing of Crystal Palace on Saturday to move six points clear at the top of the table.

In an ominous sign for the challengers hoping to dethrone Jurgen Klopp's men as English champions, the Reds built on the momentum of a last-minute winner that beat second-placed Tottenham in midweek.

Roberto Firmino and Mohamed Salah scored twice at Selhurst Park, while Takumi Minamino, Sadio Mane and Jordan Henderson also netted.

Klopp has repeatedly bemoaned having to play Saturday lunchtime kick-offs after Wednesday night games, but his side suffered no hangover from their exertions against Spurs.

Salah was given a rare rest from the start, but his Japanese replacement Minamino took just three minutes to open the scoring when he was teed up by Mane for his first Premier League goal.

Palace had chances to get back into the game as Fabinho's intervention just took Wilfried Zaha's dangerous cross away from Jordan Ayew.

Ayew then wasted a glorious chance as he pounced on an uncharacteristic error from Fabinho, but tried to tee up Zaha rather than going for goal himself and played the ball behind the Ivorian.

At the other end, the visitors were ruthless as Mane ended his longest goal drought as a Liverpool player at nine games with an excellent turn and low finish from Firmino's pass.

A clinical counter-attack made it three before the break as this time Firmino latched onto Andy Robertson's cross before calmly flicking the ball beyond Vicente Guaita.

Liverpool had not won in their previous five league games and have already dropped more points this season than they had prior to sealing a first league title in 30 years last season.

However, Klopp's men have so far survived an injury crisis and with more players returning to fitness are now in pole position to defend their title.

Trent Alexander-Arnold is one of those to have returned in recent weeks after a month out and the England international's pass was swept home by Henderson from outside the box to make it 4-0.

Klopp then took the chance to give Mane a rest, but the Senegalese voiced his frustration at being removed to be replaced by Salah.

The Egyptian played his part for the fifth with the pass into Firmino, who has now scored as many goals in his last two games than his previous 27 Premier League appearances.

Salah then moved to the top of the Premier League goalscoring charts this season with a late double by heading home from a corner before bending an incredible effort into the top corner.

Victory ensured Liverpool will lead the league at Christmas for a third successive season and on this evidence will take some catching in the new year.



MAN CITY SEE OFF SAINTS

Southampton: Manchester City secured a much-needed win to keep their Premier League title challenge alive as Raheem Sterling's goal earned a hard-fought 1-0 victory at fourth-placed Southampton.

City slipped to 11 points behind leaders Liverpool prior to kick-off, albeit with two games in hand on the champions, and once again had to rely on a solid defensive display to edge up to fifth in the table thanks to a seventh clean sheet in eight games.

Pep Guardiola's men were again guilty of not being ruthless enough in front of goal with the few chances they did create, but one moment of quality that saw Kevin De Bruyne tee up Sterling separated the sides.

Southampton had lost just once in their previous 10 league games to start the day four points and six places ahead of their illustrious visitors. But the loss of top scorer Danny Ings on top of the defeat dealt a blow to their quest to qualify for Europe.

In a bright City start, Joao Cancelo forced Alex McCarthy into a flying save and Rodri saw an effort ruled out for offside before the only goal arrived on 16 minutes.

Southampton's daring approach to press high backfired as it afforded City the chance to counter-attack that very few sides offer Guardiola's men. Bernardo Silva fed De Bruyne down the right and his inch-perfect cross was swept home by Sterling for his seventh goal of the season.



Southampton, though, reacted well to falling behind as Theo Walcott forced Ederson into his first save of the day.

Jannik Vestergaard's threat from set-pieces has been a big part in Southampton's success this season and twice the giant Dane will feel he should have done better as his first weak header was easily claimed by Ederson before his second more powerful attempt flew over the bar.

Ruben Dias's own goal cost City two unexpected dropped points in a 1-1 draw with West Brom on Tuesday and the Portuguese centre-back narrowly escaped another goal at the wrong end after Che Adams just failed to connect with a dangerous cross from Kyle Walker-Peters.

The home side suffered a major blow just before the break when Ings had to be replaced with a muscle injury. City soaked up plenty of pressure from



the Saints in the second half, but again lacked the killer instinct up front to kill the game off.

Ferran Torres flashed an effort across goal before Silva should have provided the finish Sterling did to another brilliant De Bruyne cross.

De Bruyne was also guilty of not taking a big chance on the counter-attack when he fired too close to McCarthy and the Southampton 'keeper than made an incredible save high to his right to deny Ilkay Gundogan.

Cheered on by 2,000 fans in one of the few Premier League venues allowed to host supporters, due to stricter coronavirus restrictions in other parts of England, the home side pushed until the end.

But City always looked the more likely to score if there was to be a second goal and Riyad Mahrez left Guardiola with his head in his hands after blazing over a glorious opportunity in stoppage time.

Marcus Thuram sent off for spitting in opponent's face

AFF ■ BERLIN

Borussia Moenchengladbach forward Marcus Thuram was sent off for spitting in an opponent's face during Saturday's 2-1 home defeat against Hoffenheim in the Bundesliga.

The French international was shown a straight red card with 11 minutes left, which turned the game after the VAR spotted Thuram spitting at Hoffenheim defender Stefan Posch.

The incident happened just after Andrej Kramaric had equalised for Hoffenheim at Borussia Park.

Nine minutes after Thuram's dismissal, Tottenham loanee Ryan Sessegnon put Hoffenheim ahead when he tapped in a cross unmarked at the far post.

Gladbach, who face Manchester City in the last 16 of the Champions League in February, had gone



ahead when their captain Lars Stindl converted a first-half penalty.

Having made his France debut in November, this was the first time Thuram — the son of 1998 World Cup winner Lilian Thuram — has been sent off for Gladbach in his two seasons in Germany. Gladbach, winless in their

last six games in all competitions, are now eighth in the league while Hoffenheim are up to 11th.

With league leaders Bayer Leverkusen hosting European champions Bayern Munich on Saturday night, RB Leipzig missed the chance to go top after being held to a goalless draw at home to Cologne.

The point leaves Leipzig second in the table on goal difference, but level on 28 points with Leverkusen.

Despite bringing in Dutch veteran Huub Stevens, 67, on Friday as their third coach this season, Schalke are now 29 games without a win after their 1-0 defeat at home to Arminia Bielefeld.

Bielefeld, who are also in the bottom three, secured the points thanks to a header from captain Fabian Klos.

Schalke are now just two games from the unwanted league record of 31 winless games, set by Tasmania Berlin in 1965/66.

Neymar out until Jan with ankle injury

AFF ■ PARIS

Neymar is expected to miss Paris Saint-Germain's next two matches — and the remainder of 2020 — with an ankle injury that's not as bad as previously feared.

"Following the sprain to his left ankle, there is some bruising to the bone and he continues to undergo treatment at the training ground," PSG said in a statement on Saturday. "He is expected to make his return in January."

The 28-year-old will therefore be unavailable for PSG's clash against Lille on Sunday and Wednesday's encounter with Strasbourg.

Neymar already received a "reassuring" prognosis after being stretched off the pitch against Lyon last Sunday. Lyon midfielder Thiago Mendes, who tackled Neymar in second-half stoppage time, was sent off for the challenge. Neymar has scored nine goals in 12 matches across all competitions.

Messi matches Pele's record

AFF ■ BARCELONA

Lionel Messi scored his 643rd goal for Barcelona on Saturday to equal Pele's record of goals for a single club as the Spanish giants were held 2-2 by Valencia.

Messi headed in from Jordi Alba's cross after his first-half penalty was saved to equal the mark set by the Brazilian great for Santos.

But Messi was left frustrated as a dogged Valencia forced a draw that leaves Barcelona eight points behind leaders Atletico Madrid, who beat Elche 3-1 earlier in the day.

Barcelona started slowly and went a goal behind to Mouctar Diakhaby's unchallenged header from a corner after half an hour.

Antoine Griezmann earned the penalty that led to Messi's record-equaling goal when the Frenchman was nudged over by Jose Gaya.

Messi's spot-kick was saved by Jaume Domenech but the ball rebounded and from Alba's dinked cross, the Argentine



headed the ball into the net to draw level with Pele.

Barcelona went ahead thanks to a superb scissor kick from Uruguayan Ronald Araujo.

But Valencia's pressure was rewarded when Maxi Gomez got in front of Barca central defender Oscar Mingueza to turn in a cross and equalise.

Hazard set to return 'very soon'

AFF ■ MADRID

Eden Hazard will soon resume his injury-plagued Real Madrid career after recovering from a thigh problem, coach Zinedine Zidane said on Saturday.

Hazard has missed nearly 50 matches since joining Real from Chelsea in a deal worth up to 150 million euros in July 2019.

"We hope he will be back very soon," Zidane said in a

press conference before the champions face Eibar on Sunday.

"He is fine and he is almost completely recovered. He just needs a little more time. But he is training with us and he is very close to being able to get into the team and play."

Hazard, who was voted the Premier League's player of the year by his fellow players in 2015, was injured on November 28.

lead when France forward Thomas Lemar drove the ball straight at Elche 'keeper Edgar Badia as the defence opened up.

Suarez was far more clinical in the 41st minute as the Uruguay forward got the slightest of touches to steer Kieran Trippier's cross past Badia to take the lead.

The former Barcelona and Liverpool attacker then stretched to poke a cross into the net in the 58th minute.

Chennaiyin beat FC Goa in ISL

PTI ■ MARGAO

Chennaiyin FC finally managed to log full points after five games, in the form of a 2-1 victory over FC Goa in the Hero Indian Super League at Fatorda Stadium here on Saturday.

In a game that saw 39 shots at goal, Rahim Ali (53rd minute) scored the match-winner after Jorge Ortiz (9th) cancelled out Rafael Crivellaro's (5th) opener.

It was an easy win for the visitors who should have finished with a bigger goal margin, had it not for their poor finishing.

Brandon Fernandes returned to the side as Goa coach Juan Ferrando named three changes to the line-up that lost against ATK Mohun Bagan with Aiban Dohling and George Ortiz being the other two.

Following their 0-0 draw against NorthEast United, Coach Csaba Laszlo preferred to start with influential midfielder Anirudh Thapa and Rafael Crivellaro. And the duo troubled the FC Goa defence from the first whistle.

Chennaiyin FC fired warning shots early in the game. Thapa made a darting run on the right and cut the ball back to an unmarked



Crivellaro. The latter's first-time shot was pushed behind by Mohammad Nawaz.

The visitors were soon ahead in the game and it came from a moment of individual brilliance. Crivellaro got his corner-kick to loop over the Goa defenders and land in goal.

But the lead lasted for just four minutes as the Gaurs came up with an instant response in the ninth minute. Ortiz found Alexander Jesuraj on the right who squared the ball back to the Spaniard. His shot found the roof of the net.

Chennaiyin displayed attacking prowess in the first half and should have been up by two or more goals. But a couple of missed sitters from Crivellaro and Lallianzuala Chhangte along with Nawaz's brilliance in the Goa goal saw the scores remain level.

The visitors had yet another chance to go ahead in the game just before the break but Chhangte failed to keep his composure in front of the goal.

Raegen's effort from left was saved by Nawaz but the

ball fell to an unmarked Chhangte who once again failed to direct his shot at goal, leaving Laszlo in agony on the touchline.

Nothing changed post resumption. Chennaiyin continued their poor form upfront with Crivellaro being the culprit this time. Chhangte played a low cross from the left to an unmarked Crivellaro, but he blazed his shot over the bar.

Brandon then tried his luck from a distance with a curling shot but Vishal Kaith did well to deny the Goan lad.

Chennaiyin finally got their deserved lead in the 53rd minute when Crivellaro kept his composure in beating Donachie before playing a low cross at the far post where second-half substitute Rahim Ali had little work to tap the ball into an empty net.

Had Chhangte scored with the opportunities he had in this game, he should have nearly completed his hat-trick by now. In the 77th minute, Ali set Chhangte through on goal from the edge of the box, but once again the former shot wide.

FC Goa tried their best through Igor Angulo and Ortiz to get the equaliser but Chennaiyin's defense was too tough to crack.

Aus Open confirm delayed start from Feb 8

AFF ■ MELBOURNE

Players will compete for Aus \$71 million at next year's Australian Open, tournament chief Craig Tiley said on Saturday, confirming the Grand Slam will begin three weeks late and players must undergo quarantine.

Singles, doubles and wheelchair competitions will all be played as usual after agreement was reached to stage the event following eight months of talks between Tennis Australia and state authorities in Melbourne.

But the men's and women's qualifiers will be held in Doha and Dubai respectively from January 10-13 while the junior championships have been postponed until later in the year.

"This will be an historic Australian Open on so many levels," tournament director Tiley said in confirming the February 8-21 dates revealed by the ATP Tour last week.

"For the first time in more than 100 years, the Australian Open will start in February and we look forward to offering the players what we believe will be one of their best playing experiences in 2021."

The tournament was originally due to begin on January 18 and players will now arrive in Australia from January 15 to serve two weeks of mandatory quarantine in a bio-



secure bubble, many of them coming from countries where the pandemic is still raging.

They are expected to stay at designated hotels but will reportedly be allowed to practise and exercise for up to five hours a day, shuttled between their accommodation and Melbourne Park, where the tournament is held.

A slimmed-down, 12-team ATP Cup, the relocated Adelaide International, and an ATP 250 tournament will all be held in Melbourne ahead of the Slam.

Two WTA 500 tournaments will be held concurrently in Melbourne Park on January 31-February 7.

They said the Grand Slam prize money would remain at this year's Aus\$71 million, but more than Aus\$80 million would be at stake during the players' time in Australia.

Panghal clinches Gold without fight

Injured Satish bags Silver at Cologne WC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

World Silver-medallist Amit Panghal (52kg) notched up a Gold medal without having to fight his final bout, while veteran Satish Kumar (+91kg) settled for Silver after an injury prevented him from competing in his summit clash at the Cologne World Cup in Germany on Saturday.

Panghal was given a walkover by Germany's Argishti Terteryan.

Satish, who made the final after beating France's Djamil Dini Moindze in the semifinal on Friday night, had to withdraw against Germany's Nelvie Tiafack owing to an injury.

Also making the final were Sakshi and Manisha in the women's 57kg category. The two boxers will now take on each other in the final late on Saturday night.

While Manisha defeated two-time world champion Silver medal-winning compatriot Sonia Lather 5-0, Sakshi got the better of Germany's Ramona Graff 4-1.

However, Asian Games Bronze winner Pooja Rai settled for a Bronze medal after going down to the Netherlands' Nouchka Fontijn.

Also ending with Bronze medals were Mohammed Hussamuddin and Gaurav Solanki in the men's 57kg category.

Hussamuddin lost to local hope Hamsat Shadalov. Solanki, on the other hand, was out-punched by Frenchman Samuel Kistohurry.





PLATE FULL OF XMAS CHEERS

With only five days left for Christmas, it is time to whip up some tasty treats and bid adieu to the year on a sweet note. SUNDAY PIONEER brings you some exclusive recipes



MANGO LAVA CHEESE CAKE

- Ingredients:**
- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Milk | Half cup |
| Corn flour | 1 tsp |
| Sugar | 1 tbsp |
| Mango pulp | 1 cup |
| Gelatin | 1 tsp |
| Whipped cream | 1 and a half cup |
| Mascarpone cheese | 2 tbsp |
| Mango Essence | two drops |
- Method:**
- Mix cornflour in 2 tbsp of hot milk and 1 tsp sugar. Add around one cup of mango pulp & two drops of essence into this mixture and keep aside.
 - Melt gelatin in hot water and add the same to mascarpone cheese to make it into a mixture.
 - Mix both the mixtures and add whipped cream.
 - Pour the mixture in a mould (save a little for topping) and put it in refrigerator for 3 hours.
 - Demould and make a hollow in between to fill the mango pulp.
 - After filling top with the remaining mixture, refrigerate it for 40 minutes.
 - Serve cold, topped with chopped mangoes or cheese crumble.
- Courtesy: Gaurav Malhotra, Senior Sous Chef, The Ashok



DUNDEE CAKE

- INGREDIENTS:**
- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Butter | 1½ cup |
| Brown sugar | 1 cup |
| Eggs | 5 |
| Refined flour | 1¼ cups |
| Baking powder | One and a half tsp |
| Orange marmalade | 2 tbsp |
| Crushed almonds | 1cup |
| Raisins | 2 cups |
| Orange peel | Half cup |
| Orange rind | 2 tbsp |
| Lemon rind | 1 tbsp |
| Dark rum | 4 tbsp |
| Blanched skinless almonds | Half cup |
- Method:**
- Soak raisins, orange peel, crushed almonds, lemon rind and orange rind with rum for 4 hours.
 - Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time until light.
 - Combine flour with baking powder and put it into the wet mixture of step 2.
 - Add in the soaked fruit.
 - Spread the batter into a foil-lined round baking pan. Arrange the blanched almonds on top.
 - Bake at 165 degrees C for about 1½ hours, until an inserted wooden pick comes out clean.
 - Remove cake from pan and serve hot.
- Courtesy: Executive Chef Abhiheet Thakre, Taj City Centre Gurugram

CHRISTMAS PIES

- INGREDIENTS FOR PIE FILLING:**
- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Black Currants | Half cup |
| Sweet Bread Crumbs | 1½ cup |
| Raisins Yellow | 100 gm |
| Almonds Whole | 40 gm |
| Candied Orange Peel | 5 tbsp |
| Candied Lemon Peel | 6 tbsp |
| Candied Mix Peel | 6 tbsp |
| Corondha | 3 tbsp |
| Whiskey | 1 tbsp |
| Wine Sula Red | 2 tsp |
| Rum Old Monk | 2 tbsp |

- Tart shells as a pie base As required
- INGREDIENTS FOR SWEET DOUGH:**
- | | |
|---------------|----------|
| Butter | Half cup |
| Icing Sugar | 18090 gm |
| Salt | A pinch |
| Almond Powder | 2 tbsp |
| Eggs | 2 |
| Flour | 1 cup |

- METHOD:**
- Pre heat the oven to 200 degrees C and keep ready.
 - In a clean bowl, soak all the fruit and nuts in alcohol for half an hour.
 - Then add the sweet bread crumbs to it and mix well. Mix all of them to make a soft and clean dough.
 - With a rolling pin roll the dough into a thin, cut out a disc of 6 inch diameter with a pastry cutter. Keep the disc in a plate and refrigerate for 5 hours.
 - Now, use the tart shells as a base and fill the mix till the top. Keep it ready.



- Brush egg white on the edges of the tart shell and cover it with the sweet paste disc and place it in the oven for 12 minutes with the top heat 50 and side and the bottom heat should be zero.
 - When the top crust is baked take it out of the oven and cool it on a wire rack.
 - For serving, place lovely Christmas decorations on top and dust it with icing sugar.
- Courtesy: The Chocolate Box and Lounge, Radisson Blu MBD Hotel Noida



PEPPERMINT MOCHA

- INGREDIENTS:**
- Espresso shot 30 ml, milk (one cup), unsweetened chocolate (one tbsp), mint extract (four to five drops)
- METHOD:**
- Heat milk and add unsweetened chocolate to it. Mix well. Once done, add four-five drops of mint extract. Take the mixture off heat, add the coffee shot and mix well.
 - Serve it hot and garnish with mint leaves. Goes best with Rum Cake siders.
- Courtesy: Renuka VS, Senior Barista at SLAY Coffee

OLIVE & TOMATO PASTA

- INGREDIENTS:**
- | | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Spaghetti | 160 gm |
| Olive oil | 1.5 tbsp |
| Onions | 50 gm |
| Garlic (finely chopped) | 2 tsp |
| Capers | 2 tsp |
| Marinara Sauce | 240 ml |
| Parmesan cheese | 1 tbsp |
| Cherry tomato | 5 |
| Black olives | 1 tbsp |
| Parsley | 1 tsp |

- METHOD:**
- Heat oil in a pan, sauté onions for 10 minutes or till they turn translucent.
 - Add finely chopped garlic and sauté until it turns brown, add capers (a form of Jalapeno) and marinara sauce. Bring to simmer, reduce heat and cook the sauce for 15 minutes.
 - To boil spaghetti, take a heavy bottom pan, add half litre of water, 1 tsp salt and 1 tsp of olive oil. Let the water come to a boil and add the spaghetti. Boil for 15 minutes. Take out the spaghetti in a colander, run through cold water and drain the remaning water.
 - Add the boiled spaghetti to the sauce and toss well.
 - Place spaghetti nicely on a serving plate and garnish with parmesan flakes, olives and parsley. Serve hot.
- Courtesy: Gaurav Malhotra, Senior Sous Chef, The Ashok



BE SOMEONE'S SECRET SANTA

No festival is complete without a gift. And if its Christmas, then it goes without saying that you have to be someone's Santa and gift them something they will remember for life.



No jewellery, no fun: Spreading bliss beats and chirpy cheer, Kohinoor Jewellers Agra presents its tweaked version of 'Christmas Treats'. A curation of prized endowments that are truly a reflection of everything Christmas-y. The santa's red to wreath's green, the snowflakes to treetop stars, the assortment is an endearing fusion of festive designs and wearable jewels. Featuring striking gemstones in alluring baubles, this gifting collection promises a cherished gift for your loved ones. Price: On request



For a glamorous collection: Celebrate this holiday season with the Kiko Milano Holiday Gems Collection: a line-up of festive gems bringing a contemporary twist on classic beauty. Treat yourself to a look guaranteed to make you feel holiday ready or pick from a range of gifts your friends will be delighted to unwrap and treasure, all packaged in rich emerald green and gold packaging inspired by decorations and ornaments. It's the most wonderful time of the year — and Kiko Milano is ready to celebrate it with you



Steaming cup of happiness: Choose from a variety of Roastery Coffee for gifting this season to let your loved ones enjoy a pleasurable home brewing experience. The range includes Harley Estate Grapa, Black Honey (Balur Estate), Monsoon Malabar, Thogarihunkal Estate Honey Sundried Coffee, Carbonic Maceration (Harley Estate), to name a few. Apart from coffee beans, one can also buy coffee sachets and equipment from Roastery Coffee. Roastery coffee beans are available in packaging of 250 gms, 500 gms and 1kg.



Charms on your feet: This festive season you can gift your loved ones a personalised pair of Classic clogs from Crocs. The Crocs Classic collection has the perfect footwear for everyone in your family with the iconic Croslite technology, giving you the ultimate comfort. You can personalise your favourite pair of Classic clogs with Jibbitz charms which are a fun, symbolic and sentimental way to represent your unique self to the world. Jibbitz charms allow you to make your favourite Crocs uniquely 'you'.



Amp up your style quotient: Woods presents the party collection, crafted for men & women, the range consists of Ankle Strap Sandals, Block heels & statement sling backs for women to add the glam quotient to your western and ethnic outfits effortlessly. And for Men, extensive formal loafers, blingy shoes, trendy silp-ons made from the exquisite quality material is all set to redefine your laid-back style quotient. Conquer this festive season, with the perfect footwear picks for you & your loved ones by Woods.



Personal touch: This Christmas let's unwrap the miracle and bring a cheerful smile to your loved ones' face with the perfect personalised gifts by FernsNPetals designed to make this festival even more memorable. From Xmas themed Personalised LED cushion to Merry Christmas bottles, mugs and surprises filled X-mas stockings, all these gifts can be further customised for a personal touch to surprise the recipient. Other than these amazing gifts, the diverse Christmas gifting catalogue also contains Gift Hampers, Flower bouquets, chocolates, and much more.



the pioneer agenda

Everyone has been discriminated against or harassed — sexism is real
— Scarlett Johansson



FROM THE INSIDE

Remove those impediments

If left unguided, one may face numerous roadblocks along their way to spiritual seeking. Make effort in the right direction

2



4

You can write your destiny

By turning your attention inwards, you can make necessary amends through fresh inputs to rewrite your destiny



Gardens and pavilions of Gyeongbokgung Palace

THE HERITAGE PALACES AND TRADITIONAL VILLAGES OF MODERN SEOUL

On the Trail of Buddha — A Journey to the East by DEEPANKAR ARON is a unique sojourn in search of the spiritual, philosophical, and cultural linkages that bind India to the East Asian civilisations. It discovers the unity in diversity of cultures connected by two thousand miles of the Silk Road and separated by two thousand years of history. An edited excerpt:

The traditional Korean greeting *Anyeong hasseyo* means 'Are you peaceful?'. Indeed, there is not one, but many a unique experience and peaceful encounters that can define the wonderful Korean experience.

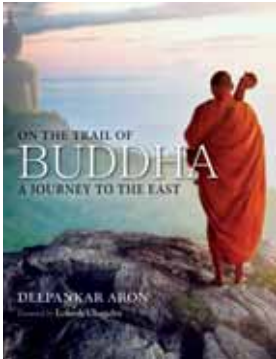
I was ruminating on the three giant gold-plated Buddha statues at the Jogyesa Temple, wondering at the calm and tranquillity they exuded, even after 2600 years of Buddha's nirvana, when a monk passing by stopped with a smile on his face and asked, 'Are you Indian?' Soon he presented his card — he was a Doctorate in Religious Studies.

JOGYESA

I was at Jogyesa, the main Buddhist temple in Seoul, which belongs to the leading sect of Buddhism in Korea called the Jogye Order. Known as Chan Buddhism in China and Zen Buddhism in Japan, it came to Korea from China, about 1200 years ago, when the Korean master, Taego Bowu went to China and became the 57th Patriarch of Buddhism and the first in Korea. He followed the teachings of the 1st Patriarch of China, the Indian monk Bodhidharma or Damo, who in turn was the 28th Indian Patriarch. Today, close to 20,000 monks and 20 million people in Korea follow this order. The temple, the biggest in Seoul today, was expanded in a big way in 1938 by adding the main wooden hall, Daeungjeon, which houses three giant images of the Amitabha, the Historical Buddha and the Medicine Buddha.

For a temple as large as this, it was conspicuously quiet. People were silently offering prayers, sitting over mats spread on the floor of the main hall. An elderly lady saw me and offered to take my photo from my camera without my having suggested so. I took hers too, reciprocating her warmth and affection.

Modern Seoul is vibrant with fashionable young professionals who believe in the work-hard-play-hard culture. Notwithstanding the absence of fluency in English, their business-



SEOUL IS FAST EMERGING AS THE 'NEW DESIGN CAPITAL' OF THE WORLD, SPRINKLED WITH ART GALLERIES AT EVERY NOOK AND CORNER OF THE CITY, WITH MULTI-STOREYED MARKETS SELLING ARTISTIC SOUVENIRS, MUSEUMS, AND HANDICRAFT SHOPS GIVING WORKSHOPS ON POTTERY MAKING, ETC



The rooftops of Bukchon Hanok village

like approach manifests in various ways — be it the 22000 USD per capita GDP, which was less than USD 100 in 1953; the meteoric rise of South Korean economy, which is Asia's third-biggest economy today, or the legendary emergence of not just Hyundai or Samsung brands, but so many others. It could be felt in the interactions with any Korean — from the presentations of my Korean Custom department friends to the absolute professional homework of the tour guide, who took us on a tour of the World Heritage Site of Gyeongbokgung Palace. For example, to explain the concept of 'ondol', the traditional heating system of Korean homes, our tour guide drew out a proper schematic diagram to show the generation of heat and the consequent hot air and its movement under the floor made up of stones and clay.

Seoul is fast emerging as the 'New Design Capital' of the world, sprinkled with art galleries at every nook and corner of the city, with multi-storeyed markets selling artistic



A glimpse of traditional Seoul

souvenirs, museums, and handicraft shops giving workshops on pottery making, etc. Artists can be seen making live paintings while music waft from the streets where performers play. The cynosure of this 'Designer Seoul' is the Cheonggyecheon, a lovely stream with a beautiful promenade running along with it. More than 8 km long

it was recreated in downtown Seoul after demolishing buildings that covered a stream that used to flow there in the past as well.

Gyeongbokgung Palace

The colours of Korea can be best savoured during the hourly 'change of guards' ceremony at Gyeongbokgung Palace, bringing alive the glory of 600 years of Joseon rule, until about the last century. The colourful guards stand in sharp contrast to the serenity of the palace and its simple architecture. Hanyang (old name of Seoul) was chosen as the capital of Joseon dynasty (1392-1910), as per *fengshui*, because it was surrounded by four mountains in the four directions.

The best example of traditional 'Joseon Korea' for me was the Bukchon Hanok village with hundreds of traditional Korean houses or hanoks, with a central courtyard, like the hutongs of Beijing or the traditional houses of India. We loitered, drifted and lost our way again and again in its narrow alleys while staring at the ever-changing compositions of rooftops, doors, and sloping alleys, framed by a riot of cherry blossoms.

Korea has become a developed country, but that has not taken away the warmth and hospitality of the Koreans. The fight to pick up the bill with Joon, my local Korean friend, or the touching gesture of Mr Jang bringing me Korean coins for my collection, shall linger on forever.

As I leave Seoul, I hope to visit it in future at the time of the Yeon Deung Hoe or the Lotus Lantern festival, celebrated annually, a few days prior to Buddha's birthday, when hundreds of thousands of lanterns are lit up and carried in an evening procession from Dongdaemun (Great Eastern Gate of the Seoul Fortress) to Jogyesa — a 1300-year-old tradition, dating from the times of the Silla dynasty.

Excerpted with permission from *On the trail of Buddha: A Journey to the East* by Deepankar Aron, Niyogi Books, ₹1,995



Daeungjeon, the sanctum sanctorum of Jogyesa with its holy trinity



Peace and solitude at Jogyesa



Pavilions inside the Korean palaces with traditional Korean architecture



Traditional Korean dance

Reversing Trumpism a challenge for Biden

Joe Biden has emerged as the new President-elect in the electoral firmament of the United States and unarguably will take a star and striped avatar in the larger international ecosystem and the political sphere of the American homeland as the most powerful man on the Earth. We are not biding for a superhero but in a way we are referring to the tumult and the histrionics which accompany quintessential American Presidential elections. The million dollar question is that how deftly and quickly New Delhi can change its loyalties as a true blue ally from the heady days of President Donald Trump to a much sombre looking Joe Biden, whose creditworthiness is further augmented as he supported the Indo-US Nuclear deal in 2008 during the times of President George Bush Jr.

The remarkable was the incumbent President's resentment, "I had such a big lead in all of these states late into election night, only to see the leads miraculously disappear as the days went by. Perhaps these leads will return as our legal proceedings move forward!" over losing Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Philadelphia, after a surprising victory in Florida and North Carolina. As the voting lead of 37,000 votes from the electoral hustings and buntings from Pennsylvania began filtering in, the American Vice President-elect, Kamala Harris, gleefully posted on her Facebook wall, "Congratulations, Joe, we have done it, You are going to be the 46th President of the US."

Biden has attempted to move away from the quintessential American Dream dreamt of by American historian John Truslow Adams as he reiterated in his acknowledgement speech in Delaware that the pained American soul would be reinstated during his term as the American President in January 2021 as he stressed upon the context of the United States of America requiring a re-building and reorientation in a larger international system which reeks with reformed



President-elect Joe Biden and his wife Jill Biden walk from St Joseph on the Brandywine Roman Catholic Church in Wilmington, Del, on Friday

AP

multilateralism.

Joe Biden has been anointed as the 47th President-elect of the most powerful nation-state in the broader international system. Subsequently, the incumbent President, Donald Trump, declaring to cooperate with the transition process despite his misgivings about the "rigged elections," the road to the White House looks clear for Biden and his Vice Presidential mate, Kamala Harris.

Antony Blinken is the new Secretary of State designate, who boasts of a diplomatic family background and has been a Deputy National Security Adviser to the President years back. He has gone on record with the official verbiage that the Joe Biden

ameliorative measure to "Bring America Back" is all slated to repudiate the Trump myth and lore of "America First and Make America Great Again (MAGA)." This can serve as a stately change which the nomenclature which the context of US policy will receive under the suzerainty of Biden.

The seat of the Secretary of Defense might go to Michelle Foulrony, who, along with Antony Blinken, worked at a consultancy firm called West exec. Thus, the masterminds and experts of the previous democrat's tenure under Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama will be leveraged in the Biden cabinet. Also, still, one aspect is a certainty that the left-centre leaders of the order of Bernie

Sanders and Elizabeth Warren are not being considered for the Biden cabinet as the chiefly centrist orientation of the White House has been strengthened. To place the Biden Presidency in an early days' dilemma, Bernie Sanders, who was also a strong candidate for the position of Democrat's nomination for the Presidential elections, has railed against the President-elect's nomination decisions.

Biden has decided to go stealthy on China, but the cooperative idiom rolled into the administration's policy towards the taloned dragon appears to be inclined towards engagement than containment. Biden had declared in his informal acceptance speech that on the first day of his Presidency,

he would reverse the Trumpism of a proposed withdrawal from the World Trade Organization, World Health Organization and the Paris Climate Change Pact, and strengthen the ties with European allies. Biden has emphasised that "American Global outreach" will receive a fillip, and the grandiloquent American retreat, as a policy, will witness a sea change. The President-elect has contended that the partnership between India and the United States would definitely sail through as one of the most valuable bilateral trysts in the times to come. Thus, India is all set to gain diplomatically but the human rights conundrum which is often associated with the Democratic posturing can

cause a flutter as far as the internal security issues are concerned. The question that will soon be answered is whether we are going all the way back to the Bill Clinton and Barrack Obama days.

Biden has had to match up to the myriad challenges as have been posed by the legal challenges unleashed by the Republican machinery led by the grudgingly outgoing President. The US District Judge, Linda Parker, has contended that she rejects the legal challenge launched by President Trump as a matter of questioning the fungibility of the electoral process being part of the quintessential Democratic process and such imagined barbs at the system do not behave well for the tra-

dition and the seat of power at the White House. President Trump has lost nearly all the legal challenges at the states while he gloats over the victory in Florida and Ohio. The decisions of the State assemblies are deemed to be full and replete with finality and the Democrats are raising the theme that outgoing President is not conceding defeat at the hustings and is attempting a situation, where in, he is not relinquishing power with grace and honour.

Anyway, it seems to be the fact that India soon needs to mend its ways and Prime Minister Narendra Modi needs to initiate quick bridge-building with Biden. Maybe, Modi would be well placed to activate the phalanx of diplomatists to the Capitol Hill and the White House in a full throttled PR exercise which they had done so diligently during the Trump era. The manner in which success was achieved at the Nuclear Supplier Groups and the momentum generated during the global debate to usher in a new definition of terrorism at the United Nations need to be replicated with the utmost zeal as India is partnering with the United States to solve the "troubles" of the twilight zone that Afghanistan is since the initiation of the great game two in South and Central Asia.

The advent of Biden augurs as advantageous to the larger international system, still a forecasted soft policy vis a vis the recalcitrant People's Republic of China tethered on the brink of being labelled as a rogue state. Biden has ounces of political and diplomatic quantum to prove as the American President and a mere Trump bashing will only leave the high pedestal of the White House pulpit tarred and marred. Authenticity in leadership and political discourse in the aftermath of the Trumpism is what Biden will be tested and tried for!

(The writer teaches at International Relations and International Organisations, IIPA, New Delhi)

Joe Biden has to prove his political and diplomatic skills to stand tall as the President of the world's sole superpower. A mere Trump bashing will only leave the high pedestal of the White House pulpit tarred and marred. Authenticity in leadership and political discourse in the aftermath of the Trumpism is what Biden will be tested and tried for



MANAN DWIVEDI

PERSPECTIVE

France at the crossroads of liberty vs Islamophobia

Article 24 of the New Security Bill has given impetus to already fierce debate, within France and outside, on its relations with Islam and Muslims, particularly after the brutal beheading of French schoolteacher Samuel Paty, who was accused of committing the sin of showing to his students the Charlie Hebdo's 2012 cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad



MAKHAN SALKIA

The New Security Bill (NSB) proposed and passed by the Lower House of the French Parliament is creating a big controversy across the country. In totality the Bill has 32 articles dealing with a broad range of issues such as road security to drones to how municipal police are to be organised. Out of all, the Article 24 which is included in Chapter 4 of the NSB is drawing maximum controversy from across the world starting from rights groups to UN Human Rights agencies. Article 24 of the new Bill would now prevent people to publish images of police officers in action.

This has moved thousands to the street demanding its immediate repeal. And people say this violates basic freedoms guaranteed under the French Constitution. The NSB has started a long debate on secularism or what in French language called "laicite".

The UN Human Rights head, Michelle Bachelet, called on the French Government to withdraw the new law, particularly Article 24 which may curb freedom to share images identifying police. She says the law should be discussed by the French people and the Article 24 should be withdrawn.

In response to this, the Emmanuel Macron administration stated that it would rewrite that article that curbs rights to circulate images of police officers.

If we unearth the background to the NSB, we can easily say it has emerged after the brutal murder of French schoolteacher Samuel Paty on October 16, 2020, in a suburb of Paris city.

He was beheaded by

Islamic terrorist named Abdoullakh Abouyedovich Anzorov, an ethnic Chechen refugee staying in France. According to the terrorist-murderer, Paty committed the crime of showing his students the Charlie Hebdo's 2012 cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad. And it was done in a class to impart the students the very sense of freedom of expression. This gruesome murder of the teacher had forced thousands to descend on the roads demanding immediate action from the Government against the growing incidents of Islamic terror across the country.

France remains traumatised by a series of Islamic terror strikes that killed many in 2015. As much as the Charlie Hebdo killings, the brutal beheading of Paty has demonstrated a direct assault on one of the main pillars of the French Republic i.e. the secular public school system and the very right to freedom of speech.

Meanwhile, the far-right leader and tipped to be the principal challenger for Macron in 2022 presidential poll, Marine le Pen has said, "This situation calls for a strategy of reconquest. Islamism is a bellicose ideology whose means of conquest is terrorism." In fact her party has been targeting the Muslims and migrants for the last nearly half a century.

President Macron has already started a campaign against what he calls Islamic separatism. Besides, by vowing to fight the Islamic terror and recognising Paty's act as a freedom of expression, Macron is highlighting the importance of



national security and the very importance of the basic values established by the Constitution of France. But many say Macron is eyeing a large vote base belonging to the right-wing which could help him win the presidency again in 2022. Therefore his speech after the murder of Paty clearly reinforced the idea to the French people that a large group of violent Muslim contingent is there in the suburbs, waiting for an opportunity to tear down the basic ethos of French society.

He also describes Islamic separatism as a deviation of Islam which is "a conscious, theorised, politico-religious project which is materialised by repeated discrepancies with

the values of the republic, which often results in the creation of a counter society and whose manifestations are the dropping out of schoolchildren, development of sports, cultural and communal practices which are the pretext for the teaching of the principles which do not conform to the laws of the republic".

This was more than sufficient for Macron to invite the ire of the Muslim nations, including Turkey. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has described Macron as mentally ill.

The French Constitution of 1958 clearly says "all citizens regardless of their origin, race or religion are treated as equals

before the law and respecting all religious beliefs". And now it seems the NSB is violating the principles laid down by the Constitution of 1958.

That's why the critics say the way the French President is using the state security apparatus to pound on civic and human rights organisations indicate entirely a unique behaviour of the state under Macron. Besides, his attitude towards the minority exposes the underlying malaise that delves deep into the French political institutions of today.

The French constitutional principle "laicite" imposes strict religious neutrality on both the state and all types of public services. This principle indeed

symbolises a pillar of the very secular identity of the French Republic. The NSB is all set to change this foundation in the name of protecting the state from terror. But many say it is new form of political coercion launched by the Macron administration just in the name of national security.

The people who oppose the NSB say it is a unilateral assault on Muslims and Islam. They all accuse him of not showing wisdom and moral leadership at this moment of crisis in French society. But They say Macron has put forward an agenda to malign Islam by closing down major mosques, banning Muslim and human rights organisations.

These latest measures to tighten the security around the country have simply stirred hatred against the Muslims across France.

Further this has emboldened the far rights groups and violent extremists to mobilise the French to counter and prevent refugee movements around the country. However, a group of 23 organisations that mobilise young Europeans has called out to President Macron to stop the raging hatred. They all urged Macron to embrace France's revered principles of "egalite, liberte and fraternite". In their open letter to him they highlighted that "it is within your capacity to nurture understanding between people and to counter dangerous forms of polarisation within France and globally".

To them he must pander to the bigots and aptly demonstrate his moral leadership so as to survive France's long-held ethos of multiculturalism.

France has already launched a massive campaign against "the enemy within" as its hardline Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin has directly pointed the finger at the country's radicalised Muslims.

Now the moot question is whether France is going to compromise with its national security. It's a clear choice between security and liberty. It's the utmost responsibility of the freedom loving French citizens to decide over it. But precisely, its people, it seems, are offering a helping hand to Macron to counter the fast-growing Islamic jihad in the country.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)

