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DEMOCRACY'S
TRUE GRIT

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US IS THRIVING AND HIGHLY
RESPECTED AGAIN: TRUMP

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BLACK CAPS BEAT
INDIA IN 1ST ODI

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KABIR IS
PROUD OF
ALAYA BEDI
13 VIVACITY

PM sets US \$ 5b target for defence exports

Invites global majors to set up manufacturing hubs in India

VIRENDRA NATH BHATT ■ LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's largest ever DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow on Wednesday and set a target of defence exports worth \$5 billion (₹35,000

crore) in the next five years. Stressing the need for India to attain self-reliance in military needs to face present and future security challenges, Modi said unless the country controls its massive defence import bill, the dream of

becoming a \$5 trillion economy could not be realised.

"India has been a major military power in the past but post-Independence the country failed to capitalise on its historical capabilities of indigenously producing its defence

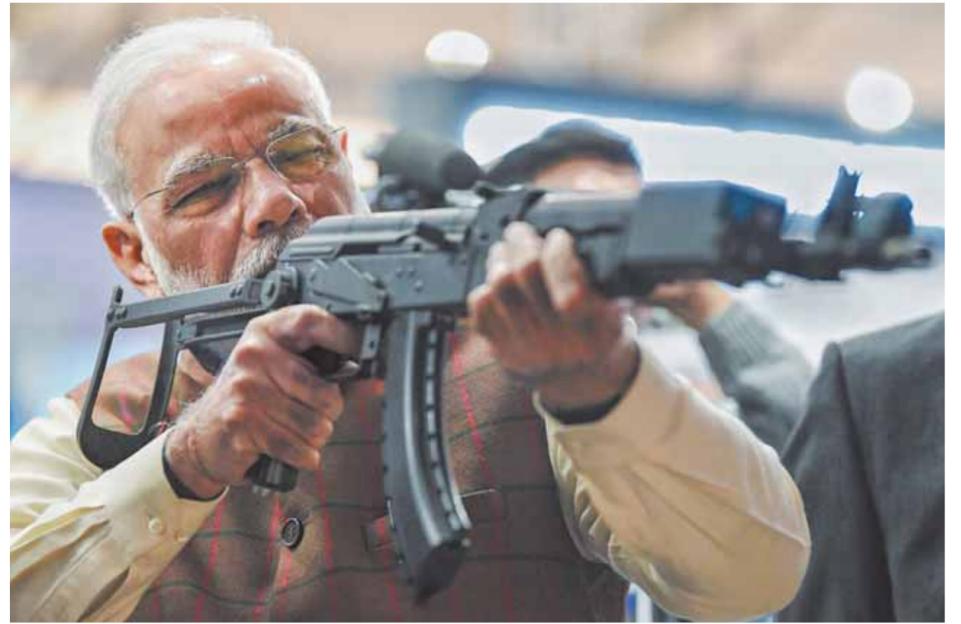
needs. India is the largest democracy in the world, has the second largest Army, fifth largest economy and is also the biggest arms importer. How long can we heavily rely on imports," asked the PM.

However, Modi observed that India's pursuit of self-reliance was to secure its national interests, especially against the backdrop of threats it faced in the region, and not targeted against any nation.

"India never had expansionist ambitions and never attacked any country nor will we ever do it. Besides our own defence, we have also obligations towards the security of our neighbours in Indian Ocean region. We are not interested in warfare, but welfare," Modi pointed out.

The PM said from defence exports valued at ₹2,000 crore a few years back, the nation had achieved defence exports worth ₹17,000 crore so far. "But our target is to hit \$5 billion in the next five years," he said.

"India has always been a trusted partner for world peace and contributed during the two World Wars despite having no direct stakes in these conflicts. Nearly 6,000 Indian security personnel were currently



Prime Minister Narendra Modi tries a weapon during the inauguration of 11th edition of DefExpo 2020, in Lucknow, on Wednesday

PTI

deployed in the UN Peace Keeping missions in African nations," Modi said.

Underlining the importance of "Make in India", the PM said DefExpo 2020 is among the biggest defence shows globally and would contribute immensely towards showcasing India as an ideal investment destination for military hardware. "India is not only a big market, but offers huge business opportunities," Modi told foreign investors and assured that their investments would provide good

returns and help India become self-reliant in defence needs.

The PM further said that Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was helping defence sector start-ups to scale up and develop new products based on modern technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI) etc.

Meanwhile, Modi espoused the development of defence manufacturing capacity in domestic private sector and talked about enabling policies, including liberal licensing

regime, implemented by Central Government and defence establishments to promote collaboration. "The DRDO was facilitating free transfer of defence technologies and created five new testing labs for start-ups to promote innovation," he said.

Referring to Defence Manufacturing Corridors in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, Modi said that these hubs would not only help India become self-reliant in defence manufacturing but also help micro, small and medium

enterprises (MSME).

He said that Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was exploring outer space for public welfare and not for warfare, while DRDO was developing capabilities to protect these outer space assets from potential threats.

The Prime Minister said his Government has introduced several reforms in the Defence Ministry and implemented ease of doing business (EODB) resulting in sharp

Continued on Page 7
See also Pgs 2, 3, 4, 16

Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Union Minister for Defence Rajnath Singh on his arrival in Lucknow on Wednesday



CAPSULE

BURQA-CLAD YOUTUBER CAUGHT IN SHAHEEN BAGH

New Delhi: A woman YouTuber donning a burqa was detained on Wednesday at Delhi's Shaheen Bagh after anti-CAA protesters caught her asking "too many questions", police said. The woman was identified as Gunja Kapoor, they said.

RAJINIKANTH THROWS WEIGHT BEHIND CAA

Chennai: Superstar Rajinikanth on Wednesday threw his weight behind the CAA and asserted that the legislation did not pose any threat to Muslims, and backed the NPR exercise as very essential.

2 ULTRAS KILLED, 1 JAWAN MARTYRED IN GUNBATTLE

Srinagar: Two terrorists were killed and a CRPF jawan martyred in a gunbattle on the outskirts of Srinagar city on Wednesday, police said.

PLANE SKIDS RUNWAY IN ISTANBUL, BREAKS INTO 2

Istanbul: A plane carrying 177 passengers skidded off the runway at an Istanbul airport and split into two after landing in rough weather on Wednesday, but officials said no-one had died. The blaze was later put out by firefighters.

Ram Lalla left in trust of 15-member team

PM announces in LS autonomous body for temple construction, 5 acre land for Sunny Waqf

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW

Among chants of Jai Shri Ram by the ruling BJP members, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday announced in the Lok Sabha the formation of a 15-member trust — Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra — to construct a Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Resolving the Ayodhya temple dispute in its landmark judgment, the Supreme Court has asked the Government to form a trust for temple construction and allot five acre land by February 9 for the construction of a mosque.

As per the SC order, the Uttar Pradesh Government on Wednesday allotted five acre to Sunni Waqf Board in Ayodhya district at Dhannipur village, 19 kilometres from the district headquarters.

Making a statement in the Lok Sabha soon after a meeting of the Union Cabinet, the Prime Minister said he wants to share information on a "very

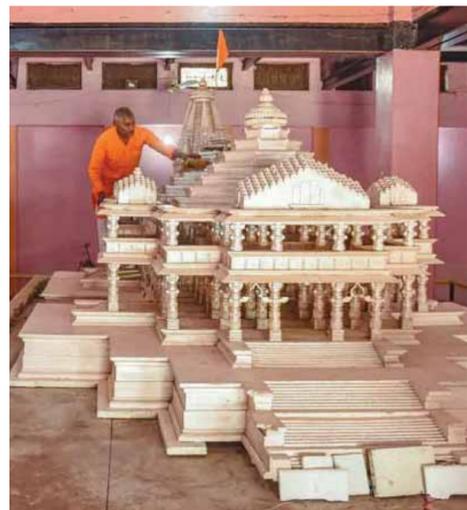
important and historical subject for the country."

"This topic is close to my heart like millions of countrymen and I consider it my great fortune to talk about it," he said, declaring the trust. "An autonomous trust has been formed, it is called 'Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra,' said Modi, with the Lok Sabha witnessing the chanting of "Jai Shri Ram" by the Treasury Bench.

The Prime Minister said after the verdict on the Ram Janmabhoomi issue came out, the people of India displayed remarkable faith in democratic processes and procedures.

"I salute the 130 crore people of India," Modi said in his over 10-minute long address. "Let us all support construction of a grand Ram Temple in Ayodhya," he said.

"Our culture, our traditions give us the vision of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and Sarve Bhavantu Sukhina. It also gives inspiration to move forward with this feeling. In India, peo-



plume of all faiths, be it Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains, we are all members of a broad family. May every member of this family be happy, be healthy, prosper, develop the country with the same spirit," he said.

SHRI RAM JANMABHOOMI TEERTHA KSHETRA

- The trust named "Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra" has its registered office at R-20, Greater Kailash Part-1, New Delhi
- This is the Delhi residence of legal luminary and two-time Attorney General of India K Parasaran, the lead counsel for the Hindu parties in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute case

I salute the 130 crore people of India. Let us all support construction of a grand Ram Temple in Ayodhya
NARENDRA MODI

The PM said the Government is following the mantra of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas". All the members should express their support for the construction of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya, he said.

Soon after the Prime Minister's announcement, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the trust will have 15 members, including one from the Dalit community. In the evening Union Home Ministry issued notification on the for-

mation the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, with its office in Delhi's Greater Kailash locality. A trust named "Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra" was registered with its registered office at R-20, Greater Kailash Part-1, New Delhi 110048, the notification said. This is the Delhi residence of legal luminary and two-time Attorney General of India K Parasaran, the lead counsel for the Hindu parties in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute case.

In a notification, the Ministry also said the Uttar Pradesh Government had already issued the allotment letter of a five-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for construction of a mosque, as directed by the Supreme Court.

The land earmarked for the construction of mosque by Sunni Waqf Board is in Dhannipur village in tehsil Sohawal in Ayodhya on the Lucknow highway, about 19 kilometres from the district headquarters, State Government spokesperson Shrikant Sharma told reporters. The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday morning.

"The State Government had sent three alternatives for land to the Centre. This one was accepted by the Centre and the State Cabinet has approved its allotment. There is good transportation facility to reach here and communal amity and law and order are also good," Sharma added.

Only few launches take shine off Auto Expo



A model poses next to a Hyundai Kona Electric car displayed at the Auto Expo 2020 in Greater Noida on Wednesday

KUSHAN MITRA ■ GREATER NOIDA

The 15th Auto Expo was kicked off by the country's largest carmaker Maruti-Suzuki as it historically has been, early in the morning. But the eight o'clock start on a cold Wednesday morning at the India Expo Mart in Greater Noida could not take away from the fact that this Auto Expo was a little bit "thanda"

(cold) in a matter of speaking for seasoned auto industry veterans.

With all major two-wheeler manufacturers with the exception of Suzuki and several large automobile manufacturers such as Honda, Ford, Audi and BMW as well as commercial vehicle manufacturers such as Ashok Leyland and Volvo-Eicher steering clear of the Auto Expo, the India Expo

mart looked and felt emptier than it usually is for this celebration of the Indian automotive industry.

This was in no small part thanks to the last eighteen months for the industry, collapsing sales, rapidly declining margins and policy paralysis surrounding the introduction (or not) of electric vehicles, spending a few crores on a stand at the show might have seemed like an extravagance.

Indeed, if it were not for the Chinese manufacturers such as Shanghai Automotive Industrial Corporation (SAIC) through MG Motor and the soon to launch Great Wall Motors (GWM) even more halls might have gone empty.

But that did not stop a slew of new concepts that were introduced and new vehicles showcased at the Auto Expo. The showstopper on the first day was the rebirth of Tata Motors' Sierra SUV. The original Sierra which many consider India's first "real" Sports Utility Vehicle has been given a modern makeover and while

Tata Motors officials were quick to point out that this was just a concept, it really got the assembled crowds going. Maruti-Suzuki showcased the Futuro-E the concept of their future electric platform but gave no timelines of when such a vehicle will hit the roads although Kenichi Ayukawa, Managing Director,

Maruti-Suzuki took a "pledge" that the carmaker would sell a million green vehicles, including CNG, hybrids and electric in the coming decade.

However, it was French carmaker Renault that launched the first car of the Expo, the automatic version of the Tribler.

Continued on Page 7



A model poses with a Vespa scooter during the Auto Expo 2020 in Greater Noida on Wednesday

Nirbhaya rapists have 7 days to exhaust remedy options

HC raps authorities for delaying execution after SC OK'd death sentence in 2017, says all four to be hanged together

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday set a 7-day deadline for the four Nirbhaya case death-row convicts to exhaust their remaining legal remedies but at the same time refused to stay a trial court order that postponed the February 2 death warrant.

The HC said the four have to be hanged together and not separately and faulted the authorities concerned for not taking steps for issuance of death warrant after the rejection of appeals of the convicts by the Supreme Court in 2017.



Nirbhaya's parents react after the Delhi High Court order in New Delhi on Wednesday

Reacting to the HC decision, Nirbhaya's mother Asha Devi said she will be happy only on the day when all convicts are hanged.

The Centre and the Delhi Government moved the Supreme Court on Wednesday challenging the rejection of their plea by the HC against the trial court order staying the hanging of the four convicts.

Meanwhile, President Ram Nath Kovind has rejected the mercy petition of Akshay Kumar Singh, one of the four men facing gallows in the Nirbhaya case, Home Ministry officials.

The trial court had on January 31 stayed "till further orders" execution of the four convicts in the case — Mukesh Kumar Singh (32), Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay Kumar Sharma (26), and Akshay Kumar (31).

UP to sign 23 MoUs: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said that the Uttar Pradesh government would sign 23 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) during the ongoing DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow.

Yogi said that these agreements would create employment opportunities for 3,00,000 people and fetch investments worth Rs 50,000 crore for UP Defence Manufacturing Corridor spanning six nodes at Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, Chitrakoot, Aligarh and Agra.

The chief minister was addressing a gathering after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's largest ever DefExpo 2020.

"The DefExpo in Lucknow is a big achievement for UP," the chief minister said while thanking Prime Minister Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who is also the local member of Parliament (MP).

"After UP was awarded the defence manufacturing corridor by Prime Minister Modi in 2018, we formulated our defence and aerospace policy and created a large land bank of 25,000 acres in the six nodes," he informed the gathering.

The chief minister claimed that owing to better connectivity in UP and improved law and order, the state has emerged as a preferred investment destination, and the



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath greeting Russian Industrial Trade minister Oleg-Ryan Sev in Lucknow on Wednesday

DefExpo would further fuel its forward march.

Yogi stressed that the government was striving hard to speed up infrastructure development and build a network of mega expressways.

"While, two expressways — Yamuna Expressway and Agra-Lucknow Expressway — are operational, two other expressways — Purvanchal Expressway and Bundelkhand

Expressway — are touted to be thrown open for public use in the next couple of years," he claimed.

"We are also working on our third proposed 'Ganga Expressway', which would connect Meerut and Prayagraj (Allahabad)," Yogi added.

The chief minister further mentioned Asia's biggest greenfield international airport proposed at Jewar in Greater

Noida and the development of 11 new airports under regional connectivity scheme.

Underlining the aim of 'Make in India' for India and the world, Yogi said that DefExpo 2020 was among the biggest defence shows globally and it would contribute towards showcasing India as an ideal investment destination for defence and military hardware.

Defence ministers of India and African nations will hold their conclave on Thursday, which is happening for the first time.

"The India-Africa Defence Ministers Conclave is also a proof of how big and important the platform has become in terms of bringing together and connecting technological innovation and business opportunity," the defence minister said.

On Make in India and Offset policy, Singh said, "We are committed to enhancing our defence production through Make in India and Offset policy. This aims at

Rajnath Singh unveils 3P strategy

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a bid to make India a defence manufacturing hub, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled a 3P strategy—Policy, Production and Partnership — at the ongoing DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow on Wednesday.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Singh said, "The sheer magnitude and scale of defence expo endeavour is symbolically representative of the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government for a New India that aims to emerge as a powerhouse in defence manufacturing. The essence of our initiative can be collectively termed as 3P strategy — Policy, Production and Partnership."

The event touched new heights with the presence of defence ministers from 40 countries, more than 165 foreign firms and around 1,000 exhibitors.

"As part of our efforts to unleash the potential in defence production, we have liberalised foreign direct investment (FDI) cap to 49 per cent through the direct route, and above that up to 100 per cent through the government route," he added.

"We have already started single window clearance for setting up industries. Alongside, we have made improvements in infrastructure development, skilling manpower and advancing connectivity," Singh said.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Industrial Development minister Satish Mahana release DefExpo stamp in Lucknow on Wednesday

integrating India's defence industry with major foreign OEMs, providing Indian companies an opportunity to produce world-class components."

Singh also said that India did not seek to create strategic dependencies by way of becoming a defence manufacturing hub.

"As a responsible power, India also believes that the export of defence equipment should not seek to create strategic dependencies but instead meet the legitimate needs of importing nations and contribute to the cause of peace and security," the defence minister said.

On Wednesday, he held bilateral meetings with his counterparts from the United Arab Emirates, the UK, Maldives, Kyrgyzstan and Oman, and discussed ways to ramp up defence cooperation, particularly in the defence manufacturing sector.

In the delegation-level talks with British Minister for Defence Procurement James Heappey, Singh underlined the growing ties between the two countries, a Defence Ministry statement said.

It said the discussions focussed on

opportunities to enhance defence engagements between the two countries

In the meeting with Singh, Maldivian Defence Minister Uza Mariya Ahmed Didi expressed her country's gratitude to India for bringing back seven Maldivian students from the coronavirus-hit Wuhan city in China. She underlined the opportunities that exist to further enhance defence cooperation especially in the maritime domain, to which Singh responded positively, the ministry said.

In their meeting, Defence Minister of Kyrgyzstan Colonel Erlis Terdikbayev and Singh agreed that to hold a joint exercise involving the special forces of India and Kyrgyzstan.

The focus of meeting between Singh and Defence Minister of Oman Badr Saud Harib Al Busaidi was to boost overall defence partnership.

"Defence cooperation was the key pillar of bilateral relations between the two countries. Both ministers discussed measures to further strengthen defence partnership, by enhancing joint maritime security exercises," the ministry said.

Akhilesh tries to steal BJP govt's thunder

Lucknow (PNS): Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav targeted the Bharatiya Janata Party government as it hosted the DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow on Wednesday.

Posting a clip of IAF planes

performing touchdowns on Agra-Lucknow Expressway built during SP regime, Akhilesh said his own government had laid a "concrete path for the country's defence."

The video showed fighter aircraft using a stretch of Agra-Lucknow Expressway near Unnao as an emergency runway. A caption described the 3.3 km stretch as the country's first 'road runway'.

"No, you are mistaken. This is not a sight from Lucknow's DefExpo. But it's a view from the day when Samajwadi government gave people a top-class transportation facility and along with it prepared a concrete path for the country's defence," the former chief minister tweeted in Hindi.

A day earlier, the SP chief had tweeted a picture of Gomti Riverfront developed during his government. "This is not somewhere abroad, but Lucknow," he tweeted.

HAL, IAI and DTL sign MoU

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Israel Aerospace Industries Limited (IAI) and Dynamic Technologies Limited (DTL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for marketing, manufacturing and selling of IAI's Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) to Indian potential customers such as defence forces, paramilitary forces and Central Armed Police Forces at the ongoing DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow on Wednesday.

The MoU was signed between ED (Corporate Planning), HAL Sanjiv Shukla, Executive Vice President (Marketing) IAI, Eli Alfassi, and Executive Director & Global COO (hydraulics and homeland security) for DTL, Arvind Mishra, in the presence of HAL CMD R Madhavan and senior executives of HAL, IAI and DTL.

On the occasion, Madhavan said, "The collaboration will provide excellent opportunity to HAL to expand its product offerings to defence customers, absorb critical technologies and strengthen the aerospace ecosystem in the country, especially for UAVs."

IAI President and CEO

Director Dr Udayant Malhoutra said, "This is a global PPP between HAL, our partner for over two decades, IAI, a world leader in UAV technology we have been teaming with since 2017. This collaboration will boost Make-in-

"The collaboration will provide excellent opportunity to HAL to expand its product offerings to defence customers, absorb critical technologies and strengthen the aerospace ecosystem in the country, especially for UAVs"

Nimrod Sheffer said, "We are delighted to sign a strategic agreement with our partners, HAL and DTL. India is an important strategic market for UAVs and I am confident of IAI's extensive experience and the technological capabilities of HAL and DTL will lead to significant advancements in the field."

Dynamic Technologies Limited CEO & Managing

ability and infrastructure available in India to manufacture world class and battle proven UAVs of IAI.

IAI as design authority, HAL as principal contractor and DTL as principal sub-contractor will complement each other to provide best in class Make-in-India UAVs to Indian defence forces.

HAL, as a long-time partner of IAI, is involved in the depot level maintenance of all the MALE and short range class of UAVs supplied by IAI to the Indian defence forces since 2004.

Taking the HAL-IAI collaboration one step ahead, through the MoU, this partnership would be the first in country to manufacture IAI designed UAVs in India like short range tactical class having long endurance. This collaboration will enhance technology sharing and business partnership between India and Israel.

Presently, UAVs play significant role in wars and other tactical missions such as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR). In the coming years, Indian defence forces are likely to induct a large number of UAVs to meet such requirements. HAL has the best capa-

India and we are committed to establishing a broad technological and industrial eco-system within the country."

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Rolls-Royce showcases latest power, propulsion solutions

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Global industrial technology major Rolls-Royce showcased its latest range of defence, power and propulsion solutions for India at the DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow on Wednesday.

"Rolls-Royce shares a rich heritage of partnering India for over eight decades and we remain committed to continue to build on our strong legacy of collaboration with the Indian defence forces," Rolls-Royce President (India & South Asia) Kishore Jayaraman said.

The company has highlighted its popular MT30, which is touted as the world's most power-dense marine gas turbine in service today. It also displayed solutions for both land and naval defence, including Integrated Bridge System, an advanced marine automation system for efficient ship operation from its MTU brand.

"Our MTU engines currently propel and power many Indian Coast Guard and Indian Navy vessels, as well as India's indigenously built Arjun Main Battle Tanks. More than 750 Rolls-Royce engines of 10 engine types are powering aircraft of the Indian military supported by a dedicated Defence Service Delivery Centre in Bengaluru," he said.

Jayaraman said with service teams present at several locations along Indian coastline, the company was geared to support varied needs of naval customers in India.

"We also employ a skilled talent

pool of engineers at our engineering centres in Bengaluru and Pune, who provide engineering capability for global projects spanning research and development as well as new product design and development," he said.

Jayaraman further said that the company was keen to support India's goals of indigenisation and self-reliance through technology partnerships and co-development initiatives. "Today, as India seeks to strengthen its local defence industry, we are well placed to support India's Make in India vision by partnering in its co-creation journey and capability building through skills and technology."

Rolls-Royce has customers in more than 150 countries, comprising about 400 airlines and leasing customers, 160 armed forces, 70 navies, and more than 5,000 power and nuclear customers.

Meanwhile, defence hardware manufacturer Kalyani group was looking to invest in a greenfield production facility in the proposed Uttar Pradesh Defence Manufacturing Corridor. Group CMD, Baba N Kalyani said that the firm had held a series of discussions with UP government and signed a memorandum of understanding in this regard.

"The UP government has offered to allot us required land at two to three places for our plant. Our firm would soon take a call. It is also planning to set up a small arms unit in the country in association with DRDO," he said.

India confident of continued partnership with Israel

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Director General (Acquisition), Department of Defence, Government of India, Apurva Chandra, said that Israel was a key contributor to India's readiness to face challenges.

Speaking at 'India-Israel Opportunities in Defence Cooperation: Future Vectors of Digital Battlefield', organised by FICCI with SIBAT (Israel Ministry of Defence) and Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD) at DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow on Wednesday, Chandra said that Israel was the largest contributor to India's preparedness for any adversities and had been always forthcoming to share high-end technology.

The DG expressed confidence on a continued partnership with Israel as all MoD contracts so far had been concluded on time and the overall experience with Israel had been highly satisfying.

Chandra listed out unmanned vehicles, UAVs, border management and after-sales support/MRO as the new focus areas of cooperation between India and Israel at the seminar that brought together stakeholders from the two nations to deliberate upon opportunities for cooperation.

Director, SIBAT, Ministry of Defence, Government of Israel, Brig Gen (Retd) Yair Kulas, said that Israel looked forward to sharing its deep knowledge and technology expertise in future vectors of digital battlefield. He said that

cooperation and collaboration were the key to a strong India-Israel defence partnership.

Ambassador of Israel to India, Dr Ron Malka, in his opening remarks said that India-Israel partnership was steadily growing on the foundation of mutual respect, trust, values, interest, tradition and culture.

Seeking more joint ventures, Malka hoped for transforming the cooperation from buyer-seller relationship to strategic partnership.

The ambassador added that India and Israel were world leaders in science and technology, and that the scope of cooperation between the two countries was tremendous and across multiple domains.

Chairman of FICCI Defence Committee and Group President, Aerospace and Defence, Member, Group Executive Board, Mahindra Group, SP Shukla, said that future battlefields would be highly digital-centric and cooperation between India and Israel on digital battlefield technologies were critical to our future partnership.

Co-chair, FICCI Defence Committee and VP & Head, Weapon and Engineering Systems, L&T Defence, Arun T Ramchandani, complimented FICCI and SIBAT for the initiative and expressed confidence on a meaningful deliberations and outcome from the seminar.

Senior officials from industry and Armed forces of India and Israel gave presentations during the seminar.

कार्यालय अधिशासी निदेशक, उग्रण राज्य कर्मचारी कल्याण निगम
742, जवाहर भवन, लखनऊ दिनांक: 05.02.2020

संख्या: 220 WB/वत्सी-2020 लखनऊ

ई-निविदा सूचना

उत्तर प्रदेश राज्य कर्मचारी कल्याण निगम द्वारा वित्तीय वर्ष 2020-21 में प्रदेश के कारागारों में निरूद्ध बन्धियों के लिए खाद्यान्न (गेहूँ एवं चावल) उपलब्ध कराने वाले हेतु व्यापारिक सहयोगी/इंडस्ट्रियल एजेंट के चयन के लिए उग्रण के चार भागों में पूर्वी क्षेत्र, मध्य क्षेत्र, पश्चिमी क्षेत्र एवं उत्तरी क्षेत्र के लिए (प्रत्येक क्षेत्र हेतु पृथक-पृथक) खुली ई-निविदाएं (बिड) निम्नानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती हैं:-

- 1) बिड प्रारम्भ की तिथि06.02.2020
- 2) बिड डालने की अंतिम तिथि27.02.2020 पूर्वाह्न 11:00 बजे तक।
- 3) दैनिक बिड खोलने की तिथि व समय 27.02.2020 अपराह्न 3:00 बजे।
- 4) दैनिक बिड में अपलोड किये गये प्रपत्रों की जांच मूल अभिलेखों से करने के पश्चात् दिनांक 03.03.2020 को फाइनल बिड खोली जायेगी।
- 5) यह निविदा/बिड उग्रण सरकार की वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर अपलोड की जायेगी तथा बिड से सम्बन्धित विवरण निगम की वेबसाइट ewc.up.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।
- 6) निविदादाता को यूपीए इलेक्ट्रॉनिक कार्पोरेशन लिमिटेड अरोक मार्ग, लखनऊ में ई-डिजिटल में पंजीकृत होना अनिवार्य है। (अरोक कुमार श्रीवास्तव अधिशासी निदेशक)

पावरग्रिड POWERGRID

NOTICE

1. Approval under regulation-86 of CEREC (Conduct of Business) Regulations' 1999 and CEREC (Terms and Conditions of Tariff) Regulations' 2019 for i) Revision of Transmission Tariff for 2001-04 tariff block, 2004-09 tariff block, 2009-14 tariff block, ii) Truing up of Transmission tariff for 2014-19 tariff block and iii) Determination of Transmission tariff for 2019-24 tariff block for Petition No. 1 system associated with LLO of both circuits of 400 kV D/C Kishenpur Wagooria TL along with bays at New Wanpho & 1 No. 315 MVA, 400/220kV ICT-I along with associated bays at New Wanpho and 03 No. 220 kV Line Bays (DOCO: 01.10.2013), Asset-I: 400/220 kV 315 MVA ICT-I along with associated bays at New Wanpho S/S (DOCO: 03.07.2014), Asset-II: 400 kV 125 MVAR Bus Reactor along with associated bays (DOCO: 16.06.2014), Asset-IV: 400 kV D/C Kishenpur- New Wanpho Line along with associated bays at both ends (DOCO:31.07.2017) associated with Northern Region System Strengthening Scheme-XVI, Petition No. 2 For Uri-II HEP Transmission System in Northern Region Consisting of Asset-1: 400 kV S/C Uri-I-Uri-II interconnector transmission line along with Bays at NHP Asset-2: 400 kV S/C Uri-II-Wagooria Transmission line along with Bays at Wagooria Sub-station Asset-3: 400 kV 80 MVAR Bus reactor at Kishenpur Sub-station
2. The beneficiaries for Combined Assets of the above mentioned Transmission system are: (1) Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Prasaran Nigam Limited, (2) Ajmer Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd, (3) Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd, (4) Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd, (5) Punjab State Electricity Board, (6) Haryana Power Purchase Centre (7) Power Development Deptt. Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir, (8) Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd, (9) Delhi Transco Ltd, (10) BSES Yamuna Power Ltd, (11) BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd, (12) North Delhi Power Ltd, (13) Chandigarh Administration, (14) Uttaranchal Power Corporation Ltd, (15) North Central Railway (16) New Delhi Municipal council, (17) Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board.
3. Tariff details : a) 2009-2014 Block ₹ in Lakh

Petition No. 2	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Asset I	-	-	392.31	1578.44	1561.81
Asset II	-	-	683.65	2853.77	2952.79
Asset III	-	-	-	146.87	194.05

b) 2014-2019 Block

True up Transmission Tariff for 2014-19	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Asset I	2392.99	2494.63	2581.21	2603.27	2594.30
Asset II	470.84	660.06	697.10	711.40	724.92
Asset III	182.24	231.61	231.80	227.67	238.96
Asset IV	-	-	-	631.36	961.93
Petition No. 2 Combined Asset-I, Asset II & Asset III	4640.15	4516.47	4396.94	4297.31	4202.12

c) 2019-24 block

Petition No	Notional DOCO	Line Length (km)	No of Bays	Cost Admitted by CEREC	Tariff for 2019-24 block
Petition-1	20.09.2016	139.396	8(220kV)/11(400kV)	71108.03	12253.94
Petition No. 2 Combined Asset-I, Asset II & Asset III	DOCO 01.01.2012	-	-	3857.69	3736.57

4. A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of the applicant at www.powergridindia.com.

5. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the application be filed by any person, including the beneficiary before the Secretary, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, 3 & 4th floor, Chandralok Building, Janpath, New Delhi - 110 001 (or other address where the office of the Commission is situated), with a copy to the applicant at the address of its corporate office within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Place: Gurugram SD/-
Date: 30.01.2020 Senior General Manager (Commercial)

POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD
(A Government of India Enterprise)

Reg. Office: B-9, Qutab Institutional Area, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi-110 016. Tel: 011-26560112, 26560121
Corp. Office: "Saudamini", Plot No. 2, Sector-29, Gurugram-122001, (Haryana) Tel: 0124-2571700-719
www.powergridindia.com, CIN: L40101DL1989GOI038121

A Maharashtra PSU

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Ayodhya royal to be a member of Ram temple trust

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday will have former Ayodhya royal Bimlendra Mohan Pratap

Mishra as one of the 15 members. This was disclosed by officials in Lucknow on Wednesday. The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust has been set up for construction of Ram temple in

Ayodhya. On the other hand, after issuance of the notification of the Trust, Faizabad Divisional Commissioner MP Agarwal resigned as the receiver of Ram Janmabhoomi. The commissioner handed

over the charge to new trustee Bimlendra Mohan Pratap Mishra in the presence of Ayodhya District Magistrate Anuj Jha on Wednesday. Meanwhile, Supreme Court lawyer K Parasaran (92), who represented Hindu

parties in Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, was made chairman of the Trust that will oversee the construction of the temple in Ayodhya. Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, the trust, not-

ified by the Central government on Wednesday morning, will have its registered office at Parasaran's residence at R Block in Greater Kailash-I, South Delhi. Of the total 15 members of the Trust, nine would be permanent and six nominated.

The other permanent Trust members are Shankaracharya Basudevanand, Maharaj Parmanandji Maharaj (Haridwar), Swami Govindagiriji (Pune), Dr Anil Mishra (Homeopathic doctor of Ayodhya), Dr Kamleshwar

Chaupal (Patna), Mahant Dhinendra Das (Nirmohi Akhara), while the district magistrate of Ayodhya would be the convener of the Trust. The names of the nominated members would be announced later on.

Yogi thanks PM for Ram temple trust

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for announcing the setting up of a trust for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, saying that it would pave the way for early construction of the temple.

Yogi expressed his views through a series of tweets after the prime minister announced on Wednesday the constitution of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust as per Supreme Court directives.

Yogi further tweeted, "This trust will be fully independent and capable of taking all decisions on temple construction. Jai Shri Ram."

Reacting to Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh's tweet saying that the trust would have 15 members, including one from Dalit community, Yogi said that in the past too, the first 'shila' (brick) of the Ram Janmabhoomi temple was placed by Kameshwar Chaupalji, a Dalit.

In another tweet, Yogi said, "The Ram temple to be constructed at Ram Janmabhoomi in Awadh puri would be a symbol of social harmony. After waiting for five decades, our Lord Ram would sit at his birthplace which is a time to rejoice and celebrate. Lord Ram should now show us the path."

Kalyan wants a backward in trust



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Welcoming the decision of the Centre to set up a trust for construction of Ram temple at Ayodhya, former chief minister and Ram temple movement mascot Kalyan Singh on Wednesday said that along with Dalits, backwards should also be given a post in the trust.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced in Lok Sabha the formation of a trust — Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra — as directed by Supreme Court for

construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya. Union Home Minister Amit Shah later informed that the trust would have 15 trustees and one of them would be from Dalit community. "A backward should also be given a post in the trust," Kalyan Singh told reporters in Lucknow.

Congratulating Modi and Shah for the decision, Singh said: "It was my dream to see a Ram temple in Ayodhya. With this, my dream will come true. Setting up of Ram temple trust and allotment of five acres land for the construction of a mosque is appreciable."

Singh (88), was the chief minister of UP when Babri mosque was demolished on December 6, 1992. He was also accused in the violence.

"We have sacrificed a lot for Ram temple and now after several decades, our dreams are coming true," said the BJP leader, who was sent to jail for a day and paid a fine of Rs 2,000 for the demolition of the Babri mosque. "The CBI also charged me in the conspiracy for the demolition of the mosque and if proved guilty, I will have to go to jail," Singh said.

When asked if he wanted a place in the trust, the former chief minister said, "I am satisfied and don't need any new posts now."

Government changes property registration fee rules

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aiming to boost its revenue collection, the Uttar Pradesh government changed the rules of registration fee for purchase of property and land and imposed regulation fee on mining products brought from other states.

The government also approved in principle the setting up of 28 universities in private sector and gave its nod for allowing bidding for piped drinking water facilities in Bundelkhand and Vindhya chahal regions.

These decisions were taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow on Wednesday.

The registration fee, which was earlier two per cent of the value of the property or land, has been reduced to one per cent but the cap of Rs 20,000 has been removed.

Government spokesperson and UP minister Sidhartha Nath Singh said that it would benefit the poor the most, while people purchasing expensive properties would now have to pay more.

As there was a cap of Rs 20,000, people used to purchase big properties but paid nominal fee. Now, they will have to pay one per cent of the total cost of the property or land.

Singh said that the state government was set to collect an additional revenue of Rs 1,000 crore through this decision.

The government also decided to impose regulation fee on mining products brought from adjoining states.

Singh said that the decision was taken to make a level-playing field as in adjoining states there was still tender system while UP had gone for online e-tendering, which was making mining products costlier.

"Regulation fee would be imposed as per requirement deciding on the rate of product coming from other states. It would also increase the state's revenue collection," he said.

The government also brought a



Sidhartha Nath Singh

"REGULATION FEE WOULD BE IMPOSED AS PER REQUIREMENT DECIDING ON THE RATE OF PRODUCT COMING FROM OTHER STATES. IT WOULD ALSO INCREASE THE STATE'S REVENUE COLLECTION"

One Time Settlement (OTS) scheme for defaulters of development authority and development council coined as OTS-2019.

Under this, a defaulter will only have to pay simple interest on dues for waiving of the penalty.

A defaulter who has to pay less than Rs 50 lakh would get four months' time to pay the dues while defaulters of above Rs 50 lakh would get seven months' time. There will be two per cent rebate on total payments at one go.

The government also approved a proposal of a committee headed by the chief secretary for setting up 28

universities in the private sector while a DPR (detailed project report) costing Rs 15,722.89 crore has been approved, along with bid document for setting up piped drinking water facilities in seven districts of Bundelkhand and two districts of Vindhya chahal region.

In a major amendment, the government lowered the criteria for getting government advertisements for web media. Now, against the norms of 2.5 lakh hits, a web portal could get advertisements if it gets 50,000 hits.

"But a third party tool like Google would be required to certify the hits, the official said, adding that it would boost the web media coverage in the state.

The government also approved the final tender document for introducing POS system and Track & Trace at liquor outlets in the state from April 1, 2020. There are 64 bidders competing for this system in the state.

The government also allotted 34.03 acres of land at five villages in Chandauli to set up the headquarters of 11th Battalion of NDRF (National Disaster Response Force).

The government also decreased the rate of commission from four per cent to three per cent given to amin appointed on commission basis to collect dues of 50 cooperative banks running in the state.

There are around 851 such commission-based amins of which 341 are not working.

The government also approved that the new jail in Bareilly would only house convicts or those who could get terms of more than seven years. The old district jails would be for prisoners whose imprisonment period could be less than seven years.

The government also approved the change in service rules for professor and assistant professors, teaching in five newly set up medical colleges in the state so that they could get their dues after retirement. The five medical colleges are in Ayodhya, Basti, Bahraich, Firozabad and Shahjahanpur.

LDA amends building by-laws for old city

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) on Wednesday amended the building by-laws, a move which will benefit only the residents of old parts of the city.

The change comes into effect immediately. As per the amended provision, residents of the old city areas having residential plot measuring 1,000 square feet can now build the house without seeking permission from the competent officer or submitting the blueprint to the LDA map section for approval. Now they can start construction of the house at their convenience. Moreover, no completion certificate will be required after finishing construction of the house.

According to sources, LDA Vice Chairman SK Dwivedi took this initiative after coming to know that the residents of the old city areas having plots were being harassed by the development authority employees and touts when they came to the LDA office to seek

permission for construction or get clearance of the blueprint.

LDA secretary MP Singh said this concession would be only for construction for residential purpose. He said stern action would be taken if the concession was used for construction for commercial purpose.

The LDA vice chairman said this concession was being given to the residents of old city areas as they were original settlers.

The sources said the limit of old city ended in Kaiserbagh.

Houses constructed as per the amended provisions, should not be of more than three storeys.

The sources said more such concessions could be given for the old city areas to check the mushrooming unauthorised structures. But they failed to explain how. What the plot owner has to do is to inform the competent officer about the construction of the house and submit the documents. This will help in maintaining a record of such houses constructed in the old city areas.

सेंट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया
Central Bank of India

E-Auction Notice

Regional Office:
73, Hazratganj, Lucknow

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Central Bank of India Secured creditor, will be sold on as "AS IS WHERE IS, AS IS WHAT IS and WHATEVER THERE IS" basis on 27.02.2020 between 11.00AM to 01.00PM, for recovery of dues as mentioned below due to the Central Bank of India, Secured creditor from below mentioned borrower and guarantors. The reserve price and the EMD will be as mentioned in below table. For detailed Terms & Conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in <https://centralbank.auction.net>.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/Guarantor/ Owner of the Property Amount o/s (as mentioned in the Notice u/s 13(2))	Description of the mortgaged Moveable/ Immovable Property (All the part and parcel of the property consisting of)	Date of Demand Notice	Reserve Price
Branch: Bachrawan				
01.	Borrower: M/S Shiv Traders Pro. Mr. Krishna Kumar S/o Shri Ramdas	EM of plot no E2 Situated at Patel nagar Raibareilly Road, Bachrawan, Raibareilly having area of 1500 sq ft (135 sq mtr) Owned by Sri Krishna Kumar S/O Shri Ram das Bounded as under- East- Plot of Ranjeet, West- House no E 1 Of Awasthi, North- Plot Of Jagdish Prasad South- Road Lucknow	23/07/2019	Rs. 21.38 Lacs
			15/10/2019	EMD Rs. 2.13 Lacs
			Possession Symbolic	
Branch: Raibareilly				
02.	Borrower: Mahesh Kumar S/O Ram Chandra Maurya Add. Sandi Ram Post. Sandi Nagin, Near Fursatganj, Raibareilly Guarantor: (1) Ram Chandra Murya S/O Raghuvver Add. Sandi Ram Post. Sandi Nagin, Near Fursatganj, Raibareilly (2) Abul Hasan S/O Mohd. Hasan Add. Vill & Po. Nasirabad, Raibareilly	EM of Property situated at Village Nasirabad Pargana Rokha Tehsil Saloon Distt Raibareilly Owned by Abul Hasan S/O Md Hasan measuring one Kita khata no 00120 plot no 1871 area 0.2410 hect in total land 0.035 hect having Boundaries as under-- East- Gallyara, West- Kabristan, North- Baag Heera Lal South Dhobi Ghat	29/05/2018	Rs.8.29 Lacs
			06/07/2019	EMD Rs.0.83 Lacs
			Possession Symbolic	
03.	Borrower: (1) M/S Bajaj Wood Industries (Proprietor Ship Firm) (2) Pro. Mrs. Pramila Singh W/o Prabhakar Singh Add. 108/23, Arabe Market, Jail Road, Raibareilly 229001. Guarantor: (3) Prabhakar Singh S/O Lt. Mr. Awadhesh Narayan Singh Add. Vill. & Po. Rampur, Kasia, Pargana Saloon Distt. Raibareilly (4) Hanumant Singh S/O Suresh Narain Singh Add. Vill. & Po. Rampur, Kasia, Pargana Saloon Distt. Raibareilly	EM of 1 Kita khata no 00129 plot no 204 & 214 of which area 0.262 hectare i.e 2620 sq mtr owned by Mr. Prabhakar Singh & Hanumant Singh at Vill & Post Rampur Kashiya Pargana & Tehsil Saloon Distt Raibareilly having Present Boundaries is as under- East- Self land Badhu khet of Tej Bahadur Singh, West- Khet Purchaser, North- House of Virendra Singh, South- Khet of Prabhakar Singh and 15 ft Bitumen Road	06/07/2019	Rs.11.76 Lacs
			23/09/2019	EMD Rs.1.17 Lacs
			Possession Symbolic	
04.	Borrower: Sunil Kumar Singh S/o Mr. Kamlesh Singh Add. Vill & Post. Pure Kripal, Post Bara Near Parshehpur, Tehsil Saloon, Distt. Raibareilly (2) Mrs. Vimla Singh W/o Mr. Kamlesh Singh Add. Vill & Post. Pure Kripal, Post Bara Near Parshehpur, Tehsil Saloon, Distt. Raibareilly	EM of property on Gata no 35 situated at Mouza Bara Pargana Parshehpur Tehsil Saloon Distt Raibareilly in the name of Smt Vimla Singh W/O Kamlesh Singh R/O Vill- Pure Kripal Majre Bara Pargana Parshehpur Tehsil Saloon Distt Raibareilly Plinth Area 145.00 sq mtr plot Area 1260.00 Sq ft Bounded By-- East- Boundary of Village Nanauti, West- Khet of Surya Pratap Singh, North- Khet of Raj Narayan Singh, South- Raibareilly to Amethi Road	23/07/2019	Rs.12.89 Lacs
			11/12/2019	EMD Rs.1.29 Lacs
			Possession Symbolic	
05.	Borrower: (1) Mr. Vimlendu Sekhar Tripathi S/o Vishwanath Tripathi Add. 149 Satya Nagar Raibareilly Guarantor: (1) Surya Prakash Awasthi S/o Kailash Bihari Awasthi Add. L-334, Indira Nagar, Raibareilly (2) Mr. Saiyad Mohammad Nasir S/o Mohammad Wasi Add. H.No. 83/828, Ahmed Nagar, Town Hall, Near National Inter Collage, Raibareilly	1-EM of all that parcel of the property consisting of plot /gata no 3496 situated at village-Pargana Saloon, Distt Raibareilly having area 55.80 sq. mtr owned by Mr. Vimal Kumar Tripathi (alias Vimlendu Sekhar Tripathi) 2- EM of all that parcel of the property consisting of plot /gata no 3496 situated at village-Pargana Saloon, Distt Raibareilly having area 37.20 sq. mtr owned by Mr Vimal Kumar tripathi (alias Vimlendu Sekhar Tripathi), 3- EM of all that parcel of the property consisting of plot /gata no 133 situated at village-Madhapur Pathak Pargana Saloon, Distt Raibareilly having area 32.55 sq. mtr owned by Vimlendu Sekhar Tripathi), 4- EM of all that parcel of the property consisting of plot /gata no 619 situated at village-Sirsira Pargana Saloon, Distt Raibareilly having area 0.465 hectare (2118.80 sq mtr) owned by Mr Vimal Kumar Tripathi (alias Vimlendu Sekhar Tripathi)	06/07/2019	Rs.9.22 Lacs
			23/09/2019	EMD Rs.0.92 Lacs
			Possession Symbolic	
Branch: Aminabad				
06.	Borrower: M/ S Toral Herbals Add; E -13 Sarojini Nagar Industrial Area (UPSIDC), Lucknow, U.P. through partners: (1) Mr. Gopal Prasad S/O late Shri Ram Lakhani Prasad R/o - A 200 south city Rae Bareilly Road Lucknow. (2) Mr. Vivek Lal S/O Late Shri ram Lakhani Prasad R/O A200 South City Rae Bareilly Road Lucknow (3) Mr. Manoj Kumar Lal. S/O Late Shri ram Lakhani Prasad R/O A200 South City Rae Bareilly Road Lucknow Outstanding Amount: Rs.39.21,123/- along with further interest thereon w.e.f 30.05.2019 plus incidental expenses, costs charges etc.	All that part & parcel of the property factory situated at house no. E-13 Sarojini Nagar Industrial Area (UPSIDC) Lucknow U.P. owned by Shri Gopal Prasad, Shri Vivek Lal and Manoj Kumar Lal Boundaries: East - Shed West - Road 30 ft. Wide Road North - 80 ft. Wide road, South: Plot no. G 1	30.05.2019	Rs. 137.18 Lakhs
			19.08.2019	EMD Rs. 13.78 Lakhs
			Possession Symbolic	
Branch: Subhash Marg				
07.	Borrower: (1) Mr. Ashok Kumar S/o Mr. Cheedi Lal (2) Mrs. Santosh W/o Mr. Ashok Kumar Both R/o: E-19, Sector C, Azad Nagar, Campwell Road, Balaganj, Lucknow	EM of House no E 19 Sector C Azad Nagar Campwell Road Lucknow Owned By Sri Ashok Kumar & Smt Santosh Bounded by- East- House no 49, West- 4.50 Mtr Road, North- House no 19, South- House no 20	16/04/2018	Rs.14.99 Lacs
			01/05/2019	EMD Rs.1.49 Lacs
			Possession Symbolic	
Branch: Gomti Nagar				
08.	Borrower: Mr. Awadhesh Kumar Singh & Mrs. Sudha Singh Add. 23/B-1, Kaushalpur Colony, Khargapur, Gominagar, Lucknow Outstanding Amount: Rs. 5,69,917/- along with further interest thereon w.e.f 03.09.2016 plus incidental expenses, costs charges etc.	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of property Residential land/house situated on 23-B-1, Village Khargapur, Part of Khasra no. 42A, B Pargana, Tehsil & Dis: Lucknow owned by Mr. Awadhesh Kumar Singh Late Ram Bahadur Singh & Smt. Sudha Singh W/o Mr. Awadhesh Kumar Singh area 185.88sqmtr. Boundaries:- East: Road 25 ft., West: Land Digar, North: Plot no. 23-B, South: Plot Samiti area-185.88 Sq.mtr.	03.09.2016	Rs. 54.07 Lakhs
			07.01.2017	EMD Rs. 5.47 Lakhs
			Possession Symbolic	
Branch: Cantt Road				
09.	Borrower: (1) Raj Kumar Singh S/o Ram Narayan Singh (2) Shiv Kumar Singh S/o Ram Narayan Singh Guarantor: (1) Mr. Sanjay Singh S/o Ram Narayan Singh (2) Mrs. Mamta Devi W/o Lt. Shrawan Kumar	EM of Residential property situated at 50 A Ganeshpur Rahmanpur Him City Part 1 Chinhat Lucknow having area 232.342 Sq mtr owned by Raj Kumar Singh, Shri Shiv Kumar Singh, Sri Sanjay Singh and Smt Mamta Devi Boundaries:- East- 25 ft Wide Road, West- Plot no 45, North- Plot no 51, South- Part of plot no 50	01/10/2019	Rs.60.89 Lacs
			09/12/2019	EMD Rs.6.90 Lacs
			Possession Symbolic	
Branch: Faizabad Road				
10.	Borrower: M/s Vishal Food Products Proprietor Shri Vishal Jaiswal S/o Shri Rajendra Jaiswal Add. H-74, H-75, Agro Park-2, Kursi Road, Village- Guggon, Industrial area, Tehsil Fatehpur, District - Barabanki - 225302 Outstanding Amt: Rs. 42,54,205/- along with further interest thereon w.e.f 05.02.2019 plus incidental expenses, costs charges etc.	1. All that part and parcel of the property/and/Plot/Building situated at Plot no.-H-74 & H-75 (Area 900.00Sq.Mtr, Agro park - 2, Kursi road, Village- Guggon, Industrial Area, Tehsil Fatehpur, District- Barabanki - 225302 Boundaries:- East: Plot no. H-73 West: Plot no. H-76 North: Road South: Plot no. K-30 & K-31	05.02.2019	Rs. 52.33 Lakhs
		2. Plant and Machinery : having gross description as under installed at plant with address as above (i) Bread bakery oven part M.S. stactcher, M seat, SS pipe-10 Rec, MS pipe, S.S outer Panel heater, S.S. firing tube chamber & Chains, ceramic wool 10 bag, mineral wool 15 bag. (ii) Round table with motor and gear box and S.S. top 5' round xxxviii SL no. DD.-0300885 weight approx 75000kg. (iii) Bread bakery oven part, High speed mixer with three bowl, sifter with elevator, water washing tank, dwelling table, conveyer, colling trolley, promoting trolley, air washer with four fan slicer, cotton conveyer, (iv) Bread bakery oven part mineral wool 40kg./each approx 60 bags. (v) wather chilling plant having emerson make compressor model CR-72, S No. UUA 0007855 with chilling water pump, stainless steel insulated (puff) water tank, copper cooling coil, set of controls, electric panel. (vi) High speed bread slicer havin 13" frame set with 9.5mm kanghi set, Cromption make electric motor 3HP 3 phase with loading & unloading plate form complete with all accessories. (vii) Tin containers.	26.04.2019	EMD Rs. 5.23 Lakhs
			Possession Symbolic	

Terms & Conditions:

- The auction sale for all properties will be Online through M/s E-Procurement Technologies Ltd. Auction Tiger, Ahmedabad on 27.02.2020 from 11:00 am 01:00 p.m. with unlimited extensions of 5 minutes duration each. Last date of submission of bid/tender with EMD is 26.02.2020 up to 04:00 p.m. The intending purchasers can inspect the property/ies with prior appointment at his/her expenses from 07.02.2020 to 24.02.2020 between 11:00 p.m. to 02:00 p.m. For prior appointment, Please contact to the concerned Branch.
- Bidders are advised to go through portal website <http://centralbank.auctiontiger.net> for detailed Terms and Conditions of the Auction Sale & satisfy themselves about the details or property before submitting their bids/taking part in e-auction sale proceedings.
- in case of non-participation of bidders in above maintained from Sr. No.1 to Sr. No. 10 the further auction will be done through PRIVATE TREATY.
- The interested bidders may deposit EMD/BID Amt. to the account in the name of "Authorised Officer" Central Bank Of India A/c No. :- 3797675634, IFSC Code:- CBIN 0280139 through demand draft favoring "Authorised Officer, Central Bank Of India payable at Lucknow

Date : 06.02.2020 Place : Lucknow Authorized Officer: Central Bank of India

Officiating DGP plays good Samaritan for Mathura cop

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Officiating DGP HC Awasthi played good Samaritan for a police constable from Mathura, who failed to get leave for his own marriage due to his deployment in the ongoing DeExpo 2020.

The peeved constable uploaded his marriage card

on DGP's twitter handle after which he got immediate response and was relieved from duty immediately.

As per reports, Yashvendra Singh, posted at Sadar Bazaar police station of Mathura, was to marry Sub-Inspector Lallu Ram's daughter Kiran in Rajgarh area of Jhansi on February 8.

The cop applied for two weeks' leave citing his marriage and other functions.

However, instead of getting leave, he was suddenly relieved along with 150 other cops and asked to report in Lucknow to assist the local police in the DeExpo.

Yashvendra, along with other colleagues reached Lucknow and they were deputised on respective duties.

Finding no other way, Yashvendra finally uploaded his marriage card on the DGP's twitter handle mentioning that he would not be able to attend his own marriage due to his deputation at DeExpo.

As soon as the DGP office noticed the post and saw the card, they immediately got in touch with SSP Mathura and directed him to immediately sanction leave and relieve Yashvendra so that he could tie the knot.

The orders were given on the direction of the DGP.

SP (City) in Mathura, Ashok Kumar Meena, said that they had not seen Yashvendra's leave application and hence he was sent to Lucknow on duty.

He said that upon learning about the event, the cop was called back and relieved for 14-day leave.

IIT-Roorkee, BEL showcase surveillance system

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, and BEL showcased their joint surveillance system software at the DeExpo 2020.

Prof Kamal Jain from IIT-Roorkee said that they collaborated with Bharat Electronics Limited to develop the 'Security Surveillance System'.

The system has cameras to record movement of a person on the map along with time.

"The USP of the security surveillance system is that it can detect human abnormal behaviour, identify face (Face ID) and fetch data from database in form of a person's background and track where persons with suspicious backgrounds move in the premises. The red zone movement alert sends the coordinates of the identified person to the security system," he said.

IIT-Roorkee Director Prof Ajit K Chaturvedi said, "We are really delighted to collaborate with BEL to introduce the security surveillance system."

Prof Kamal Jain from the civil engineering department of IIT-Roorkee said, "There is great response from different sectors of defence and other agencies partnering with BEL. The value of our recent research has enabled our experts to demonstrate their in-depth understanding of the efficient security surveillance infra-

structure. The collaboration with BEL will streamline the operations, improving business efficiency and cutting costs."

The application of the security surveillance system includes location tracking, security purposes, military intelligence (border-patrol), suspicious activity detection, use in office administration, navigation in case of satellite images/videos, human intelligence gathering, public and private (prevention of crime, violation of privacy, protection of a process etc.) and wireless security tracking.

Explaining how the system works, he said, "Through IP cameras, we are able to collect coordinates of a person on the images, videos and send it to the database. The coordinates of a person assist the security system in identifying human abnormal behaviour and acknowledging that it is a red zone movement alert. Also, whenever that suspicious person moves in the premises, the system tracks the movement. The coordinates of a person are identified by the IP camera through Face ID methodology. This surveillance system will be a golden hand to the high alert security area such as defence services, high security to the specific power authorities in private and public domain, airports etc." he added.

He said that in keeping with the theme of this year's DeExpo, 'India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub, the focus would

be on 'Digital Transformation of Defence'.

ARMY DOG SHOW ENTHRALS

The Army Dog Show at the DeExpo 2020 at Gomti Riverfront enthralled the audience.

Marching in smartly with their trainers, the sniffer dogs presented a range of activities that they perform for the Army.

The main performing dog welcomed the chief guest by showing a friendly paw while sitting in front of a flower bouquet which they carried in front of the public.

The audience watched their performance with rapt attention and also cheered and applauded the dogs.

The dogs then followed their trainers as they stood in attention and saluted. Thereafter they performed the hurdles and the obstacle run, jumping over many obstacle props.

The Army also showcased the prowess of the dogs to capture the enemy and locate the man while smelling his kerchief.

The Gorkha Regiment then performed the khukri in which they showcased their combat skills.

The Sikh Regiment performed the Gatka in which they showcased stunning acts. The soldiers broke rods, blew fire from their mouths and performed death defying acts.

The programme ended with the Kumaon Regiment performing the Chhaliya dance.

Selfie points pull crowd

LUCKNOW (PNS): Selfie points and Army merchandise stalls remained the biggest draws at the DeExpo 2020 at the Gomti Riverfront on Wednesday.

The sail boats, marine commandos selfie point, the army aviator and the paratroopers selfie point attracted crowds in a continuous stream.

The paratroopers stall at the Gomti Riverfront gave the general public a feel of wearing a 14 kg weight on the shoulders and a 7 kg weight in front as they jumped down for parachuting. It created a lot of interest in the young boys from Lucknow University and the neighbouring colleges.

Captain Akhil Kumar from the Paratroopers said they carried an extra parachute for emergency if the main parachute did not open. He wanted the people to know about these things and take inspiration for joining the Army.

Ashutosh Rai from the zoology department of Lucknow University, while getting a general feel of the parachute weight, said that he now realised that it was very heavy.

Ankit Raj and Aslam Idrisi of Class 12 at Rashtriya Inter College who want to join the Army and the Air Force respectively said that it was great feeling to be a part of the event and they had learned many things in the process.

The Army Aviators Corp had made an aviator pilot selfie. Subedar Manjit Singh from the Aviators Corp said that this regiment was recently formed for helicopters pilots engaged in relief and rescue operations. They also showcased the model of LCH (light combat heli-



copters) and Army helicopters.

The merchandise stalls of the Army and the Navy witnessed sales of a number of items that included exam folders with pictures of aircraft, comic books of bravados, books on Kargil and pencils with triocolor endings. A lance naik in charge of the stall said all these merchandise would help in inspiring the youngsters. There were stalls which gave information about the recruitment procedure and the scope of gaining entrance in army.

The Navy merchandise sold ties embossed with pictures of Navy and other interesting items which were purchased by the visitors.

Madhyanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited (U.P. Govt. Undertaking) Head Office : 4-A, Gokhale Marg, Lucknow Phone : 0522-2208737, 2207065 e-mail: sec-omm.mvnl@gmail.com CIN: U31200UP2003SGC027459 DATE EXTENSION NOTICE

The date of Short Term Tender submission and Technical Bid opening for supply of 11 KV HT T/M 3P-/5A Cat-C Energy Meters against Tender Specification No. MEDCO/2461/2020 is being extended due to unavoidable circumstances as per details given below: **Sr. No.1 Item Description 11 KV HT T/M 3P-/5A Cat-C Energy Meters Tender No. MEDCO/2461/2020 Last Date & Time for Bid Submission 12.02.2020 till 13:00 hrs. Technical Bid opening Date & Time (Part-I) 13.02.2020 after 15:00 hrs. Please visit website <https://etender.up.nic.in> for further details, Corrigendum/Amendment and further up to date details before submission and date of opening of bids. All other terms and conditions shall remain unchanged. Superintending Engineer (Commercial) MVNL, Lucknow No. 32 Date 5.2.20 "SAVE ELECTRICITY & USE LED BULBS IN PLACE OF BULBS IN NATIONAL INTER-EST HELP LINE NO. 1800-1800-440/1912**

उपरो पार ट्रान्समिशन कॉर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड, ई-निविदा संख्या 156 से 158 / विभाग(प्रो)ल/2019-20

अधोस्तक्षरकर्ता द्वारा अनुमोदी टेकदारों/फर्मों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु अलग-अलग सीलबन्ध ई-निविदाये दो मागों में ई-टेन्डरिंग वेब साइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर आमंत्रित की जाती है। ई-निविदा के प्रथम माग में धरोहर धनराशि व चेक्का, तकनीकी एवं अनुभव सम्बन्धित प्रश्न, व्यावसायिक व अन्य शर्तें आदि एवं दूसरे माग में दर्द व वाणिज्यिक नियम एवं शर्तें प्रदान करनी होंगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य, धरोहर धनराशि एवं जीएसटी/एचएसटी प्रमाण-पत्र अपेक्षा Scanned copy upload करना अनिवार्य है। निविदा प्रश्न एवं धरोहर धनराशि, जो कि अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारिषद मण्डल-प्रथम, लखनऊ के खाता संख्या 2408002190005438, I.F.S. Code-PUNB0691100 जंजाब शेखरल बेक, लखनऊ के खाते में RTGS/NEFT के माध्यम से स्थानान्तरित कर यूटीडीआर संख्या तथा पे-रिसप की प्रति ई-टेन्डरिंग वेबसाइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर निविदा प्रश्नों के साथ स्व प्रमाणित PAN एवं GST पंजीकरण प्रमाण-पत्र की प्रति प्रथम माग के साथ लगाना अनिवार्य होगा। वांछित धरोहर धनराशि एवं अन्य प्रश्न पूर्ण तथा उचित/स्वीकार्य योग्य न हो पर द्वितीय माग को नहीं खोला जायेगा। ई-निविदाओं का विवरण- निविदा सं.0, कार्य का नाम, धरोहर धनराशि, खुलने की तिथि व समय क्रमशः निम्नानुसार है- (1) 156-वि.पा.मं.(प्र.ल.)/2019-20, विद्युत पारिषद मण्डल-प्रथम, लखनऊ के अन्तर्गत 132 के.वी.ओ. उपकेंद्र एस.जी.पी.जी.आई. लखनऊ पर लॉन मॉन्ट्रेसिंग से सम्बन्धी कार्य, धरोहर धनराशि ₹ 2,00,00,00, निविदा दिनांक 12.03.2020 को 16.00 बजे तक ई-टेन्डरिंग वेब साइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर अपलोड की जा सकती है। माग-1 खुलने की तिथि 13.03.2020, समय 12.30 बजे के उपरान्त एवं माग-2 (प्राइस पार्ट्स) खुलने की तिथि तदनुसार ई-वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य ₹ 236/-माग (₹ 200,00+G.S.T.@18% अतिरिक्त), (2) 157-वि.पा.मं.(प्र.ल.)/2019-20, विद्युत पारिषद मण्डल-प्रथम, लखनऊ के अन्तर्गत विभिन्न 220 एवं 132 के.वी.ओ. उपकेंद्रों के अपारेशन एवं मॉन्ट्रेसिंग कार्य हेतु आपूर्ति, धरोहर धनराशि ₹ 2,00,00,00, निविदा दिनांक 12.03.2020 को 16.00 बजे तक ई-टेन्डरिंग वेब साइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर अपलोड की जा सकती है। माग-1 खुलने की तिथि 13.03.2020, समय 13.00 बजे के उपरान्त एवं माग-2 (प्राइस पार्ट्स) खुलने की तिथि तदनुसार ई-वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य ₹ 236/-माग (₹ 200,00+G.S.T.@18% अतिरिक्त), (3) 158-वि.पा.मं.(प्र.ल.)/2019-20, विद्युत पारिषद मण्डल-प्रथम, लखनऊ के अन्तर्गत 132 के.वी.ओ. उपकेंद्र मोडर्न रोड के वार्षिक परिचालन एवं सामान्य अनुरक्षण का कार्य, धरोहर धनराशि ₹ 18,00,00,00, निविदा दिनांक 13.02.2020 को 16.00 बजे तक ई-टेन्डरिंग वेब साइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर अपलोड की जा सकती है। माग-1 खुलने की तिथि 14.02.2020, समय 13.30 बजे के उपरान्त एवं माग-2 (प्राइस पार्ट्स) खुलने की तिथि तदनुसार ई-वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य ₹ 590/-माग (₹ 500,00+G.S.T.@18% अतिरिक्त), ई-निविदा खुलने की तिथि को अवकाश की स्थिति में निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस पर खोली जायेगी। विस्तृत जानकारी एवं अन्य संशोधनों आदि के सम्बन्ध में सूचना एवं निविदा प्रश्न डाउनलोड करने हेतु ई-टेन्डरिंग वेबसाइट www.etender.up.nic.in देखी जा सकती है। कृपया विस्तृत जानकारी, डाउनलोड, अन्य संशोधनों एवं ई-निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के दिनांक तक विस्तार आदि के सम्बन्ध में ई-टेन्डरिंग वेबसाइट www.etender.up.nic.in देखी जा सकती है। **बैंक लिस्टेड फर्म एवं एसी फर्मों जिनके विरुद्ध कोई सार्वजनिक/सोपीओआइओ जांच चल रही है अथवा लिम्बट है उनकी निविदाये स्वीकार नहीं की जायेगी।** अधोस्तक्षरकर्ता को बिना कोई कारण बताये किसी भी ई-निविदा अथवा सभी ई-निविदाओं को अस्वीकार/विमाजित करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित है। **अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारिषद मण्डल-प्रथम, उपरो पार ट्रान्समिशन कॉर्पोरेशन लि. कक्ष सं-111 से 114, कृ-बल, पारिषद भवन, विद्युत कम्प-11, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ पत्रांक-269 दिनांक - 5.2.2020 "राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचाये"**

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि.0, विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, चित्रकूट। अति-अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना

अधोस्तक्षरकर्ता द्वारा निम्नलिखित कार्य आपूर्ति को कराये जाने हेतु ई-निविदा आमन्त्रित की जाती है। विस्तृत जानकारी एवं नियम व शर्तें उपरो शासन की आधिकारिक ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है:

1. ई-निविदा विशिष्टीकरण संख्या- 65/SE/EDDCk/2019-20 : कार्य : विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, चित्रकूट के अधीन देयों की वसूली व आरक्षी 02/घारा-5 सम्बन्धी कार्यों को सुचारु रूप से सम्पादित करने हेतु 02 माह हेतु 01 नंग डीजल चलित वाहन (मय चालक) उपलब्ध कराने का कार्य। **अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, चित्रकूट। पत्रांक-1495, दिनांक-05.02.2020, राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचायें।**

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड (उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार का उपक्रम) शक्ति भवन, लखनऊ

14-अशोक मार्ग, लखनऊ संख्या-145-सं0प्रो10-26 / पाकासि/2020-10-सं0प्रो10/16 दिनांक 03 फरवरी, 2020 निविदा सूचना

लखनऊ के कैंन्टीन संचालन हेतु मात्र उन्हीं कैंन्टर्न्स/कैंन्टीन चलाने वाले, जिन्हें कैंन्टीन का पर्याप्त अनुभव हो, से निर्धारित प्रश्न पर निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। सफल निविदादाता को कैंन्टीन चलाने हेतु स्थान, कामिकों के बैठने सम्बन्धी फर्नीचर, जल एवं विद्युत कारपोरेशन द्वारा निःशुल्क उपलब्ध कराया जाएगा, अनुभव/कैंन्टीन संचालन की अवधि दो वर्ष होगी। निविदा प्रश्न तथा निविदा सम्बन्धी नियम एवं शर्तें ₹ 50/- (रुपये पचास) मात्र का बैंक ड्राफ्ट/बैंकर्स चेक (Non-Refundable), जो लेखाधिकारी (मुख्यालय भुगतान), उपरो पावर कारपोरेशन लि.0, लखनऊ के पक्ष में हो, सचिवालय प्रशासन (विविध) अनुभाग कक्ष सं-410 (चतुर्थ तल), शक्ति भवन (सु.0) में जमा करके दिनांक 25.02.2020 पूर्वान्ह 11:30 बजे से प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं। पूर्ण रूप से भरी हुई निविदायें ₹ 2000/- (₹ 2000 दो हजार) मात्र की धरोहर राशि के बैंक ड्राफ्ट/ बैंकर्स चेक सहित मोहरबन्ध लिफाफे में जिस पर "शक्ति भवन (मुख्यालय) की कैंन्टीन हेतु निविदा" अंकित हो, दिनांक 05.03.2020 अपराह्न 3:00 बजे तक अनु सचिव सचिवालय प्रशासन-(वि.0), कक्ष सं-427, शक्ति भवन, लखनऊ को प्राप्त हो जानी चाहिए, जो उसी दिन सार्वजनिक रूप से अपराह्न 4:00 बजे खोली जाएगी। (सु.0 जावेद मंसूरी) अनु सचिव सचिवालय प्रशासन (वि.0) पत्रांक 48-जस/पाकासि/20 दिनांक 5-2-2020

Spectacular display by Marine commandos



SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

Marine commandos gave a stunning performance at the Gomti Riverfront on the first day of the DeExpo 2020, leaving the crowds breathless and asking for more.

People started collecting since morning for the show and the crowd swelled into a large gathering by the time the Indian Navy sailors came into action in the evening.

The show started with water scooters, led by Joginder Singh, that pierced the waters of the river Gomti

in high speed and precision, creating huge waves as they moved on in several formations.

The next were the Dhruv helicopters which demonstrated a live rescue operation in which a lone Navy soldier was suspended from a rope and then lowered into the river waters. He then flashed a red fluorescent light after which he was lifted by the helicopter of the Indian Coast Guard.

The helicopters lowered, dipped and circled above the gaping people in the audience who raised their

mobile phones to capture the display.

This was followed by a display by the Marine commandos of a 'terror' rescue operation. They came on boats to the banks of the river, shooting guns to rescue two persons from 'terrorists'.

Last and not the least in the act was the Marine commandos returning to helicopters after the 'mission'.

Even as the chopper lifted slowly in the sky, four commandos on each helicopter dangled from ropes, sending out a saffron trail by their hands.

5 members of family killed road mishap

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a tragic road mishap, five members of a family, including three children, were killed when their car fell in the Ganga river near Charu Aharpur village in Indergarh area of Azamgarh early Wednesday morning.

Three of the car occupants were injured while one child was missing.

As per reports, Gaurav of Thathiya hamlet in Kannauj went to Barhi village of Talgram by car to attend the ring ceremony of a kin. He was accompanied by wife Pappi, daughters Lado and Priya and Mohini, Krishna, Rekha Devi, Subhi and another acquaintance.

During their return trip, while their car was passing through Indergarh in the wee hours of Wednesday, the driver lost control after which the vehicle fell in the Ganga river.

Hearing the screams of the drowning family members, the local villagers rushed to the scene and informed the police about the mishap.

Later, a rescue team rushed there and managed to extricate three of the injured besides the bodies of five of the family, who had died by then.

The deceased were identified as Priya (27), Mohini (23), Shubhi (2), Lado (5) and Krishna (10).

Another child, Harsh was missing. The injured were undergoing treatment at a hospital.

Efforts were on to search the missing child.

A case was registered and the bodies were sent to autopsy.

Meanwhile in Muzaffarnagar, one person died and eight were seriously injured in a three-vehicle pile-up due to fog-induced low visibility on Pauri-Delhi highway.

Tahir Madni among 18 held for protesting against CAA, NRC

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

As many as 18 people, including Rashtriya Ulama Council general secretary Tahir Madni, were arrested for protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC) without permission in Azamgarh early Wednesday morning.

As per reports, several women, who had gathered to join the protest, were dispersed by the police by use of force and chased away. Prior to the use of force, an altercation ensued and snowballed into stone-pelting.

Several people, including local MLA Nafees Ahmed and Rashtriya Ulama Council general secretary Tahir Madni reached the spot.

The police, however, let off the MLA after a discussion.

District Magistrate of Azamgarh, MP Singh, said that 18 people, including Madni and a woman, were arrested by the police and the arrested persons were kept in the Reserve Police Lines. Singh said the role of Tahir Madni was found to be suspicious in the case.

The district magistrate said that women were registering their protest against the CAA at Maulana Johar Park in Biliyaganj town of Azamgarh on Tuesday afternoon. Upon receiving information, the police reached the spot and made efforts to pacify the protesters and convince them to call off their illegal stir.

Meanwhile, an altercation took place between the two sides which was followed by stone-pelting.

The police then burst tear gas shells and cane-charged the unruly mob to control the situation.

Ulama Council's Nurul Huda Khan alleged that the protest was progressing peacefully when the police started misbehaving with women at the government's directions. He also alleged that water was sprinkled in the park where the protest was underway.

During stone-pelting, ASP (City) Pankaj Pandey sustained injury on his shoulder. The windshield of a police vehicle was also damaged.

Following the incident, a heavy police force was deployed in the area to avert any untoward incident and Jauhar Park was evacuated.

Youth assaults truck driver

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow (PNS): In a brazen display of muscle power, a youth attacked a truck driver with the butt of revolver in a road rage incident in Madaion on Wednesday morning.

As per reports, truck driver Vinay Awasthi of Ghatampur was transporting building material (coarse sand). In Madaion, he was passing Vithauli trisection when a youth riding a motorcycle came from behind and blew horn asking for pass. The driver probably did not hear the horn and he continued to drive the truck.

The youth lost his cool and overtook the truck and forced hte driver to stop. He then started abusing the truck driver and also slapped him.

When objected, he whipped out a pistol and hit Awasthi on the head with its butt. Awasthi also alleged that the youth looted Rs 50,000 he was carrying.

The locals however challenged the youth and overpowered him and handed himover to police. The police identified the youth as Sumit Pratap Singh of Sitapur.

Sumit denied the charges and said the truck driver hit his bike while driving carelessly. The police are investigating the case.



Visitors enjoying the show at DeExpo-2020 in Luknow on Wednesday

पावरग्रिड POWERGRID

NOTICE

1. Approval under regulation-86 of CERC (Conduct of Business) Regulations'1999 and CERC (Terms and Conditions of Tariff) Regulations, 2014 and CERC (Terms and Conditions of Tariff) Regulations' 2019 for Truing up of Transmission tariff for 2014-19 tariff block and Determination of Transmission tariff for 2019-24 tariff block for the assets of "Transmission System of Vindhya-Chal-I & RIHAND-III (1000MW) Generation Project a) covered in CERC order dated 05.09.2018 in petition no. 09/TT/2018, b) covered in CERC order dated 31.05.2016 in petition no. 71/TT/2015, c) covered in CERC order dated 23.05.2016 in petition no. 20/TT/2014, d) covered in CERC order dated 13.11.2017 in Petition no. 204/TT/2016

2. The beneficiaries of the above mentioned Transmission System are: (a) Madhya Pradesh Power Management Company Ltd. (B) Madhya Pradesh Power Transmission Company Ltd. (C) Madhyapradesh Audyogik Kendra (D) Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd. (E) Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd. (F) Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd. (G) Electricity Department Govt. of Goa, (H) Electricity Department Administration of Daman & Diu (I) Electricity Department, Administration of Dadra Nagar Haveli (J) Chhattisgarh State Power Transmission Co. Ltd. (K) Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Co. Ltd. (L) Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Prasaran Nigam Limited. (M) Aajmer Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. (N) Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. (O) Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. (P) Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board. (Q) Punjab State Electricity Board. (R) Haryana Power Purchase Centre (S) Power Development Deptt., Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir. (T) Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd. (U) Delhi Tranco Ltd. (V) Bses Yamuna Power Ltd., (W) Bses Rajdhani Power Ltd., (X) North Delhi Power Ltd., (Y) Chandigarh Administration (Z) Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd. (Aa) North Central Railway. (Ab) New Delhi Municipal Council.

3. Tariff details: a) Block 2014-19

Asset	True up Transmission Tariff for 2014-19				
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
A	16,376.14	16,608.08	16,707.79	16,566.40	16,194.75
B1	2,007.77	2,880.61	2,900.34	2,871.09	2,837.89
B2	148.31	418.04	487.59	525.49	516.53
B3	109.84	541.44	591.77	649.34	669.15
B4		6,699.82	10,859.16	10,748.81	10,534.22
B5		15,913.82	16,951.87	17,318.26	17,091.72
B6		360.59	543.15	614.49	616.24
B7		820.98	1,279.08	1,342.61	1,343.67
B8		5,925.23	9,638.22	9,698.41	9,564.25
B9		317.11	624.25	699.67	706.65
B10		193.74	358.40	372.70	369.51
B11		67.90	155.40	154.07	153.51
B12		62.76	160.98	162.08	161.37
B13		5.32	196.04	207.67	210.14
B14		381.28	819.48	801.00	787.24
C1	5,253.71	8,119.38	8,236.32	8,255.92	8,133.22
C2	302.84	625.34	637.13	646.00	627.27
D	194.46	798.48	774.07	743.16	725.7

Growing porn contents need serious discussion: Speaker

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Speaker Om Birla on Wednesday suggested a serious discussion in the Lok Sabha on the issues relating to the unbridled pornographic content in the social media as members drew attention towards its ever increasing trend besides that of fake news and sought the Government to penalise social media companies.

Members said the UAE and China have banned child porno sites and asked the Government whether it would do the same.

Maintaining that child pornography is a serious thing and must be banned, Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the Government blocked 9,000 sites. Many say adult pornography is "our right", Prasad said, adding "revenge porno" is also in vogue.

On the suggestions to ban all the sites spreading porn and fake news, the Minister said India should not be compared with China or the Middle East, as "we are a democracy".

While several MPs had, during question hour,



- Members drew attention towards its ever increasing trend besides that of fake news and sought the Government to penalise social media companies
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- On suggestions to ban all sites spreading porn and fake news, Prasad said India should not be compared with China or the Middle East, as 'we are a democracy'
- Prasad also said there is no proposal to link social media profiles of users with their Aadhaar

expressed concern over unregulated spread of the social media which spewed fake news and pornography, the Speaker said the issue demands a serious half-an-hour discussion.

Prasad promptly agreed to the suggestion saying the upper house had discussed the misuse of social media. The Modi Government had in its first term planned to go whole hog

Government would penalise social media companies. At this, Prasad said the Government was working on the direction of the Supreme Court. "We are considering penalising," the Minister said even while pointing that the Data Protection Bill is before the select committee." As for the shooting incident near Jamia, he said the incident is under investigation.

In a written reply, Prasad also said there is no proposal to link social media profiles of users with their Aadhaar numbers and asserted that steps are being taken to curb spreading of fake news and pornography through social media platforms.

His response was to a question on whether the government proposes to formulate any policy to link social media profile of users with their Aadhaar numbers.

According to him, the Government has taken several steps to keep a check on the spread of fake news, pornographic and anti-national content via social media platforms. Prasad said there has also been a rise in irresponsible comments in the social media.

8-fold increase in cyber attack in India: Report

In 2019, as per information tracked by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team, nearly 3.94 lakh cyber security incidents were reported as against 49,455 incidents in 2015, 50,362 in 2016, 53,117 in 2017, 2,08,456 in 2018 and 3,94,499 incidents in 2019

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI



In the last five years, cyber security incidents like hacking, breaching computer systems among others witnessed an almost eight-fold increase in India. In 2019, as per information tracked by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), nearly 3.94 lakh cyber security incidents were reported as against 49,455 incidents in 2015, 50,362 in 2016, 53,117 in 2017, 2,08,456 in 2018 and 3,94,499 incidents in 2019.

According to the CERT-In, 54 websites of Central Ministries, departments and State Governments were hacked in 2019, against 110 sites in 2018. These cyber attacks originated from Pakistan, Algeria, Brazil, China, France, Netherlands, North Korea, Russia, Serbia, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Tunisia, USA and Vietnam.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Sanjay Dhotre said as per the information reported to and tracked by CERT-In cyber security incidents are observed across sectors such as academia, e-commerce, energy, entertainment, finance, Government, healthcare, information and technology, manufacturing, telecom and transportation. "With the increase in the proliferation of Information Technology and related services there is a rise in cyber security incidents in the coun-

try as well as globally," Dhotre said.

"There have been attempts from time to time to launch cyber-attacks on Indian cyber space. It has been observed that attackers are compromising computer systems located in different parts of the world and use masquerading techniques and hidden servers to hide the identity of actual systems from which the attacks are being launched," the ministry said in its reply. Measures include audit of government websites and applications, formulation of a crisis management plan for countering cyber attacks, and the launch of botnet cleaning and malware analysis centre 'Cyber Swachhata Kendra'.

Kundankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP) came under a cyberattack in October last year. The damage was in the form of data theft, the same data can be used to enhance future attacks on the

power plant. The malware was linked by experts to the North-Korean group Lazarus, infected a computer in the plants external network, rather than the operational one.

According to reports, even ISRO faced attacks prior to the Chandrayan-2 mission. The most prominent trend was the drastic increase in the volume, intensity, and sophistication of cyber-attack campaigns targeting Indian enterprises in 2019. According to a research, Indian organisations have faced over three times more cyber-attack than the global average, with cryptocurrency mining malware impacting most of the entities.

According to a CISCO Annual Cyber Security Report, 53% of all cyber attacks led to financial damages of more than \$500K (including lost revenue, customers, opportunities, and out-of-pocket costs among others) for organisations in 2018.

Any 'willing' woman should be allowed to act as surrogate: Panel

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Not only close relatives but any woman — even a single woman — who is "willing" should be allowed to act as a surrogate, a parliamentary panel has recommended besides suggesting 15 major changes that include deleting the definition of 'infertility' as the inability to conceive after five years of unprotected intercourse on the ground that it was too long a period for a couple to wait for a child.

Headed by BJP's Bhopender Yadav, the Rajya Sabha Select Committee which tabled the report in Parliament on Wednesday also recommended that 'single Indian woman' - either divorcee or widow - in the 35- to 45-year age group and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) may be allowed to avail surrogacy.

However, it has strongly backed the provision of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019 allowing only altruistic surrogacy and not commercial surrogacy as it opined that "the sublime and divine instinct of motherhood could not be allowed to be turned into mechanical paid service of pro-creation devoid of divine warmth and affection."

Noting that restricting the surrogate mother to be a 'close relative' potentially limits the availability of surrogate mothers, affecting the genuinely needy persons, the panel has recommended removal of this requirement from the Bill.

The Committee recommended that "a willing woman shall act as surrogate mother and be permitted to undergo surrogacy procedures as per the provisions of this Act."

It also suggested increasing the insurance cover for the surrogate mother from proposed

Parliamentary panel has recommended besides suggesting 15 major changes that include deleting the definition of 'infertility' as the inability to conceive after five years of unprotected intercourse on the ground that it was too long a period for couple to wait for a child 16 months to 36 months. The Bill is yet to be passed by the Rajya Sabha.

Regarding the eligibility criteria for availing surrogacy procedure, the committee recommended removing the provision of requirement of five years as the period of inability to conceive before opting for the procedure.

It noted that there may be certain proven medical conditions like absence of uterus by birth, non-functional uterus, removal of uterus due to cancer, fibroids etc or patients with chronic medical condition where normal pregnancy is ruled out and it is medically proven beyond any doubt that surrogacy is the only option.

The Committee also recommended a modification in the definition of altruistic surrogacy so as to cover 'other prescribed expenses' on nutritional food required and maternity-wear etc, vital for the well-being and upkeep of the surrogate mother.

As a general recommendation, the select committee recommended that the Assisted Reproductive Technologies (Regulation) Bill which is awaiting cabinet approval may be taken up before the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill since the ART Bill primarily deals with technical, scientific and medical aspects which also apply to storage of embryo, gamete, oocyte etc. as contained in the Surrogacy Bill.

FROM PARLIAMENT

Shaheen Bagh firing incident rocks RS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Wednesday saw sharp exchanges between the treasury and Congress members when two BJP members raised the issue of alleged involvement of an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) worker in the Shaheen Bagh firing incident in New Delhi recently. However, the house ran smoothly after the brief war of words and the Elders raised matters of public importance.

The first exchange took place soon after ministers tabled listed papers when the house commenced proceedings and Vijay Goel (BJP) tried to raise the issue. Congress members strongly opposed it.

Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu did not allow Goel to proceed with his arguments and asked members to raise permitted issues for Zero Hour. Later, another BJP member

Bhopender Yadav referred to the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections and without naming any party or place brought up the issue of firing incident.

He said the Delhi Police has released certain pictures following its investigation in the firing incident and said how a political party (in an apparent reference to the AAP) can think of sending a legal notice to the police officer. Congress members objected to this and Yadav retorted that the gunman does not belong to the main Opposition party. The Delhi Police has said Kapil Baisala, who opened fired at the Shaheen Bagh protest site last week is a member of the Aam Aadmi Party.

Meanwhile, Jairam Ramesh (Congress) said states were not getting share of taxes as per the devolution formula. He said states should get 42 per cent share but they are expect-

ed to get only 30 per cent during the current fiscal. According to him, the devolution was only 35 per cent in the previous two years.

His party colleague Digvijaya Singh said the State was not giving dues of all ages have gathered together and launched a movement, Chowdhury said, adding it was a victory for democracy as the BJP was compelled to step back.

"You cannot weaken Hindustan (India). We all have together made this nation... Plurality is the heartbeat (dhadkan) we should save it," he said. The true spirit of the Constitution was that each and everyone should feel that this country was his own, he said. The BJP, he said, was dividing

Adhir slams Govt over CAA, NRC

New Delhi: Leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, on Wednesday attacked the Government over the NRC and CAA, saying it was a "sinister design" foiled by the people. "Our people are coming out to save the Constitution from you," he said in the lower house while participating in the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. People from all sections and of all ages have gathered together and launched a movement, Chowdhury said, adding it was a victory for democracy as the BJP was compelled to step back.

"You cannot weaken Hindustan (India). We all have together made this nation... Plurality is the heartbeat (dhadkan) we should save it," he said. The true spirit of the Constitution was that each and everyone should feel that this country was his own, he said. The BJP, he said, was dividing

the country and it was logical to fight against it. Swami Vivekananda, the Congress leader said, used to say that "our motherland was a junction of two great forces, Hinduism and Islam". He also said every human soul is potentially divine. "Our goal is to manifest the divinity in human beings."

"You are pseudo humanist, nationalist and Hindu... You should become a true Hindu like us (Congress)," he said, referring to the ruling BJP. On Kashmir, he claimed the cases of stone pelting have risen post the abrogation of Article 370. He demanded that the House pass a resolution for integration of PoK into India. The Congress leader also questioned the government on allowing Chinese companies for 5G trials in India. "This (5G) is critical infrastructure. China will create big risk for us," he said and advised the Government to think carefully before taking any step. PNS

No country has right to interfere in internal matters of India: Vice-Prez

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Wednesday said no country has the right to interfere in the internal matters of India in the backdrop of the European Union moving a resolution for voting against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

The Chairman also said the Indian parliament is sovereign and the message should be sent loud and clear when a Shiv Sena raised the issue in the Rajya Sabha.

Raising the issue in the House in the morning session, Anil Desai (Shiv Sena) suggested that a resolution should be passed that India will not tolerate any interference from other countries in its internal matters.

Reacting to it, Naidu said no other country has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of India. "I want to make it very clear, as Chairman of the House and also as Vice President of the country, whatever issues are there, Indian Parliament is a sovereign authority to discuss and decide.

"Outside countries have no right to interfere in our internal affairs," he said adding other countries should take care of their own respective matters. Naidu wondered whether those countries would like if Indian Parliament discusses issues like Brexit.

Six political groups of members of European Parliament had moved a joint resolution against the Citizenship Amendment Act, calling it discriminatory. The European Parliament had, however, decided not to conduct a vote on the resolution during its new session beginning March 2.

New programme under which NGOs will take care of senior citizens: Govt

New Delhi: The Government on Wednesday announced it will come up with new programme under which NGOs will take care of senior citizens, who are living alone, at their homes, besides bringing in a law to provide day care facility.

There are about 10.38 crore senior citizens in the country based on 2011 census, Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawar Chand Gehlot said during the Question Hour in Rajya Sabha. A 2007 law has the provision for taking care of all senior citizens. However, the Government is working on a new law to ensure those senior citizens living alone are taken care of in a better way, he said.

He said under the law day care centres will be set up for taking care of those living alone," he said, adding senior citizens can visit such day care centres and spend time till evening. Such centres will have library, canteen and other facilities. PNS

Opp raises J&K leaders' detention in LS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Raising the issue of detention of National Conference (NC) leader Farooq Abdullah and other senior political leaders from Jammu & Kashmir, the Opposition parties on Wednesday attacked the Government in the Parliament for "illegally" detaining them and demanded they should be freed forthwith.

Former Chief Ministers Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti were among the many mainstream politicians detained after the Centre revoked Jammu & Kashmir's special status under Article 370 on August 5 last year. The state was also bifurcated into the union territories of Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh.

"Three former Chief Ministers, including Farooq Abdullah, are languishing in jails for past six months,



they have been put behind bars without giving any proper reason," Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said in the Lok Sabha, while demanding the release of the sitting member.

Later Congress members along with those of several other Opposition parties walked out of the House.

TMC leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay also flagged the issue of detention of Abdullah and said the issue was also raised during the all-party meeting. Members from the NCP, DMK, TDP and the RJD also

voiced concern over the detention of Abdullah.

Majeed Memon (NCP) asked what kind of terror was created by Farooq Abdullah that he was detained and could not attend Parliament. The National Conference leader is an MP from Srinagar. Memon said the constitutional validity of abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir is yet to undergo judicial scrutiny.

DMK's Vaiko termed August 5, 2019 as the "blackest day" in the history of India saying three former chief ministers were detained and added that it was a pre-mediated conspiracy of "Hindutva forces".

Earlier, Congress MP K Suresh raised the issue of release of Abdullah, but it was cut short by the Speaker. It is the responsibility of the government and House to ensure his welfare and also that he exercises his right as an elected representative, Suresh said.

13.62 mn Indian nationals staying abroad: MEA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 13.62 million Indian nationals are staying abroad and USD 118.3 billion has been received as remittances from them since April 2018 up to September last year.

In a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan cited figures which showed that countries like Nepal, the Middle East region, the UK, the US, Malaysia and Germany have a large number of Indians living there.

As per the data received from Indian missions, there are an estimated 13.62 million Indians abroad, he said.

As per the RBI data, during 2018-19, USD 76.4 billion was received as remittances, while during period 2019-20 (April-September), USD 41.9 billion was received,

2015 onwards are 72 and considerable amount of Proceeds of Crime (PoC) are involved in respect of these cases. Muraleedharan, in reply to a separate question, also informed Parliament that mortal remains of 21,930 Indian nationals from 125 countries have been brought back to India since 2015 till December, 2019.

On the issue of prisoners in Pakistan's custody, he said as per the available information, 275 Indians, including fishermen are presently believed to be in Pakistan's custody.

However, as per the lists shared on January 1, 2020, Pakistan has acknowledged the custody of 262 of them, he said. In addition, there is the issue of 83 missing Indian defence personnel, including prisoners of war, whose custody has not been acknowledged by Pakistan, so far, Muraleedharan said.

Replying to another question, he said the number of Indians involved in financial irregularities with the banks as well as those who are under criminal investigation from

Statue of Unity's disabled-friendly upgrade in works

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The world's tallest statue, 'Statue of Unity' in Gujarat's Narmada, which is visited daily by over 5,000 tourists, including elders and persons with disabilities (PwDs), is all set for an upgrade to make it completely disabled-friendly.

The 182-metre-tall engineering marvel that was founded in a memorial tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Gujarat has recently got the tag of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's '8 Wonders of SCO'. It is also said to be on the itinerary list of US President Donald Trump who is expected to visit India in the last week of February this year.

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Secretary (DEPwD) Shakuntala D Gamlin said, "Statue of Unity meets up with almost all accessibility requirements. Features such as conveyor belt, lifts with Braille button, spacious corridors, direc-

tional signages, wheel-chair facilities and accessible drinking water and toilets in the Statue of Unity are novel features that need to be replicated universally."

However, certain other features such as Braille maps, sign language interpreters, audio facility for the visually impaired people needs to be added to make the accessibility complete, she said.

To assess the tourism accessibility of the icon, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2018, the DEPwD under the Union Social Welfare and Justice Ministry recently organised a visit of 14 youths with disabilities from all over India.

"We have noted their observation. For instance, the visually impaired and hearing impaired mentioned the need for Braille maps, Braille booklets on the historical importance of the Statue of Unity and a sign language interpreter for hearing impaired. We have started

FEATURES OF ACCESSIBILITY IN BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

OUTDOOR FEATURES

- * Accessible route/approach
- * Accessible Parking - Reserved parking near entrance
- * Accessible entrance to building - ramp

INDOOR FEATURES

- * Accessible reception
- * Accessible corridors and tactile flooring
- * Accessible lifts with Braille
- * Auditory commands
- * Staircases with durable handrails
- * Accessible toilets
- * Accessible drinking water provision
- * Auditory and visual signage



putting in place an infrastructure that provides a barrier-free access to the visitors with disabilities," said Gamlin. The Rights of Persons with

Disabilities Bill passed in 2016 mandates upon the Governments including Centre and the States to ensure that those with disability get equal

access to education, public facilities which is barrier-free in infrastructure and transport systems.

The Railways Ministry is also ensuring that nearby Kevadiya railway station is 'Divyang' friendly. There will be special disabled friendly features such as ramps to wheelchair access, lifts and escalators for movement to one floor to another, washrooms on both sides of the railway station. Disabled-friendly sites are getting global attention.

For instance, Kerala's 'Barrier-Free Tourism Project' recently got global recognition as the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) made a special mention to it as an 'Emerging Global Destination' in the Accessible Destination Awards 2019. According to a report, a booming section of the travel market reserved for travellers with disabilities and also the elderly is estimated to be worth an astounding USD 19.2 billion.

CAA-NRC-NPR

Rajini backs CAA, says 'not against Muslims'

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI



Even as Islamic organisations are holding massive protest rallies all over Tamil Nadu against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Population Register (NPR) and National Registry of Citizens (NRC) terming them discriminatory and anti-Muslim, Rajinikanth, Tamil film's leading superstar, came out in support of the legislation on Wednesday.

"This was the need of an hour and the Narendra Modi Government should be complimented for bringing in this legislation. There is nothing discriminatory in the CAA. Some religious organisations with the support of certain political parties are spreading the news that the act was against Muslims. This is not correct," Rajinikanth said while speaking to reporters outside his Poes Garden residence.

The actor, who is expected to announce the formation of his political outfit anytime from now, said that the Congress and other parties were speaking about such a legislation as early as 2009. "The Narendra Modi Government brought in the legislation and they should be appreciated for the same," he said.

Rajinikanth said there was nothing against the Muslims or any other religion in the CAA. "If the interests of the Muslims are hurt in anyway, I'll be the first person to come out challenging it and leading an agitation for them. The fears and concerns expressed by certain sections against the CAA are misplaced and there is no truth

in such campaigns," the actor explained.

He asked the student community in the country who are agitating against the CAA to seek the counsel of Constitutional experts and clear their doubts instead of becoming pawns in the hands of political parties. Rajinikanth said that he was making these observations after studying thoroughly about the CAA.

"There is no intimidation or threat to Indian Muslims. Some political parties with vested interests are taking this issue in hand. Some religious leaders too have fallen prey to them," said Rajinikanth.

The superstar's comments come at a time when MK Stalin, leader of the opposition and DMK chief is touring the State collecting one crore signatures against the CAA. Even on Wednesday, Stalin was seen attending a marriage in Erode district and making the new couple sign the anti-CAA register.

BJP party of 'fekus', threatens people with bullets: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Mamata Banerjee continued her tirade against the BJP for diverting the people's attention — by supplying fake news — to non-issues — so that they do not raise questions on job loss, inflation and falling economy.

Addressing Trinamool Congress workers at Krishnagar in Nadia district, Banerjee on Wednesday said, BJP is a 'Feku Party' which only supplied fake news so as to divert people's attention from real issues and divide the voters to rule.

"They are generating fake news to divide the people of the country on the basis of religion, and are threatening those who raise questions with bullets," the Bengal Chief Minister said.

Listing the dangers of showing documents under CAA and NPR, Banerjee said "they are asking from you not only your personal details but also your parents' certificates — like where they were born and where they lived. Moreover it is not enough to answer such questions. You will have to provide documents for your



They are generating fake news to divide the people of the country on the basis of religion, and are threatening those who raise questions with bullets

So I will advice you not to show your documents and not to disclose your facts because they are waiting to trap you in NPR and CAA which are like black magic. Don't show them your papers until I tell you to do so

They (BJP Government) are trying to sell off all PSUs, be it BSNL, LIC, Ordnance factories and the Railways. Unable to revive the country's economy, they have now chosen the easy way out. But this will only take the country to further bankruptcy

-Mamata Banerjee

claims. From where will you bring the documents of your parents? And if you cannot show such documents then your name will be struck off the citizenship register.

"So I will advice you not to show your documents and not to disclose your facts because they are waiting to trap you in NPR and CAA which are like black magic. Don't show them your papers until I tell you to do so."

She asked "will you throw me out of the country if I cannot produce my mother's birth certificate. If that be the case

then 70 percent of people will not be able to show their parents' papers. So the BJP will drive them all out of the country.

Attacking the BJP for resorting to divisive politics she said, "politics of divide will do no good to India. It will finish the country which is already suffering under economic slowdown. Instead of providing you with rice (bread and butter) they (BJP Government) are imposing

Citizenship Amendment Act, National Register for Citizens and National Population Register on you," and added "I was not

Government) are trying to sell off all PSUs, be it BSNL, LIC, Ordnance factories and the Railways. Unable to revive the country's economy, they have now chosen the easy way out. But this will only take the country to further bankruptcy."

Saying that her own Government had registered an increase in the employment rate by 32 percent whereas national rate of employment had gone down by 40 percent she maintained, "We managed to stem unemployment as we have chosen various ground-level projects where lakhs of jobs have been created in the last eight years."

Earlier she compared the BJP with Dussasana — the wicked brother of Kaurava king Duryodhana in epic Mahabharata who tried to cheat his cousins the Pandavas of their legitimate empire before being defeated in the battle of Mahabharata — Banerjee said "these (BJP are a party of Dussasanas) who also resemble the character of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq a historical figure who is often termed by historians as the 'wisest fool'."

Act not meant for removal of people from India: Uddhav

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Adding to continued confusion over the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) Government's stand on the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), Shiv Sena president and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Wednesday called for removal of 'misunderstanding' in the minds of the people about the CAA which, he said, was not meant for throwing Indian citizens out of the country.

Taking a stand on CAA that is contrary to the one taken by his party's ruling alliance partners in the State — NCP and Congress which have opposed the amended citizenship law in no uncertain terms, Uddhav however appeared to be on the same page as his allies on the issue of the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC). "We will not allow NRC in the state as it would impact people of all religions," he said.

Choosing not to oppose CAA, the Chief Minister said that there was a "lot of misunderstanding" about CAA which "should be removed" from the minds of people.

"CAA is not a law meant for removing anyone from the country. Amit Shah has said that CAA is meant a law for giving citizenship to people. I accept the law to that extent. It is law meant for giving citizenship to the persecuted people coming from the neighbouring countries. It is not meant for throwing out people from the country," Uddhav said, in the third and concluding part of an interview published in his party's official mouth-piece "Saamana".

"In our neighbouring countries,

persecuted minorities are Hindus. This is because Pakistan and Bangladesh are Muslim countries. Given that they are being persecuted in these countries, they want to come to India. We do not know the exact number of persecuted Hindus who want to come to India from these countries," he said.

Uddhav, however, posed some questions to the Modi Government. "But, we would like to know from the Modi government if it has made residential accommodation for the persecuted Hindus coming to India. Will the Government give houses to them under the Prime Minister Awas Yojana? Will you provide employment to them? What kind of arrangements that the government has made to provide education to the children of persecuted Hindus coming to India? We have a right to know this Government," the Chief Minister

said. Alluding to the NRC, Uddhav said: "What is not going to be discussed or what is not being discussed is the proposed NRC. NRC will not impact just Muslims in the country, but will also affect people from all religions in the country. We will not allow NRC in the State," the chief minister said.

"Under NRC, all people will have to prove their citizenship. There would not be any difference between Hindus and Muslims when it comes proving citizenship. Muslims have taken to street in protest against NRC. What if Hindus take to streets against NRC. Take the case of Assam, 19 lakh people could not prove their citizenship. Of the 19 lakh people, 14 lakh people are Hindus. Among those who failed to prove their citizenship were family members of MLAs and MPs," he said.

Will go Delhi to meet Modi, Sonia: Maha CM

Mumbai: Shiv Sena president and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said here on Wednesday that he would go to Delhi to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress' interim president Sonia Gandhi, veteran BJP leader LK Advani and others.

Queried as to why he had not visited the national Capital after taking over as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Uddhav said: "There is no such compulsion. I don't have any anger or ill will. I will definitely go to Delhi when I need to"

Asked if he would meet Modi, Sonia Gandhi among others, the Maharashtra Chief Minister said: "Why not? I will definitely meet Modi, Sonia, Advani and other people."

Replying to another question, Uddhav said that NCP president Sharad Pawar was 'a mentor' to his Government and "not a remote control".



Muslim women raise slogans during an anti-Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) protest, at Nagpada, in Mumbai on Wednesday

PTI

Dalit outfit launches postcard campaign

PTI ■ GORAKHPUR

A lesser known Dalit outfit, Purvanchal Sena, has launched a postcard campaign against the CAA and the NRC.

The outfit has urged people to send postcards to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and seek the withdrawal of the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act.

"At a time when the country's economy is struggling after demonetisation and the implementation of the GST, the Centre is ready to push the nation into another financial turmoil by doling out thousands of crores of rupees to conduct the NRC and NPR exercises," Dheerendra Pratap, national president of the outfit, said.

Bravery award winner writes to CJI about children at protests

Mumbai: Days after the death of an infant at Delhi's Shaheen Bagh protest, National Bravery Award winner Zen Sadavarte wrote to the Chief Justice of India seeking directives to prevent children from participating in protests.

Four-month-old Mohammed Jahaan died during the protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act at Shaheen Bagh in Delhi on January 30.

In a letter released to media outlets, the Class 7 student

claimed that the incident was a violation of the deceased infant's right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution.

Inclusion of children and infants in protests amounts to torture and cruelty, Zen stated in her petition.

The police had failed to take cognisance of the involvement of children in protests, she said, and appealed to the Apex Court to direct authorities to stop such involvement.

The 12-year-old argued

that organisers of the Shaheen Bagh protest and parents of the infant had failed to protect his rights.

Quoting a newspaper article in her petition, Zen pointed out that the infant's death certificate did not mention the cause of death and demanded a post-mortem to ascertain the same.

Zen had received a National Bravery Award in 2019, for guiding 17 people to safety when a fire broke out at Parel's Crystal Tower. PTI

1 CRPF jawan, 2 terrorists killed in Srinagar

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A CRPF jawan sacrificed his life while two terrorists, one each belonging to Hizbul Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Tayyeba, were neutralised by the security forces during a terror attack, at a joint naka of CRPF and police, on the outskirts of Srinagar near Lawaypora on Wednesday.

This is the first major joint terror attack by three terror outfits on security forces in the Srinagar district this year. So far, 20 terrorists have been eliminated by the security forces in different operations across the State since January 2020.

According to police, the encounter broke out after the terrorists, riding a two-wheeler, opened fire on security forces in Lawaypora area on Wednesday around 11.45 a.m.

Director General of Police, Dilbagh Singh, told reporters during a press briefing in Srinagar, "the encounter began after three terrorists opened fire on the 73 Bn CRPF personnel who were posted at a security check point near Lawaypora".

He said, the alert security forces retaliated and neutralised two terrorists adding that the third one was captured in an injured condition when he was trying to flee from the spot.

He said, a CRPF Constable



identified as Ramesh Ranjan, hailing from Bihar, received a bullet injury on the head and lost his life.

Inspector-General of Police, Kashmir Zone, Vijay Kumar, said the terrorists have been identified as Zia Ur Rehman of the Lashkar-e-Taiba and Khateeb Dass of the Hizbul Mujahideen.

"The injured terrorist has been identified as Umar Fayaz of the Islamic State Jammu and Kashmir (ISJK)," he said.

According to police spokesman, the killed terrorists were involved in several acts of militancy and several FIRs were registered against them.

Zulfikar Hassan, Additional DG CRPF, who also attended the press briefing said, Three terrorists, riding a two-wheeler without a helmet, were asked to stop at the security checkpoint on Srinagar -

Baramulla highway near Lawaypora. The person sitting in the rear got down and resorted to firing, one CRPF man was hit in the head but he fired back. "Two terrorists died and a third one was arrested, sophisticated arms and grenades were recovered from them," he said.

Dilbagh Singh said there was a heavy rush on the highway but security forces maintained great caution to ensure there was no collateral damage.

Singh said this year many successful anti-militancy operations were carried out and many militant modules were busted.

In response to a question, DGP Dilbagh Singh said "terrorists belonging to different outfits in Kashmir are jointly carrying out attacks on the security forces." "The terrorists belonging to different outfits

have been working together for a long time now," he added.

Asked about the harassment of youth on VPN use, DGP said: "There are reports that VPN is being misused here. For example, the truck driver (involved in Bann toll plaza encounter on January 31) first clicked a photograph of encounter and sent it to Pakistan as an evidence that they have been intercepted. Such use and misuse is happening.

According to police spokesman, Khateeb Dass was the brother-in-law of terrorist Mugees Mir of Parimpora who was earlier killed in an encounter. Khateeb Dass was per police records was affiliated with proscribed terror outfit HM and had been part of groups involved in carrying out terror attacks in the areas of South Kashmir. Several terror crime cases were registered against him including case FIR No. 104/2015 pertaining to terror crimes.

According to police, Zia ur Rehman Wani was affiliated with proscribed terror outfit LeT and was part of groups involved in carrying out attacks on guard posts, security deployments and several other grenade attacks besides civilian atrocities. He had history of terror crime records since 2018.

Income Tax sleuths grill superstar Vijay Joseph

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Vijay Joseph, Tamil film's superstar, is being questioned by sleuths of Income Tax Department since Wednesday noon at his residence along the East Coast Road in Chennai.

Vijay, the reigning superstar, who was shooting for a movie at Neyveli was asked to accompany the IT officials who went there and was brought back to his Chennai residence for interrogation.

Though no official word has come about the reasons that led to the questioning of Vijay Joseph (the other superstar being Vijay Sethupathi) sources close to the star said the visit by the IT team could be in connection with an alleged tax evasion case linked to Anbu Cheliyan, a leading film financier based in Madurai.

Cheliyan has major stakes in AGS Cinemas which had produced the movie 'Bigil' in which Vijay was the hero.

The Income Tax officials had raided 20 locations related to AGS Cinemas recently. Vijay had courted controversy for his 2017 film 'Mersal' a movie highly critical of the BJP Government at the Centre.

The actor had delivered some powerful dialogues in the film against the GST and the Demonetization. The movie was opposed by the Tamil Nadu BJP though it ended as a runaway hit.

The visit by the taxmen come at a time when there are reports about the superstar, addressed as Thalpathy (Tamil for commander) is likely to enter the world of politics.

Legal eagles to debate state of law at Difficult Dialogues

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At a time when a debate is raging on the legal and Constitutional validity of the Citizenship Amendment Act the fifth edition of the Difficult Dialogues will be held in Goa from February 14 for a brainstorming on the state of law in India.

Top legal eagles from India and abroad as well as members of the civil society, media, NGOs will take part in the three-day annual event.

The objective of Difficult Dialogues 2020 would be to bridge the gap between policy formulation and the on-ground implementation of the law. At the end of the seminar, based on the suggestion made by the speakers a set of recommendation will be submitted to the Central government for helping in policy formulation.

Difficult Dialogues was instituted by philanthropist Surina Narula in 2016. Over the last five years, it has partnered with several reputed international knowledge partners like the London School of Economics & Political Science (LSE), University College London (UCL) and the University of Oxford, UK to have constructive debates and come up with strategic recommendations for various key themes relevant to India and the region. These include themes like Global Finance and Civil Society in 2016, India's Health in 2017, Gender Equality in 2018, Education For All in 2019, and the State of Law this year. During this journey, the International Centre Goa (ICG) and the Goa University have been long term

Indian knowledge partners.

Commenting on Difficult Dialogues, Surina Narula, the founder of Difficult Dialogues said, "My experience working with NGOs spanning 20 years has given me a deep understanding of the pressing need to work on policy change. 'Difficult Dialogues' is an endeavor to provide a common platform to bridge this gap between policy makers and civil society involved with implementation. Unless the last mile implementers are included in the conversation, policies will only reflect what mega rich businesses want and democracy will be diluted. This year the task is to explore the State of Law in the country as the judiciary and the legal framework is an important part of a diverse nation like India for providing justice, equality and prosperity to all its citizens."

This year the Knowledge Partners for Difficult Dialogues include the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford, (CSLS, Oxford), Bar Association of India (BAI), O P Jindal Global University, Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University (CSLJ, JNU), the Goa University (GU), and the International Centre Goa (ICG). Several interesting panel discussions topics have been curated by the knowledge partners and these include Democracy and the Rule of Law, Discrimination Law and Minorities, Accountability vs Independence of the Judiciary, Gender and the Legal Profession, Reforms in the Administration of Justice, and topics related to laws for women and children, laws for the environment etc.

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Wuhan famous hub for medical aspirants from Kerala

Kochi: Wuhan may have become a household name after the outbreak of the deadly novel coronavirus but the historic Chinese city has been a much sought after education hub for Kerala medical aspirants for long with affordable and quality courses being the prime attraction.

While there is no official data on the number of Kerala students studying in the Asian nation, unofficial estimates put it around 500.

Interestingly, an official said only after the virus scare the government learnt about a sizable number of students studying in Chinese universities.

India's all three positive coronavirus cases so far are Kerala students, two of them medicos, of a university in Wuhan, the epicentre of the

novel coronavirus which has claimed 490 lives in China so far.

Impressed by factors like affordability, amenities and international standards in medical education, offered in English, students from Kerala have been flocking to the Wuhan University School of Medicine.

Wuhan, over 1,000 km from Chinese capital of Beijing and more than 800 km from the top class metropolis Shanghai, is a historic city and played a key role in the 20th century history of China.

"I am very happy about the medical education system at Wuhan university. They offer quality education at affordable fees," a student who had returned from Wuhan last month, said here.

Aiswarya Hariharan, a

third year MBBS student, returned to India early January soon after the school was shut for vacation.

According to her, the Wuhan University School of Medicine has become a centre of attraction for MBBS aspirants from Kerala because of its international standard.

Overseas students prefer the university as the six-year-long course is offered in English for them.

"In our batch, there are about 70 international students. Interestingly, 50 of them are from Kerala," said Aiswarya from Tripunithura near here. Parent of another MBBS student studying in Wuhan said he sent his daughter there because of its high standard of education in a fees affordable for him.

"I spent ₹5 to 6 lakhs for fee, accommodation and food



annually for my daughter. This fee amount is very less when compared with many of the self-financing medical institutes with least facilities in India." Besides, studying overseas is beneficial for the students as they get an international exposure," the parent said.

Revathy Krishnan from Thiruvananthapuram is also doing MBBS in Wuhan. The third year student said she was very happy about her institute and its faculty which offer medical education at par with any other reputed Indian medical institute.

The students claimed that the facilities the institute offer at Wuhan university, which is also recognised by the Government of India, is of international standard.

The students said around 500 from Kerala are pursuing MBBS course at Wuhan

University School of Medicine.

However, a government department set up to redress the grievances of Non-Resident Keralites (NRKs) said there was no exact data on this number. Vice Chairman of the Non-Resident Keralites Affairs (NORKA Roots) K Varadarajan said no records of the Kerala students studying in Chinese institutions were available with the state.

"We believe that most of the Kerala students studying in Wuhan have returned to Kerala following the outbreak of the novel Coronavirus. But some of the students, whose courses will complete in coming months, are still staying back there," he said.

"There is no possibility to get the exact number of Kerala students studying in universities in Wuhan and other Chinese provinces. It is because of the virus scare, we came to know such a sizable number of students are studying in Chinese universities," Varadarajan told PTI.

Meanwhile, the students expressed confidence China would very soon overcome the coronavirus crisis and that they would be able to continue their education in Wuhan.

According to students, though there are about 35 medical colleges in Kerala not all of them could aspire to get a seat in one of them. Educational consultant, Jacob George, General Manager of the Asian Educational Consultancy, however, felt the number of students who go to China for MBBS were minimal as several others preferred countries like Russia. **PTI**

IN BRIEF

EC TO FORM VISITING CHAIR AT IIIDEM
New Delhi: To commemorate and celebrate former Chief Election Commissioner late TN Seshan's special connect with the young and aspiring India, the Election Commission has decided to establish and fund a visiting chair on interdisciplinary approach to Electoral Studies in the Centre for Curriculum Development at India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM), New Delhi from 2020-2025. The Chair will be mentored by former CEC N. Gopalaswami.

IMD TO INSTALL AWOS AT 18 AIRPORTS



New Delhi: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has started to install the integrated automatic weather observing system (AWOS) at 18 airports where there are more than 500 weekly flights. Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri informed the Parliament on Wednesday.

BOOK ON FIGHT AGAINST LEPROSY RELEASED

New Delhi: Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar recently released the book "No Matter Where the Journey Takes Me: One man's quest for a leprosy-free world", penned by Yohel Sasakawa, WHO Goodwill Ambassador. The book talks about Sasakawa's journey as the global ambassador for leprosy. Present on the occasion were NK Singh, Fifteenth Finance Commissioner of India and Tarun Das, Chairperson, Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation.

TMC SLAMS GOVT OVER DY SPEAKER VACANT SEAT

New Delhi: The Trinamool Congress (TMC) hit out at the Government on Wednesday over its 'dubious record' of keeping the Lok Sabha Deputy Speaker's seat vacant for 62 sittings of the Lower House of Parliament. In a video, TMC's national spokesperson and its leader in the Rajya Sabha Derek O'Brien said the average time taken to fill the post was 22 sittings of the House.

21 J&K residents arrive back from China, no positive case found

Jammu: Twenty-one people arrived back to Jammu & Kashmir from coronavirus-hit China this week and they have been kept under home observation, officials said on Wednesday.

No case of coronavirus has been found in the UT so far, they added.

As many as 21 persons — seven from Jammu and 14 from Kashmir — have arrived in Srinagar and Jammu during the last few days and they have been kept under home isolation, a senior officer of the Health department told PTI.

Tests were conducted on 11 passengers — seven from Jammu and four from Kashmir — and sent to a laboratory in Pune, he said.

Of these, seven reports have arrived back and all of them are negative, the officer added.

"All these people are under observation and are being monitored. They have been asked to remain in isolation and take necessary precautions. However, no one has been hospitalised," he said.

Financial Commissioner, Health, Atul Dulloo said the Government has established a 33-bedded isolation ward at Government Medical College Jammu for coronavirus cases and 22-bedded such facility at GMC Srinagar, SKIMS Soura and Maternity Hospital Sanathnagar in the Kashmir valley.

The sample taking facility has been kept at GMC Srinagar and GMC Jammu, he added.

"The government is not taking any chances on the issue of coronavirus and all those arriving from China, Nepal and other countries are being monitored," Dulloo said.

The new strain of coronavirus, which originated in Hubei province in central China late last year, has so far killed 490 people in that country and infected further 24,324. Globally, around 130 cases have been reported and three of them are from Kerala, India.

Groom comes home from China for wedding; rituals postponed

PTI ■ THRISSUR (KER)

A groom, who arrived in Kerala from China for his wedding two weeks ago, had to postpone the ceremony on the insistence of health authorities as the youth is presently under home quarantine for the novel Corona virus.

The marriage had been scheduled for Tuesday at Kadangode grama panchayat here.

Panchayat sources said they came to hear about the proposed ceremony only a day before the wedding.

"We came to know about the wedding on February 3. The health inspector immediately contacted the District Medical Officer (DMO) and we sent a letter to Deputy Director. Following the intervention of the officials, the family postponed the wedding," the sources said. The youth, who is working as an accountant in Yiwu, about 1500 km from Wuhan, had reached Kochi airport on January 19.

The groom was told by the health authorities that he cannot get married as part of the health protocol of the Government, which stipulates that those returning from China have to strictly report to the health authorities and quarantine themselves for a 28-day period at home, the sources said.

A local health official said a reception was held in the evening, in which the groom did not participate.

The bride was garlanded by the groom's mother and brought to the hall before the guests and a traditional "Sadya" was arranged for the guests.

Two Medical students, a businessman and a man working in China were among those from the panchayat who had recently returned to the state, the panchayat sources said.

The LDF Government had asked families of those who return from the virus affected regions to postpone marriages to prevent a possible outbreak of the disease in the State.

Man in Surat hospital for suspected infection slips away

Surat: A 41-year-old man quarantined on Tuesday for suspected novel coronavirus infection walked out of the civil hospital here in Gujarat without giving his blood samples for testing, a senior official said on Wednesday.

However, after the hospital authorities informed district administration and the police about the incident, the man's family members on Wednesday said he would return to the hospital to give his blood samples.

A senior hospital official said that the 41-year-old walked out of the facility without informing anybody, as he was "scared", apparently of contracting the infection.

The man had returned from China on January 19. Meanwhile, samples of three of the total five cases of suspected nCoV infection in Gujarat have tested negative while result of two others is awaited.

All these persons had returned from China—the country from where the nCoV infection originated—in the recent past.

"A man was admitted in the isolation ward of the hospital for suspected nCoV on Tuesday afternoon. However, before we could collect his blood samples, he slipped away. We have informed the district collector and the police," said Priti Kapadia, in-charge medical superintendent of the hospital.

She said a family member of the man met with the hospital authorities on Wednesday and assured them that he would get himself admitted to the hospital again for giving his blood sample.

"If he cooperates and provides his blood samples, we shall be able to prevent the spread of the virus in case his samples test positive," Kapadia said.

Hospital Resident Medical Officer (RMO) Ketan Naik said the man walked out of the hospital without informing anybody despite counselling on Tuesday.

A health department official said they are following up with 622 of the total 769 passengers who had returned from China in the recent past.

In Ahmedabad, we have followed up with 195 people, followed by Mehsana (70), Banaskantha (62), and Rajkot (47), he said. **PTI**

Kerala tackling virus with experience drawn from fighting Nipah

Kochi: Faced with the challenges posed by the novel Coronavirus (nCoV), the Kerala Government is banking on its experience gleaned from fighting the deadly Nipah outbreak in 2018 and 2019 to effectively tackle the current situation.

Activating its officials, doctors and field staff to face the challenge much before the State's first Coronavirus case was reported from Thrissur last week, the state health department has put all persons who have returned from nCoV-hit China under its surveillance since January 15.

"If you are a person with travel history to China and returned from that country after January 15, you will be put under the radar of the district surveillance team," Dr S Sreedevi, additional DMO Ernakulam and district surveillance officer, told PTI.

According to her, those who returned from the coronavirus-hit regions are given instructions through phone on the need to remain in home quarantine for 28 days for the safety of his/her family members. Details of the people who have travel history to China are taken from the airports.

Information about the home quarantined persons are updated to the district health officials by the field staff.

"If that person is found not following the guidelines for coronavirus, he will get a call from the top district medical officers urging him not to mingle with anyone," the medical officer said.

According to her, in most cases the people obey the instructions of the health officials as they are aware of the threat posed by the disease.

"Our experience in tackling the Nipah virus in 2018 and 2019 help us in dealing with the nCoV cases," the medical officer said.

The Kerala Government declared novel coronavirus as a "state specific disaster" on Monday as three students who returned from China's Wuhan province, epicentre of the epidemic, tested positive for the infection in the last few days.

The State Health Minister KK Shailaja has said the state health department is ready to face the novel coronavirus challenge drawing on its experience in overcoming the Nipah virus outbreak in 2018 and 2019.

In line with the steps taken to tackle the Nipah virus outbreak, a state control room in Thiruvananthapuram and district control rooms at all district headquarters were set up much before the first coronavirus case was reported. **PTI**

UP to have 16 cybercrime police stations

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to set up 16 cybercrime police stations in the state. A total of 18 proposals were approved in a Cabinet meeting headed by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, government spokesperson Sidharth Nath Singh told reporters here.

"The cabinet has approved a proposal to establish cybercrime police stations in UP Police's 16 zonal headquarters in Bareilly, Moradabad, Saharanpur, Agra, Aligarh, Kanpur, Jhansi, Prayagraj, Chitrakoot, Gorakhpur,

Devipatan, Basti, Varanasi, Azamgarh, Mirzapur and Ayodhya," he said.

The cabinet also approved a proposal of nominating teachers of the Provisional Medical Service (PMS) cadre based on their abilities as professors and associate professors on deputation in Ayodhya, Basti, Bahraich, Shahjahanpur and Firozabad medical colleges.

These colleges were established with the help of the central Government.

The cabinet also approved an amendment to the web media policy, under which websites with 50,000 hits will now get advertisements under the DAVP.

SC refuses to stay HC order on reservation to Marathas

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to stay the Bombay High Court order upholding a Maharashtra law granting reservation to Marathas in education and jobs.

A bench of Justices L Nageswara Rao and Deepak Gupta said the matter has been pending for long and required detailed hearing.

It fixed March 17 to hear at length a batch of pleas filed for and against the Maratha quota. "We are fixing the date of March 17, so that the issue can be heard at length. We are also making it clear that

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Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of IIFL Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as India Infoline Housing Finance Ltd. (IIHFL)) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, a Demand Notice was issued by the Authorized Officer of the company to the borrowers / co-borrowers mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of IIHFL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, if the borrower clears the dues of the "IIHFL" together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred, at any time before the date fixed for sale or transfer, the secured assets shall not be sold or transferred by "IIHFL" and no further step shall be taken by "IIHFL" for transfer or sale of the secured assets.

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Place: Lucknow Date: 06-02-2020 Sd/- Authorised Officer For IIFL Home Finance Limited (IIFL HFL)

PM SETS US \$ 5B TARGET FOR DEFENCE EXPORTS

From Page 1

increase in number of licence issued by the Ministry from 210 to 460 in the last five years.

"India today is building several defence equipment like artillery guns, aircraft carriers, submarines, frigates, light-combat aircraft, and combat helicopters," he said.

Modi cited misuse of technology, terrorism and cyber threat as challenges facing the world and said that defence

forces were eyeing new technology considering new threats. "India is not behind others. A roadmap has been finalised to use application of artificial intelligence in defence sector," he said.

Modi said that the creation of the post of Chief of Defence Staff and Department of Military Affairs would boost the overall defence production. Earlier, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh made a detailed presentation about the plans of

his Ministry and said that it was pursuing three Ps - policies, promotion and partnership. The 11th edition of biennial DefExpo 2020 during February 5-9 will feature 1,000 exhibitors, including 165 foreign companies from the US, France, Germany, Russia, Israel, Australia etc, making it the largest ever defence show surpassing the 10th edition of DefExpo 2018 in Chennai, when about 700 exhibitors participated.

Overcrowding in jails related to courts' performance, will pass orders: Apex court

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Overcrowding in jails is connected to "performance of courts", the Supreme Court observed Wednesday and said it will pass directions to deal with the issue affecting 1,341 prisons in the country which house 4.68 lakh inmates as against the sanctioned strength of 3.83 lakh.

A bench, headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde, said it will also pass direction to effectively deal with the problem of shortage of staffers in jails "which are on an average 30 to 40 per cent" of sanctioned strength.

The problem was "connected to the performance of the courts and will have to be tackled", the bench said, taking note of issue of overcrowding in prisons.

It asked the Centre, represented by Additional Solicitor General A N S Nadkarni, to take instructions and apprise it as to how they are going to address the immediate concerns of filling up vacancies in jails and over-crowding in them as highlighted by the prison reforms committee headed by former apex court judge Justice Amitava Roy.

"We will pass orders after two weeks on the issues of overcrowding in jails and filling up of vacancies," said the bench, also comprising Justices B R Gavai and Surya Kant, as the law officer sought time for taking instructions.

Only few launches take shine off Auto Expo

From Page 1

Korean carmakers Hyundai and Kia also took the opportunity to showcase their next concept vehicles, Hyundai showcased their facelifted Tucson and will unveil the second-generation Creta today with Kia showcasing their compact SUV, the 'Sonet'. Kia also launched their much awaited MPV, the Carnival which has been priced between Rs 25-34 lakh. Mahindra and Mahindra

announced their latest range of engines which will be used on Ssangyong and Ford vehicles and the Indian manufacturer also launched their eKUV electric small car at Rs 8.75 lakh. Chinese manufacturers SAIC and GWM also showcasing their upcoming products including small urban electric cars and SUV's. German luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz, the only luxury manufacturer participating at the show show-

cased their upcoming A-Class limousine and GLA SUV, both of which will be launched later this year.

On the whole this was a relatively dull Auto Expo, but the overwhelming feeling from automobile manufacturers is that 2020 might see a revival of demand, which collapsed a few months after the previous Expo held in 2018. Will that happen? Keep watching this space.

VETERINARY COUNCIL OF INDIA
 (STATUTORY BODY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA)
 'A' WING, 2ND FLOOR, AUGUST KRANTI BHAWAN,
 BHIKAJI CAMA PLACE, NEW DELHI-110066

NOTICE

All the Registered Veterinary Practitioners (RVP) are hereby informed that consequent upon the judgement dated 10.10.2019 of Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in C.W.P. No.478 of 2018 filed by Dr. Ravinder Chaudhary and subsequent notification issued by the Central government (Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India) vide Extra-ordinary Gazette of India dated 09.12.2019 calling upon the persons enrolled in the Indian Veterinary Practitioner's Register (IVPR) to elect Members from amongst themselves for the Veterinary Council of India as provided under Section 3(3)(9) of the Indian Veterinary Council (IVC) Act, 1984. The Draft Electoral Roll has been prepared as provided under rule 4 of the Indian Veterinary Council (IVC) Rules, 1985 and other provisions amended in IVC (Amendment) Rules, 2019.

The Electoral Roll contains the names of all the RVP whose names have been included in the IVPR upto 31.03.2019. Further, Mobile Number and Email Id of RVP as provided by the Registrar of State/U.T. Veterinary Councils have also been incorporated in view of IVC (Amendment) Rules, 2019.

The said Roll has been made available at the offices of all the State/U.T. Veterinary Councils for display during the period from 07th February to 21st February, 2020. The Roll is also available at the office of this Council.

Hence, all RVP registered upto 31.03.2019 are requested to kindly verify their details in Draft Electoral Roll in terms of Name, Address, Registration Number, Mobile Number and Email Id for correction/ updation/ insertion/ deletion as the case may be. Further, those RVP who have not yet provided their Mobile Number and Email id are again requested to provide the same to the Registrar of State/U.T. Veterinary Council concerned on or before 21.02.2020.

Any updation/correction and claim for inclusion of a name as provided under IVC Rules, 1985 in the Roll and objection to the entry therein, if any, need to be lodged to the Registrar of the State/U.T. Veterinary Council in whose register the name of the claimant has been included, or as the case may be, from whose register the objector requires a name to be deleted within the aforementioned period. Claims/Objections made after the last date shall not be entertained. Prescribed proforma for updation/correction/claim for inclusion of name in the Roll and objection to the entry therein has been made available with the Registrar of State/U.T. Veterinary Councils.

(Dr. Basudev Sunani)
 Secretary, VCI, (Addl. Charge)

davp 01222 / 11 / 0001 / 1920

NRC on hold?

This may just be a placatory gesture and will be back given the BJP's performance in State polls



For long, the ruling establishment has demonised the countrywide protests over the citizenship law as anti-national betrayal, an elitist-liberal conspiracy and an attack on the Hindu way of life. The party with a difference at the Centre has been trying to convince the nation that existing templates of governance needed to be overturned to effect such a change and years of minority appeasement had to be replaced with majoritarian resentment. But if it was so sanguine about the sporadic nature of dissent, then what could

explain a temporary reversal of its stand on the National Register of Citizens (NRC)? Clearly the sound and fury signify something for the Government to at least halt its missionary zeal to go for a profiling-based census or justifying it as a way of rooting out illegal immigrants. Clearly, a civil society movement has generated such a swell among common citizens across India, from students to grannies, from working class to labourers, and affected the nation's productivity cycle to such an extent that the BJP feels its ramrod aggression is costing it politically. Combined with the venom of the hate speeches flying thick and fast and the morally reprehensible sedition and inquiry brought against students and teachers of a school play, the strong agenda push has even left its apologists and defendants somewhat red-faced. The civil unrest across the country has given us a primary lesson in democracy, that people may make ideological choices but are largely against societal deconstruction driven by political imperatives. And the country cannot be in a perpetual state of a war with itself. For long, the Right has played the victim card as a recipient of the Leftist-socialist and Congress oppression. Now that it has a brute electoral majority, that narrative is well past its expiry date. And it must realise that the people's verdict needs to be respected, that it needs to be trusted as a deliverer and not just be an avenger. It must realise that its manifesto cannot become the nation's own. That's why the latest Home Ministry clarification in Parliament that there was no plan for the NRC shows the Government has been stung, temporarily at least. For it comes at a time when senior BJP Ministers, including Home Minister Amit Shah, and even Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath — who has been consolidating the Hindu votebank in mathematical terms in his State and raising the ghostly invasion by "others" — have made no bones about the need to isolate illegal settlers, namely Muslims. It also proves that the Government's effort to treat the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in isolation isn't quite working. If the longevity of the protests, particularly Shaheen Bagh, has proven anything, it is that people are not against rehabilitating Hindu returnees, they are against the legacy hunt process, which may disqualify Muslims from the NRC list, who may not have redressal under CAA in the way an excluded Hindu would have. It is the otherisation and genocidal instincts implicit in the CAA that has riled up people. Which is why the pressure on the Government has been immense, such that Prime Minister Narendra Modi chose to publicly overrule his deputy and Home Minister Amit Shah. Now the PM's reassurance on "no NRC now" has been given official credibility.

But does this mean that the BJP is still pursuing its forked tongue approach? Is it rescuing Modi as a thinking patriarch and, therefore, he has to appear more statesmanlike while Shah and motormouths continue to be aggressors and somewhat recalcitrant members of the Sangh? Modi's clarification that the NRC had not been discussed in the Government made light of Amit Shah's statement in Parliament. Many loyalists argued that the PM was not present in the House when the legislation was placed, but can any legislative or policy matter be placed in the House without it having been discussed in the Government at all? This orchestrated rift between Modi and others has frankly been overplayed. Fact is, the cessation of NRC is but temporary to offset general fury over the country's economic slowdown. The CAA-NRC project was part of the BJP manifesto for the 2019 Lok Sabha election. Shah as BJP president then had promised to bring the CAA first and then implement the NRC. Frankly, with the abrogation of Article 370 and the Ram temple a reality, the BJP is left with very few promises to dangle and nurture the Hindu dream of a promised land. The NRC, therefore, is in abeyance. If the BJP blasts the citadel in the Delhi elections, it will be back. Even if it doesn't, there will be some subtle State-level experiments for sure.

Return of the cheetah

With shrinking habitats and a reduced prey base, translocating this cat species isn't a good idea



Following the green signal by the Supreme Court, India will soon be reintroducing cheetahs into the wild by flying in the carnivore from Africa, over 50 years after the animal was declared extinct in the country in 1952. That it was a tragedy and a big loss to our biodiversity that we hunted and caged the beautiful animal into extinction, is undisputed. But the fact remains that the cheetah is the only big cat to have gone extinct in India. What is lost is lost. Now we need to focus on the other large carnivores that we still have and try and save them the best we can. And given our meagre resources, can we really afford to take on this project? We have 20 species that are on the brink, with the Asiatic lion, tigers, Indian wolf, the great Indian bustard, the Asian wild buffalo, Jerdon's courser and the red panda being among them. Except for 50 reserves that come under Project Tiger, the allocation for all wildlife habitats and 21 endangered species was a mere ₹497 crore between 2017-20. Over 10 years ago, the cost of the cheetah project was estimated at ₹300 crore. So, where will we get the funds to conserve the cheetahs from? Will we rob the snow leopard of its chance of survival to pay for the cheetah's reintroduction? Also, what is the guarantee that the exotic, yet very vulnerable cat, will be able to survive in India?

As it is, the number of cheetahs is on the decline globally with just 7,100 left in the wild, having been driven out of 91 per cent of their habitats. Asia has been the worst offender where its decimation is concerned. India's last spotted cheetah died in 1947. There are less than 50 of them left in Iran and now the majority of this shy and secretive feline lives in six southern African countries. Have all the proponents of the idea of bringing the cheetah back thought why the animal is on the verge of becoming extinct elsewhere? It's because this cat is hard to protect. Being the fastest animal in the world, cheetahs need a very wide range for hunting prey. So according to researchers, an estimated 77 per cent of a cheetah's habitat would be outside protected zones, making it difficult to keep them safe from poachers, vehicular traffic and rural populations. This is also a very big impediment to monitoring its progress and well-being. This problem is further compounded by the man-animal conflict. India certainly doesn't have the prey base or the ranges required for the survival of a translocated species. Unless we want the cheetah to die here, this idea doesn't seem good enough.

Democracy's true grit

India rewrote history by upsetting the conventional wisdom that democracies could exist only in developed nations. Yet our foreign policy undermined our chances



PRIYADARSHI DUTTA

It is speculative how the military parade became the centerpiece in Republic Day celebrations at Rajpath. The Republic Day commemorates January 26, 1950, the day the bulk of the Constitution of India came into force. The armed forces had no role in its making and the text nowhere refers to them. However, given the robust traditions of an apolitical army, institutionalised by the British, there was never a conflict between the civilian government and the military in India. No doubt General K.M. Cariappa (Retd), India's first Chief of Army Staff, had blurted out in 1971 that the Constitution should be scrapped, and India should be placed under military rule, at least temporarily, "to put things right in the country." But he never lost his credentials or post-retirement benefits on account of such sacrilege. He was still invested with the Five Star General Rank or Field Marshal by the President. That is the beauty of democra-

cy. In contrast, the United States of America, the world's oldest modern democracy, took long to reconcile itself with the necessity of a large standing Army. The Army, unlike the Navy, was perceived as a potential threat to the civilian government. This is despite the fact that the first US President, George Washington, had been a reputed general himself. When the US got accidentally drawn into the World War I on April 6, 1917, its standing Army was a constabulary force of 127,151 in addition to a national guard of 181,620. Though it expanded to 3.68 million troops within 18 months of WWI, it again shrank to a size of 125,000 personnel between 1919 and 1939, the smallest for any great power.

The World War II inflated the size of the Army to 8.3 million troops, about five million of whom were posted overseas. It is estimated that 12 per cent of the US population served in some branch of the military during the WWII. As the Cold War followed the World War II, the US came to rely on its military superiority as a means of protecting the "free world." The military pacts like NATO, ANZUS, CENTO and SEATO became the order of the day.

In the post-WWII phase, both India and the US demonstrated a divergent approach towards democracy and militarisation. India became the world's largest democracy based on a universal adult suffrage. But this status found little reflection in the nation's foreign policy. The significance of India becoming a democracy was never fully realised. By the end of WWII, there were only 12 democracies left in the world, down from all 29 in 1926, courtesy the rise of authoritarian regimes based on fascism and Nazism. The defeat of the Axis Powers signalled a process of re-democratisation. But the Russian victory also meant expansion of Communism, which sealed the fate of re-democratisation in a number of countries



in WWII. Writing in 1950, John Foster Dulles, later to be US Secretary of State, says, "Already Soviet Communism has extended its control over more than 700,00,000 people, or about, one third of the human race. This has happened in thirty three years. Never before have so few gained so much, so fast (*War or Peace, P.2*)." Dulles, when he became Secretary of State (1953-59), favoured the policy of "liberation" of East Europe and other communist-dominated regions, as against the "containment" theory of his predecessor Dean Acheson.

At a time when one-third of humanity was somehow under the sway of Communism, it was no mean achievement to bring one sixth of humanity to the light of democracy. This political "miracle" happened in India. As a result of the first general elections in 1951-52, India's 36.5 crore population (as per Census, 1951) came alive under a parliamentary democracy. India rewrote history by upsetting the conventional wisdom that democracies could exist only in industrially developed, affluent and educationally forward nations.

India and the US should have enjoyed the best of relations based on the common factor of democracy. But if the relationship had failed to take off in

the first place during Nehru's visit to the USA (1949) during Harry S. Truman's presidency, the relationship actually plummeted during the first three years of Eisenhower administration (1953-56). The reason was despite Eisenhower's sympathy for the third world, his Secretary of State Dulles was inflexible and dogmatic about democracy. India was no doubt the world's largest democracy. But it refused to be its standard bearer on the world stage. Nehru's pronounced Marxist leanings were traceable at least since 1927 when he had participated in the International Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism in Brussels, Belgium. At this conference, Nehru had "come around to the Marxist viewpoint in broad essentials. He agreed that imperialism and capitalism went hand in hand, and neither would disappear until both were put down (S. Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, Vol-1, P.101*)." Nehru had been to Moscow in 1927 to participate in the decennial celebrations of the October Revolution, 1917.

Dulles felt India was running with the hares and hunting with the hounds. During the Korean War (1950-53), the US had militarily intervened to save a democratic South Korea

from being overrun by a communist North Korea. India's foreign policy during the Korean War was perceived as scattered and confused. Nehru as the External Affairs Minister, B.N. Rau in the UNO, High Commissioner V K Krishna Menon, Ambassador Vijay Laxmi Pandit and Ambassador K.M. Pannikar in Beijing were pulling in different directions. China entered the Korean War on the side of North Korea in October, 1950. But Nehru was seen lobbying for the Republic of China's seat in UN Security Council, when it was not even a member of the UN till 1971. Ironically, Mao's China at that moment was also busy annexing Tibet, with grave security repercussions for India itself.

India never allowed its armed forces to be used for the defence of a "free world" that the US might have liked. In 1955, India fashioned its greatest foreign policy statement, much to the chagrin of the US. It along with 28 other nations formed the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at the Bandung Conference (April 18-24, 1955) in Indonesia. The NAM was mostly an assortment of newly de-colonised nations of Africa and Asia, which did not want to be part of any bloc (East or West) or sign military pacts. Not all founding members of the

NAM were democratic. Countries like Yugoslavia and Cuba were communist, though not part of the Eastern Bloc. Democracy was not part of the 10-point NAM Charter (an expansion of Nehru's five principles of Panchashila). Democracy was first adopted by the NAM as a guiding principle in 2006, at the Havana Conference, ironically in a country (Cuba) that itself has no democracy till date.

In 1955 itself, India began its lasting relationship with the USSR, occasioned by the visit of Nikita Khrushchev and Nikolai Bulganin to India, and Nehru's return visit to Moscow. The relationship between the world's two largest democracies became all the more complex. India's status as the world's largest democracy and its foreign policy were out of sync. But so it was for the USA, which in pursuit of saving the "free world," can support the military dictatorship of Park Chung-hee in South Korea but overthrow a democratically elected Mohammed Mossadegh in Iran or President Salvador Allende in Chile. Those were the crude realities of the Cold War.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based researcher and author of the book *The Microphone Men: How Orators Created a Modern India. Views are personal*)

SOUNDBITE

I am seriously worried that the spread of the infectious disease could throw cold water on the momentum toward the Games.



Tokyo Olympics CEO —Toshio Muto

CAA is no threat to Muslims. If they face trouble I will be the first person to raise my voice for them.



Actor —Rajinikanth

Our aim is to develop 25 defence products based on artificial intelligence in the next five years in India.



Prime Minister —Narendra Modi

Pakistan players need to learn from Jaiswal's history. He is running behind excellence and money is running behind him now.



Former Pakistan pacer —Shoab Akhtar

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PGV a leader in making

Sir — This refers to the analysis "Priyanka must rebuild the party in UP" (February 5). The writer's observation is spot on that Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's charismatic personality, lineage and close resemblance to her grandmother Indira Gandhi have not contributed to her becoming a political personality to be reckoned with as yet. This is despite the fact that she plunged headlong into instrumental politics last year by holding a roadshow with her brother Rahul Gandhi and preempted her political adversaries by paying visits to the victims of the Pulwama attack, Sonbhada clash and Unnao rape, besides visiting the hospitalised Bhim Army chief Chandra Shekhar Azad and CAA protesters. The writer has also suggested that Priyanka lost many opportunities coming her way and could not draw political mileage out of them for the benefit of the Congress party. However, Rome was not built in a day. Priyanka was brought into politics a decade too late and even in this short span, she has matured politically. If media reports are to be

Abuse of child rights in Bidar a blot on BJP

The police interrogation of children as young as nine in a school in Karnataka's Bidar district, in connection with a play enacted in denunciation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), constitutes a flagrant abuse of child rights. It is also an act of inhumanity a civilised society cannot countenance under any circumstances. The police obviously ignored the fact that children need to be handled in a humane and understanding manner. Interrogating the young ones in the way the police have done intimidates them and causes irreversible psychological damage. If the police grilled the kids to strike fear in their hearts and ensure that they never raise their voices against any injustice in the future, then the police personnel are devoid of any human feelings and unworthy of the uniform they wear. In their cavalier style, the police tried to justify their quizzing of the kids on the grounds that they needed to collect evidence against the parents and teachers.

The BJP Government is so intolerant of criticism that it does not spare even children the nightmarish experience of being interrogated and intimidated by the police. The Bidar incident meant that the Government would go to any lengths to stifle dissent. It is particularly worrying that the Karnataka High Court and the Supreme Court have turned a blind eye to the gross violation of child rights. If courts do not intervene and protect children from police high-handedness, who will? It is some consolation that the State Child Rights Commission has asked the police to explain



their appalling behaviour. By slapping sedition charges on a parent and a teacher, the Karnataka police showed utter ignorance of the sedition law. The play in question has provoked no "breach of peace", made no "incitement to violence" and promoted no "enmity" to attract the provisions of the sedition law. The remark that anyone seeking information on the National Register of Citizens will be hit with slippers is hardly sedition. The courts have ruled time and again that a speech or action intended to influence the Government to change a policy or law does not amount to sedition. But the police have misconstrued criticism of a discriminatory law as sedition. A country that cherishes democracy cannot let the ruling dispensation scare children and slap sedition charges on adults on flimsy grounds.

G D Milton
 Maruthancode

the most politically significant State, Uttar Pradesh (UP), she must leave no stone unturned to keep her flock together. Priyanka must also induct some young faces in UP to give the Grand Old Party a modern look and a fighting chance in the 2022 Assembly elections in the State.

Azhar A Khan
 Rampur

Shame on us

Sir — This refers to the editorial "Soldiers without boots", (February 5). Nothing could be more unfortunate than this. A party in power which takes pride in its "nationalist" leanings cannot treat its Army in such a shabby manner. The least you can do for your soldiers is to give them respect and treat them well, because they are the ones who put their lives on the line for the nation daily. If Government after Government is not looking after our soldiers, then there is something very wrong with us as a nation.

Bal Govind
 Noida

Send your feedback to:
 letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Erdogan has lost the plot

One small and successful war might benefit the Turkish President by mobilising nationalism but three at once? This is megalomania



GWYNNE DYER

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is not an "Islamist", in the extreme sense of the word. He doesn't wear a suicide vest, he doesn't behead people, he doesn't get his citizens flogged or stoned, he doesn't get their hands cut off for theft, he doesn't even go around holding one finger up in the air to signify his hatred of those who fail to acknowledge the one true God. However, he certainly does like the Islamists a lot. In the heyday of the Islamic State (ISIS) in northern Syria and Iraq, it was Erdogan who kept the Turkish border open so that thousands of foreign fighters and their families could go to join that terrorist proto-state, which was a descendant of Osama bin Laden's original Al-Qaeda organisation. More recently, Erdogan has stationed Turkish troops in Syria's Idlib province, the one remaining rebel-held part of the country, where Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, another offshoot of the Al-Qaeda, subjugated all the other rebel organisations last year and now rules unchallenged.

Unchallenged, that is, except by Syrian army troops backed by Russian airpower who are gradually winning back control on the province in a slow, grinding offensive that last week captured Idlib's second-biggest city, Maarat an-Numan. So it's no surprise that the Turkish army in Idlib is now firing directly on Syrian forces.

The story is a bit muddy, with Turkey claiming that four of its soldiers in Idlib were killed by Syrian shellfire on Sunday. But the Turkish Government said it had killed 35 Syrian troops in retaliatory fire and Erdogan added: "Those who question our determination will soon understand they made a mistake."

And, upping the ante further he said that the Assad regime must fall back from Turkey's observation posts in northwestern Syria this month. "If the Syrian regime will not retreat from Turkish observation posts in Idlib in February, Turkey itself will be obliged to make this happen," Erdogan told his party's lawmakers in Parliament on Wednesday.

Erdogan also warned Russia, Syria's ally, "not to stand in our way." The Russians will take this seriously since Erdogan deliberately set up an ambush in 2015 and shot down a Russian plane that strayed into Turkish airspace for only 17 seconds.

However, the fact remains that Moscow won't back down. So, Erdogan is now playing with the dangerous prospect of a shooting war with Syria and Russia. That would be enough on his plate, you might think, but he is also intervening in the civil war in Libya. Erdogan backs the Islamist-dominated Government in the capital, Tripoli, against the rebel army led by General Khalifa Haftar that controls most of the country and he has just sent troops to support it.

The troops are Syrian Arabs, part of the same Islamist puppet army that Erdogan used recently to invade the Kurdish part of Syria. His intervention in Libya puts Turkey into a potential confrontation with France, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, all of which back Haftar. So does Russia.

Not one to be daunted, Erdogan is spouting the same tough-guy rhetoric over Libya: "We will not hesitate to teach a deserved lesson to the putschist Haftar if he continues the attacks on the country's legitimate administration and our brothers in Libya." So there's a few more potential enemies for Turkey. His plate is getting rather full. But Erdogan's not finished yet. He has also militarised a dispute with Greece and Cyprus over seabed oil and gas reserves, to the extent that Turkish fighter planes are now violating Greek airspace almost daily. And he has demanded that Athens demilitarise 16 Greek islands that are close to the Turkish west coast (making them permanent hostages, totally vulnerable to Turkish invasion).

France has now sent warships to the eastern Mediterranean, and President Emmanuel Macron has explained that "Greece and France are pursuing a new framework of strategic defence." "Defence" against whom? Turkey, obviously. Who else could it be?

Turkey is still formally a member of NATO, so technically France and Greece are its allies but Erdogan doesn't seem bothered by that. Neither was he bothered by the fact that the United States (US) is also a NATO member when he invaded northeastern Syria last October to drive the Kurds, America's key allies in the war against ISIS, from their homes in the border region. He got away with that. The Kurds had served their purpose and Trump just abandoned them to their fate. But is he really wise to take on almost everybody else at once? Like Vladimir Putin in Russia, Erdogan is a strongman ruler who has to win an election every four years. Putin is perennially popular in Russia and wins easily — but Erdogan usually scrapes through with just over half the vote. The country is divided down the middle and the other half loathes him and his Islamist policies.

One reasonably small and successful war might actually benefit Erdogan by mobilising Turkish nationalism but three at once? Against Russian and Syria on one front, France and Egypt on another and Greece plus France and perhaps other NATO and European Union members on a third. He used to be a fairly competent strategist but he has been in power too long (17 years) and he has finally lost the plot. This is megalomania.

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

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

THERE IS NO NEED FOR THE BJP TO DECLARE A CM FACE. JUST LET KEJRIWAL TELL US THE TIME AND PLACE AND WE WILL PARTICIPATE IN A DEBATE.
 —HOME MINISTER
 AMIT SHAH



I INVITE AMIT SHAH FOR THE DEBATE. I AM READY FOR A DEBATE ANYWHERE ON ANYTHING WITH HIM.
 —DELHI CHIEF MINISTER
 ARVIND KEJRIWAL

Hear out the States

The responsibility of States to attend to displaced people or illegal immigrants cannot be taken away by the Centre assuming for itself a bigger role by a law such as the CAA



PRASENJIT BISWAS

India, as defined in Article 1 of the Constitution, is a "union of States." These States, therefore, are constitutive of the Indian Union and no executive power can be exercised in a manner that undermines their quasi-autonomous status. Even under Article 368, where the Parliament enacts a law, the power of the House is only a "constituent power", which, though without limitation, only implicitly permits amendments in part-II (citizenship provisions) of the Constitution. The critical question is, can the constituent power of the Parliament in enacting a law override the constituent power of the State in implementing such a law? Given the quasi-autonomous status of the States, are they obliged to blindly comply with a Central law, which creates a conflict with part-III (basic structure) of the Constitution? Many such questions assume great significance in understanding the constitutional provisions and scope of its operation in relation to States, especially with regard to the recent Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). Apart from embedded quandaries of the CAA, *prima facie*, in conflict with Article 14 of the Constitution, the CAA puts the onus of repatriation indirectly on States, as the target class of immigrant citizens would have to reside or settle in a State of the Union. Therefore, the constituent power of the Parliament cannot bypass the State in a manner that creates conflict of interest with State(s). The Parliament needs to ensure that existing balance of power and interest is not grossly disturbed by a piece of law.

In Centre-State relations, the Parliament's capacity to recommend an appropriate course of action in a matter that consequentially affects the State shall run the risk of getting limited by other obligations and interests of the State. A law such as the CAA cannot overwhelm both *lex fori* and *lex loci* conditions in relation to States. Obviously, the States remain as both the jurisdictional forum and locus of CAA in terms of its operation, which has to operate through Rules framed under the Citizenship Act of 1955, that necessarily involves officials under the State Government, who are delegated with "procedural" powers to determine who is a citizen.

To put it differently, the responsibility of States to attend to displaced people, who could be legal or illegal immigrants cannot be taken away by the Centre assuming for itself a bigger role by a law such as the CAA. Mere grant of citizenship by the Centre is a form of personal right, which requires the support of a State in entirety to secure all other rights of the citizen, including the right to life, as enshrined under Article 21. Indeed, the CAA in the first instance of its passage in Parliament did recognise *lex fori* and *lex loci* conditions by exempting States and areas under the Sixth Schedule from its operation. There remains much scope to fulfil these conditions in framing of rules under the CAA, as Assam and Tripura have State-specific accords to decide on matters of citizenship. The Supreme Court (SC), on its part, distinguishably recognised the case of Assam and Tripura as different from concerns of other parts of the country in relation to the CAA, which is recognition of *lex fori* and *lex loci* conditions under which the CAA must operate.

It must also be noted that under Article 13 of the Constitution, laws prior to the commencement of the Constitution such as Foreigners' Act of 1946 under which the Foreigners' Tribunals (FT) are ordered in violation of Article 323(b) are inconsistent with part-III of the Constitution and hence it can operate even with CAA framed under Article 368 of the Constitution. This establishes the limited application of the CAA that still requires a much wider framework, apart from its "religious" bias.

Indeed in the case of Assam, operation of the FTs in violation of basic principle of law, namely, "innocent until proven guilty" and its broad sweep

THERE IS A CLEAR NEED FOR CHECK AND BALANCE IN THE OPERATION OF EXECUTIVE POWERS UNDER A CENTRAL LAW, WHICH THE CAA CERTAINLY WARRANTS. ALL THE CONTENTIOUS ISSUES RELATED TO THE CAA ALSO NEED A CLEAR RESOLUTION IN THE GOOD FEDERAL SPIRIT, GIVING DUE IMPORTANCE TO THE STATES' PERSPECTIVES IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL HARMONY ACROSS INDIA



of executive discretion in sending someone to a detention camp along with purported operation of the CAA hardly makes a case of consistent application of law. Indeed such inconsistency in operation of the citizenship law is exploited to the extent that a suspected foreigner or an illegal border crosser is often denied right to fair trial, as nothing in law explicitly puts a check and balance on a FT judge from placing a one-sided "onus of proof", under Section 9 of the FT Act, 1946 on a person claiming to be an Indian citizen in dispute of what the Executive has attributed upon her as a foreigner.

Indeed, the affidavit filed by some of the parties disputing the CAA in the SC refers to this "onus of proof" to be placed upon an immigrant covered under the CAA to make it consistent with the FT Act. In effect, the Code of Civil Procedure that provides right to fair trial and assumes someone not to be guilty until proven guilty is ostensibly a matter of dispute in the case against the CAA that is lying before the SC now, which substantially involves the role of the State in deciding the fate of a suspected foreigner.

So, the SC has to decide on the basis of the principle of "better law" or "more rational law" in the cases filed against the CAA. Additionally, when a State disputes the CAA as a violation of the basic structure of the Constitution, especially the principle of secularism and right to equality before law, the SC has to decide on its jurisdiction as granted by Article 131 of the Constitution.

Kerala, West Bengal and Punjab are raising the same dispute under Article 131. Article 131 clearly stipulated original jurisdiction in any dispute between the Centre and States pertaining to validity of a Central legislation. Independent of the outcome of the case on the CAA, it is to be noted that the right to disputation by a State is a recognised constitutional position that cannot be questioned by raising the issue of prior permission by the con-

stitutional authority of the Governor. The quasi-autonomous status of the State and full power of the legislature in framing laws under the Seventh Schedule allow for a room of manoeuvring by the States in creative ways without directly contravening a Central law. In a quasi-federal structure like India, there is no "supremacy clause" attached to the Central law, as the Indian Constitution followed a principle of separation of powers guided by a thumb rule of avoiding inequality and imbalance.

This makes it amply clear that there is only an abiding responsibility of the State to follow a Central law without a binding obligation or liability in case the State is not convinced of its correctness. The whole set of issues of federal cooperation and consensus comes into play in enforcing a Central law in case the State concerned sees it as violative of part-III of the Constitution.

What causes the hiatus here is the filtering out of Muslims under the CAA and treating them differently from the rest, in case they have entered India from neighbouring countries covered by the law. Further, exclusion of Tamil immigrants from the purview of the CAA is a potent cause of heartburn in Southern States. The praxis of federalism, being a constantly-developing subject in the world's large democracies, tells us that distinctions drawn among people on the basis of race, religion, colour, sex, culture and so on are to be disbanded by the State. Hence, in the case of India, no State can be made to practise such distinction and discrimination between people by a Central law, if the State sees it as an incorrect practice. It is correct that in no way can the constituent State of the Union remain non-compliant even if it sees a law giving rise to an incorrect practice, except for approaching the SC to resolve the dispute. However, it is also true that compliance by the State should not violate legal principles of non-discrimination, while denying certain

rights to a segment by an established procedure of law. No constitutional law could be bereft of constitutional morality and ethical principle of "no harm" and hence no State could be forced by an executive decree to implement a law that the State sees causing discrimination and harm to a segment in a certain local situation.

The Bommai judgment makes it very clear that the Centre cannot apply "arbitrary powers." Arbitrary powers here would mean decrees and pronouncements that explicitly subvert a State's autonomy and jurisdiction of its executives in its own territory. Citizenship Rules, 2003, recognise this executive power of the State by delegating certain crucial powers to the State executive like the District Magistrate. Further, the Bommai Judgment, read with the Sarkaria Commission report, also makes it clear that one of the major sources of arbitrary power lies in "partisan" affairs. When there is no consensus in a bipartisan or multi-partisan sense on the CAA, it does not become non-partisan, as per the language of the Sarkaria Commission, which is the only major commission to examine and understand Centre-State relations in post-independent India. Further, the Inter-State Council, another constitutional body created to resolve any dispute between federal constituents, could discuss the points of contention related to the CAA, which, of course depends on how the respective players raise the matter.

In sum, there is a clear need for check and balance in the operation of executive powers under a Central law, which the CAA certainly warrants. All contentious issues related to the CAA also need a clear resolution in the good federal spirit, giving due importance to the States' perspectives in the interest of social and political harmony across India.

(The writer is an author, political analyst, philosopher of law and teaches Philosophy at North Eastern Hill University)

How climate change births a virus

The relationship between rising temperatures and increasing spread of viruses has been much researched. The American Society of Microbiology released a report on this in 2010 citing conditions for pandemics



KOTA SRIRAJ

The Coronavirus, with its epicentre in Wuhan, China, is wreaking havoc and creating an immense fear psychosis around the world. In China alone, the virus has infected over 24,391 people and has reportedly caused over 492 deaths according to official estimates.

However, the actual number is believed to be much higher. The alarming speed at which the virus is spreading caused Chinese President

Xi Jinping to remark that the nation was fighting a demon. The virus has led many nations to evacuate their citizens from China. The Chinese authorities have deployed emergency measures to contain the spread of the virus by imposing strict travel restrictions and putting certain geographical locations under lockdown, with over 50 million people quarantined. The spread of lethal viruses has become the new face of climate change and is taking an unimaginable toll on human life even as the international medical community, scientists and disease experts scramble to find a vaccine and contain the coronavirus. Climate change-enabled rise in temperatures has caused the spike in humidity levels that in turn have created a favourable environment for the viruses of the most virulent kind to breed and multiply. The relation-

ship between rising temperatures and increasing spread of viruses has been much researched. The American Society of Microbiology released a report way back in 2010 regarding the relation between the two and how high temperatures play a perfect host to pandemics. In the background of this virus outbreak, the lack of progress at the recent COP 25 looks like a lost opportunity, as the international environmental community with a great opportunity at hand could not come up with any major development agenda to fight climate change.

Had the world leaders and the environmental community cobbled together an actionable plan that included containment of those precipitating factors that trigger epidemics such as these, the world would have already had a plan in

hand to deal with the present crisis. Be it the SARS virus that impacted China 17 years ago and infected nearly 8,000 people or the Zika virus outbreak in 2016, the role of climate change has always been centric as the enabler of fast-spreading viruses. However, there are other aspects also. For instance, there is an urgent need to manage the triangular relationship between humans, the environment and animals. The inept handling of any one aspect of this can cause a cascading impact on the well-being of all three.

The United States (US) took a risk of sorts when the Trump Administration closed down the Predict Programme that had the research mandate to test animals for dangerous pathogens that could cross over to human beings. The current coronavirus could be an example

where the virus strain is in fact believed to have evolved from bat species.

The political leadership, therefore, plays a very important role in either limiting the evolution and subsequent spread of the virus or exposing the human community to the risks of virus by shutting down ongoing research facilities engaged in studying them, as done by the Trump Administration.

The human community has for ages been engaged in a never-ending struggle with diseases and maladies which have challenged and inspired the scientific community to come out with superior medication and vaccines. But the intensity and speed of the virus is now approaching dangerous levels giving lesser and lesser time to the scientific and medical community to respond with an antidote.

As a result of this time lag, precious lives are being lost at an alarming speed. China needs to up its research and development powers and ensure that clear lines are drawn between animal and human interactions so that a virus highway of sorts is not opened between the two.

India, thankfully has remained largely out of the clutches of this present pandemic but the reporting of disease-infected victims is getting uncomfortably closer to home. India must set up a research protocol and a prevention programme and insulate itself against the disease. But more importantly, the global community must unite and ensure that climate change is controlled drastically and does not play host to the virulent viruses of the future.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)



FOREIGN EYE



TAKE BARNIER'S ADVICE MR PM

Boris Johnson would be wise to take up the offer from Michel Barnier, the EU's chief Brexit negotiator, of a roadmap to a workable free trade deal, which would be the central pillar of the UK's partnership with the continent. Since trade talks don't begin until March, a lot of what Barnier said ought to carry a health warning that politics coloured its delivery.

(The Guardian editorial)

Benchmark indices end higher for 3rd day

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Indian equities notched up their third straight gains on Wednesday as investors felt the need to neutralise budget overreaction and move positively as improved business sentiment and positive global cues augur well.

At the closing bell, the BSE gauge Sensex was 0.87 per cent or 353.28 points higher at 41,142.66. The index has gained over 1,407 points or 3.54 per cent over the last three sessions. The NSE Nifty rose 109.50 points, or 0.91 per cent, to settle at 12,089.15, taking the three-day gains to 427.30 points or 3.66 per cent.

Market gains were driven mainly by rate-sensitive stocks ahead of the Reserve Bank's monetary policy announcement on Thursday.

Besides, reports of a breakthrough in coronavirus treatment enthused investors.

Analysts said that buoyancy in Indian equities accelerated during the afternoon trade as India's service sector growth for January hit a seven-year high.

On the Sensex chart, Tata Steel was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rallying 5.14 per cent, followed by Bharti Airtel, HDFC, TCS, L&T and Reliance Industries.

On the other hand, Hero

MotoCorp was the top laggard, shedding 3.83 per cent. PowerGrid, Maruti, Asian Paints and NTPC too ended with losses.

Sectorally, BSE metal, telecom, realty, industrials, capital goods, energy, oil and gas, finance, FMCG and IT indices ended up to 2.90 per cent higher, while power and utilities indices slipped in the red.

Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices rallied up to 1.35 per cent.

"Indian markets are mirroring the global markets and trading on a higher note powered by rate-sensitive stocks. With the overreaction following the budget mostly done with, focus will shift to how global events and Q3 results pan out. With Inflation being on the higher side there is no further room left for the central bank to tweak rates and is expected to continue its accommodative stance in the policy due tomorrow," said Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services Ltd.

India's services sector activity surged to a seven-year high in January driven by sharp increase in new business orders, leading to job creation and business optimism amid favourable market conditions, a monthly IHS Markit survey said.

Earlier this week, another survey said the country's manufacturing sector activity climbed to a near eight-year high in January.

On the global arena, positive global cues persisted after Chinese policymakers promised to unveil more measures to support an economy jolted by a coronavirus outbreak.

With reports of a breakthrough in coronavirus treatment doing the rounds, global stocks surged.

Bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul settled up to 1.25 per cent higher.

Stock exchanges in Europe too opened on a strong note.

Meanwhile, Brent crude oil futures advanced 2.76 per cent to USD 55.45 per barrel.

On the currency front, the Indian rupee pared initial gains to settle nearly flat at 71.24 (dollar) against the US dollar on Wednesday, as market participants await fresh cues from the RBI's monetary policy.

The domestic unit eroded the initial gains as investors are anticipating no change in key interest rate in the RBI policy meet amid surge in inflation, forex traders said. The Reserve Bank of India is scheduled to announce the outcome of its sixth bi-monthly monetary policy statement for 2019-20 on Thursday.

Adani Enterprises net profit surges to ₹383 cr in Dec quarter

New Delhi (PTI): Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) on Wednesday said its net profit rose over fourfold to ₹382.98 crore in the December 2019 quarter, helped by higher income. The Adani Group's flagship firm had clocked a net profit of ₹80.09 crore during the year-ago quarter, AEL said in a BSE filing. Its total income during the October-December 2019 period was ₹11,075.32 crore, higher from ₹10,548.14 crore in the year-ago period. The company's expenses were ₹10,635.16 crore, compared with ₹10,443.76 crore a year ago.

NIIT Q3 PROFIT RISES 40% TO ₹27 CR

NIIT, a global leader in skills and talent development, on Wednesday reported 40% jump in consolidated net profit to ₹27.1 crore for December quarter 2019-20 on account of increase in demand from corporate sector. The company had garnered a profit of ₹19.4 crore in the same period a year ago. Overseas market led by the US and Europe contributed 77% of the total corporate learning group business, NIIT recorded 10% growth in its consolidated revenue to ₹247.6 crore during the quarter under review from ₹225.5 crore in the year-ago period. CLG recorded net revenue of ₹189.5 crore. During the quarter, the company completed buyback of 2.68 crore equity shares after approval from the shareholders of the company at ₹125 per share, representing approximately 16 per cent of the total paid up equity share capital for an aggregate amount of ₹335 crore, exclusive of taxes.

APOLLO TYRES Q3 NET PROFIT DECLINES 12%

Apollo Tyres on Wednesday reported a 12.09% decline in consolidated net profit to ₹173.85 crore for the quarter ended on December 31, 2019, mainly due to sluggish demand from original equipment manufacturers. The company had posted a net profit of ₹197.95 crore for the corresponding period of 2018-19, Apollo Tyres said in a BSE filing. Consolidated net sales declined to ₹4,347.16 crore for the quarter under consideration as against ₹4,655.36 crore for the same period year ago.

CIPLA Q3 NET PROFIT UP 5% TO ₹339 CR

Drug major Cipla on Wednesday reported a 5.31% rise in its consolidated net profit to ₹339.38 crore for the December 2019 quarter. The company had posted a net profit of ₹322.24 crore for the corresponding period of the previous financial year, Cipla said in a filing to the BSE. Its consolidated total revenue from operations also rose to ₹4,371 crore in the October-December 2019 period, compared with ₹4,007.54 crore in the corresponding period a year ago.

Fitch: Budget light on new structural reforms

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget for 2020-21 was light on new structural reforms, Fitch Ratings said on Wednesday adding it had not materially altered its forecasts for India's economic growth to rise to 5.6 per cent in the next fiscal from 4.6 per cent in 2019-20.

"We believe it is highly unlikely the country's general government debt will be brought within the ceiling of 60 per cent of GDP by FY25, as stipulated in the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act," it said.

Fitch projected that the government debt will remain close to 70 per cent of GDP throughout the period to 2021-22. "India's high public debt levels are a weakness relative to its rating peers (the BBB median stood at 41.1 per cent in 2019)," it said.

The Union Budget 2020-21 implies a modest degree of slippage from previous targets to consolidate public finances, it said. "However, its contents are consistent with our expectations when we affirmed the country's sovereign rating at 'BBB-/Stable in December 2019,'" it said.

The Budget projects a deficit of 3.5 per cent in 2020-21 and implies a further postponement of the Central gov-

ernment's medium-term fiscal deficit target of 3 per cent of GDP as it prioritises efforts to support economic growth in the context of the ongoing sharp slowdown.

"A slippage of 0.5 per cent of GDP in both FY20 and FY21 relative to the earlier targets is in line with the tendency for deficit outturns to exceed targets in the past few years," Fitch said.

Sitharaman projected that the deficit would fall from 3.8 per cent of GDP in 2019-20 to 3.5 per cent in 2020-21.

"We believe most assumptions in the budget, such as nominal GDP growth of 10 per cent and a 9.2 per cent rise in fiscal revenues, are credible," Fitch said. "However, risks are likely skewed towards the downside, particularly for revenues in light of previously announced cuts in the corporate income tax rate and newly unveiled income tax reductions."

The tax cuts may stimulate economic activity in the medium term, but their impact on fiscal revenues is likely to be negative in the short term, it said.

"The Budget was light on new structural reforms, although the government had already unveiled some measures last year," it said.

The finance minister announced some easing of restrictions on foreign portfo-

lio inflows, and schemes to encourage manufacturing in electronics and textile sectors. "However, we have not materially altered our forecasts for India's economic growth, which we expect to pick up to 5.6 per cent in FY21 from 4.6 per cent in FY20," it said.

Fitch said a number of steps affecting financial institutions were announced in the budget, but they only partially address the issues that are facing the sector.

For example, the extension of the credit guarantee mechanism to the debt of troubled non-bank financial companies will likely help provide some interim support for wholesale and housing-finance companies, but is unlikely to restore confidence in a sector that continues to face high risk aversion from creditors, it said.

"Another downside risk in the government's fiscal projections is the degree to which it expects asset sales to fill the revenue gap left by tax cuts. Its divestment target for FY21 is around 3x as large as its expected total for realised sales in FY20."

"To achieve this, the government would have to address its persistent tendency to fall short of announced asset-sale targets; asset sales in FY20, for example, were only 40 per cent of the planned total," Fitch said.

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	12005.85	12098.15	11953.35	12089.15	109.50
TATAMOTORS	167.40	184.95	166.60	183.40	17.70
YESBANK	35.10	39.70	34.05	37.95	3.00
TATASTEEL	452.25	479.70	448.00	477.90	26.00
JSWSTEEL	259.50	271.65	256.35	271.15	12.80
BPLCL	480.00	507.95	478.00	501.55	23.05
VEDL	139.30	143.90	137.60	143.70	5.15
HINDALCO	190.00	197.55	188.30	196.10	6.85
BHARTIARTL	518.00	537.50	515.80	536.50	17.60
UPL	525.10	542.30	521.55	537.00	14.40
INFRATEL	242.00	251.00	240.00	245.00	4.95
HDFC	2345.55	2395.50	2326.20	2390.50	44.55
TCS	2115.00	2156.70	2104.30	2147.50	39.75
GAIL	119.30	121.50	118.00	121.05	2.15
SBIN	306.90	313.65	304.60	311.00	4.75
ICICIBANK	529.05	540.40	525.70	538.70	7.90
LT	1297.90	1325.00	1295.00	1311.00	19.25
HCLTECH	389.40	398.50	386.00	395.80	8.50
RELIANCE	1434.90	1452.80	1430.30	1446.30	19.90
M&M	580.25	589.85	577.40	585.00	8.10
AXISBANK	719.45	725.65	715.20	724.70	9.70
HDFCBANK	1234.90	1248.00	1227.30	1246.00	16.20
CIPLA	449.55	459.15	437.50	453.75	5.30
WIPRO	241.60	243.00	237.20	242.40	2.15
BRITANNIA	3269.80	3318.00	3243.70	3320.00	27.50
IOC	114.85	115.85	113.00	114.70	0.90
GRASIM	793.70	822.10	788.05	798.45	4.75
ONGC	106.40	107.40	105.10	106.70	0.55
BAIJAFINSV	9540.00	9684.00	9457.70	9580.00	45.10
SUNPHARMA	429.00	431.40	427.90	427.50	1.85
ITC	216.30	217.50	211.50	216.05	0.40
HINDUNILVR	2167.40	2184.00	2153.90	2159.30	3.70
BAIJANCE	415.00	423.95	407.65	425.00	5.75
TECHM	801.00	816.00	807.00	811.95	0.85
TITAN	1284.75	1297.70	1255.00	1276.75	0.95
INDUSINDBK	1280.00	1288.65	1265.20	1273.40	0.75
ULTRACEMCO	4477.00	4528.60	4397.60	4475.00	0.75
EIGHERMOT	19712.00	19800.00	19356.10	19590.00	-12.65
BAJAJ-AUTO	3185.00	3220.90	3150.00	3158.40	-4.80
KOTAKBANK	1702.00	1707.45	1677.10	1693.50	-4.80
INFY	781.00	786.00	774.40	784.30	-3.35
NTPC	111.30	112.60	110.50	111.40	-0.60
NESTLEIND	16476.00	16481.90	16256.05	16350.00	-105.60
ASIANPAINT	1889.00	1890.00	1866.15	1869.00	-22.30
ADANIPORTS	372.00	372.50	361.10	368.00	-4.50
COALINDIA	184.00	184.00	178.50	179.80	-2.70
MARUTI	7215.00	7231.60	7025.60	7050.00	-149.60
POWERGRID	194.10	195.70	188.00	189.90	-4.45
DRREDDY	3235.00	3250.00	3121.70	3142.00	-99.85
HEROMOTOCO	2478.90	2478.90	2345.55	2374.00	-88.05
ZEL	250.00	250.70	225.00	228.90	-15.60

NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	28235.30	28565.75	28120.25	28337.80	425.35
SRTRANSFIN	1056.00	1140.00	1055.00	1130.00	80.60
PEC	117.30	124.55	117.30	122.30	6.25
CONCOR	566.50	604.00	552.00	595.10	28.75
GICRE	245.85	258.45	245.10	255.00	11.65
NMDC	109.45	114.35	107.40	113.50	4.70
DMART	2160.00	2274.00	2160.00	2246.20	90.90
L&T	114.60	119.30	114.20	118.30	4.15
BAJAJHLDC	3764.95	3950.00	3730.20	3880.10	131.75
IBULHSGFIN	266.40	274.50	265.00	272.80	8.65
AUROPHARMA	495.50	510.90	495.10	510.50	15.70
LEL	1435.00	1480.00	1420.10	1459.10	39.70
DLF	250.15	255.80	245.65	251.65	6.40
HINDPETRO	233.10	239.15	232.50	237.05	5.35
INDIGO	1421.50	1455.00	1407.05	1445.65	32.65
BIOCON	291.50	298.35	288.10	296.40	6.30
UBL	1287.50	1317.20	1287.50	1314.60	26.70
NIACL	141.00	144.00	140.20	142.55	2.85
ASHOKLEY	79.10	82.30	79.10	80.60	1.60
HAVELLS	613.40	630.00	610.70	619.10	11.05
DABUR	505.00	513.00	503.50	512.45	9.10
HDFCLIFE	574.40	586.35	565.00	583.50	10.40
SHREECEM	2441.25	2529.00	2441.25	2493.00	437.60
ICICI	1326.00	1348.20	1311.00	1335.05	20.75
ICICIRULI	469.90	482.00	468.90	476.75	6.50
SIEMENS	1487.00	1508.65	1480.00	1497.65	20.25
BANKBARODA	87.50	88.70	87.00	88.25	1.15
MARICO	309.10	314.85	299.20	311.00	3.75
GODREJ	658.00	663.85	649.55	660.15	7.60
MCDWELL-N	650.90	657.00	643.00	651.50	6.95
COLPAL	1367.00	1379.80	1362.60	1368.80	9.40
MOTHERSUMI	135.00	136.75	130.90	134.80	0.75
NHPC	24.60	24.90	24.40	24.55	0.10
AMBUJACEM	206.90	208.75	205.20	207.50	0.70
LUPIN	721.10	726.85	716.50	723.70	2.10
PNB	56.25	57.30	56.10	56.90	0.10
HDFCAMC	3204.80	3230.00	3175.00	3189.85	3.95
SBLIFE	913.60	915.80	898.50	911.85	0.25
IDEA	5.25	5.35	4.95	5.25	0.00
VIDYALAB	1962.05	1990.00	1946.20	1958.00	-3.30
PAGEIND	2460.00	2505.95	2450.00	2462.50	-47.00
IBULHSGFIN	279.00	284.15	271.50	276.30	-0.55
PIDILITIND	1558.65	1562.00	1542.10	1551.40	-5.60
BERGEPAINT	592.90	597.00	582.15	586.00	-2.50
HINDZINC	193.20	194.95	189.50	191.60	-1.35
PETRONET	270.50	279.90	264.25	268.00	-2.05
OFSS	3020.00	3069.00	2961.00	2970.00	-22.75
ACC	1496.50	1496.50	1463.00	1470.00	-17.25
PGH	11659.00	11740.00	11450.20	11465.20	-136.20
BOSCHLTD	14125.00	14440.00	13305.00	13790.00	-223.25
BANDHANBANK	439.50	439.90	427.50	428.00	-9.90

BSE 500

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
BAIJAFINANCE	4519.70	4541.00	4480.65	4527.55	6.70
ICICIBANK	530.60	540.00	526.00	538.90	7.00
WESTLIFE	488.00	488.00	423.00	469.10	

US thriving and highly respected again: Trump

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Making a strong pitch for his re-election amid the impeachment trial, President Donald Trump said that America has made a great comeback and the country is "thriving and highly respected again" as he boasted about the economic growth under his regime.

Delivering his 3rd State of the Union address, Trump said on Tuesday that in just 3 short years, his administration has shattered the mentality of American decline and rejected the downsizing of the country's destiny. "We are moving forward at a pace that was unimaginable just a short time ago, and we are never going back," Trump said during his over one hour address.

The US president said that under his leadership, jobs are booming, incomes are soaring, poverty is plummeting, crime is falling, confidence is surging, and "our country is thriving and highly respected again."

"Three years ago, we launched the great American comeback. America's enemies are on the run, America's fortunes are on the rise and America's future is blazing bright," he added.

Trump underlined the country's economic gains under his leadership, asserting that "the American Dream is back" and is "stronger than ever before."

"The years of economic decay are over...Gone too are the broken promises, jobless recoveries, tired platitudes, and constant excuses for the depletion of American wealth, power and prestige," Trump said on the eve of his likely acquittal by the Senate in the impeachment trial. The president asserted his country's economy is the best it has ever been.



President Donald Trump delivers his State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington on Tuesday as Vice President Mike Pence and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of Calif., listen.

Asserting that the US is moving forward at a pace that was unimaginable just a short time ago, Trump, the first president to run for reelection after being impeached, said from the day he took office, he worked towards reviving economy and the agenda of his administration is relentlessly pro-worker,

pro-family, pro-growth, and most of all, pro-American. Trump said that the US administration is strongly defending the national security and "as we defend American lives, we are working to end America's wars in the Middle East."

Stressing that his administration has undertaken unprecedented effort to secure the southern border of the US with Mexico, Trump said that the country "should be a sanctuary for law-abiding Americans - not criminal aliens."

He said that whosoever coming illegally to the US would be promptly removed. "We entered into historic cooperation agreements with the Governments of Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. As a result of our unprecedented efforts, illegal crossings are down 75 per cent since May - dropping 8 straight months in a row. And

Days ago, we signed the ground breaking new agreement with China that will defend our workers, protect our intellectual property, bring billions of dollars into our treasury, and open vast new markets for products made and grown right here in the US," he said.

as the wall goes up, drug seizures rise, and border crossings go down," he said.

Trump showered praise on the US military for carrying out a "flawless precision strike" that killed Iran's military commander Qasem Soleimani and terminated his "evil reign of terror forever."

"Soleimani was the Iranian regime's most ruthless butcher, a monster who murdered or wounded thousands of American service members in Iraq," he said.

"That is why, last month, at my direction, the US military executed a flawless precision strike that killed Soleimani and terminated his evil reign of terror forever," he said.

Trump said that the peace talks with the Taliban are underway and vowed to bring the US troops back from war-torn Afghanistan.

"It is also not our function to serve other nations as a law enforcement agency. These are warfighters, the best in the world, and they either want to fight to win or not fight at all. We are working to finally end America's longest war and bring our troops back home," he said.

Speaking about the US-China relationship, he said for decades, China has taken advantage of the US, "now we have changed that, but, at the same time, we have perhaps the best relationship we have ever had with China, including with Chinese President Xi Jinping."

"We entered into historic cooperation agreements with the Governments of Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. As a result of our unprecedented efforts, illegal crossings are down 75 per cent since May - dropping 8 straight months in a row. And

Top Democrat Pelosi rips up Trump speech

AFF ■ WASHINGTON

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi ripped up her copy of Donald Trump's State of the Union address on Wednesday, in a pointed political gesture after listening tight-lipped to the president tout his achievements to Congress.

The tension between Trump and his Democratic nemesis was palpable from the outset, as Pelosi extended her hand for a handshake — and the president failed to return the favour.

Seated in silence behind the president in the House of Representatives, Pelosi frowned, repeatedly shook her head and smiled disbelievably until he finished speaking and Republicans erupted in applause — at which point she rose and very visibly tore up the papers in front of her.

Asked afterwards by a reporter to give a reason for her gesture, Pelosi replied: "Because it was the courteous thing to do, considering the alternatives."

And in a follow-up tweet, the 79-year-old Pelosi said Democrats would "never stop extending the hand of friendship to get the job done."

Trump was impeached by the Democratic-controlled House six weeks ago, and the flashpoint with Pelosi comes one day before the US Senate is all but certain to vote to acquit him on charges of abuse of power and obstruc-

tion of justice.

During the impeachment crisis, Trump, 73, has repeatedly assailed the speaker for her impeachment "hoax," branding her "nervous Nancy" and "crazy Nancy" on Twitter.

Pelosi's gesture capped a night where the country's bitter political divide was on full display, as Trump's address earned a triumphant reception from the Republican half of Congress — but sullen silence, boos and jeers from the Democrats present.

Chuck Schumer, the senior Democrat in the Senate, said that the speech was "more like a Trump rally than a speech a true leader would give."

"It was demagogic, undignified, highly partisan and in too many places, untruthful," he said.

The White House was quick to hit back at Pelosi, saying she had insulted the Americans honored in Trump's speech, from a veteran airman to a premature baby or a mourning military family.

"That's her legacy," it said.

Republican Senator Lindsey Graham doubled down, tweeting: "Tearing the speech up is not going to tear up the accomplishments of this President." His fellow Republican Senator Marco Rubio said Pelosi had "embarrassed herself" by ripping up the speech.

"So pathetic," he added on Twitter.

US troops are not for serving as law enforcement for others: Trump

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Stating that the peace talks with the Taliban are underway, President Donald Trump on Wednesday vowed to bring the US troops back from war-torn Afghanistan and said that American soldiers are not serving other nations as "a law enforcement agency."

Trump in November announced the resumption of peace talks with the Taliban, but refused to give a timeline for the drawdown of US troops from Afghanistan during his unannounced visit to the American soldiers stationed in the country.

After nine rounds of negotiations with the Taliban, Trump in September called off the peace talks after a US service member was killed in a suicide attack in Afghanistan's capital, Kabul.

"In Afghanistan, the determination and valour of our warfighters has allowed us to make tremendous progress, and peace talks are underway. I am not looking to kill hundreds of thousands of people in Afghanistan, many of them

"It is also not our function to serve other nations as a law enforcement agency. These are warfighters, the best in the world, and they either want to fight to win or not fight at all. We are working to finally end America's longest war and bring our troops back home," Trump said.

innocent," Trump said during his 3rd State of the Union address to the US Congress.

"It is also not our function to serve other nations as a law enforcement agency. These are warfighters, the best in the world, and they either want to fight to win or not fight at all. We are working to finally end America's longest war and bring our troops back home," he said.

Trump hopes to reduce the number of troops in Afghanistan to 8,600, but has not given a timeline.

The US currently has than 14,000 troops in Afghanistan, but military officials would

not confirm the exact number. Afghan officials have long demanded a ceasefire but the Taliban, who now control more territory than at any point since they were ousted in 2001, have refused to hold direct talks with the government until a US deal is agreed.

Trump also said that the US is also working to end America's wars in the Middle East. Three years ago, the barbarians of ISIS held over 20,000 square miles (51,799 sq kms) of territory in Iraq and Syria, he said.

"Today, the ISIS territorial caliphate has been 100 percent destroyed, and the founder

and leader of ISIS - the blood-thirsty killer (Abu Bakr) al-Baghdadi - is dead," he said.

Trump in October announced that Baghdadi "is dead" in a secret US special forces raid in northwest Syria, saying the elusive leader of the "ruthless" Islamic State and the world's number one terrorist died "like a dog and like a coward."

He said that his administration was strongly defending the country's national security and combating radical Islamic terrorism.

"Last week, I announced a groundbreaking plan for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Recognising that all past attempts have failed, we must be determined and creative in order to stabilise the region and give millions of young people the change to realise a better future," he said.

President Trump last week said that Jerusalem "will remain Israel's undivided capital" as he unveiled his Middle East peace plan aimed at solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, describing it as "historic" and a "giant step" towards peace.

Malaysia's former first lady goes on trial for corruption

AFF ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysia's former first lady, who allegedly bankrolled a luxurious lifestyle with kickbacks and stolen public money, went on trial Wednesday for corruption for the first time since her husband lost power.

Rosmah Mansor, notorious for making overseas shopping trips and owning vast collections of handbags and jewellery, became a lightning rod for public anger as the government of prime minister Najib Razak was engulfed by corruption allegations.

Her husband's long-ruling coalition suffered a shock election defeat in 2018 in large part due to claims he and his officials plundered billions of dollars from sovereign wealth fund IMDB. Both Najib and his wife have since been hit with multiple charges over the looting of the investment vehicle, but Rosmah's first trial centres on allegations she received bribes linked to a government project.

Prosecutors allege she pocketed 6.5 million ringgit (\$1.6 million) for helping a company secure the project to provide solar power generators to schools on the Malaysian part of Borneo island.

The 68-year-old is also accused of soliciting a further 187.5 million ringgit. Rosmah



Rosmah Mansor, wife of former Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak, arrives at Kuala Lumpur High Court in Kuala Lumpur on Wednesday as her graft trial began, with a top prosecutor saying she wielded considerable influence.

faces three counts of corruption for the offences, which allegedly took place in 2016 and 2017. Rosmah, known for her imperious manner and enormous mane of hair, denied all the charges as proceedings began at the Kuala Lumpur High Court. The former prime

minister's wife "occupied no official position. However, she wielded considerable influence by her own overbearing nature," said prosecutor Gopal Sri Ram in his opening statement.

"She placed herself in a position where she was able to influence decisions in the public sector."

The trial was supposed to start Monday but was delayed after Rosmah was admitted to hospital complaining of neck pain.

On Wednesday she arrived in a car followed by an ambulance, and limped into the courtroom. Najib, who is on trial at the High Court over the looting of 1MDB, made an appearance in the courtroom as the trial got underway.

The former leader and his wife's lavish lifestyles came to symbolise the perceived rot in Malaysia's ruling elite.

Following the 2018 election, police discovered valuables — including cash, jewellery and luxury handbags — worth up to \$273 million in properties linked to the couple.

Biden's poor showing shakes establishment support

AP ■ DES MOINES (US)

Joe Biden's third presidential bid enters a critical stretch after a disappointing finish in the Iowa caucuses sent the former vice president on to New Hampshire with a skittish donor base, low cash reserves and the looming threat of billionaire rival Michael Bloomberg and his unlimited personal wealth.

In New Hampshire on Tuesday, Biden insisted he had a "good night" in Iowa even as he trailed the top moderate candidate, former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana, and the leading progressive, Bernie Sanders, according to initial returns from 71% of precincts. Biden was running fourth, close to Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar, who just days ago polled in single digits.

That leaves some establishment Democrats, including some Biden supporters, questioning his contention that he'll reclaim clear front-

runner status in the race against President Donald Trump once the primary fight moves beyond overwhelmingly white Iowa and New Hampshire to more racially diverse electorates. And it's a reminder of how Biden's previous presidential campaigns never advanced beyond Iowa.

"If he came in fourth, yeah, that could hurt," said Bill Freeman, a Biden donor from Nashville, Tennessee, who added that he hadn't even considered such a possibility heading into Monday's caucuses.

"That's a bad night, no matter how you spin it." Most precarious for Biden: Some of the would-be donors he could win over with a strong showing are giving new looks to Bloomberg, the former New York City mayor whose entire strategy of sitting out the four early nominating states is pegged to the possibility that Biden falters.

Bloomberg, one of the world's wealthiest men with a net worth approaching \$60

billion, isn't asking for money. He's simply looking for support that could cut off financial lifelines to Biden, whose campaign reported just \$9 million cash on hand to start the year.

That's patronage Biden needs to remain competitive with Buttigieg, as well as Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Sanders, who have raised massive sums from small-dollar online contributors, who have been far less generous to Biden.

Alex Sink, a Democratic donor who hosted Hillary Clinton in the 2016 race, said many donors are holding back, waiting to see how Biden does. They are also keeping an open mind about Bloomberg, whose campaign asked Sink last week to attend an event in Tampa.

"I was anxious to do it because, like so many others, I'm curious and interested and worried about who our candidate will be and how we are going to beat Trump," she said.



"Most of my friends don't know yet who they are voting for," Biden aides have said for months that he didn't have to win in Iowa or on Feb. 11 in New Hampshire because he was better positioned in Nevada's Feb. 22 caucuses, South Carolina's Feb. 29 primary and a slate of March 3 primaries with more than a third of Democrats' national delegates at stake on a single day.

That never meant, however, that Biden could sustain a bad showing in Iowa and New Hampshire. The approach was also an expensive one, requiring deep campaign reserves to finance advertising and staffing in Nevada, South Carolina and delegate-rich states like California and Texas.

Biden has a campaign footprint across the March primary map, with paid staff or volunteer offices in 13 states. But his cash flow raises questions about how much he can bolster his existing operation. His uneasy finan-

cial situation is underscored by an affiliated super PAC that spent more on Iowa ads than the campaign itself, but still has struggled to raise money and has little left over after Iowa.

"Will he have as much money as Bernie Sanders? Probably no. But it doesn't matter — all you need is enough gas to finish the race," said John Morgan, a Florida plaintiffs attorney and one of Biden's top fundraisers.

Freeman and Morgan agreed that Biden needs to finish in the top 3 in New Hampshire and ideally as the top moderate. That reflects what had been the quiet hope of Biden's team heading into Monday's caucuses. They didn't necessarily expect to win outright.

But they hoped that they could emerge from Iowa as the clear alternative to Sanders, a democratic socialist and leader of the left's progressive base.

An effectively two-person race between Sanders and

the former vice president, Biden confidants believed, would open the financial spigot, firm up his advantages among nonwhite voters and win over skeptical white moderates now aligned with Buttigieg or Klobuchar.

"That's my conversation with people: If Bernie Sanders is the nominee, would you vote for him?" Morgan said. "If not, then back Joe." Biden took the same approach Tuesday on the campaign trail, hammering Sanders as directly as he has in weeks.

"It's time to get real about health care," he said as he compared his proposal to expand existing insurance markets with a "public option" to Sanders' "Medicare for All" idea.

Sanders has been pushing single-payer insurance for "30 years now," Biden said, and "hasn't moved it an inch." The problem, Freeman said, is that a lackluster start in Iowa makes the Biden-Sanders juxtaposition a much harder sell.

US working closely with China to combat virus outbreak: Trump

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US is working closely with Beijing to combat the coronavirus outbreak, President Donald Trump said, as the deadly infection claimed 490 lives in China and spread to over 20 countries, including India and America, prompting the World Health Organisation to declare a global health emergency.

The US on Tuesday evacuated over 300 more people on two new flights out of the Chinese city Wuhan, the epicentre of the fast-spreading new coronavirus. Last week, it evacuated 195 Americans from Wuhan.

"Protecting Americans' health also means fighting infectious diseases," Trump said in his State of the Union speech on late Tuesday night

while highlighting the initiatives taken by his administration in the healthcare sector.

"We are coordinating with the Chinese government and working closely together on the coronavirus outbreak in China. My administration will take all necessary steps to safeguard our citizens from this threat," he said.

The death toll in coronavirus outbreak rose to 490 in China on Tuesday. One death was reported earlier this week from the Philippines.

Worldwide, the virus, so far, has spread to Thailand, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam, Macau, India, Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, United States, Canada, Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Russia, Finland, Spain, UAE and Sweden.

"As we pray for all who are sick, we know that America is constantly achieving new medical breakthroughs," Trump said in his speech.

The president underlined that his administration has launched ambitious new initiatives to substantially improve care for Americans with kidney disease, Alzheimer's, and those struggling with mental health challenges.

Trump said a good life for American families also requires the most affordable, innovative and high-quality healthcare system.

"Before I took office, health insurance premiums had more than doubled in just 5 years. I moved quickly to provide affordable alternatives. Our new plans are up to 60 per cent less expensive.

"I have also made an iron-

clad pledge to American families: We will always protect patients with pre-existing conditions — that is a guarantee," he said.

The president said his administration will always protect the Medicare and Social Security schemes.

Asserting that his administration will never let socialism "destroy" US healthcare, he said, "As we work to improve Americans' healthcare, there are those who want to take away your healthcare, take away your doctor, and abolish private insurance entirely."

"One hundred thirty-two lawmakers in this room have endorsed legislation to impose a socialist takeover of our healthcare system, wiping out the private health insurance plans of 180 million Americans," he added.



A worker wearing a protective suit checks the luggage of an evacuee from Wuhan, China, after their evacuation flight landed at an airport in Marseilles, France. France used two flights to bring back about 400 people from China. They are being quarantined at two different sites in southern France. AP

China's stuttering economy braces for virus impact

AFP ■ BEIJING

China's struggle to contain the deadly coronavirus is deepening concerns about the impact on the world's number-two economy, as factories stay closed and millions of consumers remain holed up at home.

The epidemic, which has killed hundreds and infected more than 24,000, has led to sweeping travel restrictions across the country as well as the closure of popular tourist attractions, businesses, schools and entertainment venues.

Central Hubei province — at the epicentre of the outbreak — has effectively been locked down since late January with other cities imposing restrictions this week in the eastern industrial belt, including the home of tech giant Alibaba.

Now, economists are warning of a bruising first quarter for the already stuttering economy — and potentially a severe hit to full-year growth — after

a ruined Lunar New Year holiday, with some saying it could prove more painful than SARS.

"The inopportune timing of the outbreak around Chinese New Year, a time of increased transport and economic connectivity... as well as the lockdown of affected regions all add to the equation," said Louis Kuijs of Oxford Economics.

The crisis also comes as Beijing battles to kickstart growth after a draw-out slowdown caused by weak overseas demand and the US trade war, and there are building concerns a hit to China could have a domino effect globally.

Moody's analysts said the virus was "a serious mounting threat to the fragile Chinese and global economies", adding that there are "no good scenarios".

Many factories closed for the Lunar New Year break have delayed reopening — exceeding a three-day extension of the holiday that author-

ities imposed to prevent large public gatherings.

Manufacturing accounts for around a third of China's economy and the auto industry is set to take a sharp blow, given that Hubei's quarantined capital, Wuhan, is among China's largest production bases.

A Ford spokesman told AFP production would resume around next week, but said the epidemic has already "suppressed or delayed consumer purchases to a large degree".

Dongfeng Motor Corporation, which is based in Wuhan and is one of China's biggest auto groups, said its reopening "will depend on the prevention and control of the epidemic".

Ratings agency S&P has predicted the delay in opening factories could hit car production by up to two percent and warned the real impact may be larger as workers could potentially shun Hubei when called back to work.

Coronavirus toll soars to 490

PTI ■ BEIJING

The death toll in China's coronavirus outbreak rose to 490 on Tuesday while the total number of confirmed cases mounted to 24,324, Chinese health officials announced on Wednesday.

By the end of Tuesday, a total of 490 people had died after being infected and 24,324 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection had been reported in 31 provincial-level regions, China's National Health Commission reported.

It said 65 deaths were reported on Tuesday, all from Hubei province and its capital Wuhan.

Also 3,887 new confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection were reported on Tuesday, it said.

Also on Tuesday, 431 patients became seriously ill, while 262 were discharged from hospital after recovery.

The commission added that 3,219 patients remained in severe condition and 23,260 people were suspected of being

infected with the virus.

A total of 892 people had been discharged from hospital after recovery, it said.

Over 2.52 lakh who were in close contacts with patients had been traced with over 1.85 lakh others still under medical observation, it added.

By the end of Tuesday, 18 confirmed cases had been reported in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), including one death, 10 in the Macao SAR and 11 in Taiwan, it said.

As the novel coronavirus, regarded as the most virulent in recent years, showed no signs of abatement, China has intensified its efforts to contain its spread by opening more hospitals in Hubei province to exclusively treat its patients.

A 1000-bed makeshift hospital was opened on Monday.

Another 1,300-bed hospital is set to be ready on Wednesday. Both will be run by hundreds of military medical personnel.

Authorities in Wuhan on Tuesday said they would build eight more mobile cabin hos-

pitals to treat the patients, China Daily reported.

All the Chinese cities including Beijing have been reporting daily increase in the cases of the virus, which has no cure yet. The virus has now spread to over 20 countries.

The Philippines reported the first overseas death from the virus on Sunday while 176 cases have been reported from abroad so far. India has reported three cases of the coronavirus. All the three patients from Kerala recently returned from the affected Wuhan city.

India on Tuesday further tightened visa rules by cancelling the existing visas for Chinese and foreigners who had visited the country in the last two weeks.

On February 2, India temporarily suspended e-visa facility for Chinese travellers and foreigners residing in China in view of the outbreak.

Currently, 647 Indians and seven Malaysians, who have been evacuated from Wuhan and Hubei are in 14-day quarantine at a medical camp in Manesar, near Delhi.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hua Chunying told the media here that 16 foreigners in China have been infected with the virus.

She, however, declined to provide details of their nationalities in her Tuesday media briefing, citing privacy concerns.

According to reports, those infected included four Pakistanis and two Australians.

Wuhan has thousands of foreigners as it is an education hub. Hundreds of Pakistani have been pleading to their government to evacuate them citing successful evacuation by the Indian government.

China has struggled to contain the virus despite implementing unprecedented measures, including virtually locking down more than 50 million people in Hubei.

While the virus cases increased by the hour, Chinese health officials attributed the spiralling rate of cases and the death toll to shortages of hospitals mainly in Hubei and its provincial capital Wuhan.

Also Chinese officials have

converted the national auditorium and gymnasium in Wuhan into a hospital to exclusively treat growing number of coronavirus cases.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said on Tuesday that the outbreak of the deadly virus does not yet constitute a "pandemic".

In its report on Tuesday, they WHO said dramatic measures taken by China to rein in the virus has prevented significant spread abroad.

The UN health agency's chief also called for greater global solidarity, accusing some governments of wealthy countries of being "well behind" in sharing data on virus cases.

"While 99 percent of cases are in China, in the rest of the world we only have 176 cases," the UN health agency's chiefs aid in a technical briefing to the WHO's Executive Board in Geneva.

Earlier, the WHO categorised the coronavirus as Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

Scientists dive into 'Midnight Zone' to study dark ocean

AP ■ BARCELONA

A team of scientists is preparing to dive deep into the depths of the Indian Ocean — into a "Midnight Zone" where light barely reaches but life still thrives. Scientists from the British-led Nekton Mission plan to survey wildlife and gauge the effects of climate change in the unexplored area.

Working with the Seychelles and Maldives governments, the five-week expedition is targeting seamounts — vast underwater mountains that rise thousands of meters from the sea floor.

To explore such inhospitable depths, Nekton scientists will board one of the world's most advanced submersibles, called "Limiting Factor." "What we do know is

that beneath 1,000 meters (3,280 feet), there's no light down there, but a lot of animals... are bioluminescent. It's life that glows," says Nekton mission director Oliver Steeds.

"The area that we're going to be researching, it's one of the most bio-diverse parts of the world's oceans. So what we're going to find there is unknown," Steeds recently told The Associated Press in Barcelona, Spain, before sea trials for the submersible and its mother ship. The AP will be covering the expedition exclusively from start to finish.

Last August, the "Limiting Factor" completed the Five Deeps Expedition, diving to the deepest point in each of the world's five oceans.

The deepest was almost 11,000 meters (36,000 feet)

down — deeper than Mount Everest is tall.

To withstand such crushing pressures, the sub's two-person crew compartment is wrapped in a nine-centimeter (3.5-inch) titanium cocoon. It also carries up to 96 hours' worth of emergency oxygen.

"There are only five vehicles in the world that can get below 6,000 meters (19,685 feet), and only one that can get to the bottom half," said expedition leader Rob McCallum. "So everything we do is new. Everything we see is virtually a new discovery."

Using sampling, sensor and mapping technology, scientists expect to identify new species and towering seamounts, as well as observe man-made impacts, such as climate change and plastic pollution.

Pakistan observes Kashmir Solidarity Day

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Wednesday observed Kashmir Solidarity Day, with the top leaders extending their support to the Kashmiri people to find a just and peaceful resolution to their issues.

The day is observed every year on February 5 by Pakistan.

President Arif Alvi in his message said India by abrogating Article 370 has directly contravened the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

Article 370 of the Constitution was abrogated to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir in August last year.

Prime Minister Imran Khan in his message said India

has turned 8 million Kashmiris into prisoners in their own land through the deployment of over 900,000 troops.

"The unprecedented length of these restrictions has fully exposed the 'fiction' of India's democracy and its scant regard for basic human norms," he said.

He said Pakistan demands immediate lifting of the restrictions and communications blackout.

India has categorically told the international community that its move to scrap Article 370 of the Constitution revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir was an internal matter and has also advised Pakistan to accept the reality.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in his mes-

sage reaffirmed Pakistan's unstinted political, diplomatic and moral support for the Kashmiri people.

He urged the world to act in support of the fundamental freedoms and basic human rights of the Kashmiris.

He asked New Delhi to allow United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), the media and civil society unhindered access to Kashmir if it had nothing to hide.

India maintains that the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), established in January 1949, has outlived its utility and is irrelevant after the Simla Agreement and the consequent establishment of the Line of Control (LoC).

International court gathering evidence in Rohingya case

AP ■ DHAKA

Investigators from the International Criminal Court have begun collecting evidence for a case involving alleged crimes against humanity by Myanmar against Rohingya Muslims causing them to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh, a court official said.

Phakiso Mochochoko, director of the Jurisdiction, Complementary and Cooperation Division of the ICC Office of the Prosecutor, said a team of investigators is visiting Rohingya refugee camps to collect evidence. He said justice will be delivered whether Myanmar cooperates or not.

Mochochoko told reporters in Bangladesh's capital, Dhaka, that The Hague-based court will pursue the case even though Myanmar is not a party to the Rome Statute, the treaty that established it, and urged the Buddhist-majority nation to cooperate.

Myanmar has denied committing crimes against humanity or genocide.

He said the court has a mandate to proceed with the case because Bangladesh is a party to the statute and the Rohingya crossed the border into that country. He acknowledged that the investigation would be a long and difficult one without Myanmar's participation.

"This is a challenge, we all agreed, it's a challenge," he said. "We have the experiences in the past, in some other situations where countries have refused to cooperate with us, they refused entry into their territory, but we have been able to investigate and prosecute the people."

He said the investigators will talk to Rohingya refugees as well as witnesses in other countries.

Mochochoko said the investigators will work to identify who planned, facilitated and committed the alleged crimes.

"Investigators from the Office of the Prosecutor will now carefully and thoroughly seek to uncover the truth about what happened to the Rohingya people in Myanmar which brought them here to Bangladesh," he said.

The responsible persons could be the head of state or other top people in Myanmar, he said. Mochochoko said Bangladesh's effort to start the repatriation of the Rohingya refugees would not be hampered by the ICC investigation and it can proceed to do so under an agreement it has with Myanmar.

He thanked Bangladesh for its support.

"As we undertake our independent investigations, we look forward to continued support and collaboration" from Bangladesh, he said.

He said the ICC is working in cooperation with the UN's top court, the International Court of Justice, which ordered Myanmar last month to take all measures in its power to prevent genocide against the Rohingya.

The UN court said its order for measures to protect the Rohingya is binding "and creates international legal obligations" on Myanmar.

More than 700,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh after Myanmar security forces launched a crackdown on the Muslim minority in August 2017. Bangladesh currently houses over 1 million Rohingya refugees.

Myanmar has long claimed the Rohingya are "Bengali" migrants from Bangladesh, even though their families have lived in the country for generations. Nearly all have been denied citizenship since 1982, effectively rendering them stateless.

The International Criminal Court is a court of last resort that takes on cases when national authorities are unable or unwilling to prosecute alleged atrocities.

Syria presses offensive despite Turkish warning

AFP ■ BEIRUT

Syrian regime forces Wednesday pressed on with their offensive in the northwest that has displaced half a million people, despite heightened tensions with Turkey.

Intensive aerial bombardment and ground fighting in the jihadist-dominated Idlib region since December have killed almost 300 civilians and triggered one of the largest waves of displacement in the nine-year war.

The United Nations and aid groups have condemned the escalation and called for an end to hostilities in a region that is home to three million people, half of them already displaced from other parts of Syria.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday warned that his country would

not allow Syrian forces to gain more ground and accused them of driving "innocent and grieving people" towards the Turkish border.

But Russian-backed Syrian regime forces on Wednesday pressed on with their offensive in Idlib, where they have seized more than 20 towns and villages from rebels and jihadists over the past 24 hours, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and state news agency SANA.

With their latest advance, Damascus loyalists have nearly encircled Saraqeb in southern Idlib and were now within one kilometre (less than a mile) of the strategic highway town which has been emptied of its residents following weeks of bombardment, the Observatory said.

Holdout rebels and jihadists can only exit from the

north, with regime forces deployed on all other sides, according to the war monitor group. A military source quoted by SANA late Tuesday said the Syrian army was giving its enemies in Saraqeb and nearby areas a "last chance," calling on them to surrender their arms.

The Syrian government was poised this week to recapture Saraqeb. But its push hit a snag after regime forces exchanged deadly fire with Turkish troops on Monday, an escalation UN chief Antonio Guterres called "extremely worrying".

Regime shelling of Turkish positions in Idlib killed at least five Turkish soldiers and three civilians, Ankara said.

The Observatory reported that retaliatory fire from Turkey killed at least 13 Syrian government troops.

Israel hits Hamas targets in Gaza after renewed fire

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israel struck Hamas militant targets in Gaza early Wednesday in response to rocket fire toward Israeli communities overnight, the military said, the latest flare-up following the release of the Trump administration's Mideast plan, which the Palestinians have fiercely rejected.

The military said it targeted a Hamas weapons manufacturing site; no casualties were reported in Gaza. The exchange comes amid an uptick in cross-border rocket and "explosive balloon" launches from the Hamas-controlled territory, as well as violent protests in the West Bank.

The Gaza Strip has been relatively calm in recent months as part of an informal truce between its Hamas rulers and Israel, but tension has increased since President Donald Trump unrolled his favorable plan for

Israel last week.

Under the plan, Israel would be allowed to annex all Jewish settlements in the West Bank, as well as the strategic Jordan Valley. The Palestinians were offered limited self-rule in Gaza, parts of the West Bank and some sparsely populated areas of Israel in return for meeting a long list of conditions.

The Palestinians, as well as much of the international community, view the settlements in the West Bank and annexed east Jerusalem — territories seized by Israel in the 1967 war — as illegal and a major obstacle to peace.

Hamas had recently curbed rocket fire from Gaza and rolled back weekly protests along the frontier that had often turned violent. In return, Israel eased the blockade it imposed with Egypt on Gaza after the Islamic militant group seized power from forces loyal to the Palestinian Authority in 2007.

Hamas rejected the Trump plan and vowed that "all options are open" in responding to the proposal, but the group is not believed to be seeking another war with Israel.

In the West Bank, Palestinians have held scattered protests in recent days condemning the Trump initiative, burning US and Israeli flags and posters of Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Firebombs have been hurled at Israeli troops, with one exploding on a soldier, who was only lightly wounded.

The Israeli military has thus far instructed its troops to "contain" the protests and not respond forcefully, for fear that any Palestinian casualties would set off further violence.

Following the latest rocket fire, the military said it viewed the incident with "great severity" and is prepared for various scenarios.

Trend Slazer

Kabir is proud of Alaya Bedi

Veteran actor KABIR BEDI is proud of grand-daughter Alaya's debut act in *Jawaani Jaaneman*.

"I am so proud of Alaya for the beautiful performance that she has given and that too working with seasoned actors like Saif (Ali Khan) and Tabu. She has worked so hard and prepared well, she deserves every good review she is getting," Bedi said at a special screening of the short film, *Nawab*.

Alaya has been getting rave reviews for her performance in *Jawaani Jaaneman*. She played the onscreen daughter of Saif and Tabu in the film.



'Without sounding pompous I'd like to mention that I have never really cast an actor for his commercial viability. As long as he or she fits my role I cast him. I had cast Aditya (Roy Kapur) in *Aashiqui 2* before which he had done character roles in a couple of films but not lead. When I met him I felt he would be the perfect choice for *Aashiqui 2*'

—Mohit Suri

Actor NORA FATEHI was "severely injured" while performing a high octane action sequence for the forthcoming film *Bhuj: The Pride of India*.

"I've just got back from Bhopal after shooting *Bhuj: The Pride of India*. It involved a lot of emotional scenes and an entire high octane action sequence during which I ended up getting severely injured," Nora said.

Nora, who is currently riding high on the success of her latest release *Street Dancer 3D*, hurt her forehead.

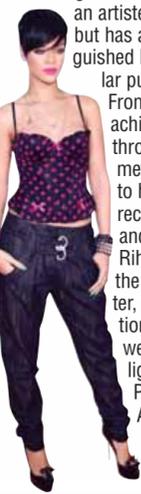


Rihanna to receive President's Award

Singer RIHANNA will be honoured with the President's Award, which recognises special achievement and distinguished public service, at the 51st National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) Image Awards.

She will receive the honour on February 22 in California.

"Rihanna has not only enjoyed a groundbreaking career as an artiste and a musician but has also distinguished herself as a stellar public servant. From her business achievements through (her cosmetics line) Fenty, to her tremendous record as an activist and philanthropist, Rihanna epitomises the type of character, grace, and devotion to justice that we seek to highlight in our President's Award," Derrick Johnson, president and CEO of the NAACP, said.



Italian fashion officials forecasted a nearly 2 per cent drop in first-half revenues due to the virus emerging from China, which also is preventing three Chinese fashion houses from traveling to Milan Fashion Week later this month.

Chinese consumers are the biggest luxury spenders in the world, including in Italy, where they represent 35 per cent of big-ticket spenders, more than Russians, Arabs and Americans combined, according to a 2019 study by Global Blue, a tourism shopping tax refund company.

Their absence during the Chinese New Year travel period is being sorely felt in Milan's MonteNapoleone District of luxury boutiques, where 48 brands have created capsule collections dedicated to the Year of the Rat in anticipation of the usual influx of Chinese tourists.

A drop in big-spending Chinese tourists along with the negative impact on luxury sales in China, where Italian brands have a strong retail presence, are expected to decrease first-half revenues in the Italian luxury

MILAN GETS FLU CHILL

Coronavirus blocks 3 Chinese brands from fashion week



industry by 1.8 per cent. That will in turn put a drag on projections of 3 per cent revenue growth in 2020 over the 90 billion euros (\$99 billion) posted last year,

according to Italian National Fashion Chamber president Carlo Capasa.

"Everyone hoped that we would grow this year, but instead



we have this terrible setback. We hope that they find a solution and there is a relaunch," Capasa said.

Due to the virus, the Chinese fashion houses Angela Chen,

Ricostru and Hui had to cancel their runway turns during Milan Fashion Week, which runs from February 18 to 24, while an estimated 1,000 Chinese journal-

ists, buyers and other fashion industry insiders also will be absent.

The fashion chamber will express its solidarity with its partners in China with a digital event, showcasing eight Chinese designers over video with runway shows, backstage peeks and interviews. The initiative, titled *China, we are with you*, will open with a runway show of a Chinese designer whose production is mostly in Europe and the United States, so is unaffected by the virus, Capasa said. The identity of the fashion house was being kept secret. "We want to confront this emergency with a positive message, trying to keep ties very open with our Chinese partners," Capasa said.

The Chinese brand Annakiki was able to maintain its place on the schedule because 95 per cent of the apparel collection was already in Milan and its accessories are all made in Italy. Designer Anna Yang was still in Shenzhen, putting the finishing touches on the last pieces before traveling to Milan.

Two-dimensional art installations using *mulmul* panel fill a spiral staircase. Several pictures of a woman in red kurta and blue pants in different poses are juxtaposed here. These look like a series of photos where the subject is caught mid-motion delving deep into spirituality.

Amid a white backdrop, the works denote transition through time and captures several movements of the human body. This is the first thing that grabs our attention as we witness artist Remen Chopra's exhibition at Jorbagh. She takes us around and narrates some stories of how she constructed these thought-provoking pieces that resonate with the passage of time as well as human emotions.

"While shifting, I was going through migration and displacement. It was then that I realised that in order to calm myself, I need to find answers. So after going through all this, I questioned myself, 'What makes me feel at home and safe?' So I started writing and researching. I also tried to explore my maternal space. This is how the whole exhibition came together organically," says Remen.

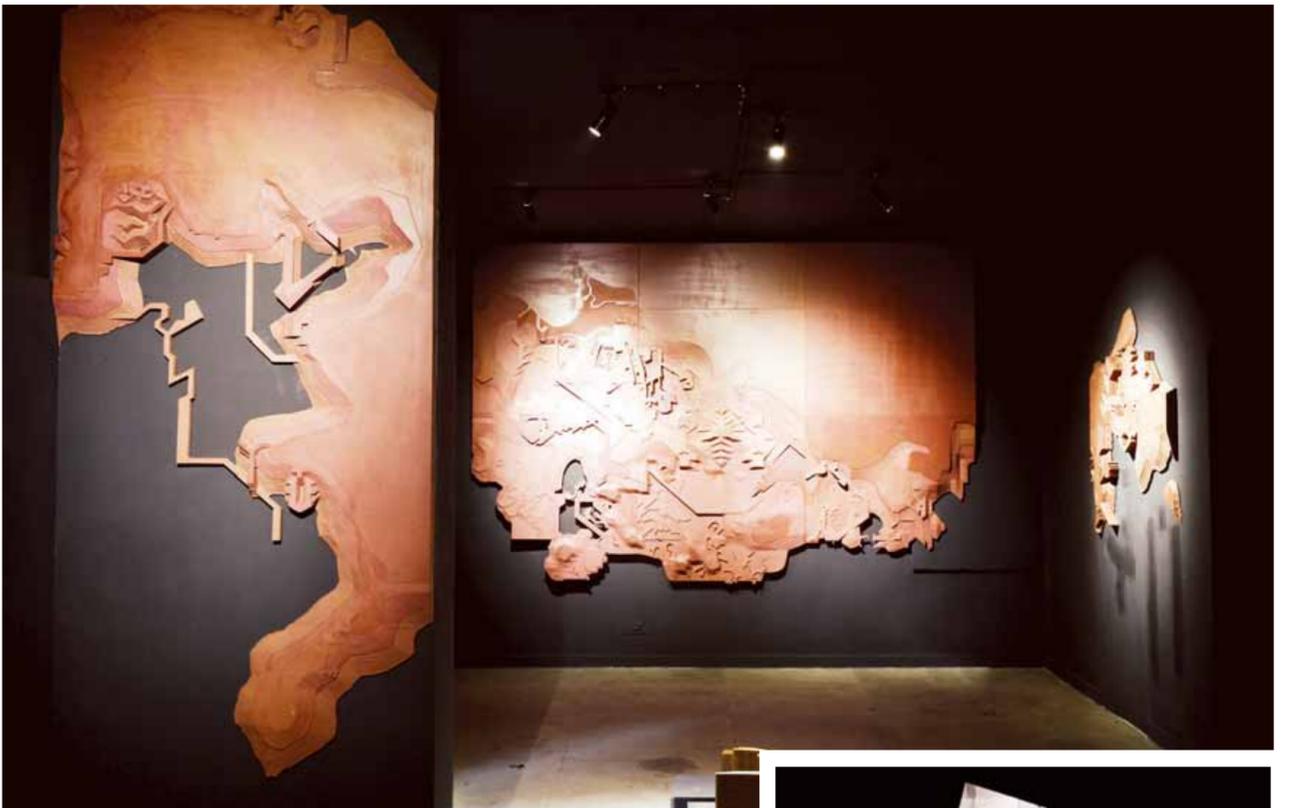
Through Memory's Cut: Its Deep Embrace, she has transformed 24 Jor Bagh into a series of personal spaces, which reflect her reminiscence of home. The works depict her personal journey of migration as she questions the notions of home, lineage, space and time.

She uses various media like photography, drawing, sculpture, textiles and sound, which showcase her personal and familial histories of migration. The works include poetry and personal objects that were passed on matrilineally from one generation to the other.

The artist also recalls the stories of her family from Tehran, Rawalpindi and Shimla, which were narrated to her by her grandmother. She uses wood and embroidery on a cloth to write a poem, *Under the lime tree*, from her grandmother's archive.

Inspired by Egyptian architecture, *Imaginary landscapes: Shimla, Rawalpindi*, is a work with recycled wood. The artist creates imaginary topographic maps to explore the feeling of dislocation. The maps, painted rust on three different black walls with triangular ends at some places, depict both the places, Rawalpindi and Shimla, which co-exist in one space and time. Along with the maps, there is also a collection of wooden pieces kept in a linear form. When one tries to comprehend them, the artist tells us that it is Urdu poetry.

Moving further, we also come across pieces which makes one wonder how she has constructed such complex monochromatic montages and layers of photographs with glass and *mulmul*. They vividly capture a fleeting



THAT FLEETING MOMENT

Inspired by a range of personal archives and old photographs, artist REMEN CHOPRA's works speak volumes about her personal journey. By SAKSHI SHARMA



moment of time. While the figures evoke a sense of mystery in us, the artist grows nostalgic.

One can clearly see a strong presence of the feminine forms in her works which reflect her idea of regeneration, nurturing and balancing. *To what shore would*

you cross is a work with recycled wood. A maroon heirloom carpet that has been passed on from one generation to another has two rust lines at the ends which look like sculptures. It also represents the vagina and questions birth and regeneration. The artist ques-

tions, "how do we relate to our mothers and grandmothers through objects?"

All her works are in black and white with just a hint of rust in places. While one wonders if she has intentionally done it to revive old memories, the artist



says, "I always work with monochromes. When I was studying in New York and exploring the idea and notion of time, I saw a lot of black and white films and got inspired by cinematic references. That was when I let go of the colours."

Time has been a constant attraction for the artist. She says that the continuous circular movement of the past, present and future is hard to ignore. This is quite evident in her works as they seem to bridge the gap between history and now.

A more colourful picture

Top films were more diverse than ever before, finds study

Hollywood's awards season may not show it, but the most popular films are increasingly diverse, a new study finds. According to a new research by the University of Southern California's Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, more of 2019's top films featured minority or female lead characters than ever recorded before.

Analysing the top 100 films at the North American box office, USC researchers found that 31 films had leads or co-leads from an underrepresented racial group, an increase of four films from

2018 and nearly triple the number of 10 years ago. The data showed similar gains for female leads. Of the same films, 43 featured female leads or co-leads, an increase of four films from 2018 and more than double the number of female leads (20) in 2007.

Combined with studies released last month that showed a notable uptick in the numbers of female directors, the research paints a picture of an industry that, after years of lagging behind in representation in front of and behind the camera, is showing real signs of progress. While still



falling short of an accurate reflection of the American population (51 per cent of which is female and about 40 per cent are people

of colour), researchers called it "a banner year for inclusion." "It is clear that Hollywood is taking steps to create more inclusive sto-

ries and that those films are connecting with audience," Stacy L Smith, founder of the Inclusion Initiative, said in statement.

But those gains haven't been reflected in Hollywood's awards season, which culminates Sunday with the Academy Awards. For the 87th time, no female filmmakers were nominated for best director. And while the much-nominated Korean drama *Parasite* has made history, only one person of colour (Cynthia Erivo, for *Harriet*) was nominated in an acting category. At the British Academy of Film and Television Awards on Sunday, only white actors were nominat-

ed. "There is also a very obvious disconnect between what sells tickets and what garners awards points to a systemic bias at cultural institutions like the BAFTAs

or the Academy Awards," Smith said. "After another year in which the major studios increased their output of films with female and underrepresented leads or co-leads, it is critical to recognise that talent is not limited by gender or race/ethnicity."

The USC study also assessed the major distributors. Because box office is a key metric in their research, that doesn't include releases from streaming services including Netflix and Amazon, neither of which disclosed ticket sales for most of their 2019 releases.

Universal, the only studio led by a woman (studio chief Donna Langley), led all studios with nine films featuring a female lead and eight films featuring leads from an underrepresented ethnicity.

TAYLOR STITCHES TRIUMPH

Kiwis break duck of defeats as Ross' ton takes host past finish line

AGENCIES ■ HAMILTON

After coming close on three occasions to beat India in the ongoing tour, New Zealand were finally able to cross the line and taste victory as they defeated the Men in Blue by four wickets in the first ODI at the Seddon Park on Wednesday.

Seasoned campaigner Ross Taylor anchored New Zealand's chase of 348 by scoring a brilliant hundred. He was well supported by Henry Nicholls and stand-in captain Tom Latham as the hosts took a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

The Black Caps started off the chase on a cautious note as both Martin Guptill and Nicholls played with intent. Such was the determination from Guptill (32) that he scored just two boundaries in 41 balls before getting out to Shardul Thakur on the team score of 85.

Debutant Tom Blundell, who came in first down, didn't have a great outing and was stumped by KL Rahul at his individual score of 9. At that point of time, the match appeared to be heading in India's favour.

However, it was then that Taylor brought in all his experience and along with Nicholls shared a 62-run stand. After Nicholls' dismissal who was sent back to the pavilion courtesy some brilliant fielding efforts from Virat Kohli, Latham joined forces with Taylor and steered the team towards victory.

The match did seem to once again turn towards India as New Zealand lost two wickets in quick succession and brought the crowd to the edge of the seats.

However Mitchell Santner smashed two boundaries in Thakur's 48th over and erased hopes of any upset.

Taylor — who scored his 21st ODI century — collected the winning runs as he remained unbeaten on 109 alongside Santner who scored 12 not out and guided New Zealand to what is their most famous win in recent times.

Earlier, India rode on a brilliant century from Shreyas Iyer



Ross Taylor hugs New Zealand captain Tom Latham at the end of 1st ODI against India at Seddon Oval in Hamilton

and fifties from Rahul and Kohli as they posted a formidable 348-run target. After being put into bat, debutants Prithvi Shaw and Mayank Agarwal provided India with a steady start. They initially faced some tough time, but managed to get through that and stitched a 50-run stand.

However, both failed to capitalise on their starts as they got out in successive overs. While Shaw (20) was the first to go as he got a peach of a delivery from Colin de Grandhomme, Agarwal tried to be

over aggressive and in the process gifted his wicket to Tim Southee after contributing with 32.

Skipper Kohli then stitched a 102-run stand with Iyer and steadied India's ship. The Indian captain looked all set to score yet another century but was undone by a brilliant googly from Ish Sodhi and was bowled after scoring 51.

Rahul, who has been in the form of his life on the ongoing tour, continued from where he left in the T20Is, and made sure runs

BLACK CAPS SUCCESSFUL RUN-CHASE IN ODIS				
Score	(Overs)	Opponent	Venue	Date
350-9	(49.3)	Australia	Hamilton	20-02-2007
348-6	(48.1)	India	Hamilton	05-02-2020
340-5	(48.4)	Australia	Auckland	18-02-2007
339-5	(49.3)	England	Dunedin	07-03-2018
332-8	(49)	Australia	Christchurch	10-12-2005

HIGHEST TOTALS CHASED AGAINST INDIA				
Score	(Overs)	Opponent	Venue	Date
359-6	(47.5)	Australia	Mohali	10-03-2019
348-6	(48.1)	New Zealand	Hamilton	05-02-2020
322-6	(49.5)	Pakistan	Mohali	08-11-2007
322-3	(48.4)	Sri Lanka	The Oval	08-06-2017
319-7	(48)	Pakistan	Ahmedabad	12-04-2005

Faisal Features

come thick and fast for the visitors. He shared a 136-run partnership with Iyer before the latter got out after playing a brilliant knock of 103.

However, the dismissal didn't deter the confidence of Rahul who continued with his prolific form and switched gears to take India past the 300-run mark. He was well supported by Kedar Jadhav, who played a nice cameo and took the New Zealand bowlers to the cleaners.

The duo added 55 runs off 27 balls as India finished at 347/4 in their allotted quota of 50 overs. While Rahul remained unbeaten on 88 (64 balls), Jadhav scored 26 runs in 15 balls.

The two teams will now face off in the second ODI at the Eden Park on Saturday.

Kohli surpasses Dada's record

FIANS ■ HAMILTON

India's run-machine Virat Kohli on Wednesday added yet another feather to his cap by surpassing Sourav Ganguly in the list of India skippers with most ODI runs.

Kohli, who scored 51 off 63 deliveries in the first ODI has now amassed 5,123 runs as skipper and surpassed current BCCI chief Ganguly's tally of 5,082 runs in 148 ODIs. He has taken only 87 matches to score these runs at an average of 76.46. Kohli has scored 21 hundreds and 23 fifties as India captain in ODIs.

Former skipper MS Dhoni sits at the top of the list of highest run-getters as India captain. He had scored 6,641 runs as captain while Mohammed Azharuddin had collected 5,239 runs in the 50-over format.

Overall, Ricky Ponting holds the record for scoring the maximum number of runs in ODIs as captain. Ponting scored 8497 runs for Australia in the 230 ODI matches he appeared in as captain. He is followed by Dhoni, Stephen Fleming (6295 runs in 218 ODIs), Arjuna Ranatunga (5608 in 193).



Tom Latham fields during 1st ODI

Latham's innings took away momentum: Kohli

PTI ■ HAMILTON

Ross Taylor got the hundred but India captain Virat Kohli said it was Tom Latham's 48-ball 69 that took away the momentum from his side in the high-scoring first ODI.

"It was an outstanding performance by New Zealand. We thought 348 was good enough. Ross is the experienced batsman they have but Tom's innings was the one that took away the momentum. Credit to Taylor and Tom," Kohli said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

India were below-par on the field with Kuldeep Yadav dropping a skier and bowlers doing a less than commendable job.

"Look, we didn't grab onto one chance, but we were decent. Something we need to keep (on) improving. We can't focus too much (on negative things). Today, the opposition played better than us and they deserved to win," Kohli said. The Indian captain also seemed satisfied with the performance by debutants Mayank Agarwal and Prithvi Shaw, who gave the team a 50-plus start even though they failed to get big scores.

"I think the debutants gave us a good start and hopefully they continue. (Shreyas) Iyer was outstanding getting his first ODI hundred under pressure. KL (Rahul) again. These are positives for us."

PARTNERSHIPS KEY TO SUCCESS

Meanwhile Black Caps Stand-in skipper Tom Latham says building partnership and holding their nerves in the crucial moments helped New Zealand cross the finish line.

"Great performance from the guys. It was nice to keep our composure at the end and get across the line," stand-in skipper said.

"For us it was about building partnerships. The total was a little more than what we would have liked to chase. But we managed to get off to a good start and keep wickets in hand.

"We saw how hard it was to defend with the left-right combination. It's nice to make winning contributions. The way Ross played was fantastic."

India posted a huge 347 and Latham said his team will look to find their "perfect" game in the second ODI.

"We weren't quite where we wanted to be with the ball. So we got to improve and hopefully we will play the perfect game at Eden Park."

Taylor, who was adjudged the Man of the Match for anchoring the chase, said the right-left combination and short boundaries helped New Zealand chased overhaul the total.

"It has been an interesting summer, so as to speak, good to get across the line. To restrict them under 350, gave us a chance. We were fortunate with the right-left combination and we targeted the short boundary. Tom came in and released the pressure of me," he said.



Shreyas Iyer celebrates after reaching century

Shreyas attributes No 4 success to India A stint

HAMILTON: Shreyas Iyer now owns the No 4 slot in white ball cricket but the success has come owing to his flexible batting positions between Nos 3 to 5 for the India A team, where he learnt the art of tackling various match situations.

With six half-centuries and a hundred with an average of 48 plus in 16 ODIs, Iyer has had a good time in the Indian middle-order.

"In India A, it's not that I have to bat number four all the time. You keep changing your position depending on what is the situation. I got to manoeuvre my place from 3 to 5, I kept changing (batting order). It's just that we get good practice there and you face different opposition as well so you get used to the atmosphere," Iyer attributed his new-found success to his stint with A team.

For someone, who had to wait for his opportunity to cement his place in the senior team, the interim duration spent on A teams was important learning curve.

"India A games are always been helpful for me personally because whenever I used to go there, I used to make sure that as many matches I got, I have to make the best use of it and the players and the atmosphere is also amazing. You literally have no pressure," Iyer said about the team which is mentored by NCA director Rahul Dravid.

"And coming from the top arena (senior) to one level below (A team) doesn't make you feel that you are completely away from the team but you always see similar faces around you. I really enjoy that atmosphere like I said," he said.

Iyer scored an eye-catching 103 off 107 balls but Indian bowlers failed to defend a target of 348 with Ross Taylor scoring a match-winning hundred.

"I am very happy but would have been happier if we could have finished the game on a winning note. First of many (centuries) I hope, so I would take this in my stride and try to make sure that next time, I finish on the winning side," Iyer said at the post-match press conference.

NZ ODI side can handle pressure better than T20 team: Taylor

PTI ■ HAMILTON

New Zealand batsman Ross Taylor on Wednesday said their ODI side can deal with pressure situations a lot better than the Twenty20 side and that precisely is the reason they could knock down a big target in the series-opener against India.

"It's always nice to win after a clean sweep in the T20. Obviously new personnel came in and the loss was not a hang up for them. I am sure it must have played on their minds little bit, you are human, and towards the end we lost a couple of wickets,"

Taylor said at the post match press conference.

"But at the same time, the last game was our world cup final and a lot of the guys have played in pressure situations. They are a lot more experienced than the T20 side. So that showed, but it is only one game and lots to go in this series. It is nice to get that monkey off the back," he said.

Taylor said the dimensions of the ground helped out, but the New Zealand batsmen all contributed to the successful chase.

"That's the tough thing about playing on some of these grounds in New



Ross Taylor celebrates his century

Zealand, not knowing what a par total is at any time. Whether at the MCG, or here or anywhere else, you always give yourself a chance. At the same time if you lose two early wickets it was going to be a tough chase.

"I think there were some great contributions through out the whole order. Even the bowling lineup did well as India looked like they could get 360-370 at one stage. So we just managed to keep it under 350 and it was a psychological mark I guess. The team has to bat well to get that and we

did that today," he said. "What made that chase easier for us was the left-right combination. We knew there was one short boundary and we could use that to our advantage," he added.

Taylor said he was determined to finish the game after the tie here during the T20.

"It's not about going there and smacking every single ball but playing good shots. Trying to have those big overs every now and then, soaking up when they did bowl well. They put us under a lot of pressure and obviously

when you have worldclass line up like Bumrah and Kuldeep, you respect that and take into consideration when attacking different bowlers. Some days it comes off, like today, and some days it doesn't," he said.

"Today Shami bowled exactly the same ball and I inside edged down to fine leg or the keeper. Small margins, it could have been two different results but that is cricket. I guess that's why we love the game. Just little things — it went our way today and didn't in the T20s," he signed off.

Future of Indian cricket in safe hands: Akhtar



Yashasvi Jaiswal celebrates after taking wicket

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Pakistani speedster Shoaib Akhtar has heaped praise on the Indian colts following their emphatic win over Pakistan in the semifinal of the ongoing U-19 World Cup.

The Rawalpindi Express said that the Priyam Garg-led side was absolutely brilliant in their performance and that the future of Indian cricket is in safe hands.

"Congratulations to the Pakistan U19 team for reaching the semis. It was a good effort but not good enough to

take you to the finals. It was a pathetic fielding performance by Pakistan. Despite being U19, can't you put in dives while fielding? They did not deserve to be in the finals but on the other end congratulations to India for winning the semis," Akhtar said in a video posted on his Youtube channel.

"They won it and won it comprehensively. Indian team deserves praise and they must be told that there are some players in your team who will surely represent India in the future. I am very happy to see that India's future is in the right hands," he added.

The former Pakistan speedster reserved rich praise for Jaiswal, who has battled all odds to make his way into the Indian set-up and is now one of the rising stars in the country.

"India's boy Jaiswal, he left his village to come to Mumbai and used to sleep in milk dairies. He has scored two centuries in U19 cricket. Jaiswal used to sell pani-puri in the morning. He sold pani puris to his teammates to have food on his plate.

"Imagine this kind of a guy, who will be street smart and will fight for his place. Rajasthan Royals bought Jaiswal and remember my words that Jaiswal is going to go places. He has the power, passion and interest for the game. He will represent the senior team, this is a guarantee. Saxena also played well.

"Pakistan players need to learn from Jaiswal's history. He is running behind excellence and money is running behind him now," the former Pakistan pacer added.

De Kock's hundred stun World Champions



England's wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow, left, fields a ball during the first ODI at Newland's

AFP ■ CAPE TOWN

Quinton de Kock made an ideal start to his full-time captaincy of South Africa's one-day team on Tuesday when he hit a century as his side beat England by seven wickets in the first ODI at Newlands.

De Kock made 107 and Temba Bavuma hit 98 as South Africa chased down an England total of 258 for eight with 14 balls to spare.

De Kock and Bavuma shared a second wicket partnership of 173 off 170 balls, dominating an England team which included only five of the side that won the World Cup last year.

De Kock made his 107 off 113 balls with 11 fours and a six, while Bavuma faced 103 deliveries, hitting five fours and two sixes. "It was a good night. It feels good to get

back to winning ways," said De Kock.

"We had one or two chats about how we want to take this ODI team forward. Today was a good start — but it's only one game."

South Africa's team also had an experimental feel, featuring only six of the squad who had a dismal World Cup.

"We were way off the mark," admitted England captain Eoin Morgan. "South Africa completely outplayed us in every department."

Joe Denly was largely responsible for England reaching what appeared to be a reasonable total on a slow pitch. Denly made his highest one-day international score of 87 and helped rescue England from a precarious 131 for six. He and Chris Woakes, who made 40 in his 100th ODI, put on 91 for the seventh wicket.

Yes, I am black, that's my skin: Bavuma

CAPE TOWN: South Africa batsman Temba Bavuma, who played a match-winning knock against England has accepted that constantly being viewed through the prism of his skin colour has affected him.

"It has been hard," Bavuma, who was speaking for the first time since his recall to the national team last month, was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

"It's not so much the dropping part, all players get dropped, everyone goes through slumps of not scoring well. The awkwardness and discomfortability from my side is when you are thrown into talks of transformation."

"Yes, I am black, that's my skin. But I play cricket because I love it. I'd like to think the reason I am in the team is because of performances I have put forward in my franchise side, and also for the national team, whenever I have been able to. The discomfort was there, having to navigate myself around all those types of talks. Players get dropped, I am not the last guy to get dropped."

That's something we've come to accept," he added.

According to South Africa rules, the national team has to always field six players of their colour, including two black Africans. Bavuma has found himself caught in a race storm on social media with some arguing that he was only part of South Africa's plans because of the existence of the transformation target.

IANS

Raval, Juneja put Delhi on mat

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Middle-order batsmen Manpreet Juneja and Dhruv Raval in a counter-attacking fifth wicket stand added 181 runs as Gujarat are well on course for a first innings lead on the second day of their Ranji Trophy group A game against Delhi.

The hosts starting the day at 270 for 6 could add only 23 runs to their overnight score finishing on a below-par first innings total of 293. Rush Kalaria (5/78) had the best figures for the visitors.

Gujarat were in trouble at 88 for 4 but Juneja, who had played in IPL for erstwhile Delhi Daredevils and also scored hundred for India A in a four-day Test few years back, struck an unbeaten 88 off 135 balls to steady the ship.

Left-handed Raval (83 batting off 139 balls) was lucky to get a reprieve after being adjudged leg-before off Kulwant Khejroliya after bowler was found to have over-stepped.

While Delhi were looking good till an hour after lunch, things changed when Dhruv Shorey introduced rookie leg-spinner Tejas Baroka into the attack.

Baroka leaked runs giving away 52 in his wicketless 11 overs but more importantly eased the pressure on the two Gujarat batsmen, who scored nearly five runs per over off him.



Akshay Wakhare celebrates with Vidarbha teammates after taking wicket of Kerala's Jalaj Saxena

Ranji Trophy
Live from 9:30pm IST
HOTSTAR



Krishnappa Gowtham plays shot

The lanky wrist spinner never found his spot and mostly bowled half-volleys which made it difficult for the bowlers who operated from the other end.

SAURASHTRA IN COMMAND
RAJKOT: Sheldon Jackson hit a stroke-filled 85 to put Saurashtra on the verge of securing a vital first innings lead against Mumbai on the second day of their Elite Group B match.

Saurashtra bundled out Mumbai for 262 and then rode on Jackson's gritty 85

GUJARAT WERE IN TROUBLE AT 88 FOR 4 BUT JUNEJA STRUCK AN UNBEATEN 88 OFF 135 BALLS TO STEADY THE SHIP. ALSO LEFT-HANDED RAVAL (83 BATTING OFF 139 BALLS) WAS LUCKY TO GET A REPRIEVE AFTER BEING ADJUDGED LEG-BEFORE OFF KULWANT KHEJROLIYA AFTER BOWLER WAS FOUND TO HAVE OVER-STEPPED

to end the second day at 257/6, as they trail by just five runs.

Saurashtra skipper Arpit Vasavada (46) and Chirag Jani (45 not out) also made valuable contributions to take the game away from the 41-time Ranji champion.

Earlier, Mumbai added 13 runs to their overnight tally to be dismissed for 262. It took Saurashtra only 17 minutes to wrap up Mumbai's innings with Kushang Patel dismissing Shams Mulani (60) and Tushar Deshpande (6).

Meanwhile in other Group B matches, Railways took the first innings lead against Himachal Pradesh with seasoned pro Arindam Ghosh hitting unbeaten century (111). At Baroda, experienced Tamil Nadu

opener Abhinav Mukund hit a double hundred (206) as the visitors took a massive 316-run first innings lead.

Tamil Nadu racked up 490 for 7 declared after bowling out the home team for 174, built on Mukund's splendid knock and his big opening partnership with L Suryaprakash (75).

At Shimoga, Madhya Pradesh are trailing Karnataka by 366 runs after the latter posted a mammoth 426 in their first essay.

HARYANA WIN

ROHTAK: Skipper Harshal Patel starred with four wickets in each innings as Haryana posted a seven-wicket win over Assam on the second day of Group C encounter.

Trailing by 101 runs, Assam made 197 in 56.5 overs in their second innings, leaving the hosts with 97 runs for victory.

Patel (4/49) snapped four wickets to add to his first innings haul of four for 32.

Haryana then reached the target in 20 overs with Ankit Kumar scoring 30 and Shivam Chauhan (26 not out) and Chaitanya Bishnoi (21 not out) producing unbeaten knocks.

The win took Haryana's tally to 30 points and they are now placed fourth in the group.

In another match, Services crushed Uttarakhand by 10 wickets to pick up seven points.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India end tour on high

Navneet's brace sees women's team through in last match of tour

A determined Indian women's hockey team beat hosts New Zealand 3-0 to end their New Zealand tour on a high. Playing their last match in the five-match tour, India stuck to a disciplined structure, remained assertive in their attack and ensured a good finish without letting the pressure daunt their efforts to win.

It was Indian striker Navneet Kaur who starred for the team when she set up India's first goal in the 45th minute to put the team ahead 1-0. Soon after, youngster Sharmila doubled the lead when she struck a powerful shot past New Zealand goalkeeper in the 54th minute.

Navneet rallied back in the 58th minute with a beautiful goal that ensured India won 3-0. While the Indian forwards had stitched together a successful attack that saw them make



Indian women's hockey team pose for a group picture after the end of New Zealand tour

space in the striking circle, India's defence remained defiant to ensure New Zealand had little chance to score.

"The team ensured a good ending to the tour and I am happy we produced three goals against New Zealand in the last

match. This tour gave us a good insight about where we need to improve and one of the things is to create faster play

than we do now," expressed Chief Coach Sjoerd Marijne reflecting on the team's performance in the five-match tour.

Expressing his observations about the team's performance during the tour, Marijne said, "Sometimes we tend to keep the ball too long on the stick and then we create pressure to our own self. We need to avoid that by passing faster. On the defence side, we need to be a bit more calmer and need to improve how we tackle. We will have a four week camp after a short break now when we return home. We will be working on these points during the forthcoming camp apart from a few other aspects," stated Marijne.

PSG extend unbeaten run

Tuchel's side move 15 points clear with tight Nantes win



Angel di Maria celebrates after PSG first goal

AFP ■ PARIS

Paris Saint-Germain further strengthened their dominance of Ligue 1 on Tuesday with a 2-1 win at Nantes that moved the champions 15 points clear of the domestic rivals.

Goals in either half from Mauro Icardi and Thilo Kehrer were just about enough for Thomas Tuchel's side to stretch their lead over second-placed Marseille ahead of their trip to Saint-Etienne.

PSG extended their unbeaten run in all competitions to 20 matches despite a Presnel Kimpembe howler allowing Moses Simon to race through and pull one back in the 68th minute, setting up a nervy finish.

The capital club were dominant for long periods despite the absence of Neymar with a rib complaint, and it was Kylian Mbappe who created the opener.

World Cup winner Mbappe burst down the left flank before pulling back perfectly for Angel Di Maria, whose shot brushed fellow Argentine Icardi before nestling in the back of the net.

The three points looked to be sealed 11 minutes after the break when Kehrer headed home Di Maria's corner.

However, Kimpembe let Nantes back into the game 11 minutes later when his fluffed attempt at a flicked pass to centre-back partner Kehrer gave Simon his chance.

Ram-Raja storms into doubles quarters

Mukund loses in singles despite gritty show

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian pair of Ramkumar Ramanathan and Purav Raja made their way into the doubles quarter-final of the third edition of Tata Open Maharashtra with hard-fought yet convincing 7-6 (8-6), 6-3 victory against compatriot Sumit Nagal and his Partner Egor Gerasimov of Belarus at Mhalunge Balewadi Stadium in Pune on Wednesday.

The Indian rising star Nagal, who was included into doubles main draw following withdrawal of German pair Peter Gojowczyk-Cedrik-Marcel Stebe, could not capitalise on the opportunity. After winning the first in the tie-breaker Ramanathan-Raja came strongly into the next set which saw them dominating and wrapping it up 6-3 easily as well as the match in straight sets. The duo will now face stiff challenge of India's Leander Paes today.

Earlier in the singles round-of-32, Sasikumar



Ramkumar Ramanathan & Purav Raja celebrates after winning

Mukund dished out a gritty performance before going down against the Japanese Taro Daniel. The 23-year-old Indian youngster, who was handed a wild-card entry during his third appearance at the tournament, made strong comeback into the second set before losing the first 6-2. However, despite putting a solid performance in the second set that saw Daniel struggling, Mukund went onto lose 6-2, 7-6 (9-7) in the thrilling tie-break-

er. Meanwhile, in the doubles round-of-16 match, Robin Haase of Netherlands and Sweden's Robert Lindstedt played to their had to work hard in their opening round match against Dutch pair of Sander Arends and David Pel which went into tie-breaker. However, top-seeded pair of Haase-Lindstedt somehow managed to comeback in the decider and completed 6-7 (5-7), 6-3, 10-8 win.

performance. There was a message at half-time and at full-time. "He said Chelsea away could be an opportunity for one or two of them and they put in a performance tonight."

Newcastle reached the fifth round for the first time since 2006 after a dramatic 3-2 win at third tier Oxford.

Also, Wayne Rooney booked an emotional clash with his former club Manchester United as second tier Derby cruised to a 4-2 win over Northampton at Pride Park.

The former England star, who recently joined Derby after a spell with DC United, spent 13 years with the Old Trafford club and won a host of major trophies before returning to Everton in 2017.

"He's going to face the club where he had a wonderful career so of course it is special," Derby boss Phillip Cocu said.

Sindhu signs off with win

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

PV Sindhu ended her campaign at Star Sports Premier Badminton League 2020 on a high with a strong 15-7, 15-8 win against Rituparna Das as the former champions Hyderabad Hunters clashed with the Pune 7 Aces at the GMC Bhalayogi Sats Indoor Stadium in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

While Pune has confirmed its berth in the semi-finals, the journey ends for the Hunters as they failed to make it to the knock-out stages.

Having upset World No 14 Beiwen Zhang in her previous match, World No 100 Rituparna Das came into this match with a lot of confidence.

But the world champion Sindhu posed a very different challenge. The Rio Olympic silver medalist was in no mood to relent as she built a big lead of 8-3, banking on her aggression and speed. Das struggled to counter the pace at which Sindhu was hitting and conceded the first game 7-15.

The lower-ranked shuttler gave a better account of herself in the second game as she kept Sindhu moving to every part of the court. Her strokeplay helped her remain on par with her highly accomplished opponent till 6-6.

Sindhu did just enough to lift her game from thereon and completed a strong 15-7, 15-8 win to end her PBL5 campaign on a high.

Haaland goal not enough for win

AFP ■ BREMEN

An astonishing eighth goal for teenage striking sensation Erling Braut Haaland couldn't help Borussia Dortmund into the German Cup quarter-finals after they were knocked out 3-2 at Werder Bremen on Tuesday.

Haaland continued his incredible run of form since signing for the Bundesliga title chasers when he tapped home in the 67th minute to pull one back for the away side after Davie Selk and Leonardo Bittencourt had put Werder two ahead in the first half-an-hour.

The strike means the 19-year-old has scored in each of his appearances for Dortmund despite only making one start and playing barely two matches' worth of football in the few weeks since his arrival in Germany.

On this occasion he entered the field as a half-time substitute, but three minutes after his goal Milot Rashica put the hosts 3-1 up and put his side through to the next round, despite Giovanni Reyna pulling one back with 12 minutes remaining.

Werder will be joined in the next round by Fortuna Duesseldorf and Eintracht



Haaland celebrates after scoring

BVB/instagram

Reus out of PSG clash

DORTMUND: Borussia Dortmund were dealt a blow on Wednesday after announcing that captain Marco Reus has picked up a muscle injury that should keep him out of the first leg of their Champions League last 16 tie against Paris Saint-Germain.

In a statement Dortmund said the 30-year-old should be out "for around four weeks" after picking up the injury, ruling him out of the home leg of the PSG clash on February 18.

Frankfurt after their wins over Kaiserslautern and RB Leipzig, and Schalke, who squeezed past Hertha Berlin 3-2 thanks to Benito Raman's extra-time winner.

Ighalo took pay cut to sign for 'dream club' Utd

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Lifelong Manchester United fan Odion Ighalo said he had no hesitation in taking a pay cut to complete his dream deadline-day switch to Old Trafford, enduring a sleepless night as the deal was hammered out.

United were already short in attack following the summer departures of Alexis Sanchez and Romelu Lukaku and a back injury sustained by Marcus Rashford, making a reinforcement during the January transfer window of crucial importance to the Old Trafford club.

United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer looked at a variety of options and eventually completed a late loan deal for ex-Watford striker Ighalo, who has joined until the end of the season from Shanghai Shenhua.

"I'm very happy," the Nigeria forward told United's website. "First, I want say thank God for making this happen and it's just like a dream come true for me."

"People that know me, even back in Nigeria, and even when I was playing at Watford, my team-mates knew that I loved Man United, I support them. When I played against Man U, that emotion is there, because it is my dream."

"It is a nice reality, so I'm very happy and I'm looking forward to start."

Ighalo, 30, followed Sporting Lisbon midfielder Bruno Fernandes into Old Trafford, with the forward calling his last-minute move "very dramatic", having been informed by his agent the day before of United's interest.

"From 11:00 pm (2300 GMT) there was paperwork, negotiating and all that, for the loan deal and all that, so we are talking and other teams are calling them, wanting me," he said.

"But I told my agent that this is what I want. I want to come here."

"He said 'you're going to get a pay cut to go to United'. I said I don't care. Make this deal happen. I want to go to United. I don't care how much is the pay cut, I know that, make it happen."

Ighalo, who will be the first Nigerian to play for Manchester United, said there had been huge excitement among his family and friends.

"It was crazy because, all over the news for the last few days, is about my deal to Man United," he said. "Even the street I grew up on, they are doing parties, celebrating Ighalo signing for United."

Solskjaer's side are currently seventh in the Premier League table, with United a huge 38 points behind runaway leaders and arch-rivals Liverpool.

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Are you kidding me!

Liverpool youngsters beat Shrewsbury to reach FA Cup fifth round

Liverpool's youngest ever team proved coach Jurgen Klopp was right to rest his stars as they reached the FA Cup fifth round with a 1-0 win against third-tier Shrewsbury on Tuesday.

Klopp and his entire first team were all absent for the fourth round replay at Anfield as part of the club's winter break.

The Liverpool manager was criticised for disrespecting the FA Cup, but his youngsters proved up to the task and their mature display was rewarded when Ro-Shaun Williams headed the decisive own goal in the closing stages.

Liverpool will face Chelsea in the last 16 at Stamford Bridge in March as they remain on course for a potential treble of the Premier League, Champions League and FA Cup.



Liverpool players celebrate after FA Cup win against Shrewsbury Town at Anfield

responsibility of leading Liverpool to the club's under-23 coach Neil Critchley.

With an average age of 19 years and 102 days, it was Liverpool's youngest ever starting line-up in all competitions.

There were seven teenagers, including 16-year-old Harvey Elliott, while Pedro Chirivella was the oldest player in the team at 22.

Liverpool-born teenager Curtis Jones became the club's youngest captain at 19 years and five days.

"The manager sent a message prior to the game with some words of advice and support, which was fantastic," Critchley said of his contact with Klopp. "He is delighted with the

DEFEXPO-2020

THE PIONEER'S LENS MAN CAPTURES THE BREATHTAKING ARIEL DISPLAY AND EXHIBITION ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE DEFENCE EXPO-2020 IN LUCKNOW ON WEDNESDAY

