

OPINION 8 A CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

WORLD 11 UK COURT ORDERS SALE OF YACHT LINKED TO MALLYA

SPORT 16 NADAL, HALEP WIN IN AUSTRALIAN OPEN

LUCKNOW, TUESDAY JANUARY 28, 2020; PAGES 16 ₹3



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



DEEPIKA, RISHI IN THE INTERN REMAKE 14 VIVACITY

Coronavirus bleeds markets

Sensex plunges 458 points, world stocks skid as virus scare pervades

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The deadly coronavirus struck the global equity market in a vicious way on Monday as China reported more cases of infection that is respecting no geographical boundaries. Driven by fear and uncertainty about the impact of the virus outbreak on global economy, exchanges across the world saw sharp sell-off and oil prices collapsed.

In India, equity benchmark Sensex on Monday clocked its second biggest fall in four months, dragged mainly by financial and metal counters as investors fear grew over the fast-spreading virus outbreak in China. At close, the BSE gauge Sensex was 458.07 points, or 1.10 per cent, down at 41,155.12. Intra-day, the index cracked nearly 500 points. Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty ended 129.25 points, or 1.06 per cent, down at 12,119.

On the Sensex chart, Tata Steel was the top loser, dropping 4.31 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, HDFC Bank, SBI, PowerGrid and HDFC. The Dow tumbled by nearly 500 points on opening. The S&P 500 (SPX) was down 1.6 per cent, while the Nasdaq Composite (COMP) was down 2.1 per cent.

European exchanges also traded more than 2 per cent lower on Monday, continuing their selloff from the previous week. In Paris, the CAC 40 lost 1.9 per cent to 5,907.40, while



People walk by an electronic stock board of a securities firm in Tokyo on Monday

Germany's DAX skidded 1.7 per cent to 13,342.32.

Many Asian markets, including China's, were closed for Lunar New Year holidays, while Australia was closed for Australia Day. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index caved in by 2 per cent to 23,343.51

Investors across the world are worried that if the second-largest economy in the world fails to recover in time from the viral outbreak, then it economy could take a big hit, which will also drag down the world economy.

While fear of economic slowdown spooked the oil

prices that have corrected by more than 15 per cent during the last ten days, safe-haven assets rallied higher on Monday. The price of gold climbed 0.8 per cent to \$1,583.60 per ounce.

Brent crude futures traded around 3 per cent lower on Monday at \$58.88 a barrel, their lowest level since October. US crude futures were down roughly 3 per cent.

News agency PTI quoted S Ranganathan, head of research at LKP Securities, as saying, "Coronavirus outbreak in China took a toll on Indian equities as well today as finan-

cial and metals bore the brunt of the selling. Except for select pharmaceutical stocks which held fort and gained the broader markets traded weak."

Meanwhile, India on Monday decided to prepare for possible evacuation of Indian nationals from Wuhan city in the pathogen-hit Chinese province of Hubei.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting, chaired by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, which carried out a detailed review of the situation arising out of outbreak of Coronavirus in China where 80 people have died and over 2,000 infected

with the disease.

Officials said the External Affairs Ministry will request to Chinese authorities for evacuation of Indians from Wuhan.

In view of a confirmed case of coronavirus in Nepal, the Centre has asked the five States bordering the neighbouring nation (Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim) to be alert and keep hospitals ready to meet any emergency. After airports and border areas, it has now initiated entry screening at the international ports having traffic from China.

In India, a few suspected cases have been reported altogether from Patna, Mumbai and Rajasthan, but none yet confirmed. In Patna, a woman who returned from China last week was admitted to a Patna hospital on Monday with symptoms similar to those of coronavirus.

Samples of 12 passengers have been referred to National Institute of Virology, Pune. No positive case has been reported so far, the Union Health Ministry said.

Over 100 people have been kept under observation in Kerala and Maharashtra following screening for a possible exposure to the novel coronavirus. One person each from Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur, Pathanamthitta and Malappuram and three from Ernakulam are in isolation wards of various health centres in the State.

Continued on Page 6

CM flags off Ganga Yatra

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Flagging off Ganga Yatra from Bijonore, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that Ganga river had always been a part of India's faith and economy and therefore it was the responsibility of the people and the government to keep the river clean and maintain its flow. "We have to keep Ganga river clean and ever-flowing at any cost. If you actually consider Ganga as your mother, then do your duty and brace yourself for making the river clean," Yogi said during a function held on Monday.

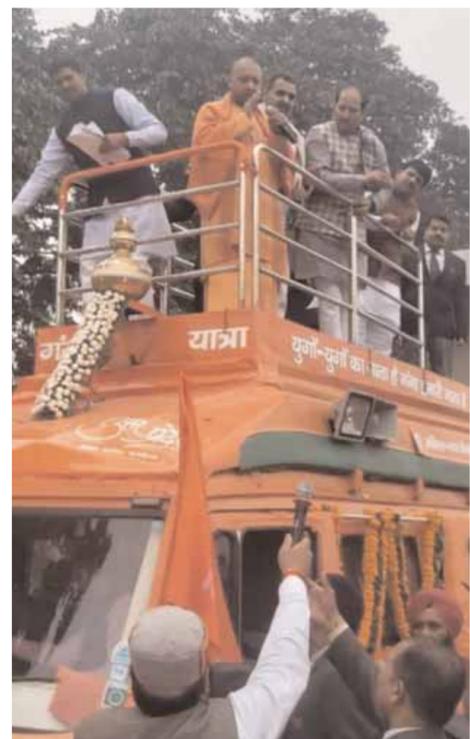
One leg of the Yatra was launched from Bijonore, where the Ganga river enters Uttar Pradesh. The Chief Minister was accompanied by his Uttarakhand counterpart Trivendra Singh Rawat and Union minister Sanjeev Balyan.

The second leg of the Yatra was flagged off by Governor Anandiben Patel from Ballia, where the holy river left the state and entered Bihar. Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi was also present on the occasion. Yogi said that Kanpur was the most sensitive point for the Ganga. "After crossing Kanpur, the holy river transforms into a drain which hurt both our faith and economy. I took a pledge and made Ganga ever-flowing and clean even in Kanpur," he said.

The Chief Minister said that if river Ganga could be made clean in Kanpur, then all other rivers of the country could become ever-flowing and clean. "If the Delhi government takes a resolve then Yamuna river can also become ever-flowing and clean," he said. Yogi said that the Gangetic plains ranked among the most fertile lands in the world. "Farmers here are hard working and because of them, India has achieved new height in agriculture production," he said.

The Chief Minister said that there were apprehensions on how Ganga could be clean and ever-flowing, how the onerous task could be done and what was the state government doing and to answer these questions, he had come to inaugurate Ganga Yatra.

"The state government is taking every possible step in this direction. You should also make this programme successful by increasing public participation. Prevent dirty drains from falling into Ganga in the cities and villages. If we work with commitment by setting goals, then Ganga will become an example in the country and the world," he said. Earlier, state BJP president Swatantra Dev Singh said that 40 per cent people of Uttar



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath after flagging off the Ganga Yatra in Bijonore on Monday

Pradesh depended on Ganga river. He said that previous governments only indulged in dacoity. "For the first time, grand and divine Kumbh Mela was successfully organized in 2019. Flowers were showered on Kanwaris for the first time. It is for the first time that the Ganga is so clean and ever-flowing during any regime," Singh said.

Earlier, Yogi performed Ganga Aarti at Bijonore Barrage

in the presence of Union Minister Sanjeev Balyan, Union Minister VK Singh, UP ministers Suresh Rana, Kapil Dev Aggarwal and Baldev Singh.

The UP government is likely to prepare a documentary film on the first-ever Ganga Yatra which will be screened for the people to make them aware of the holy river. Jal Shakti department is organising the Ganga Yatra along with two dozen other departments.



UP Governor Anandiben, Bihar Deputy CM Sushil Modi and other senior BJP leaders participating in the Ganga Yatra function in Ballia on Monday

PFI funded anti-CAA violent protests: ED

Sibal denies CAA links, claims PFI money transferred to his banks a/cs is Hadiya case fees

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

An Enforcement Directorate (ED) probe has revealed that the controversial outfit Popular Front of India (PFI) was "financially" backing the recent violent anti-CAA protests in Uttar Pradesh. However, the PFI denied the claim.

According to news agency PTI, the ED, which is probing the PFI under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act



(PMLA) since 2018, has found that at least ₹1.04 crore were deposited in bank accounts in western Uttar Pradesh after the Act was passed by Parliament in December last year. The sources said a total amount of

₹120 crore, credited to bank accounts linked to the PFI, are under the ED's scanner.

Incidentally, there was no Press release issued by the Ed to confirm the report. The PFI rubbished the charges and said

the ED has not even contacted them regarding the same.

The PFI was formed in 2006 in Kerala as a successor to the National Democratic Front (NDF) and was suspected to have shifted its headquarters to Shaheen Bagh in the national Capital over a decade ago.

Amid news reports suggesting that the PFI had paid lawyers such as Kapil Sibal, Dushyant Dave and Indira Jaising as part of its efforts to fund anti-CAA protests, the PFI as well as Sibal rejected the charge. Sibal said the payments he received from the PFI had nothing to do with anti-CAA protests, and were made for his legal services offered in the Hadiya case. The Congress leader said the ED has released a statement analysing the bank accounts of the PFI in which "my name has been mentioned

as a recipient of ₹77 lakh".

"The first bill was raised on August 4, 2017. Last bill on March 8, 2018. All payments were received before March 2018," Sibal said.

Fellow lawyer Indira Jaising, on the other hand, "completely and vehemently" denied receiving "any money" from the PFI "at any point of time". Jaising also denied receiving any money from anybody in connection with the anti-CAA protests.

On money transfers made to some prominent lawyers, the PFI said, "The truth is that transfers were made in 2017 as lawyer fees for these advocates for the Hadiya case... Attributing a fees transfer that happened in 2017 as a funding for 2019 CAA protest is totally absurd and exposes the

Continued on Page 6

CAPSULE

PROOF OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS MUST UNDER CAA

New Delhi: Non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan will have to provide proofs of their religious beliefs while applying for Indian citizenship under the controversial CAA, officials said on Monday.

NIRBHAYA: PLEA AGAINST WITNESS DISMISSED

New Delhi: A Delhi court on Monday dismissed a plea filed by the father of one of the four death row convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case, challenging the court's order rejecting his complaint questioning the credibility of the sole witness in the case.

AMU STUDENTS BLOCK TRAFFIC ON HIGHWAY

Aligarh: Hundreds of AMU students overnight blocked traffic on the main Aligarh-Moradabad Highway demanding release of a student who was held for allegedly heckling the AMU Vice Chancellor during his Republic Day speech, a university official said on Monday.

CAA INTERNAL MATTER: FRENCH GOVT SOURCES

New Delhi: France, a founding member of the European Union, considers the new citizenship law an internal political matter of India, French diplomatic sources said on Monday. They said the European Parliament is an institution independent of member states and the European Commission.

AIMPLB moves SC against pleas to criminalise nikah halala, polygamy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) moved the Supreme Court on Monday seeking implementation in petitions challenging constitutional validity of polygamy and "nikah halala" practised among Muslims.

The application has been filed to oppose a batch of petitions on which the SC had in 2018 issued notices to the Centre and other stakeholders while referring the matter to a 5-judge Constitution bench.

While polygamy allows a Muslim man to have four wives, "nikah halala" stipulates that a Muslim woman, who wants to remarry her husband after divorce, has to first marry another man, "consummate" the marriage and get divorce from him.

The two issues had arisen when the SC was dealing with the practice of triple talaq. By a 3:2 verdict, a five-judge Constitution bench on August 22, 2017 had banned the 1,400-year-old practice among Sunni Muslims saying it was against the basic tenets of the Quran and violated Shariat.

Continued on Page 6

Historic Bodo accord inked for peace in Assam

Centre, State Govt sign pact with NDFB, gives political-economic benefits for foregone State/UT demand

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major step to usher in "permanent peace" in the region, the Centre and Assam Government on Monday signed a tripartite peace accord with the dreaded insurgent group National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and other militant outfits.

The accord signed in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah promised political and economic benefits while not acceding to the demand for separate State or Union Territory. The members of the armed outfits will surrender on January 30, Mahatma Gandhi's martyrdom day, as per the accord.

Soon after the agreement was signed at the Union Home Ministry in the afternoon, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it would usher in a new dawn of peace, harmony and togetherness.

"Today is a very special day for India. The accord with Bodo groups, which has been inked today will lead to transformative results for the Bodo people. Bodo Accord inked today stands out for many reasons. It successfully brings together the leading stake-



President of National Democratic Front of Boroland (NDFB) Govinda Basumatary (C) and president of the United Bodo Peoples Organisation (UBPO) Mihiniswar Basumatary (R) sign an accord with the Centre and the State Government to facilitate all-round development of the Bodo areas, without compromising the territorial integrity of Assam in New Delhi

holders under one framework. Those who were previously associated with armed resistance groups will now be entering the mainstream and contributing to our nation's progress," Modi said in a series of tweets.

The Home Minister described the agreement as "historic" and said it would bring permanent peace and solution to the decades-old problems of the Bodo people. "This agreement will facilitate all round development of the

Bodo areas, their language and culture will be protected without compromising the territorial integrity of Assam," he told reporters after the accord was signed. Shah said due to the violence perpetrated by the Bodo

militants, over 4,000 people lost their lives in the past few decades.

The All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU), which has been spearheading a movement for a Bodoland State since 1972, and the United Bodo People's Organisation, were signatories to the Comprehensive Bodo Settlement Agreement. The agreement was signed by top leaders of the four NDFB factions, the ABSU and the UBPO, Joint Secretary in the Home Ministry Satyendra Garg, and Assam Chief Secretary Kumar Sanjay Krishna.

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal also signed the pact as one of the witnesses. Assam Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma was present on the occasion.

The NDFB was responsible for a series of violent acts in the past few decades, including the massacre of nearly 70 Adivasis in December 2014.

Shah said no stone would be left unturned for the development of Assam and the Northeastern region. "A final and comprehensive solution to their demands has been made, while retaining the territorial integrity of Assam," he said.

Continued on Page 6

Bengal 4th State to pass resolution against CAA

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The West Bengal Assembly on Monday became the fourth State after Kerala, Punjab and Rajasthan to pass a resolution against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, or CAA, even as Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee called upon all the Opposition parties to sink their differences and put up a united front against the BJP-led Union Government.

Addressing the House, Mamata said, "We will never allow CAA, NPR, and NRC in Bengal, and resist the draconian CAA peacefully."

She expressed her anguish over how the Centre was trying to befool the people by offering to provide citizenship through the amended Act.

"Though in the face of it CAA is designed to provide citizenship... for that to happen you have to become a foreigner for five years. This is a vicious game that will push people towards death. I appeal you not to fall in trap," she said.

Mamata wondered whether the BJP was "brand ambassadors of Pakistan," talking more of the hostile neighbour than their own country.

Continued on Page 6

CAA brought to divide society on religious lines: Yashwant

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Terminating the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as unconstitutional, former Union minister and a strong critic of the Bharatiya Janata Party government, Yashwant Sinha, on Monday said the law was brought to divide society on religious lines.

"The only motive of this law is to divide society on communal lines and trigger hatred against each other in the country," he said while demanding immediate withdrawal of this "black law".

Addressing a press conference along with Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav and Congress leader Shatrughan Sinha at SP state headquarters here, Sinha said the statement of Union Home Minister Amit Shah that the CAA would not be withdrawn at any cost was itself anti-democratic.

"Sinha's statement that the CAA would not be withdrawn even after protests, indicated that the government is working against the citizens. The government already had the power to give citizenship then what was the reason for bringing this new law, no one can understand," Sinha said, claiming that by bringing such an "anti-constitutional" law, the government was trying to divert the



Former Union Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha addressing media persons at Samajwadi Party office in Lucknow on Monday. With him are SP chief Akhilesh Yadav and former parliamentarian Shatrughan Sinha (right)

attention of the people from economic slowdown and unemployment.

He said when the rules of the new CAA had not been framed yet, how would it be implemented. "The law says that the minorities in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, if harassed on the basis of religion, can apply for the Indian citizenship. But how these people will prove that they are harassed and the law does not say anything about it," Sinha said.

He said the present BJP government at the Centre was taking unethical and illegal decisions just to benefit a handful of industrialists.

"While Air India would be

given to some industrialists, on the other hand, Rs 1,45,000 crore has been taken from the RBI for these industrial houses," he alleged.

"The economic condition of the country is grim and the agriculture sector is most hit leading to suicides by farmers," he added.

Sinha is in Lucknow along with his Gandhi Shanti Yatra, which has come to Uttar Pradesh after covering Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and other states. The yatra will end at Rajghat on January 30. It commenced on January 9 this year from Gateway of India in Mumbai, where Mahatma Gandhi landed after coming to the country

from South Africa.

Sinha also targeted some governors in the non-BJP state. "These governors are acting like BJP cadre and are adopting unconstitutional ways to create hurdle for the democratically elected governments," he said.

Meanwhile, SP president Akhilesh Yadav said that the BJP government was not talking of demonetisation as it had failed on it.

"We are opposing the CAA, the NRC and the NPR and will not accept them at any cost," he reiterated, saying that the government had failed in demonetisation and it would again meet the same fate on CAA and NRC also.

7 IAS officers transferred

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a minor bureaucratic reshuffle, the state government transferred seven IAS officers on Monday.

CDO of Mathura, Ram Newas, was posted as special secretary (medical education) while CDO of Rae Bareilly, Rakesh Kumar-1, was sent to Panchayati Raj department as special secretary.

CDO of Bareilly, Satyendra Kumar, was shifted to Lucknow as special secretary (basic education) while joint magistrate at Shravasti, Chandra Mohan Garg, was sent to Bareilly as CDO.

Joint magistrate of Mathura, Abhishek Goyal, was transferred to Rae Bareilly as CDO while joint magistrate of Jaunpur, Satya Prakash, was posted as CDO of Fatehpur.

Joint magistrate of Mathura, Nitin Gaur, was posted as CDO of Mathura.

CM orders strict monitoring of coronavirus

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed strict monitoring of coronavirus in the state.

The virus has killed over 80 people in China so far.

The chief minister has asked the Health department to set up 10-bed isolation ward in all the district hospitals and medical colleges.

He reviewed the preparations to counter the deadly virus in the state with senior officials of the Health department here on Monday.

Yogi Adityanath directed the Health officials to monitor people entering UP from Nepal border with special checking at airports of people coming from



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath speaking at a press conference.

foreign countries. The chief minister also asked the state Health department to coordinate with the Central government over coronavirus patients and its prevention.

Till date not a single person has been identified in UP as being infected with this deadly virus

UP Budget session from Feb 13

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Budget session of Uttar Pradesh legislature will commence from February 13 and promises to be a stormy one.

Being the first session of 2020, Governor Anandiben Patel will address a joint sitting of both the Houses of the UP legislature on the opening day.

The session is likely to have around 20 sittings though the business advisory committee will finalise the details.

The Yogi Adityanath government is scheduled to lay the budget proposal for coming 2020-21 financial year on February 17.

Sources said that for the first time, the Budget of UP government was set to cross the ₹5 lakh crore-mark. The budget of previous fiscal was of ₹4.28 lakh crore.

Dikshit to kick-off Basti Mahotsav today

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly Speaker Hriday Narayan Dikshit will kick-off the Basti Mahotsav at the district headquarters. The Basti Mahotsav, which will commence on Tuesday, will end on February 1.

Giving this information, programme convener and District Magistrate Ashutosh Niranjana said on Monday that

the Basti Mahotsav would be inaugurated traditionally by the Speaker at 11 am on Tuesday.

Preparations for the mahotsav have been completed and various departments have put up stalls to highlight the welfare schemes of the government. Eminent poet Kumar Vishwas, well-known devotional song singer Anoop Jalota, singer

Maithali, Rishabh Thakur and other artistes are slated to take part in the mahotsav.

Niranjana said that the mahotsav would have a 'yoga' programme from 7 am to 8 am every day, and workshops related to schemes of various departments will also be organised. Major workshops among these will be related to Rashtriya Ajeevika Mission, Beti Bachao,

Beti Padhao, Poshan Mission, Swachh Bharat Mission. Women and children will be trained for self-defence under Virangana programme from 12 noon to 2 pm.

Stage programmes of schoolchildren will also be held from 1 pm to 4 pm. Entry is free in the mahotsav and people have been urged to attend the programmes.

CAA protests: Congress, BSP demand withdrawal of cases

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Expressing concern over those booked for taking part in the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, especially in Uttar Pradesh, the Congress and the Bahujan Samaj Party took up the issue on Monday.

While a Congress delegation led by Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra met top officials of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in New Delhi on Monday and demanded a probe into alleged police atrocities against the protesters in UP, Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati demanded withdrawal of cases registered against those involved in protests against the amended citizenship law and National

Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state.

As per reports, former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and senior leaders of the party met NHRC officials and highlighted the alleged brutalities committed by UP Police on agitators during anti-CAA stir.

Other leaders in the delegation included Mohsina Kidwai, Salman Khurshid, PL Punia, Jitin Prasad, Abhishek Singhvi, Rajiv Shukla and UP Congress chief Ajay Kumar Lallu.

The Congress delegation demanded a thorough probe into the deaths during police action in the UP.

Earlier, Priyanka had visited several families in Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Meerut etc. to condole the deaths of the near and dear ones during the anti-CAA stir. Meanwhile, Mayawati demanded withdrawal of cases registered by the state government against women protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state.

Women have been protesting in different parts of UP, including the historic Clock Tower of Old Lucknow, demanding scrapping of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and National Register of Citizens.

Nearly 20 people were killed in the state after violence erupted during the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act last month.

citizens.

In a tweet, the Bahujan Samaj Party chief said, "Wrong cases filed against women and others protesting against CAA/NRC by the BJP-led UP government should be immediately withdrawn, and those who lost their lives during this time should also be extended proper help, this is the demand of BSP."

Around 100 women protesters have been booked for violating prohibitory orders at the Clock Tower in the state capital.

"A case has been registered against 10 women and 100 unidentified women for violating Section 144 of CrPC, while protesting at Clock Tower. Besides, eight persons were arrested," Station House Officer of Thakurganj police station, Pramod Mishra, said on Saturday.

The dharna at Lucknow's Clock Tower is on the lines of Delhi's Shaheen Bagh protest against CAA and NRC.

The women protesters have said their stir will continue until the Centre scraps the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens.

Nearly 20 people were killed in the state after violence erupted during the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act last month.

Congress calendar projects Priyanka as a mass leader

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a bid to project Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra as a mass leader working for the betterment of Uttar Pradesh, the party released a calendar with pictures highlighting her key political visits to the state.

Each page carries a different picture of the Congress leader, addressing public rallies, greeting people, her Sonbhadra visit and Ganga Yatra between January and December 2019.

Earlier on New Year, Priyanka had sent greeting cards to five lakh people of the state, with the Preamble of Indian Constitution printed on one of its sides. The cards were sent to intellectuals, writers, poets, journalists and social workers of the state. The task of collecting postal addresses of five lakh people was done by Congress workers over several months.

Congress leaders said in Lucknow on Monday that the 'January' page of the calendar shows Priyanka embarking on Ganga Yatra from Prayagraj, while on the page of March there is a picture of Priyanka during her Ganga Yatra at Bhadohi.

The page for April showcases pictures from Chunar Fort when Priyanka had gone there to meet the families of



Sonbhadra massacre victims. Then she was stopped by the local administration in Mirzapur and forced to spend the night at Chunar Fort. Sources in the Congress said that the calendar was meant for party workers only and its copies would be given out soon.

Another motive behind bringing out this calendar is to target people who vote for Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party. The Congress has tried to address the caste equations in the 12-page calendar, with "special days" and holidays also highlighting dates such as birth anniversary of Dalit icon Dr BR Ambedkar, his wife Ramabai Ambedkar, social reformer Savitri Bai Phule and Raja Suhel Dev, considered an icon by the Rajbarh community. The birth anniversary of Babu Jagdev Prasad, who is revered by Kushwaha community, also finds a mention in the calendar.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING ATTENDANCE OF DEFENDANT
(Order 5, Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure) In the Court of Sh. R.L. MEENA, ADJ-02 (New Delhi) Patata House Courts, New Delhi
NDH-06.02.2020
ML118/2016

Shri Anil Aggarwal
Versus
Wafiq Khan Bahadur Nawab Abul Hasan Khan & Wafiq Mst. Mahmood-UN-Nisa Begum & Ors.

To:
1. Wafiq Khan Bahadur Nawab Abul Hasan Khan & Wafiq Mst. Mahmood-UN-Nisa Begum. Through its Mutawalli, 626-27, Bazar Chilli Qabar, Jama Masjid, Delhi-110006
2. Rahat, Kamal Hasan Khan S/o Late Mustafa Kamal Hasan Khan
3. Humayun Kamal Hasan Khan S/o Late Mustafa Kamal Hasan Khan
4. Murtaza Kamal Hasan Khan S/o Late Mustafa Kamal Hasan Khan
5. Haziq Kamal Hasan Khan S/o Late Mustafa Kamal Hasan Khan
6. Afaq Kamal Hasan Khan S/o Late Mustafa Kamal Hasan Khan
7. Alia Kamal Degum W/o Dr. Hidayat Hussain
8. Uruska Kamal Begum W/o Anis Ahmed
Defendant No. 1
Defendants No. 2 to 8 R/O Mustafa Bagh, Nasheman-E-Tahzeeb, Nagla Barola, Aligarh U.P.
9. Shri Sukhbir Singh S/o Late Harpal Singh R/o WZ-156, Ravi Nagar, New Delhi-110018
Defendant No. 12
10. Mr. Satish Kumar Jain S/o Jagat Ram Jain, 758, Katra Neel, Chandni Chowk, Delhi-110006
Defendant No. 13

Whereas you are intentionally evading service of summons it is hereby notified that if you shall not defend the case on the 06.02.2020 the day fixed for the final disposal, it will be heard and determined ex-parte. (Given under my hand and the seal of the Court, this 20.01.2020. ADJ-02 & Wafiq Tribunal (NDH) PHC, New Delhi)



NOTICE

I Anita Sinha W/o Mohd. Aquil Akhtar R/o 11/60 Bahar Sahara Estates Jankipuram Lucknow 226021 hereby declared that my son Ayaan and Ayaan Sinha are one and same person.

सूचना

मैंने अपना नाम सरफराज अहमद सिद्दीकी से बदलकर सरफराज अहमद रख लिया है। अब मुझे इसी नाम से जाना व पहचाना जाये। सरफराज अहमद पुत्र निशाज अहमद निवासी मोन-0 544 / 3260 लीला बैटरी के सामने कन्हई खेड़ा, कैम्पवेल रोड, बालागंज, लखनऊ

सूचना

मैं घोषणा करती हूँ कि मेरा नाम परवीन बेगम है व अंग्रेजी नाम की Spelling है जो मेरे ही हैं। अब मेरे नाम की Spelling सारे दस्तावेजों में Perveen Begum है जो सत्य व सही है। Perveen Begum W/o Mazhar Shakeel Ansari A-999 H.A.L. Colony Lucknow-226016

Man hacks wife, brother to death in Lakhimpur Kheri

Lucknow (PNS): Lakhimpur Kheri was rocked by a sensational double murder in which a 35-year-old man, Shakeel, hacked his wife and younger brother to death with an axe and injured his mother in Naurangabad area on Monday morning.

While the motive for the killings was not immediately known, the police suspect that Shakeel committed the crime as he suspected that his wife Shabikunnishan (30) and brother Mohsin (30) were having an affair. They said when Shakeel's mother, Sabirunnishan, tried to stop him during the attack, he attacked her, injuring her hand. Apparently mentally disturbed, Shakeel was later held by locals and handed over to the police along with the axe he used for the murderous attack.

Senior Superintendent of Police of Kheri, Poonam, visited the scene of crime and said that investigation was on to ascertain the actual motive behind the killing.

The bodies were sent for autopsy. In another sensational incident reported

from Sambhal, two sisters were raped in Behjoji area by two men in police uniform on Sunday. The police registered a case but denied involvement of any cop, claiming that the accused seemed to have misused the uniform to terrorise the victims and execute the crime.

As per reports, two men came in a car and barged into the house of the sisters. Claiming to be constables of local police station, they accused the family members of dealing in spurious liquor and asked the sisters to accompany them to the police station for inquiry.

Later, the miscreants took the girls to a secluded spot in a nearby jungle, took turns with them and sped off.

Upon returning home, the sisters informed the family about their ordeal after which their kin went to Behjoji police station only to be told that no constable was sent to their home.

A complaint was lodged, investigations were underway and the victims were sent for medical examination.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Lucknow only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

Youth's torso found stuffed in sack, hunt on for other parts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Torso of an unidentified youth was found stuffed in a plastic bag which was recovered near railway tracks in Kakori on Saturday night. Police sent the torso to morgue and were searching for the head, legs and arms in the forest cover and deserted places in the locality. A case was registered against unidentified persons for murder and bid to destroy the evidence.

As per reports, two track patrolmen, Gyanendra and Vinod of Kakori, spotted a plastic sack lying near railway bridge in Amethiya locality and alerted the station master. On being informed, senior police officers reached the scene to take stock of the investigation.

Kakori SHO Ghanshyam Mani Tripathi said: "There were no clothes on the torso which was recovered from the sack. The patrolmen who informed us about the incident said they saw vapours coming out of the sack and they grew suspicious. No blood stains were detected around the crime scene and it suggested that the



youth was killed somewhere else and his body dumped there. Apparently, the killers wanted to destroy the evidence to hide their crime and thus, we also booked them under Section 201 of IPC besides murder." While the police were yet to conclude the probe and reach any conclusion, sources said the youth was killed out of hatred. "The youth's head was decapitated and his limbs and arms were also chopped off. The killers probably used some sharp-edged weapon or motorised saw," they opined. "The possibility of honour killing cannot be ruled out at this stage," they added.

A spokesman said the police searched the entire area and questioned many locals to

While police were yet to conclude the probe and reach any conclusion, sources said the youth was killed out of hatred

ascertain the identity of the deceased, but got no headway.

It is not a new task for Lucknow police to investigate cases in which dismembered bodies were found stuffed in bags. A case in point is that of an LLB girl student of Aminabad and another of a woman of Para. The police had recovered the body parts of the girl alongside Shaheed Path in PGI police station area when Yashasvi Yadav was the SSP of Lucknow. In case of Para, a woman's limbs and arms were recovered in Ashiyana and chopped-off torso from a vacant plot in Para last year.

In Aminabad girl's murder case, the police had arrested a youth of Telibagh and he had disclosed that he used a saw to

cut the body parts after killing her at his house. The police had also suspected the role of her husband but were yet to nab him. The police had said that the victim's husband doubted her character and used a chainsaw to dismember her body and dumped the parts after stuffing the same in two briefcases.

"The police took quite some time to crack both the cases and also triggered a row in the process. In the Aminabad girl's murder case, the police were accused of purchasing a saw from a hardware shop in Telibagh while in case of Para, the cops were blamed for hastily concluding the probe," sources said.

They also cited a case in which the Madaion police had recovered two sacks stuffed with body parts of two women near a medical college on IIM road in 2015. "The Hardoi police had recovered two decapitated heads of different women later from a village a few days after the recovery of body parts in Madaion. But the heads did not match with the torsos recovered in Madaion. The case is still pending," they pointed out.

3 SP workers held for bid to torch Shah's effigy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow (PNS): Three workers of Samajwadi Party (two girls and a youth) were arrested for attempting to burn the effigy of Union Home Minister Amit Shah during an anti-CAA protest at Vidhan Bhawan Gate No. 2 in Hazratganj on Monday.

As per reports, the youths reached the scene around 11.25 am. They were carrying an effigy which they later attempted to burn. "A police team deployed there responded quickly and nabbed three of them for violating prohibitory orders besides rioting and endangering lives of others," a police spokesman said.

They were identified as Neeraj Yadav (23) of Madaion, Ranjana Verma (24) of Barabanki and Manbhawati Yadav (25) of Deoria. "They had been kept at Hazratganj Kotwali while police are working on the case," the spokesman said. He added that 7 Criminal Law Amendment Act was also slapped on the trio.

Bars in five-star UP hotels to remain open till 4 am

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to allow bars in big cities to remain open up to 2 am and those in five-star hotels till 4 am. The move has been cheered by bar and hotels owners who have been demanding increase in the timing for a long time. Principal Secretary Sanjay Bhoosreddy said the decision, which would come into effect on April 1, was meant for the convenience of guests, particularly foreigners.

Liquor Sellers Welfare Association (LSWA) leader KL Maurya welcomed the decision and said he hoped the government would increase the time of business hours of the shops also. Licenced bars in major UP cities used to remain open up to 1 am or 3 am if they were located in five-star hotels. Now, hotels in small cities can also apply for a liquor licence.

The annual license fee to serve liquor in 50-room hotels in the bigger cities will be Rs 10 lakh from April 1. These cities include Gautam Buddha Nagar

(Noida), Ghaziabad, Kanpur, Agra, Allahabad, Lucknow and Varanasi. The licence fee for category-2 cities has been fixed at Rs 7.50 lakh per year. These cities include Bareilly, Aligarh, Gorakhpur, Jhansi, Mathura, Meerut, Moradabad, Saharanpur, Ayodhya and Firozabad. The annual fee for category-3 cities is now Rs 5 lakh and for category-4 towns Rs 2.50 lakh, it was announced last week. Under the new excise policy, shops selling beer will be allowed to sell wine also. Besides, a licence fee will be charged from to serve liquor on board luxury trains, which was free earlier. The government has also decided to give licences to airport lounges and hotels located outside the airport

where airline passengers stay. To check adulteration, all liquor bottles will have bar codes so that the consumer can check for spurious liquor.

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet last week had given nod to the 2020-21 excise policy under which the licence fee for selling country-made liquor was increased by 10 per cent, the licence fee for serving beer by 15 per cent and for foreign liquor by 20 per cent. KL Maurya said the government did not address their demand to increase the time of opening of shops. He also pointed out that the government was yet to consider their demand for roll-back of its decision on e-banking payment for the liquor sellers.

Father drowns infant in bathtub

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A man was accused of killing his one-month-old son by drowning him in the bathtub at his house during a brawl with his wife in Gosainganj on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday. The couple had a love marriage but they developed serious differences in due course of time and moved court for divorce. However, they agreed to live together following mediation on court's instructions.

As per reports, Beena Pandey of Arjunanj had a

love marriage with Lavlesh Dwivedi in 2016. On Sunday night, Beena informed police that Lavlesh had killed their son by drowning him in the bathtub. "On the information, Gosainganj SHO DK Upadhyay reached the scene and it surfaced that child was at Ram Manohar Lohiya hospital. A team reached there and came to know that the infant had died," the Gosainganj SHO was quoted as saying by a police spokesman. He said the couple were on loggerheads ever since they got married as Beena

accused Lavlesh of demanding dowry.

Beena alleged that Lavlesh was a greedy man and was demanded money from her parents off and on. "He started beating me following which I sought the help of my parents. Later, we lodged a case of dowry against Lavlesh but he succeeded in winning favour from policemen and I was forced to live with him. He had also tried to kill our daughter in the past and I had lodged a complaint in this regard, but no police help came my way," she alleged. Her father

Ramrang alleged that Lavlesh drowned the infant in the bathtub on January 25 night and fled the house. "We rushed the child to hospital where he was declared brought dead. With dowry on his mind, Lavlesh wanted to marry another woman and wanted to kill both the children he had with my daughter," he alleged.

The SHO said he was yet to get a complaint in this regard. "If we receive a complaint, a case will be registered," he said, adding that the infant's body had been sent for autopsy.

Clerics support anti-CAA stir



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Muslim clerics Maulana MKhalid Rasheed Farangi Mahali, Abdul Alim Farooqui, Qazi Shahar Mufti Abul Irfan Firangi Mahli, AIMPLB member Zafaryab Jilani and Fazle Mannan besides poet Imran Pratapgarhi were among those who expressed solidarity with the all-women protest against CAA at Hussainabad Clock Tower on Sunday and Monday. The protest entered its 11th day on Monday. A group of

advocates also reached the site in support of the protesters.

The religious leaders hailed the women observing dharna saying the law is biased and will adversely affect those with no documents. They said the government used to claim protection of women, but its actions were opposite.

"There were reports that the district administration snapped electric supply to the protest venue and police also snatched blankets and food-stuff being provided to the women braving the chilly weather," they pointed out. They said the government should ensure that there should be no discrimination against anyone. Gerald Mathais, leader of the Christian community, also reached the protest site. "We are ready to face even the tortuous measures by the government. More women are joining us each with each passing day and our supporters from different communities are increasing," a woman said.

Reports said Chandra Pal Singh (62) of Madaion was in a store room where woods were kept. "At the time of incident, only his wife was present in the house. Before any help could reach, Singh had suffered grievous burns. Neighbours contained the fire by sprinkling water and the charred body was recovered from the store room," the Madaion SHO said.

He said Singh had taken VRS in 2011 as he was suffering from several diseases, some of which chronic in nature. "His family told us that he was under depression due to his illness," the family of the retired constable was quoted as saying by the SHO. Singh's elder son, along with his wife and children, lives in Barabanki while younger son is deployed at Dial 112.

Retd constable suffering from chronic disease sets self ablaze

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A retired constable suffering from a chronic disease ended his life by setting himself ablaze at his house in Madaion on Monday evening. Though police did not recover any suicide note, they claimed that the retired constable ended his life, as per latter's family.

Reports said Chandra Pal Singh (62) of Madaion was in a store room where woods were kept. "At the time of incident, only his wife was present in the house. Before any help could reach, Singh had suffered grievous burns. Neighbours contained the fire by sprinkling water and the charred body was recovered from the store room," the Madaion SHO said.

He said Singh had taken VRS in 2011 as he was suffering from several diseases, some of which chronic in nature. "His family told us that he was under depression due to his illness," the family of the retired constable was quoted as saying by the SHO. Singh's elder son, along with his wife and children, lives in Barabanki while younger son is deployed at Dial 112.

Better late than never: Praveen on Padma Shri

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

Author Yogesh Praveen, whose phone has not stopped ringing since Padma Shri awards were announced on the occasion of Republic Day, says the award has reaffirmed his faith in the saying 'Bhagwan ke ghar der hai per andher nahin'. The 82-year-old said people asked him whether the award came to him a little late in the day. "I am a great believer in old sayings and I truly believe waqt se pehle aur kismet se zyada kisi ko kuch nahin milta," he quipped.

For this retired college, who has been penning stories on Awadh, getting an award means the city of nawabs which he has highlighted through his writings will also be in the lime-light. "I have written more than 24 books on Lucknow. I

collected the matter by meeting and interacting with people in the bylanes of Kashmiri Mohalla and Chowk. I am happy that my books are being read by people across the globe and readers are of the opinion that I have wrapped up the fables of Lucknow in such an interesting and anecdotal manner that it gives a whole picture of the city," he said.

Praveen said one of the greatest compliments which he has received was from former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. "I had gone to receive the President's medals at New Delhi and we were invited for dinner to the Prime Minister's residence where Atalji told me that whenever he came to Lucknow, he would always carry one of my books," he recalled. Another compliment which he recalled was given to

him by noted writer Amritlal Nagar. "There was a function organised at CDRI and I had to submit a 30-page write-up on Lucknow. I was a young man then, but when it was read aloud after which Amritlal Nagar came up to me and complimented me on the way I wrote about Lucknow," he said. Praveen, who has kept alive the spirit of Lucknow in his books, said *tehzeeb* still exists in the older parts of Lucknow but missing from new areas. "I quote another author here who said Lucknow's *tehzeeb* has not crossed the Gomti river. The old parts of Lucknow are still brimming with several untold stories while newer parts do not carry this fragrance at all. I know there have been several changes in the older parts of Lucknow but the culture and language is still alive

there. Even today, Shia Muslims come to me, asking about old graves and sites," he added. He said life has been an interesting journey for him and the learnings have come mostly during the pitfalls. "I still believe that the fruits of labour come when you walk a path with great dedication and without expecting anything. It is important to focus on what you have and proceed rather than compare yourself to others. One should also not waste ones time in revenge, which does not take you anywhere but harms your positive energy" he opined.

Praveen said his next would be his autobiography with tales of Lucknow. "There have been many people who have suggested that I should write my autobiography, and I think it will have a lot of Lucknow in it," he said.

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow-226007
(Area of Jurisdiction - Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION Date : 06.01.2020
(Summons to defendant under Section 19(3) of the Recovery of Debts due to Bank and Financial Institution Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rule, 1993)

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 473 OF 2019
CORPORATION BANK Applicant
VS.
AMIT KUMAR Defendants
To,
Amit Kumar S/o Sri Ravindra Prashad Srivastava, r/o Flat No. 704; Orchid Block; Eldeco Park View Apartment; Sitapur Road; Lucknow.

In the above noted application you are required to file in Paper Book form in two sets alongwith documents and affidavits (if any) personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorized agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 20.02.2020 at 10.30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.

REGISTRAR DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL LUCKNOW

LUCKNOW विकास प्राधिकरण
(ISO 14001 : 2004, ISO 9001-2008 प्रमाणित संस्था)
प्राधिकरण भवन, विपिन खण्ड, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ (उ.प्र.)
दूरभाष : 0522-2302586 वेबसाइट "http://www.ldaonline.in"

संख्या : 48/ई-निविदा/मु030/2019-20 दिनांक : 27.01.2020
ई-निविदा सूचना

लखनऊ विकास क्षेत्र में निम्नलिखित कार्यों हेतु लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण या अन्य विकास प्राधिकरणों में पंजीकृत अथवा आवास एवं विकास परिषद में पंजीकृत देकेदारों से ऑनलाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। कार्य से सम्बंधित विस्तृत निविदा-नोटिस तथा ड्राफ्ट निविदा-प्रपत्र लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट "http://www.ldaonline.in" पर देखा जा सकता है, जिसमें धरोहर धनराशि, निविदा डालने की तिथि, श्रेणी, कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि एवं ई-निविदा लागत तथा अन्य नियम व शर्तों का उल्लेख है। कार्य से संबंधित ई-निविदा-प्रपत्र वेबसाइट "http://etender.up.nic.in" पर उपलब्ध होंगे तथा ई-निविदा करने होंगे।

क्र.सं.	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की लागत (रु० लाख)	ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि
1	बसन्त कुञ्ज योजना सेक्टर-डी में भवन सं० 4/50, 4/106, 4/36 एवं 4/147 के सामने साहिब्रस्त पड़े पाकों की मरम्मत, रंगाई-पुराई एवं 02 वर्ष का अनुसंधान कार्य।	40.20	11-02-2020
2	जय प्रकाश नारायण अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय केन्द्र परियोजना स्थित म्यूजियम में स्थापित विभिन्न इक्युपमेंट, हार्डवेयर एवं साफ्टवेयर उपकरणों की आगामी तीन वर्षों हेतु वार्षिक रख-रखाव का कार्य।	35.08	11-02-2020
3	इन्दिरा गांधी प्रतिष्ठान, विभूति खण्ड, गोमती नगर में शोभाकार पौधों की आपूर्ति का कार्य।	8.37	30-01-2020

ई-निविदाओं के सम्बन्ध में कोई बदलाव अथवा अतिरिक्त सूचना मात्र उपरोक्त दोनों वेबसाइट्स पर ही उपलब्ध करायी जायेगी, अतः इच्छुक निविदादाता नियमित रूप से उक्त दोनों वेबसाइट्स देखते रहें।
उपरोक्त क्रमांक-03 पर अंकित कार्य हेतु सामान्य निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं, जिनके निविदा प्रपत्र वेबसाइट "http://www.ldaonline.in" से डाउनलोड किये जा सकेंगे।

मुख्य अभियन्ता

SAHARA INDIA PARIWAR

ROAR LUCKNOW ROAR

YOUR WARRIORS ARE READY TO BATTLE & SMASH

AWADHE WARRIORS

Team Awadhe Warriors: Christinna Pedersen (DEN); Beiwen Zhang (USA); Wong Wing Ki Vincent (HKG); Shin Baek Cheol (S.KOR); Ajay Jayaram (IND); Subhankar Dey (IND); Ko Sung Hyun (S.KOR); Ivan Sozonov (RUS); Tanvi Lad (IND)

awadhewarriors.in

FOLLOW US ON awadhewarriorsteam awadhewarrior warriorsawadhe

ROAR WITH US @
BBD UTTAR PRADESH BADMINTON ACADEMY
GOMTI NAGAR, LUCKNOW

28th Jan, 2020 | 7:00 PM | Awadhe Warriors Vs Mumbai Rockets

Tickets to the Stadium available on www.insider.in

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

AWAY MATCHES, WATCH LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1
1st Feb with Chennai Superstanz | 3rd Feb with Pune 7 Aces
6th Feb with Bengaluru Raptors

BJP slams Cong's double standards on Sami

Recalls PC's support for his citizenship

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday came out hard against the Congress for questioning the award of Padma Shri to acclaimed singer and pianist Adnan Sami.

Charging Congress with lapping up a 'set of Muslims' who always speak against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Indian Constitution, the BJP lashed out at the Opposition party for criticizing the Government for awarding 'Padma' honour to the Sami and said he was "highly deserving".

Addressing a Press conference here, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said though Congress objection was based on Sami's father having served in Pakistani air force, the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance had in the

past backed and feted the singer-musician who was invited to play Piano by the Congress Government on the occasion of 500 years of Taj Mahal, he said.

Patra took a dig at Congress saying if father's past is to cloud the present of anybody than Congress President Sonia Gandhi would be the first victim as the BJP spokesperson claimed her father was in the service of fascists Italian dictator Mussolini and Germany's Hitler and sought to know why she was given Indian citizenship.

He said former Home Minister P Chidambaram was as recently as in 2013 supporting that Sami be given Indian citizenship. BJP leader pointed out that Sami, for long, has been living in London and not in Pakistan. Everything has

Addressing a Press conference here, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said though Congress objection was based on Sami's father having served in Pakistani air force, the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance had in the past backed and feted the singer-musician who was invited to play Piano by the Congress Government on the occasion of 500 years of Taj Mahal, he said

Patra took a dig at Congress saying if father's past is to cloud the present of anybody then Congress President Sonia Gandhi would be the

changed now since BJP has honoured the musician, he said.

Patra said Sami's father was treated in India and even his book was released by an Indian



first victim as the BJP spokesperson claimed her father was in the service of fascists Italian dictator Mussolini and Germany's Hitler and sought to know why she was given

Indian citizenship

BJP leader pointed out that Sami, for long, has been living in London and not in Pakistan. Everything has changed now since BJP has honoured the musician

the party does not respect Muslim women from the region.

BJP ally and Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan also backed the Government's decision to confer Padma Shri award on Sami, saying he has enhanced India's stature with his talent. Hitting out at the criticism of the decision, the Lok Janshakti Party leader said, "After completing all the formalities, he was granted Indian citizenship in 2016. He has elevated India's reputation and honour through his talent. I congratulate him on being honoured with Padma Shri."

"Those who are opposing the award to the famous singer are not aware of Indian Citizenship Law. Indian citizenship has no relation with religion. Anyone who fulfils the requisite conditions of the citizenship act can become Indian Citizen," Paswan said.

Did you get your brain from clearance sale?: Adnan reacts to Cong criticism over Padma Shri

New Delhi: As parties across the spectrum debated his contribution to India, Sami, who became an Indian citizen in 2016 and on Sunday expressed his "infinite gratitude" at being chosen for the Government award, did not mince his words in hitting out at his critics.

The 46-year-old, who has carved out a career in Hindi film music as a composer and a singer, was part of an unseemly Twitter spat with Congress spokesperson Jaiveer Shergill and also many political discussions, ranging from the controversy over the

Citizenship Amendment Act to his father's past as a Pakistani Air Force pilot. Taking umbrage at Shergill's statement that his recognition was due to his sycophancy, an irate Sami said on Twitter, "Hey kid, did you get your brain from a 'Clearance Sale' or from a second hand novelty store? Did they teach you in Berkeley that a son is to be held accountable or penalised for the acts of his parents?" Interestingly, the Congress is divided on the issue with senior leader Digvijay Singh welcoming the honour to Sami. PNS

INSHORT

BJP WORKER'S DEATH: SC SEEKS WB REPLY

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday sought the West Bengal Government's response on a BJP leader's plea seeking a direction to make him a party in a case related to the alleged murder of a BJP activist in 2018 in the state. BJP activist Dulal Kumar was found hanging from a power transmission tower at Purulia district of West Bengal in June 2018. Lawyer and BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia had filed a PIL seeking a CBI probe into Dulal's 'murder'.

BOOK 'ATROCITY' RELEASED IN DELHI

New Delhi: BlueRose Publishers on Monday released a book 'Atrocity', written by Ann Alexander. The characters in the story just carry the mystery and make it much interesting. The story revolves around the main protagonist 'Jenor'. She always has nightmares which she thinks certainly have a connection with her present life.

DOCTOR GETS HENRY VISCARDI AWARD

New Delhi: Dr Satendra Singh, disability rights' activist and doctor at Guru Tegh Bahadur Hospital, Delhi has been felicitated with the State award for best electoral practices by Delhi Chief Electoral Officer Dr Ranbir Singh on National Voters Day 2020 observed here on January 25. Dr Singh is the first ever Indian to win the prestigious Henry Viscardi Achievement Awards given to extraordinary leaders in global disability community.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVT BEFORE BUDGET

New Delhi: The National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People, a body working for the rights of persons with disabilities (PwD), has drafted recommendations for the Govt before the upcoming Budget. These include removal of GST on goods for PwD, raising the income tax ceiling to Rs 5 lakhs, aligning medical welfare and insurance, and lower interest rates, said the NCPEDP.

BHOPAL GAS TRAGEDY

SC to hear plea for additional ₹7,844 cr fund to compensate victims

New Delhi: A 5-judge Bench of the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Tuesday the Centre's plea seeking ₹7,844 crore as additional fund from successor firms of US-based Union Carbide Corporation, now owned by Dow Chemicals, for giving compensation to victims of 1984 Bhopal Gas tragedy.

The Bench, comprising Justices Arun Mishra, Indira Banerjee, Vineet Saran, M R Shah and S Ravindra Bhat, will hear the curative petition filed by the Centre for enhanced compensation for the victims.

The Centre is seeking a direction to Union Carbide and other firms for ₹7,844 crore additional amount over and above the earlier settlement amount of \$470 million for paying compensation to the gas tragedy victims.

Over 3,000 people had died in the tragedy due to release of methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas.

The Union Carbide Corporation (UCC) gave a compensation of \$470 million (₹715 crore) after the toxic gas leak

from the Union Carbide factory on the intervening night of December 2-3, 1984 killed over 3,000 people and affected 1.02 lakh more.

The survivors of the 1984 tragedy have been fighting for long for adequate compensation and proper medical treatment for ailments caused by the toxic leak.

The Centre had filed the curative petition in the apex court in December 2010 for enhanced compensation. On June 7, 2010, a Bhopal court had convicted seven executives of Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) to two years' imprisonment in connection with the incident.

Then UCC chairman, Warren Anderson was the prime accused in the case but did not appear for the trial. On February 1, 1992, the Bhopal CJM court had declared him an absconder.

The courts in Bhopal had issued non-bailable warrants against Anderson twice — in 1992 and 2009. Anderson died in September, 2014.

SC seeks response from Maha Govt on Gawli's plea challenging life term

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday sought response from the Maharashtra Government on a plea by gangster-turned-politician Arun Gawli challenging the life term awarded to him in the 2008 murder of Shiv Sena corporator Kamlakar Jamsandekar.

Jamsandekar was shot dead in his house on March 2, 2007 by two persons, allegedly hired by associates of Gawli who was then sitting MLA.

Gawli's appeal challenging the last month verdict of the Bombay High Court, which had upheld the life term awarded to him by a trial court in the case, came up for hearing before a bench comprising Justices R Banumathi and A S Bopanna.

The Bench agreed to hear the appeal and issued notice to the state. The High Court had on December 9, 2019 upheld Gawli's conviction and life term awarded to him by trial court under various provisions of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA).

Besides Gawli, it had also upheld the conviction and sentence imposed on several other accused in the case by the trial court in August 2012.

Delhi police seeks more forces for forthcoming polls

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Terming the "present security scenario and law & order" in the national Capital as "quite critical" due to the ongoing protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the Delhi Police has sought from the Election Commission an additional deployment of 30 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) for the conduct of the impending Assembly polls here, as withdrawing the paramilitary already deployed for essential duties was "not feasible".

Presently, over a dozen of protests are going on against the CAA in various parts of the Capital. In a letter to the EC, Special Commissioner of Police (Intelligence) Praveer Ranjan said, "The present security scenario and law & order is quite critical than was expected to be during electioneering process of the forthcoming Delhi Assembly 2020 as large number of protests and at times even violent in various parts of the national Capital are going for more than a month now over CAA."

"Further, being capital city and also election is to happen shortly, this may continue for longer time. It is requested that 30 companies of CAPF may be provided through direct induction immediately instead of in situ as it would not be feasible to withdraw these 30



companies from important essential duties like maintaining law & order, security for VBIPs, vital installations, banks in Delhi as it may adversely affect the security and law and order scenario." The CAA has triggered a nationwide debate on whether the law violates the country's secular nature by excluding a particular religious group from its ambit, as has the iron-fisted approach adopted by police in some areas, including Delhi, to quell protests. The law favours non-Muslim refugees from the Muslim-majority countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Sources in Delhi police said that heavy police deployment has been made Shaheen Bagh, Jamia Nagar, Karawal Nagar, Brijpuri, Bhajanpura, Seelampur, Jafrabad, Welcome, Mustafabad, Okhla and several parts

which have seen repeated protests against the Citizenship Act. Union Home Minister Amit Shah has accused Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Congress of pursuing vote bank politics and alleged that they had "instigated riots in the capital" during the protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). According to the EC, over 71,000 persons have been booked under the various sections of the Delhi Police Act while over 3500 booked under various section of the Criminal Procedure Code after the implementation of the model code of conduct. The Delhi police needs 179 companies of CAPF/State Armed Force which include 15,000 home guards from Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and other States.

'Those trying to fragment India getting cover at Shaheen Bagh protest'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Raising the pitch of controversy surrounding the anti-citizenship law protest, Union Minister and BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad on Monday alleged that Delhi's Shaheen Bagh protest is emerging as "a textbook case of a few hundred people trying to suppress the silent majority".

The Minister claimed that those trying to fragment India are getting cover at Shaheen Bagh protest where the tricolours are being waived. "It is offering platform to

'tukde tukde gang' elements under the garb of opposition to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. This protest is not just a protest against CAA it is a protest against Modi," Prasad said in a press conference.

"Lakhs of people are distressed because they can not go to office, shops are shut and their children are not able to go to school due to road block by Shaheen Bagh protesters," he said.

Prasad's comment has come close to Enforcement Directorate investigating the alleged diversion of money



and transaction of money in light of anti-CAA protests across the country.

CAA has become a core campaign issue between the challenger BJP and the ruling

AAP and the Congress, another party in the Delhi election fray.

In relief to consumers, Onion yield to rise 7% this yr

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Despite floods in 15 States and erratic rainfall, India will witness a record production of onion, tomato, potato and other vegetables and fruits this year which may bring relief to consumers from high prices seen in the last few months. Onion production is expected to increase by seven per cent to 24.45 million tonnes in the current 2019-20 crop year.

Besides onion, production of potato — another important kitchen staple — is estimated to rise to 51.94 million tonne this year from 50.19 million tonne last year, while tomato production is also pegged slightly higher at 19.32 million tonne as against 19 million tonne last year.

Releasing its first forecast, the Agriculture Ministry projected that vegetables production, is projected to be higher by 2.64 per cent than the year before, thanks to increase in output of onions, potatoes and tomatoes.

The overall production of vegetables is estimated to be higher at 188 million tonne in 2019-20 crop year from 183 million tonne in the previous

- ◆ Besides onion, production of potato — another important kitchen staple — is estimated to rise to 51.94 million tonne this year from 50.19 million tonne last year
- ◆ Releasing its first forecast, the Agriculture Ministry projected that vegetables production, is projected to be higher by 2.64 per cent than the year before, thanks to increase in output of onions, potatoes and tomatoes
- ◆ The overall production of vegetables is estimated to be higher at 188 million tonne in 2019-20 crop year from 183 million tonne in the previous year while the total fruits production is pegged lower at 95.74 million tonnes in 2019-20 crop year as against 97.9 million tonnes in the previous year
- ◆ Honey production is pegged at 1,20,000 tonne same at the last year's level, while production of plantation crops like coconut, cashewnut is projected to increase marginally to 16.4 million tonne from 16.3 million tonne.



year while the total fruits production is pegged lower at 95.74 million tonnes in 2019-20 crop year as against 97.9 million tonnes in the previous year.

According to the ministry's projection, onion crops has been grown in 12.93 lakh hectare in the 2019-20 crop year (July-June), slightly higher than 12.20 lakh hectare

achieved during the previous year. Consequently, production of onion — the key kitchen staple — is estimated to increase to 24.45 million tonne this year from 22.81 million tonnes in the 2018-19 crop year. Onion is grown during both kharif (summer) and rabi (winter) season. The prices of onion has increased this year due to shortfall of 22 per cent

in kharif onion crop due to late monsoon rains and later excess rainfall, which led to supply constraint and sharp rise in prices.

The Government was forced to import onion in a bid to contain prices, which have cooled down now to ₹60/kg from the peak of ₹160/kg in last few months. The Ministry has projected marginal drop in

production of beans, parwal, pumpkin and tapioca this year.

In 2019-20, fruits production is expected to be lower by 2.27 per cent in 2019-20 over 2018-19. It is mainly due to loss in production of grapes, banana, mango, citrus, papaya and pomegranate. Among major fruits, production of apple is expected to be higher at 2.73 million tonne this year

compared with the final output of 2.31 million tonne last year.

Production of mango is estimated to decline slightly to 21.28 million tonne this year from 21.37 million tonnes last year, while that of banana output may slip to 29.64 million tonnes from 30.46 million tonne and grapes output is expected to decline to 2.15 million tonne from 3 million tonne in the said period.

As per the projection, Pomegranate production is also estimated to fall to 2.32 million tonne this year from 2.91 million tonne last year. Spices production is estimated to drop to 9.37 million tonne from 9.42 million tonne, while that of flowers output to 2.87 million tonne from 2.91 million tonne in the said period.

Honey production is pegged at 1,20,000 tonne same at the last year's level, while production of plantation crops like coconut, cashewnut is projected to increase marginally to 16.4 million tonne from 16.3 million tonne.

However, total production of horticulture crops is estimated at 313.35 million tonne in 2019-20, up from actual output of 310.74 million tonne in 2018-19.

ANTI-CAA PROTEST

Cong moves NHRC over police 'atrocities' on protesters in UP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A delegation of Congress leaders, led by Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, met senior officials of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and sought action against alleged police atrocities on anti-Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) protesters in Uttar Pradesh. The Congress alleged victims have been made accused in case-related FIRs and no police officer has been named in any of the cases.

In its 31-page memorandum to the NHRC that include videos uploaded by witnesses, ground reports and other "unbiased" media reports show police firing and mercilessly beating of the protesters and photographs as "evidence", the Congress has alleged that the BJP Government in the state "treats its own citizens like criminals" and demanded a thorough probe into the deaths that took place in the State during violent protests against the CAA.

After the meeting, Rahul Gandhi alleged the UP Government has "gone to war against its own people" and urged the NHRC to act decisively to protect the "Constitutional rights of our citizens".

"A delegation of Congress leaders presented the NHRC with evidence of the atrocities against the citizens of UP by the State Govt., which has gone to war against its own people. The NHRC must act decisively to protect the idea of India & the Constitutional rights of our citizens," Rahul said in a tweet.

According to the memorandum, given the role of a



reckless State Government that views the law and constitution as mere inconveniences, treats its own citizens like criminals and wears its hostility towards ordinary citizens as a badge of pride, the duty of institutions such as the NHRC to act as checks and balances and to embody and protect the values enshrined in the Constitution of India becomes paramount. It further said the NHRC has a "glorious history" of addressing injustices when all other institutions have fallen short. "We hope and expect that this instance will not be an exception to that legacy." After the meeting, Congress leader Abhishek Singhvi stated that there has been gross human rights violations. We have submitted videos and photos to the NHRC in UP. Singhvi said the Congress has given detailed facts including "deaths of 23" people and also details on how they were killed "as some were shot in the chest".

CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT

AMU students block highway

Demands release of arrested students

Aligarh (UP): Hundreds of AMU students overnight blocked traffic on the main Aligarh-Moradabad Highway demanding release of a student who was held for allegedly heckling the AMU Vice Chancellor during his Republic Day speech, a university official said on Monday.

The blockade, which started on Sunday evening, continued till 2 am, the official said.

AMU Vice Chancellor Tariq Mansoor was on Sunday heckled by a group of students during his Republic Day speech here soon after he termed as 'unfortunate' the recent happenings on the campus and said peaceful protests will be allowed on any issue within the ambit of law.

Four students identified as Tahir Azmi, Rafiuddin, Sudhir Gulati and A Mujtaba Faraz, who were involved in the heckling, were handed over to police.

In the afternoon, a group of protesters collected at the gate of the AMU Proctor's office demanding the release of the

four. Three students were later released by the police.

AMU Proctor, Prof Afifullah Khan, said three students had been released whereas Faraz was sent to jail.

As the news spread in the campus, huge crowds of protesters started collecting near the Purani Chungi gate of the University and blocked the Aligarh-Moradabad Highway.

In view of the protests, exams of the AMU Engineering College were cancelled on Monday.

AMU Proctor, Prof Afifullah Khan told PTI, "The examinations which were to be held at the AMU Engineering College on Monday could not be held" as a large number of protesters collected at the gates of the Zakir Hussain College of Engineering, Referring to the students' demand for the release of Faraz, the Proctor said a group of teachers and top university officials have met senior district officials and, "We are hopeful that Faraz will be out on bail". **PTI**

AMU cancels exam after protests

Aligarh (UP): The AMU on Monday cancelled an exam after more protests over the amended citizenship law, the university said.

AMU spokesman Shafey Kidwai said the exam was cancelled after a group of protesters blocked the entrance in response to a boycott call given by the AMU Students' Coordination Committee. Over 600 students were scheduled to appear for the examination.

Kidwai, however, expressed hope that the Tuesday examination won't be disturbed. He said efforts are on to persuade students not to disturb it. Hundreds of AMU students overnight blocked traffic on the main Aligarh-Moradabad highway demanding the release of Mujtaba Faraz, a former student leader. He was released on bail on Monday afternoon. Three others, identified as Tahir Azmi, Rafiuddin and Sudhir Gulati, were released late on Sunday. The blockade, which started on

Sunday evening, continued till 2 am. AMU Vice Chancellor Tariq Mansoor was on Sunday allegedly heckled by the students during his Republic Day speech here soon after he termed as "unfortunate" the recent happenings on the campus and said peaceful protests will be allowed on any issue within the ambit of law. AMU Proctor Prof Afifullah Khan had said that three students were released whereas Faraz was sent to jail.

As the news spread, huge crowds of protesters started collecting near the Purani Chungi gate of the university and blocked the Aligarh-Moradabad highway. The AMU campus has been witnessing protests against the amended Citizenship Amendment Act. Over 1,200 students, including those not identified, have been booked in about a dozen odd cases connected to different protests. **PTI**

Anti-CAA resolutions constitutional blunder: Rajnath

Mangaluru: Taking on Opposition parties, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday asked them not to make the "constitutional blunder" of passing resolutions against the CAA in state assemblies where they have a majority and advised them to not forget 'Rasthradharm' for their 'vipakshdharma'.

Addressing a rally, the senior BJP leader also asserted that no power can now stop Kashmiri Pandits from returning to Kashmir as he strongly defended the Modi Government's decision to reorganise Jammu & Kashmir and scrap its special status under Article 370. He also sent out a strong message to Pakistan, saying India will not touch anyone but if someone bothers it, then it is not going to let them live in peace.

Making a strong defence of the amended Citizenship Act, he said it is not a law to hurt the sentiments of any religion but to give relief to victims of religious persecution in non-secular countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has given the slogan of 'sabka sath, sabka vikas and sabka vishwas' will never discriminate on the basis of religion, he said, adding that no harm will come to the citizenship of Indian Muslims.

The Opposition raises the question that if Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians can be given citizenship, then why not Muslims of these three countries, he said.

"Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan are not secular States. These are theocratic States. Islam is the religion of these three



states. India's religion is not Hindu. India is a secular country. That is why those who follow Islam can not be persecuted in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan," he said.

Amid decision by many states ruled by opposition parties to not implement the CAA, he said it is a central law and has to be followed by everyone.

"Some opposition parties are passing resolutions in assemblies (where they have a majority) that their states will not implement the Citizenship Amendment Act. I want to appeal to them not to do such things. This is a constitutional blunder. Please do not do such blunder," he said.

Accusing the Congress of misleading people on the issue, he said the party should not forget its 'rasthradharm' (national duty) for the sake of its 'vipakshdharma'

(duties as opposition party). Referring to the exodus of a large number of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley in the late 1990s at the height of militancy, Singh said no power can now stop them from returning to their homes.

Singh noted that Adnan Sami, who has been given Padma Shri award, was given citizenship when he was the home minister in the first Modi government.

On the CAA, he said that the Congress Working Committee in November 1947 had passed a resolution that refugees from Pakistan should be given citizenship. "So, why object now," he asked.

Singh said India now stands among the world's strong nations and added that it will become a 5-trillion dollar economy by 2024.

While Modi has tried to improve relations with other countries, a neighbouring country is not following the duty of a neighbour, he said in an apparent reference to Pakistan. Whatever promises the BJP has made, its government has fulfilled them, he said, be it repeal of the Article 370, construction of Ram temple or removal of the practice of triple talaq.

"We will follow the constitutional methods. No power can stop the construction of Ram Mandir now," he said. Article 370 was supposed to be a temporary provision, he said. He said Pakistan cannot dare to raise Kashmir on international forums now after the Article 370's nullification and asserted that if talks happen with Pakistan, then it will be on PoK. **PTI**

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Thai woman with Corona-like symptoms dies in Kolkata

Kolkata: The medical fraternity of Kolkata got the first 'corona scare' with a Thai patient succumbing to her ailments at a private south Kolkata hospital in the city. She was reportedly suffering symptoms similar to that of the dreaded Corona virus, sources said.

Sources in the Health Department which immediately rushed to the hospital in quest of further details said another Chinese national had been admitted in the isolation ward of the Beliaghata Infection Disease Hospital with similar symptoms.

The sources in the private hospital where the Thai woman died later said they were cooperating with the Government and would pass all the details about the deceased patient. "We are preparing to send her blood serum for examination to Pune institute of virology," said a doctor adding however even the Pune Institute did not have the facility for testing Corona virus and hence the samples would have to be sent to the USA for examination.

"The State is on high alert and we have been screening people travelling in and out of India via Nepal border too," a health official said. **PNS**

436 people under observation

Thiruvananthapuram: At least 436 people, who returned to Kerala from China in recent days, are under observation for possible exposure to the novel coronavirus (nCoV), health officials said on Monday.

Five people are still under observation in isolation wards at various hospitals across the State, officials said, adding, all results of blood samples sent to the National Institute of Virology at Pune have been found to be negative for the virus. While three people are in hospitals at Ernakulam, one each are in Thiruvananthapuram and Thrissur, officials said.

Two people, admitted earlier to hospitals in Pathanamthitta and Malappuram, have been discharged.

Health Minister KK Shiyala said necessary steps were being taken by coordinating with district medical officers.

"We have also opened isolation wards even though we have not

received any positive cases in the State," she told the media.

Meanwhile, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to arrange for airlifting stranded Indians from coronavirus affected Wuhan province in China, including those from the Southern State. Sharing the concern of Kerala, Vijayan, in a letter to Modi, said the ground situation in the province has worsened and the State had information from relatives of students from Kerala studying at various Universities there that the situation there was "grave." There were also reports that, Yichang area has also been affected, he said.

"It may be appropriate to consider operating a special flight to Wuhan/a nearby functional airport and airlift the Indian nationals stranded there and bring them back to India," Vijayan said, days after he shot off two letters to External Affairs minister S Jaishankar.

DefExpo 2020 to be biggest with over 1K companies registered so far: Ministry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 1,000 companies have so far registered for the 11th edition of the biennial mega defence exhibition, DefExpo 2020, to be held at Uttar Pradesh Capital Lucknow from February 5-9 this year. In the DefExpo 2018, held in Chennai, 702 companies had participated. Thus, it has become by far the biggest ever DefExpo to be held in India, Defence Ministry officials said here on Monday.

They also said the number of participating foreign companies has also increased to 165 from the previous figure of 160. The booked exhibition space by exhibitors for DefExpo 2020 has gone up by

60 per cent to over 42,800 square metres, compared to around 26,774 during the last edition.

Moreover, Defence Ministers and Service Chiefs of 35 countries have confirmed their participation for the DefExpo. A substantial number of Memoranda of Undertaking (MoUs) are expected to be inked during the Expo, resulting in forging of new business collaborations.

The theme of the Expo is 'India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub'. The aim is to bring the leading technologies in the defence sector under one roof and provide a myriad of opportunities for the Government, private manufactures and startups.

The event will cover the entire spectrum of the country's aerospace, defence and security interests. The 'India Pavilion' will exclusively showcase the jointness between the public and private sector, including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)/Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and innovation ecosystem, which is the key to the way forward.

There will be a sizeable Uttar Pradesh Pavilion at the DefExpo venue. Apart from displaying industrial prowess and huge potential for the investors, the UP Government will organise several cultural programmes showcasing rich cultural heritage of the northern state.

Goa Govt to form special task force on coronavirus

Panaji: The Goa Government has decided to form a special task force to monitor cases, if any, of coronavirus in the tourist State. Health Minister Vishwajit Rane on Sunday said that people arriving in Goa from the virus-affected regions outside India would be closely monitored.

"I have given instructions to form a special task force to monitor any cases of coronavirus in Goa. All the activities, including people arriving from the virus-affected regions, would be closely monitored and reported to the State Chief Secretary," Rane told reporters. The task force will work as per the guidelines laid down by the Union Ministry of Health, he added. The coronavirus is a large family of viruses that causes illnesses ranging from the common cold to respiratory syndromes, but the virus in China is a novel strain. **PTI**

Pinarayi urges PM to airlift stranded Indians at Wuhan

Thiruvananthapuram: Observing that the situation in coronavirus affected Wuhan province in China was worsening, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Monday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to arrange for airlifting stranded Indians, including those from the southern state.

Sharing the concern of Kerala, Vijayan, in a letter to Modi, said the ground situation in Wuhan has worsened and the state had information from relatives of students from Kerala studying at various Universities in Wuhan that the situation there was 'grave'.

CORONAVIRUS BLEEDS MARKETS

The Union Health Ministry on Monday said health teams have been deployed in areas along the border with Nepal at Panitanki in West Bengal and Jhulaghat and Jauljibi in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh.

The hospitals in the national capital, AIIMS and RML Hospital, have set up isolation wards and kept beds ready to provide treatment to any suspected case of the novel coronavirus infection if the need arises.

Experts from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) visited Dr RML Hospital here on Monday to inspect the isolation ward and review the hospital's preparedness for management and control of the nCoV2019 infection.

As on 26th January, 29,707 passengers from 137 flights have been screened for novel coronavirus infection symptoms and no case has so far been detected in India.

A 24x7 NCDC call centre (+91-11-23978046) has been made operational to monitor the list of contacts furnished by the Ministry of External Affairs; provide details of district and state surveillance officers to those who seek them; and in case of any clinical query, direct the concerned to the relevant Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) officer. Thermal screening is being done at seven designated airports -- New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Kochi.

PFI FUNDED ANTI-CAA PROTESTS: ED

intention to defame the Popular Front."

"The PFI has stated it multiple times that we fully comply with the law of the land and the allegation of ₹120 crore transferred from the Popular Front's accounts just before the CAA protests is totally baseless," the PFI said in a statement.

The dubious deposits were either made in cash or through the immediate payment service (IMPS) and a number of such instances were seen in Uttar

Pradesh, where the maximum number of violent anti-CAA protests were reported to have taken place, sources said, adding the withdrawal of money from the bank accounts linked to PFI and its related entities had a "direct correlation" with the violent demonstrations against the CAA. It is suspected that these funds were allegedly used by the PFI affiliates to fuel the anti-CAA protests in various parts of Uttar Pradesh and other locations, the sources said.

Claiming the allegations levelled against it were unfounded, the PFI said, "We are confident that the fate of this series of allegations will also be like the ones before, which could never be proved." There were instances of about 80-90 money withdrawals from one bank account in a day during the stated period. The ED had also shared these findings with the Union Home Ministry's internal security division after the latter sought a report on funding of protests.

Earlier, the Uttar Pradesh police had sought a ban on the PFI after its alleged complicity was suspected in the Statewide violent protests against CAA. Nearly 20 people had died during these protests. The ED probe had further revealed that the funds deposited in banks were also routed from foreign shores and sent to the accounts of certain investment firms.

A National Investigation Agency FIR and chargesheet against the PFI formed the basis for the ED to file the PMLA case against the organisation.

The PFI statement further said, "PFI strongly condemns the news reports that are published in various news channels regarding Popular Front's financial link to instigate the CAA protest. Firstly, the news channels have attributed the report to Enforcement Directorate through some 'unnamed sources' but the ED has not contacted our organisation or issued any such official statement regarding the allegations."

Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said, "Law enforcement agencies are doing their job, I need not make any comment. But if there is suspicious nature of transaction on a particular day then obviously it raises

serious apprehensions and protests that are organised don't look voluntary."

AIMPLB MOVES SC

The top court had then made it clear that it would deal separately with the issues of polygamy and nikah halala at a later stage. The AIMPLB plea on Monday said the apex court has already dealt with the issue of these practices in its verdict of 1997 in which it had declined to entertain the petitions.

"That personal laws do not derive their validity on the ground that they have been passed or made by a legislature or by other competent authority. The fundamental source of personal laws are their respective scriptural texts," the AIMPLB plea said.

"The Mohammedan law is founded essentially on the holy Quran and the Hadith of the Prophet Mohammed and thus it can't fall within purview of expression 'laws in force' as mentioned in Article 13 of the Constitution and hence its validity cannot be tested," it said.

The plea of Personal Law Board said that Article 44 of the Constitution stipulates that the State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India. "It is submitted that Article 44, which envisages a Uniform Civil Code is only a directive principle of state policy and is not enforceable," it said.

The Article recognises the existence of different code applicable to different religions in matters of personal law and permits their continuance until the state succeeds in its endeavour to secure for all citizens a Uniform Civil Code (UCC), it said.

"That these very same practices were challenged in 1997 verdict in Ahmedabad Women Action Group versus Union of India, in which this court had itself declined to entertain the matters by taking the view that these issues were to be dealt with by the legislature and not judiciary," it said, adding that rights of Muslim Women are already protected by virtue of Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act of 1986.

Questioning the locus standi of BJP leader and advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhaya for filing a PIL challenging polygamy and "nikah halala" practices, the AIMPLB said that it is of the view that ordinarily,

any person other than a member of a religious denomination should not be allowed to question the faith of another religious denomination.

"A member of a religious denomination belonging to that faith, in the event of any violation of their fundamental rights, only to the extent of a threat to life and liberty, may be permitted to seek the protection of the court and determine the issues of faith arising therefrom," the petition said.

In March 2018, the apex court had issued notices to Ministries of Law and Justice and Minority Affairs as well as the National Commission of Women (NCW) after taking note of the plea of Delhi-based woman Nafisa Khan challenging the two practices, and said the issues raised in a batch of petitions, including by Upadhaya, will be taken up by a 5-judge Constitution bench.

The apex court had also considered the submission that an earlier 5-judge Constitution bench, in its 2017 verdict, had kept open these issues while quashing triple talaq.

On March 14, 2018 Khan had moved the apex court saying that by virtue of Muslim Personal Law, section 494 of IPC (marrying again during lifetime of husband or wife) was rendered inapplicable to this community and no married Muslim woman has the avenue of filing a complaint against her husband for the offence of bigamy.

She sought that Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939 be declared unconstitutional and violative of Articles 14, 15, 21 and 25 (freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion) of the Constitution in so far as it fails to secure for Indian Muslim women the protection from bigamy which has been statutorily secured for women in India belonging to other religions.

The petitioner, who herself claimed to be a victim of such practices, had alleged that her husband and his family used to torture her for dowry and she was ousted from the matrimonial home twice. She had also alleged that her husband had married another woman without taking any legal divorce from her and the police had refused to lodge FIR under section 494 and 498A (husband or relative of husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty) of the IPC stating that polygamy was permitted under the Sharia.

The top court had also allowed Muslim Women Resistance Committee, Kolkata to file an application for implementation as a party in the hearing.

BENGAL PASSES RESOLUTION AGAINST CAA

She said, "The label of doubtful citizens, detention centers... is unacceptable. The way things are, it was better not to have been born. Today, people are scared that they may have to leave this country. They are queuing up for all kinds of cards."

Calling upon the opposition parties to sink their narrow differences and put up a united resistance against the "divisive policies of the BJP," Mamata said, "though I am for Tagore's 'ekla chalo' policy and ready to walk alone, I appeal to all the parties that this is not the time to fight among them... It is the time to sink differences and unite against the bigger danger... you will give more occasions to fight against me but this is the time all of us should unite to put up a joint fight."

Banerjee's campaign against CAA and NRC has been punctuated by her disagreements with the Left and Congress as the two parties have repeatedly expressed their doubts over the sincerity of her anti-BJP-anti-CAA stance.

Despite the Left and the Congress backed the Monday's motion grudgingly they accused the ruling Trinamool Congress of toning down the language of the draft. "We voted for the resolution though and did not press for the amendment..." Left Legislature Party leader Sujan Chakrabarty said adding the language of the draft was unusually soft.

HISTORIC BODO ACCORD INKED FOR PEACE IN ASSAM

After the agreement, NDFB factions will leave the path of violence, surrender their weapons and disband their armed organisations within a month of signing the deal," he said.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said after the accord different communities in the State will be able to live with harmony and it will lay the foundation of a bright

future, fulfilling aspirations of the people.

Sarma said as per the accord, 1,550 militants belonging to the NDFB lay down their arms on January 30, an economic programme of ₹ 1,500 crore will be implemented in the next three years with equal contribution of ₹ 750 crore each from the central and state governments.

Around 1,550 cadres of NDFB(P), NDFB(RD) and NDFB(S) will be rehabilitated by the central and state governments.

Sarma said the existing structure of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) will be strengthened with more powers and its seats will be expanded from 40 to 60, he said. A commission will be set up for inclusion of Bodo-dominated villages in the BTC and exclusion of those where Bodos are not in majority.

This was the third Bodo accord to be signed in 27 years. The first accord was signed with the All Bodo Students' Union in 1993, leading to the creation of a Bodoland Autonomous Council with limited political powers.

In 2003, the second accord was signed with the militant group Bodo Liberation Tigers, leading to formation of a Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) with four districts of Assam -- Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baska and Udalguri -- called Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD).

As per Monday's accord, the name of BTAD will be changed to Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) and it will have more executive, administrative, legislative and financial powers. The BTC currently has control over 30 subjects such as education, forests, horticulture but no jurisdiction over the police, revenue and general administration departments, which are controlled by the Assam government.

The BTC was formed under the 6th Schedule of the Constitution. The Assam Government will soon notify Bodo language as in Devanagari script as an associate official language of the State.

The State Government will give ₹ 5 lakh each to the next of kin of those who lost their lives during the agitation for a separate state, criminal cases with non-heinous charges against NDFB members will be withdrawn while heinous cases will be reviewed case-to-case basis as per the existing rules, according to the pact.

EU's CAA move uncalled for, says Naidu

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of the European parliament set to debate and vote on a motion against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Monday asserted there is no scope for outside interference in India's internal matters. He also expressed concern over the trend of foreign bodies interfering in matters that are 'completely within the purview of the Indian parliament and Government'.

Senior BJP leader and Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad also questioned the objectivity of European Union Parliament members who have backed resolutions against the CAA, asking if they ever raised their voices over 'victimisation' of minority Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan.

"The Government of India has already explained that it (the CAA) is our internal matter. We believe in engagement. Lots of Left Parties there have sought this resolution and our External Affairs Minister will engage with them and explain our position," Prasad told a press conference at the Delhi BJP office.

Asked about the upcoming EU Parliament's debate, Prasad asked a counter question, "Have my esteemed friends of EU Parliament sought to raise a voice over victimisation of Hindu girls or a Sikh Granthi's daughter in Pakistan? It is high time they also need to be objective."

Naidu's remarks at a book launch event here came a day after reports indicated that a total of six resolutions were tabled by groups within the European Union (EU), including the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D), Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) (PPE), Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance (Verts/ALE), European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR), Renew Europe Group (Renew) and European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) Group.

Though there was no official statement from the Ministry of External Affairs on the issue,

Government sources on Sunday had said the EU Parliament should not take any action questioning the rights and authority of democratically elected legislatures, government sources. This came ahead of a debate on the clutch of resolutions against the CAA by the powerful bloc of 28 nations. The resolutions will be debated on Wednesday in the European Parliament in Brussels. Voting will take place the next day. Expressing concern over this, Naidu said there is no scope for outside interference in India's internal matters. Making these observations, he also lamented the trend of foreign bodies interfering in matters that are "completely within the purview of the Indian Parliament and the Indian Government."

He said such efforts were totally uncalled for and unwarranted and expressed hope that they would refrain from making such statements in future.

Addressing the gathering after releasing the book 'TRG-An Enigma' in New Delhi today, Naidu said as a mature republic and democratic polity, India capable of addressing the con-

New citizenship law internal matter of India: France

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

France, a founding member of the European Union, considers the new citizenship law an internal political matter of India, French diplomatic sources said here on Monday. The assertion came after six resolutions were moved against the CAA. Making France's position clear, sources said the CAA is India's internal political matter and it has been stated on several occasions.

They said the European Parliament is an institution independent of member states and the European

Commission. There has been no reaction from the Ministry of External Affairs on the resolutions against the CAA in European Parliament. Official sources, however, maintained that the CAA was an entirely internal matter of India and that the legislation was adopted through democratic means after a debate in both houses of Parliament. "Every society that fashions a pathway to naturalisation contemplates both a context and criteria. This is not discrimination," a government source said, explaining why India is opposed to the resolutions at the EU parliament.

AP Cabinet passes resolution for abolishing Legislative Council

PTI ■ AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet passed a resolution on Monday setting in motion the process for abolishing the state Legislative Council. A similar resolution will now be adopted in the Legislative Assembly and sent to the Centre for necessary follow-up action. With just nine members, the ruling YSR Congress is in minority in the 58-member Legislative Council. The opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) has an upper hand with 28 members and ruling party could get a majority in the House only in 2021 when a number of opposition members will retire at the end of their six-year term.

The move by the Andhra Pradesh cabinet came after the YS Jaganmohan Reddy government last week failed to pass in the Upper House of the state legislature two crucial Bills related to its plan of having three capitals for the state.

AP Cabinet passes resolution for abolishing Legislative Council

Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council Chairman MA Sharrif on January 22 referred to a select committee the two bills — AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill, 2020, and the AP Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) Act (Repeal) Bill — for deeper examination. The chairman had said that he was using his discretionary powers under Rule 154 while referring the Bills to the select panel in line with the demand of the TDP. Following this, the chief minister had told the Assembly, "We need to seriously think whether we need to have such a House which appears to be functioning with only political motives. It is not mandatory to have the Council, which is our own creation, and it is only for our convenience." "So let us discuss the issue further on Monday and take a decision on whether or not to continue the Council," he had said.

In fact, the YSRC had on December 17 first threatened to abolish the Council when it became clear that the TDP was bent on blocking two Bills related to creation of a separate Commission for SCs and conversion of all government schools into English medium.

AP Cabinet passes resolution for abolishing Legislative Council

As the Legislature was adjourned sine die on December 17, no further action was taken. But last week, the issue cropped up again as the TDP remained firm on its stand on opposing the three-capitals plan.

The YSRC managed to get two TDP members to its side, but the government failed to get the three capitals Bills passed in the Council. "What will be the meaning of governance if the House of Elders does not allow good decisions to be taken in the interest of people and block enactment of laws? We need to seriously think about it... Whether we should have such a House or do away with it," the chief minister had said in the Assembly.

2017 KOPARDI MINOR RAPE-MURDER CASE

Final hearing of convicts appeal against death penalty from Feb 25

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

The Bombay High Court will now hold a final hearing from February 25 on the appeals challenging the death sentence handed out to all the three accused in the much-discussed case involving the ghastly rape and murder of a minor Marathi girl in Kopardi village of Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district in November 2017.

This follows the order passed by Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court Pradeep Nandraj transferring the appeals challenging the punishment meted out to the accused by the trial court in the Kopardi rape and murder case from the Aurangabad bench of the high court to the principal seat in Mumbai.

Acting on a writ petition filed by the petitioners seeking transfer of the case from Aurangabad bench to the principal High court in Mumbai, the chief justice transferred the Bombay High Court and scheduled the hearing of the "appeals challenging the trial court's judgement and sentence confirmation in the case" from February 25.

The petitioner had among other things cited that "due to the political limelight the case

has got and the past history of threats to the accused and consequently to the lawyers, the Petitioners have not been able to arrange a counsel of their choice to argue their case in the Aurangabad Bench of the Bombay High Court."

In a writ petition challenging the trial court's order handing out death sentence to her client Santosh Gorakh Bhawal, one of the three persons convicted and sentenced to death in the case, Advocate Vijayalaxmi B Khopade stated that the sessions court had committed a "gross error" by hastily delivering the judgment and that the trial court had awarded capital punishment to the applicant considering that the case fell under the ambit of "rarest of rare" principle.

Advocate Vijayalaxmi also stated that the trial court's order entailed "gross miscarriage of justice and a miscarriage of justice which may arise from the conviction of an innocent and that the trial had substituted, in patent error, cogent evidence with strong suspicion and based its reasoning on assumptions while delivering the judgment.

It may be recalled that on November 29, 2017, a fast-

track set up under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POSCO) Act had handed out death sentence to all the three convicts in the case. District Sessions Judge (Mrs) Suvarna Keole had awarded capital punishment to all the three convicts in the case — Jitendra alias Pappu Babul Shinde (26), Santosh Gorkha Bhawal (30) and Nitin Gopinath Bhailume (28).

A 15-year-old victim girl, who belonged to the dominant Maratha community, was brutally raped between 7.35 pm and 8.15 pm July 13, 2016 and later throttled to death. The victim girl was on her way to bring spice from her grandfather house at that time.

All the three accused in the case are Dalits. The incident, it may be recalled, had sparked widespread protests in the state, with various political parties and Maratha organisations rooting for capital punishment to the accused.

The 11-month-long trial in Ahmednagar minor girl rape and murder case had generated considerable interest among the people across the state.

The fast-track court had on November 9, 2016 framed charges against three accused — Jitendra Shinde, Santosh Bhawal and Nitin Bhailume —

under various sections of POSCO Act and IPC for allegedly perpetrating a sexual assault on the victim girl and strangulating her.

The Prosecution's case was that the prime accused Jitendra Shinde allegedly raped and murdered the girl, while two other accused Bhawal and Bhailume had "conspired" with Shinde in the heinous crime.

During the trial which began on December 20, 2016, the Prosecution examined 31 witnesses, while defence lawyer defence lawyer Vijayalaxmi Khopade — representing one of the three accused Bhawal in the case — examined one witness.

There were no eyewitnesses in the case and that the entire case was based on "circumstantial evidence", omissions and commissions made by the accused and forensic evidence.

Nikam, it may be recalled, had -- during his final arguments in the case -- adduced 24 pieces of circumstantial evidence built up the chain of events leading to the rape of the "homicidal death" of the victim girl who was studying in the ninth standard.

According to Nikam, the medical evidence helped the Prosecution nail the prime accused in the case.

Coronavirus: Centre steps up vigil in districts bordering Nepal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has stepped up vigil in districts bordering Nepal in view of a confirmed case of novel coronavirus detected there. The Union Health Ministry on Monday said health teams have been deployed in areas along the border with Nepal at Panitanki in West Bengal and Jhulaghat and Jauljibi in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh.

"Subsequent to confirmed #coronavirus case in #Nepal, vigil strengthened at Panitanki (West Bengal) entry point from Nepal," the Health Ministry said in a tweet on Monday. "In response to confirmed case of #nCoV2019 in #Nepal, India has stepped up vigil in districts bordering Nepal. Health Teams deployed at BOP with Nepal at Jhulaghat and Jauljibi, Dist Pithoragarh, #Uttarakhand," it had tweeted on Sunday.

Central government hospitals in the national capital, AIIMS and RML Hospital, have set up isolation wards and kept beds ready to provide treatment to any suspected case of the novel coronavirus infection if the need arises. Experts from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) visited Dr RML Hospital here on Monday to inspect the isolation ward and review the hospital's preparedness for management and control of the nCoV2019 infection. "A team led by Dr Sajeet Singh who is director of NCDC visited Dr RML hospital to review preparedness for management of nCoV2019. They inspected the isolation wards, reviewed biohazard disposal protocols, assessed availability of PPE marks," the Union Health Ministry tweeted.

As on 26th January, 29,707 passengers from 137 flights have been screened for novel coronavirus infection symptoms and no case has so far been detected in India. Over 100 people have been kept under observation in Kerala and Maharashtra following screening for a possible exposure to the novel coronavirus as the Prime Minister's Office on Saturday reviewed India's preparedness to deal with any situation amid mounting global concern over rising cases in China. Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Saturday said samples of seven passengers have been sent to the ICMR-NIV Pune lab.

"Secretary (HFV) reviewed preparedness of agencies & hospitals in terms of orientation of health dept and other agencies; adherence of various prevention & managt protocols; awareness

reg #ncov2020; self reporting; isolation wards; protective gear etc. She assured all support," the Health Ministry tweeted.

One person each from Thrissur, Thiruvananthapuram, Pathanamthitta and Malappuram and three from Ernakulam are in isolation wards of various health centres in the state. A 24x7 NCDC call centre (+91-11-23978046) has been made operational to monitor the list of contacts furnished by the Ministry of External Affairs; provide details of district and state surveillance officers to those who seek them; and in case of any clinical query direct the concerned to the relevant Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) officer. Thermal screening is being done at seven designated airports — New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Kochi.

Veterans for Ganga revival drive

New Delhi: In an effort to revive holy river Ganga, a group of citizens including veterans have come together and prepared a blueprint of a movement in this regard through a walk named 'Mundaman Ganga Parikrama'.

The group, under the aegis of Atulya Ganga, has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in this regard

seeking an appointment. They will also meet Union Minister Nitin Gadkari. The proposed walk or 'parikrama' envisages circumnavigation of river Ganga from Haridwar-Gomukh to Gangasagar and then back to Haridwar, organisers of the walk said here on Monday.

They are planning to visit two lakh schools situated on the Ganga's banks and organise over

200 public meetings during the 'parikrama,' expected to commence in August this year, to motivate the villagers to take the responsibility towards Ganga and its revival — and in turn save their own future. Along the route, they will map the river on pollution levels and a final report will be submitted to the Prime Minister's office and concerned Ministry once the

'parikrama' ends. This data will be an available year on year — at the same place — so that everyone can check the improvements made — and in turn to fix the accountability of resources being spent by various stakeholders of the project. The team is calling on people across the river belt, the whole of India and the world at large — to participate in the walk.

PNS



उत्तर प्रदेश प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड

क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय : 34ए, निकट संत तुलसी पब्लिक स्कूल, गेट नं०-2, इन्दिरा नगर, चिल्ला रोड, बाँदा

पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु आयोजित की जाने वाली लोक सुनवाई सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु लोक सुनवाई के सम्बन्ध में प्रस्ताव उ0प्र0 प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड लखनऊ को प्राप्त हुए हैं जिसे सम्बन्धित लोक सुनवाई का आयोजन निम्नलिखित कार्यक्रम के अनुसार किया जाना प्रस्तावित है।

क्र०	परियोजना एवं आवेदक का नाम	प्रोजेक्ट का नाम	परियोजना स्थल का पता	क्षेत्रफल	स्थान	दिनांक व समय
1	मैसर्स श्री सफदर अली पुत्र स्व० फरजंद अली, नि०-मोहल्ला खुन्ती चौराहा, अलीगंज सिटी, जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	अवयस्क खनिज बिल्डिंग स्टोन (खण्डा, गिट्टी बोल्टर)	गाटा नं०-2450 खण्ड संख्या - 03, ग्राम-जरर तहसील-नरैनी, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	क्षेत्रफल 2.0 हे० क्षमता-20,000.00 घनमीटर/वर्ष	तहसील नरैनी समागार जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	28.02.2020 10.30 बजे
2	मैसर्स श्री इन्द्रासन मौर्या पुत्र श्री गृण्नाथ नि०-631/29 मुलायम नहर, इस्माइलगंज थाना-गाजीपुर, जनपद-लखनऊ (उ०प्र०)	अवयस्क खनिज बिल्डिंग स्टोन (खण्डा, गिट्टी बोल्टर)	गाटा नं०-2451 खण्ड संख्या - 05, ग्राम-जरर तहसील-नरैनी, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	क्षेत्रफल 2.75 हे० क्षमता-27,500.00 घनमीटर/वर्ष	तहसील नरैनी समागार जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	28.02.2020 11.00 बजे
3	मैसर्स मुजीबुद्दीन सिद्दीकी पुत्र श्री जीमरुद्दीन सिद्दीकी नि०-मोहल्ला खाईपार, थाना कोतवाली नगर, जनपद -बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	अवयस्क खनिज बिल्डिंग स्टोन (खण्डा, गिट्टी बोल्टर)	गाटा नं०-501 खण्ड ग्राम-नहरी तहसील-नरैनी, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	क्षेत्रफल 1.21 हे० क्षमता-12,100.00 घनमीटर/वर्ष	तहसील नरैनी समागार जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	28.02.2020 11.30 बजे
4	मैसर्स श्रीमती निधी पत्नी श्री राम कृष्ण नि०-ग्राम पनगरा, तहसील - नरैनी, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	अवयस्क खनिज बिल्डिंग स्टोन (खण्डा, गिट्टी बोल्टर)	गाटा नं०-42 एवं 44, खण्ड संख्या-05, ग्राम बरुआसोडा, तहसील-नरैनी, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	क्षेत्रफल 1.46 हे० क्षमता-14,600.00 घनमीटर/वर्ष	तहसील नरैनी समागार जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	28.02.2020 12.00 बजे
5	मैसर्स दिशा इण्टरप्राइजेज, पट्टाधारक श्रीमती सुधा सिंह पत्नी श्री सुनील सिंह, नि०-ग्राम नोनिया मुहाल छाबी तालाब, जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	अवयस्क खनिज बिल्डिंग स्टोन (खण्डा, गिट्टी बोल्टर)	गाटा नं०-332 खण्ड संख्या-02, ग्राम-बड़ोखर खुर्द, तहसील-नरैनी, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	क्षेत्रफल 1.61 हे० क्षमता-16,100.00 घनमीटर/वर्ष	तहसील नरैनी समागार जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	28.02.2020 12.30 बजे
6	मैसर्स श्री मुमताज अली पुत्र श्री फरजंद अली, नि०-मोहल्ला खुन्ती चौराहा, अलीगंज सिटी, जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	अवयस्क खनिज बिल्डिंग स्टोन (खण्डा, गिट्टी बोल्टर)	गाटा नं०-2450 खण्ड संख्या-05, ग्राम-जरर तहसील-नरैनी, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	क्षेत्रफल 2.0 हे० क्षमता-20,000.00 घनमीटर/वर्ष	तहसील नरैनी समागार जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	28.02.2020 01.00 बजे
7	मैसर्स विकास ट्रेडर्स पट्टाधारक श्री सुभाष चन्द्र जैन पुत्र स्व० श्री कृष्ण लाल जैन, नि०-मकान नं०-488/512/9, हवेलिया कालोनी, थाना हसनगंज जनपद - लखनऊ (उ०प्र०)	अवयस्क खनिज मिट्टी/पत्थर एवं पहाड़ी मौरम	गाटा नं०-35 खण्ड संख्या-02, ग्राम-संग्रामपुर तहसील-अतर्रा, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	क्षेत्रफल 2.0 हे० क्षमता-20,000.00 घनमीटर/वर्ष	तहसील नरैनी समागार जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	02.03.2020 12.00 बजे
8	मैसर्स विकास ट्रेडर्स पट्टाधारक श्री सुभाष चन्द्र जैन पुत्र स्व० श्री कृष्ण लाल जैन, नि०-मकान नं०-488/512/9, हवेलिया कालोनी, थाना हसनगंज जनपद - लखनऊ (उ०प्र०)	अवयस्क खनिज मिट्टी/पत्थर एवं पहाड़ी मौरम	गाटा नं०-35 खण्ड संख्या-01, ग्राम-संग्रामपुर तहसील-अतर्रा, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	क्षेत्रफल 2.0 हे० क्षमता-20,000.00 घनमीटर/वर्ष	तहसील अतर्रा समागार जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	02.03.2020 12.30 बजे
9	मैसर्स फाल्गुन गिरि माईंस पट्टाधारक श्री आलोक कुमार शुक्ला पुत्र श्री गोपाल चन्द्र शुक्ला, नि०-किशनपुर खागा, जनपद - फतेहपुर (उ०प्र०)	उपखनिज साधारण बालू/मौरम	गाटा नं०-38, 40, 41 एवं 42, खण्ड संख्या-07 ग्राम दादीखादर तहसील-बबेरू, जनपद-बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	क्षेत्रफल 12.00 हे० क्षमता-1,20,000.00 घनमीटर/वर्ष	ग्राम-प्राथमिक विद्यालय दादीखादर तहसील व जनपद - बाँदा (उ०प्र०)	04.03.2020 02.00 बजे

बोर्ड द्वारा पर्यावरण वन मंत्रालय भारत सरकार द्वारा जारी अधिसूचना संख्या-एस०ओ० 1533 दिनांक 14-09-2006 यथा संशोधित-एस०ओ० 3067 (ई) दिनांक 01-12-2009 के अनुपालन में उपरोक्त परियोजना की लोक सुनवाई उपरोक्त सूची में अंकित वर्णित स्थान दिनांक एवं समय के अनुसार आयोजित की जायेगी। उक्त परियोजना की लोक सुनवाई हेतु जनता के सुझाव विचार, टीका एवं टिप्पणियां आदि आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। परियोजना से सम्बन्धित ई०आर०ए० एवं सक्षिप्त अभिलेख निम्नांकित कार्यालयों में उपलब्ध है।

- जिलाधिकारी कार्यालय जनपद-बाँदा।
- महा प्रबन्धक जिला उद्योग केन्द्र, बाँदा।
- क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय उ०प्र० प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड, 34ए निकट संत तुलसी पब्लिक स्कूल गेट नं०-2, इन्दिरा नगर, चिल्ला रोड, बाँदा।
- उ०प्र० प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड टी०सी०-12 वी, विभूति खण्ड, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ।
- कार्यालय जिला पंचायत बाँदा।
- क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय मध्य क्षेत्र, पर्यावरण एवं वन मंत्रालय भारत सरकार पंचमतल केन्द्रीय भवन, सेक्टर-एच अलीगंज लखनऊ।

अतः समस्त सर्व साधारण को इस आम सूचना के माध्यम से सूचित किया जाता है कि उक्त प्रस्तावित सैण्ड/पहाड़ी मौरम/मौरम माईनिंग, उपखनिज ग्रेनाइट, गिट्टी बोल्टर, खण्डास प्रोजेक्ट की पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति से सम्बन्धित प्रकरण के निस्तारण हेतु उपरोक्त वर्णित स्थान, दिनांक एवं समय के अनुसार आयोजित लोक सुनवाई में उपस्थित होकर अपने आक्षेप-सुझाव प्रस्तुत कर सकते हैं अथवा सुझाव एवं आपत्तियां आदि लिखित रूप से प्रकाशन की तिथि से 30 दिन के अन्दर प्रेषित कर सकते हैं।

क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी

Selling the jewel

The Govt has invited expressions of interest for Air India again. Will it succeed this time in selling off the airline?



What's next for Air India? Even with Ministers in the Government trying to talk up the sale — Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said he would have bought the airline if he weren't a Minister — the fact is that this sell-off is difficult. This time it will not be — thanks to the quality or the lack of it — the asset on sale alone. In a revised push, the Government has made it clear that it plans to sell its entire stake in the carrier. But the sell-off process by the Modi Government during both its terms has been

sporadic and questionable. Take its failure to sell off Can Fin Homes, the housing finance arm of Canara Bank. Without any reason to put it on sale, it has been more damaging to the investor community than any of the protests at Shaheen Bagh or resolutions by the European Parliament. Foreign investors are genuinely worried whether India is open to doing business at all. The Government's negativity has been on display, including that of Goyal's recent statement against Amazon's billion-dollar investment/bailout to its Indian operations. Air India is no ordinary public sector unit (PSU); it is the national airline after all. Talk of its disinvestment have flamed passionate arguments on both sides. On the one hand, some feel that it remains a vital national asset and that the Government must plough in more taxpayers' funds to keep it aloft. On the other, there are those who feel that it is a five-tonne deadweight attached to India's leg and must be divested immediately or better still, shut shop. Air India may be tottering at the edge of the precipice but it still has strengths that can be advantageous in the long run. Whoever rescues it stands to gain for it has some of the prized international slots in profitable routes, a decent fleet and has a well-developed domestic and international footprint. It has some leftover glow from being a superbrand at one time and has skilled and experienced staff, particularly on operations and engineering sides, who are also being sought by most private operators.

With the disinvestment process in a limbo and the Government failing to even make what one could best describe as "easy sells", the question about selling Air India should be put on hold. Simply because selling the national carrier is extremely complex and involves a layered process with terms and conditions. At the same time, despite Jet Airways' collapse actually providing a slight fillip to the rest of the industry, the Indian aviation industry has been hurt due to a multitude of reasons, many not of its own making. IndiGo, India's largest airline, is suffering due to engine issues. SpiceJet, owned by Government-linked entrepreneur Ajay Singh, is faced with a cash crunch, which is not being helped by several of its Boeing 737 Max aircraft grounded. So, the question about who has the money as well as the expertise to buy Air India is open, one that does not have easy answers. The same issues that arose when Jet Airways was going down in flames have re-emerged now. It would be easier and cheaper to establish a new airline than sink hundreds of millions of dollars into Air India unless one really values the slots. At the same time, during the weekend, it emerged that Dubai-based Emirates carried over 50 million Indians to Dubai and beyond, a classic case of how Indian passengers have fuelled the growth of global airlines. There is no doubt that India offers rich pickings for global airlines and could one day become a key driver of the aviation economy. We are poised to be the third largest player in this sector by 2025.

A censure too far

India has rightly ignored the EU resolutions on CAA, argued the law is an internal matter but we must dispel doubts



It is perhaps a little hypocritical of the European Union (EU) to go so far as to pass resolutions against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) when it has traversed a spectrum of genocidal politics and refugees born of racial hatred itself. That's patronising. India is capable enough to conduct its own democratic scrutiny. Yes, all is not right with the new law that makes religion a criterion for naturalisation. And the civil society dissent against it has indeed become a pan-Indian movement to act as a counter-pressure to the

Government. Both the law, which was duly passed by Parliament, and the mass protests thereafter, are within democratic convention. Though the Government clampdown on discourse is reprehensible, the recent protests have shown how masses of people can effectively turn the tide while being leaderless and without political endorsement. To that extent, the pro and anti-CAA battle will be settled within the spirit and territoriality defined by the Constitution and may actually set us on the self-corrective course of democratic renewal. We certainly won't need any third-party intervention to make that call, India's citizens are enough to do it. Domestic matters, no matter how contentious, will have to be solved domestically. Fellow democracies indeed need to respect that.

Also, such resolutions mean nothing unless they are a precursor to some sort of practical curbs in EU's engagement with India (some EU members have suggested that as well) but that's an extreme option, considering there are nations with worst rights violations. Unless of course, this is being done to negotiate a stronger position when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits Brussels for an Indo-EU summit. Having said that, the international narrative does shape global perceptions and attitudes in engaging with India. And the resolutions embody unanimity of opinion from the extreme Right to extreme Left groups, coming from 625 of 752 EU members. Sifting through them, certain key issues do come up on which the Government has to ready its explainers and demonstrate that it is receptive as a vibrant democracy and not combative like an authoritarian regime. It has to engage with counterpoints than scare them away. The key concerns are clearly about the marginalisation of a community implicit in the CAA, its link with the profiling nature of census in the National Population Register (NPR)-National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the clampdowns on dissent, including those in Kashmir following its changed status as a Union Territory. The resolution, which falls under the category of "resolutions on topical subjects," says that India has "created the legal grounds to strip millions of Muslims of the fundamental right of equal access to citizenship" and has linked the rights situation in Kashmir. The US, too, despite the guided tour of the Valley, has been critical of the detention of mainstream political leaders, who have so far worked within India's democratic template and even been allies of New Delhi, without formal charges. The viral images of an emaciated, bearded and unkempt National Conference leader Omar Abdullah have only intensified the sense of victimhood at the hands of an oppressive regime. Till date, the Government's lobbying and efforts to push its own point of view have not been too convincing. It has not made any reconciliatory moves either except by countering criticism with an obstinate aggression that is sharpening polarities. We must realise that intransigence is not always an asset even as we attempt to reset the template of diplomacy from passive to aggressive.

A Constitutional mandate

Those individuals/leaders, who stand opposed to the CAA, must show respect to the Constitution, which empowers Parliament to make laws regarding citizenship



A SURYA PRAKASH

Continued opposition to the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which was passed by Parliament last month, and to the preparation of the National Population Register (NPR) by several State Governments, who stand opposed to the ruling dispensation, and their threatening postures towards the Union Government do not augur well either for the Republic or our Constitutional well-being.

The CAA, which has now become the law of the land, has amended the Citizenship Act of 1955 to provide succour to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians, who because of religious persecution in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, crossed over to India before December 31, 2014, and are living here without any legal status. These nations are Islamic States, meaning Islam is the State religion over there.

Thus, automatically, unlike in India, adherents of all religions other than Islam are second or third-class citizens. Therefore, all non-Muslims are Constitutionally inferior and this has conditioned the majority to ill-treat the religious minorities in these nations. Ever since Partition, the Hindus and other minorities have been subjected to all forms of harassment and cruelty in these nations, forcing them to either convert to Islam or flee.

As a result, the population of Hindus in undivided Pakistan, which was around 24 per cent in the mid-1940s, has crashed to just 1.70 per cent. Similarly, in Bangladesh, which was earlier East Pakistan, the Hindu population has crashed from 30 per cent to about seven per cent. This should also answer the question as to why Muslims have been left out of the list of persecuted minorities under the CAA. First, they are not "minorities" and second, it is laughable to say that Muslims are "persecuted" by an Islamic State. The CAA seeks to offer some help to these subjugated minorities and to only those who entered India before the cut off date. In other words, this is not an open-ended scheme to allow for future migrants from these nations. Nor does it have anything to do with the citizens of India, whether Hindu or Muslim.

Given this reality, the attempt made by the Communists, the Congress and other parties opposed to the BJP, to spread the word that the CAA is against the Muslim citizens of India is blatantly false. This Act seeks to provide succour to persecuted religious minorities in Islamic States and it is also in line with the Bharatiya dharma and Constitutional dharma as well, to reach out to them. Those opposing this are abetting the non-secular, non-democratic behaviour of the citizens of Islamic nations across India's border and will thereby lose the moral right to talk about these values in the country. The Communists and the Congress are also spreading canards about the NPR, the compilation of which is critical for policy formulation. Both parties were roundly rejected in



the last parliamentary election in May 2019. In fact, although the Communists hog 30 to 40 per cent of the airtime on television debates, public support for such parties has fallen dramatically. In the 2004 Lok Sabha election, the two main Communist parties had a combined vote share of 7.07 per cent. In 2014, this was down to 4.07 per cent and in 2019, it crashed to 2.36 per cent.

So, it appears that the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) is their last bastion and with the support of the Congress, the two parties seek to avenge the electoral humiliation they suffered by whipping up passions against the Government that received overwhelming public support.

Meanwhile, in a resolution, the Kerala Assembly has said that the CAA passed by Parliament has created apprehensions in various sections of society. This was followed by the Punjab Assembly, which in its resolution stated that the CAA had caused widespread anguish and social unrest in the country. It further said that "the ideology behind the CAA is inherently discriminatory and is as far away as it can be from being a humanitarian measure." The Rajasthan Assembly is the latest one to demand repeal of the CAA. These resolutions are not unconstitutional but unprejudiced and are certain to pose a threat to the federal structure.

Even more worrying is that the Punjab Assembly's resolu-

“THE ATTEMPT MADE BY THE COMMUNISTS, THE CONGRESS AND OTHER PARTIES OPPOSED TO THE BJP TO SPREAD THE WORD THAT THE CAA IS AGAINST THE MUSLIM CITIZENS OF INDIA IS BLATANTLY FALSE. THIS ACT SEEKS TO PROVIDE SUCCOUR TO PERSECUTED RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN ISLAMIC STATES”



tion refers to "apprehensions" that the NPR is a prelude to the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and that it is "designed to deprive a section of people from citizenship of India." It goes on to say that because of these apprehensions, the Union Government should amend the forms and documentation associated with the NPR.

However, Assemblies in Kerala, Punjab or Rajasthan never shed tears for persecuted religious minorities in theocratic States such as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. Further, all lectures on secularism are to be directed towards the secular, democratic citizens of India and the Government elected by them.

Three other developments in recent weeks are extremely worrying. One, several Chief Ministers have declared that they will not implement the CAA in their States. Two, the disgraceful decision to bring kids to protest sites and to get them to raise foul, abusive slogans against a duly elected Prime Minister. And three, telling the Muslims not to respond to queries from enumerators who are tasked to prepare the NPR.

Every Chief Minister and politician in the country, who has declared that CAA will not be implemented in his/her State, must immediately withdraw their statement because it will amount to challenging the supremacy of the Constitution. Parliament is

empowered to make laws regarding citizenship, naturalisation of aliens under item 17 in the Union List and no State or individual has the right to say that the law made by it will not be implemented. If Chief Ministers persist with this line, it will lead to a Constitutional breakdown and the consequences will be terrible because the overwhelming majority in this country swears by the Constitution and will not allow a few malcontents in politics to disturb its rhythm and balance.

Second, the decision by protesters to bring infants to protest sites and to get them to hurl abuses at the Prime Minister is another act of brinkmanship which no reasonable person will support. Last, asking the Muslims to boycott the NPR is equally risky because any attempt to stymie the working of a duly elected Government at the federal level will have its own implications.

Those who are encouraging such tendencies, are treading a dangerous path. It is indeed unfortunate that one has to make such a gloomy prognosis about what lies ahead around the time when the nation just celebrated its 71st Republic Day. Everybody has to be alert to ensure that the Constitution and the democratic way of life remain undisturbed.

(The writer is an author specialising in democracy studies. Views expressed are personal.)

SOUNDBITE

The Opposition, the CPI(M) and the Congress must put aside narrow political differences and fight together against the fascist BJP Government at the Centre.

West Bengal CM
—Mamata Banerjee

For me fitness is a way of life. It is my daily routine. I cannot operate without exercising regularly or doing something for my fitness. I do yoga, running, sprinting, weights.

Actor
—Anil Kapoor

The Government with a 56-inch chest will have to shed its arrogance on the new citizenship law and bend before the people who have been protesting against the law.

Former Union Minister
—Yashwant Sinha

I would not say Jinnah has completely won but he is winning. There's still a choice available to the nation between Jinnah's idea and Gandhi's idea of a country.

Senior Congress leader
—Shashi Tharoor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Imbibing Indian ethos

Sir — As India celebrated its 71st Republic Day, we need to pause and introspect on the larger picture than debate on transient aberrations — social, political and economic — to which we have become so accustomed to. Yes, as a State, we have not slipped as have other contemporary nations who have attained independence. This, we owe to the legacy bequeathed in our philosophy and culture, the tenets of which run through our genes.

The Vedas and the Upanishads had delineated a vibrant ethos for public and private good. Time and tide have posed questions and we have chosen the right path many times. What is satisfying is that we strive to make amends to the wrongs. Each era is defined by a mix of thinkers and leaders they offer. That at any given time we seem to misplace their right proportion remains an enigma. And no nation is an exception to this. Let us nevertheless celebrate an envious legacy we have inherited and pass it on to future generations.

R Narayanan
Navi Mumbai

Blunders that require quick remedy

In its report, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had confirmed that the Indian economy would grow at a rate lower than five per cent in 2019-20 rather than 7.2 per cent as predicted by it in April last year. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s periodic survey of the economy, too, gave a lucid account. Noting that the economy was bottoming out and growth had slowed from a rapid pace, it said recovery had been hurt as non-banking financial companies — which contribute a large share to its financing, weighing on job creation, income and consumption — are under stress. And now, the Reuters has forecast that India's corporate and income tax collection is likely to fall below what was collected in 2018-19, a fall for the first time in two decades.

It is here that it is difficult to fathom the philosophy behind some of the decisions taken by the ruling Government. The subjugation of Kashmir and its people and the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) have all made prospective investors wary of parking funds here. A new facet of Indian politics now is a flurry of saffron foot soldiers who remain alert all the time to counter every critic of the Government. Recently, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella had to face the wrath for his tweet on CAA. He said, "I think what is happening is sad...It's just bad." During his visit to India, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos pledged



to invest \$1 billion. His proposal didn't earn approval from the Government. A few days ago, George Soros, the billionaire investor and philanthropist, made a candid observation during his speech at the World Economic Forum, "A democratically elected Narendra Modi is creating a Hindu nationalist State" in India, alluding to the CAA. He, too, wasn't spared. These are men who command respect and wield considerable clout among the business fraternity across the world. For a country, which banks heavily on foreign investment to revive its economy, attacks on well-meaning critics will only be self-defeating.

Haridasan Rajan
Kozhikode

Stop creating walls

Sir — The Chinese have always had a fascination with walls culminating in the "Great Wall of

China" to keep the invaders out. Soon, they realised that the walls do not stop things from coming in. Now, they have put up another set of walls across a number of cities, initially Wuhan, to prevent

the spread of coronavirus. But again, the walls failed. Coronavirus has already claimed 80 lives in China and the country is making desperate attempts to stop its spread. But

emphasis must be on curing rather than just containing it. The modern world moves too fast for walls to work.

The real dilemma is to find a cure to it using scientific research, including vaccinations. There's a dire need to raise funds for medical research. Let's hope there is a solution and that it is found soon.

Dennis Fitzgerald
Melbourne

Learn from Kerala

Sir — The coronavirus threat in China has put millions of people in lockdown at a time when they should be celebrating the Lunar New Year. Given the way this disease has been spreading, many fear that it may become pandemic. Early reports suggest that the disease may have originated in bats. China must learn from Kerala's experience, which successfully contained the Nipah virus outbreak in 2018 due to adequate planning and infrastructure.

Sravana Ramachandran
Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Leaders must get their act together

China seems to be a prime source of viruses. The doctors will do their duty as always but it would be nice if Chinese politicians act fast



GWYNNE DYER

In an emergency, the good thing about dictatorship is that it can respond very fast. The bad thing is that it won't respond at all until the dictator-in-chief says that it should. All little dictators, who flourish in this sort of system, won't risk their positions by passing bad news up the line until the risk of being blamed for delay outweighs the risk of being blamed for the emergency in the first place. You can see how this works if you consider China's response to the emergence of nCov-2019 (novel coronavirus 2019), a new viral threat potentially as serious as the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) virus of 2003. Some things it has done well but others it did very badly and the odds that the virus will spread globally are now probably even or worse.

The local health authorities in Wuhan, the 11-million-strong city in central China where the virus first appeared, spotted it on December 31, 2019, when only a few dozen cases had come to their attention. That's as fast as you could ask for. And they promptly shut down the seafood and wild game market where the victims caught the disease. Score: Nine out of 10.

China's national health authorities also acted fast. On January 9, they announced that they had a brand new coronavirus on their hands and just one day later they released its full genetic sequence online so that medical researchers worldwide could start working on it. Elapsed time: Just 11 days. Known deaths at that point: One. Score: 10 out of 10.

But these are medical professionals doing their duty according to internationally-agreed protocols. We don't know what they recommended to China's political authorities at that point but they must have called for widespread testing and probably also for travel restrictions to control the spread of the virus. But nobody dared to rock the boat: Nothing was done.

A pause here to recall how countries control the spread of a new infectious disease for which there is no vaccine nor any effective cure. Isolate the victims as soon as they are identified and give them medical support: Some will die but most will usually survive. And if you do that soon enough and thoroughly enough, the global pandemic never gets going.

There are often complicating factors. The spread will be far faster if the virus can pass from one person to another in the air. It will be much harder to isolate the people carrying the virus if they become infectious before they develop visible symptoms. But the methods available to slow or stop the spread are still the same: Identify the carriers and isolate them.

Now, back to what happened in China. The medical people did their job; the political people did not. It was two more weeks before the city of Wuhan was cut off from the rest of the country and the world. I live in London, 15 hours' flying time away and during those two weeks 2,000 people arrived from Wuhan at London's airports.

Lunar New Year, the biggest holiday in China's calendar, was coming up fast but nothing was done although half the population goes home for a visit at this time every year. Wuhan and a dozen other Hubei cities are now in lockdown but it's too late: Wuhan's mayor, Zhou Xianwang, admits that five million people have already left the city for the New Year celebrations. Score: Two out of 10.

We now have two pieces of bad news that would have made it even more urgent to seal Wuhan off had we known them at the time. The new virus does propagate through the air and people carrying it do become infectious before they display any symptoms.

Zhou didn't dare advocate isolating the city and neither did anybody else, until the Great Panjandrum Himself had spoken. President Xi Jinping finally spoke on January 25, saying that China faces a "grave situation" and now the system is racing to do what it should have been done two weeks ago.

Too bad but this pandemic (if that is what it becomes) will probably be on the same scale as the SARS virus and that is not really horrific: Deaths in the high hundreds or a few thousands worldwide. The mortality rate among those who catch it appears to be about two per cent, compared to one per cent for ordinary seasonal influenza. And ordinary flu kills about 400,000 (mostly elderly) people every year.

But one of these days something like the 1918 virus that caused the Spanish influenza will emerge again. That killed around 50 million people worldwide, out of a global population only a quarter of what it is now. Since Chinese food markets now seem to be a prime source of dangerous new flu-related viruses, the Chinese Government has a particular responsibility to contain them early. The Chinese doctors will do their duty, as always, but it would be nice if China had its political act a bit more together before then.

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

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

ON FEBRUARY 8 MORNING, PRESS THE BUTTON WITH LOTUS SYMBOL SO HARD THAT ITS CURRENT FORCES SHAHEEN BAGH PROTESTERS TO LEAVE BY EVENING.
 —UNION HOME MINISTER
 AMIT SHAH



EVM BUTTONS WILL BE PRESSED WITH LOVE IN DELHI. IT SHOULD BE A MILD CURRENT SO THAT FRIENDSHIP AND BROTHERHOOD ARE NOT ENDANGERED.
 —JD(U) NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT
 PRASHANT KISHOR

Powerless discoms

The house must be set in order, else this will have catastrophic consequences for power producers, banks, States and Modi's plans to supply electricity to every household



UTTAM GUPTA

Even as there are incessant promises from the ruling establishment of electrifying all villages in the country and making power available to each and every household for maximum duration in a day, the most crucial wheel required for making this happen has got stuck. And the irony is that the political brass is only paying lip service to the urgent need for extricating it. The reference here is to the power distribution companies (discoms) — mostly owned and controlled by State Governments which procure electricity from the independent power producers (IPPs), Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) like the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) and so on, besides their own undertakings such as Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam (RVUN) and sell to consumers. There are some discoms in the private sector as well but they, too, can't ignore the diktats of the state.

Ever since the dawn of the present century, the discoms have been incurring losses primarily due to three factors. First, being their sole owner and controller, the ruling establishment runs discoms as an extension of the state machinery, ordering them to sell electricity to a certain category of consumers viz. poor households and farmers either at a fraction of the cost of purchase and distribution or even free. On the units sold to this class, the discoms incur heavy under-recovery. At the same time, they are told to sell to industries and businesses at a price much above the cost to enable them to offset under-recovery on sale to preferred customers. But, even after offset, losses remain.

Second, in the course of transmission and distribution of electricity, there are so called "technical and commercial" (T&C) losses. Most of it is plain theft which is facilitated by faulty transformers, meters and other equipment. There being no revenue from stolen power, this further exacerbates the losses.

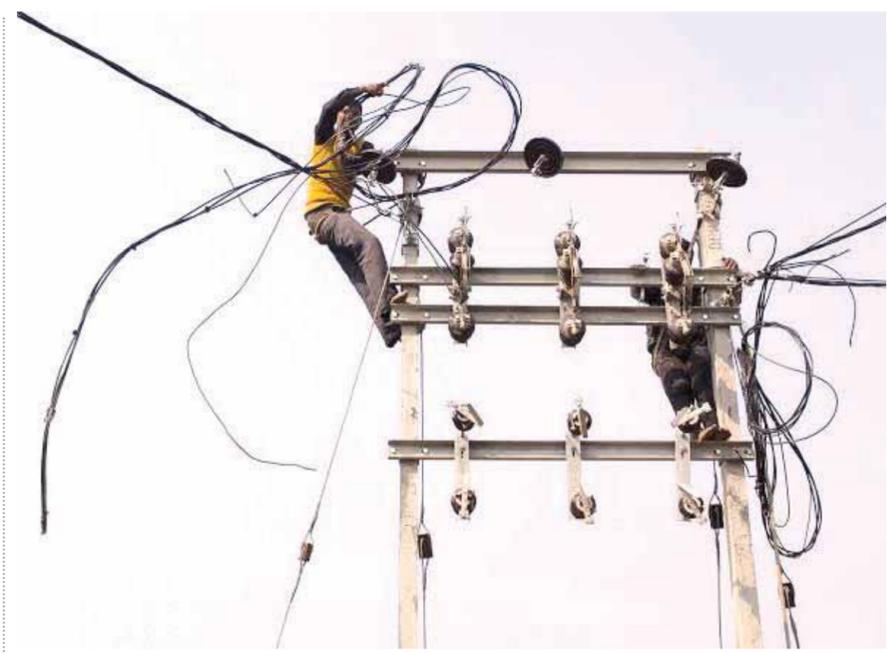
Third, under the power purchase agreements (PPAs) signed by discoms, States allow inflated tariff to generators taking recourse to "gold plating" (euphemism for claiming higher investment than actual), excessive overheads and over-invoicing of fuel bills and so on.

The above three factors make a deadly combination leading to shortfall in the realisation from sale, vis-à-vis the cost of supplying electricity which gets manifest in their loss. Funded by borrowings, this leads to accumulation of debt to unsustainable level. To ensure that they are able to sustain operations and the spillover effect on the rest of the economy is arrested/avoided, the Government had come out with three bail-out packages since 2000 — the latest being in 2015.

In 2015, under a financial restructuring package (FRP) orchestrated by the Union Government, over 75 per cent of the outstanding debt, about ₹400,000 crore of discoms were taken over by State Governments whereas for the balance 25 per cent, they were allowed to issue bonds — backed by sovereign guarantee — to raise funds at concessional interest rate. The FRP was intended to enable discoms to wipe the slate clean, reduce losses and eventually eliminate them.

During 2016-17 and 2017-18, they did show significant reduction with losses declining from

A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION CAN EMERGE ONLY BY TACKLING THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO LOSSES OF DISCOMS. THE CENTRE AND STATES SHOULD PUT THEIR HEADS TOGETHER TO DO AWAY WITH SOPS TO FARMERS AND HOUSEHOLDS, ELIMINATE THEFT AND REIN IN INFLATED TARIFF UNDER PPAS



₹52,000 crore during 2015-16 to ₹32,000 crore during 2016-17 and ₹17,000 crore during 2017-18. During 2018-19, this trend was reversed with losses increasing to ₹28,000 crore. The trend continues during the current year. A collateral damage has been by way of increase in pending payment to power generators. Thus, the amount due for more than 60 days increased from about ₹23,000 crore as of March 2018 to ₹71,000 crore as of November 2019. All dues including those pending for less than 60 days — as on this date — were even higher at about ₹81,000 crore.

This has a debilitating effect on the ability of generators to service loans taken from banks and financial institutions (FIs). A good chunk of those loans have already become non-performing assets (NPAs). Moreover, given their precarious finances, discoms are forced to reduce off-take which affects capacity utilisation. It leads to an anomalous situation whereby despite ample capacity, electricity generation declines affecting supplies.

There is an urgent need to set the house of discoms in order, or else this will have catastrophic consequences for all stakeholders, viz. power producers, banks/FIs, finances of States and jeopardise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's grandiose plans to supply electricity to every household. So, what is the Government doing to set things right?

From August 1, 2019, it made mandatory for discoms to open letters of credit (LOC) for getting supply from generators (gencos). Under the LOC arrangement, the bank guarantees that a buyer's payment to a seller will be received on time and for the correct amount; in the event that the buyer is unable to pay, the bank will be required to cover the full or remaining amount which in turn, it will recover from the

buyer using all available legal means. Relying on the above, in September, 2019, the Union Power Minister, RK Singh even exuded confidence that this would prevent creation of fresh dues. But this has not happened as may be seen from arrears continuing to be on an upward trajectory from about ₹49,000 crore in February, 2019 to over ₹71,000 crore as of November 2019. Clearly, the mechanism has not worked even as generators are forced to maintain supplies despite not receiving payment.

Singh was also optimistic that by incorporating a provision for penalty (or surcharge) for delayed payment at commercial rate of interest of 18 per cent in the New Tariff Policy (NTP), it should be possible to eliminate all pending dues. This may work while dealing with private entities (in fact, in those cases, the problem may not even arise in the first place) but not when it comes to dealing with state entities. So, it is unlikely that the legacy dues would be cleared.

Under the NTP (this is yet to be approved by the Union Cabinet), the Government has also proposed capping of tariff hike to 15 per cent of the under-recovered power supply cost. Further, they won't be eligible for grant or loan if they don't make efforts to reduce losses. These, too, are unlikely to work in improving their financial position and ability to clear the arrears and make timely payments in future.

Let us not forget that at present, even after increasing tariff — mostly directed at industries and businesses (a big chunk of households and farmers are never touched) — discoms incur loss. If a hike is restricted to just 15 per cent then their loss would be even bigger. Far from any help in reducing, such a stipulation will only end up increasing loss

as they lose the flexibility to hike tariff. Similarly, the pressure by way of denying grant or loan won't be of much help.

The Government is also contemplating a Special Loans Plan (SLP) under which banks will be asked to give loans to discoms to enable them to clear their dues to gencos. This will have serious implications for the banks. Considering that discoms won't be able to pay back (given their precarious finances and no effort being made to address the fundamental factors behind their losses), these loans will be NPAs from day one. For banks struggling to come out of the crisis they got into (courtesy, legacy NPAs), this will compound their woes.

True, payment by discoms to gencos (enabled by SLP) will enable the latter service loans they had taken from banks thereby preventing those loans from becoming NPAs. However, for banks, this is no consolation as one set of NPAs would have been substituted by another. Besides, the gencos will continue to remain vulnerable to payment default as long as the discoms remain financially unviable. The SLP may solve today's problem but after some time, dues will pile up requiring Centre's intervention yet again.

Let it be understood in no ambiguous terms that whether it is the FRP (granted thrice over earlier) or SLP under consideration now, these are merely "band aids." These don't offer sustainable solution even as the problem keeps on festering beneath.

A sustainable solution can emerge only by tackling the fundamental causes which contribute to losses of discoms. The Centre and States should put their heads together to do away with sops to farmers and households, eliminate theft and rein in inflated tariff under PPAs. (The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst)

India is not there yet

The NITI Aayog's index of UN's Sustainable Development Goals reveals that Kerala is on top of the chart in the country while in the north, Himachal Pradesh is a leading performer and Haryana and Punjab are laggards



PINKI RAMAUL

On December 30, 2019, the NITI Aayog released the second edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index, 2019, which is more robust than the first edition, SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018, on account of a wider coverage of goals, targets and indicators and has greater alignment with the National Indicator Framework (NIF). A composite score was computed in the range of zero to 100 for each State and Union Territory (UT). If a State/UT gets a score of 100, it signifies that it has achieved the 2030 national SDG targets. The higher the score, the closer the State/UT gets towards achieving the objectives.

For North India, the report revealed contrasting performances by States, with Himachal Pradesh (HP) fortifying its position as the lead performer and securing the second rank with a composite SDG index of 69. Punjab was placed 12th with a score of 62 and Haryana ranked much lower at 18th place with a score of 57, which was even lower than the country's average of 60. Overall, Kerala achieved the first rank with a tab of 70, while Bihar was the worst performing State with a tally of 50.

The SDGs consist of a set of 17 broad-based global goals adopted by 193 countries at the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Summit at UN Headquarters in New York in September 2015. The objectives were intended to be achieved by 2030 as a part of the resolution, "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." These SDGs for 2030 evolved from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for 2015. India is committed to achieve the 17 SDGs, the 169 associated tar-

gets and 232 SDG indicators, which comprehensively cover the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development.

The present analysis of the three North Indian States covers only 15 SDGs since the SDG 14 (life below water) is excluded as it applies only to nine coastal States and the SDG 17 (Partnership for the goals) is only qualitatively analysed in the report.

Out of the 15 SDG indices, HP is the best performer among these three States on 11 SDG indices while Punjab is the best performer on three goals viz. SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 3 (good health and well-being) and SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy) and Haryana is the best performer on only one of the goals viz. SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure).

However, appreciably, at an all-India level, Haryana is among the top three States in respect of SDG 9. However, Punjab has not found mention among the top three States at the all-India level on any of the 17 indices used for evaluating States and

UTs on parameters of development. Significantly, on the other hand, at the all-India level, goal-wise HP has been the top State in three SDGs viz. Goal 4 (quality education), Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities).

Besides applauding the achievements of the States, the report also highlights several challenges before them, which need to be comprehensively addressed by Governments. Some of the critical issues highlighted reveal that at the all-India level, Haryana ranks second-highest in urban income inequality. Punjab and Haryana have less than 10 per cent of their geographical area under forest and tree cover. Both Haryana and Punjab have surpassed the maximum limit of annual groundwater withdrawal, which is 70 per cent, so that the ground water is replenished at a normal rate. These States have to improve this ratio.

Unfortunately, in terms of sexual crimes against the girl child as well as total crimes against children, HP is the worst. Moreover, it does badly

in terms of SDG 2 (zero hunger), which reflects poorly on the performance of the State Government on ending starvation, thus requiring a more focussed approach on nutrition.

Among the positive aspects, Punjab has the highest agricultural productivity at 4,169.67 kg/Ha and is nearing the targeted productivity of 5,033.34 kg/Ha. Similarly, Punjab with Gross Value Added (GA) in agriculture at ₹2.4 lakh, has the second-highest GA after Goad at ₹3.7 lakh, which is already above the target of ₹1.3 lakh.

Cellular density is over 100 per cent in both HP and Punjab and with a HIV incidence per 1,000 uninfected population at 0.01, HP is closest to achieving the UN target of zero HIV-incidence. In terms of the average annual drop-out rate at the secondary level, HP is the best performing State with a 0.03 per cent rate as compared to 19.89 per cent in India. It leads the States in the Female Labor Force Participation Rate at 39.70 per cent as compared to the all-India rate

of 17.7 per cent. In terms of the share of renewable power as a proportion of the total electricity generated, HP leads the country with 94 per cent of the total electricity generated in the State coming from renewable sources. The above analysis emphasises that the SDG India Index Report 2019 would spur the States towards necessary course-correction wherever required and encourage them to ensure timely achievement of the goals.

At the global level, it is widely agreed that India will play a leading role in determining the relative success or failure of the SDGs, as it is the second-most populous country, accounting for one-sixth of the world's population. In this context, it is worthwhile to quote Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General, "The coming years will be a vital period to save the planet and to achieve sustainable, inclusive human development."

(The writer is an author and editor)



LEST WE FORGET OUR DARK PAST

This Holocaust Memorial Day, and the ceremony that will take place in Poland, carry a special poignancy because of the diminishing number of survivors and the landmark nature of the date. In the last 75 years, survivors have talked about it out of a sense of duty to the dead and the living. Philosopher Santayana said of the Holocaust: "He who does not learn from history is doomed to repeat it." That lesson must never cease to be taught. (The Guardian, editorial)

Govt to sell 100 pc stake in Air India; issues bid document

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Monday announced sale of 100 per cent stake in debt-laden Air India as it issued the preliminary bid document for the strategic disinvestment and has set March 17, as the deadline for submitting expression of interest.

As part of the strategic disinvestment, Air India would also sell 100 per cent stake in low-cost airline Air India Express and 50 per cent shareholding in joint venture AISATS, as per bid document issued on Monday.

Management control of the airline would also be transferred to the successful bidder. This is the second time in less than two years that the government has come out with proposal for selling stake in Air India, which has been in the red for long.

The government has set March 17, as the deadline for submitting the expression of interest (Eoi).

AISATS is an equal joint venture between Air India and Singapore Airlines. It offers ground handling services.

Air India also has interests in Air India Engineering Services, Air India Air Transport Services, Airline

Air India along with Air India Express great asset: Puri

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Monday said Air India along with Air India Express is a "great asset," as the government came out with preliminary bid document for disinvestment of the national carrier.

The Minister of State for Civil Aviation said the successful bidder would continue to use Air India brand. The government on Monday

announced sale of 100 per cent stake in debt-laden Air India as it issued the preliminary bid document for the strategic disinvestment and has set March 17, as the deadline for submitting expression of interest.

As part of the strategic disinvestment, Air India would also sell 100 per cent stake in low-cost airline Air India Express and 50 per cent shareholding in joint venture AISATS, as per bid document issued on Monday.

Management control of the airline would also be transferred to the successful bidder.

The Minister of State for Civil Aviation further said the lessons have been learnt from 2018 with regard to Air India stake sale.

In 2018, the government proposed to offload 76 per cent equity share capital of the national carrier as well as transfer the management control to private players. However, there were no bidders.

Allied Services and Hotel Corporation of India.

These entities are in the process of being transferred to a separate company — Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL) — and would not be a part of the proposed transaction, the document said.

According to the document, debt of Rs 23,286.5 crore would remain with Air India and Air India Express at the time of closing of the disinvestment.

The remaining debt would be allocated to AIAHL.

A person in the know of PIM details said staff would be given shares on discount under Employee Stock Option Programme (ESOP).

Air India staff will be offered three per cent of the airline's total shares in the government's disinvestment process. About 98 crore shares would be set aside under the ESOP, the person said.

As on November 1, 2019, Air India and Air India Express had 16,077 employees on their rolls, including permanent people.

Employee unions to meet in Delhi

New Delhi (PTI): Various Air India employee unions will meet here on Monday to discuss proposed privatisation of the debt-laden airline, sources said.

The meeting was scheduled after the government, earlier in the day, announced sale of 100 per cent stake in Air India as it issued the preliminary bid document for the strategic disinvestment. Representatives of various Air India trade unions will meet here to discuss the government's privatisation plans, sources said. There are around a dozen recognised trade unions at Air India.

As part of the strategic disinvestment, Air India would also sell 100 per cent stake in low-cost airline Air India Express and 50 per cent shareholding in joint venture AISATS, as per bid document issued on Monday.

ED arrests DHFL CMD

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Enforcement Directorate has arrested the CMD of Dewan Housing Finance Ltd (DHFL), Kapil Wadhawan, in connection with its money laundering probe against deceased gangster Iqbal Mirchi and others, officials said on Monday.

They said Wadhawan, 46, has been arrested under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) as he was allegedly not cooperating in the probe and was "untrustworthy" in his dealings and statements made to the agency. He was on Monday produced before the designated PMLA court which remanded him in the ED custody till January 29.

Kapil Wadhawan, being chairman and managing director of Dewan Housing Finance Ltd (DHFL), had visited London along with a city-based real estate broker to meet Iqbal Mirchi in 2010. He has been instrumental in siphoning off huge amounts of money as part of the illegal deal between Mirchi and the Wadhawans, the ED said in its remand note. "Kapil Wadhawan played a very crucial role in the nefarious transactions by way of money laundering. He diverted huge funds from DHFL to shell companies which was then transferred to Wadhawans-owned Sunblink Real Estate Pvt Ltd," the agency said. The case relates to Mirchi's Mumbai properties, which have been called as proceeds of crime by the ED.

Budget may bring in new policy to revive power discoms

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The upcoming Union Budget may bring about a new policy to reduce the losses of power distribution company and revive them.

Union Power Minister RK Singh on Monday said that the Power Ministry has discussed and proposed the new scheme with the Finance Ministry and was hopeful that it would find place in the Budget 2020-21.

The new scheme would include elements of the current UDAY scheme and would provide assistance for reduction of discoms' losses, he told reporters on the sidelines of an event here.

Allocations under the new scheme will make allocations based on efficiency.

The minister said that the government aims to reduce the losses of discoms to 15 per cent from 18.79 per cent loss in the financial year 2018-19.

According to official sources, the scheme may come up as a revised version of UDAY — UDAY 2.0 — which would provide another lease of life to ailing power discoms by extending financial support in the form of loans and grants.

This would support discoms to cover their payment to the generators and lenders while also investing in upgrading power infrastructure.

The accumulated losses of all discoms have again shot up to over ₹80,000 crore, as of now, out of which close to ₹60,000 crore is overdue.

The new financial support scheme will come with stringent conditions of regular power tariff revision by discoms and bringing down AT&C (aggregate, technical and commercial) losses to a level of 15 per cent within a year.

Non-adherence to conditions will stop loans and grants facility to state-run discoms.

The scheme for revival of stressed power discoms was launched in November 2015. The Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana's (UDAY) prime objectives were financial turnaround and operational improvement of the discoms along with the reduction of cost of generation of power development of renewable energy efficiency and conservation.

Singh observed that the proposed new scheme would be replace the current multiple programmes into a single focused initiative.

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	12197.10	12216.60	12107.00	12119.00	-129.25
DREDDY	3029.00	3209.00	2997.50	3200.00	168.60
M&M	565.00	582.50	563.00	578.50	10.60
CIPLA	457.50	466.50	454.20	464.20	5.35
ULTRACEMCO	4624.90	4754.10	4622.00	4686.00	43.25
EICHEMOT	2085.00	21160.80	2075.00	21091.00	160.20
TECHM	786.00	796.25	779.65	792.10	4.80
ICICIBANK	538.50	545.00	531.50	535.90	2.05
SUNPHARMA	447.00	451.75	442.20	448.75	0.95
AXISBANK	732.45	748.45	731.00	738.70	3.30
ASIANPAINT	1787.00	1805.75	1780.00	1790.00	1.20
BAJAJ-AUTO	3069.80	3122.95	3044.05	3102.25	5.10
MARUTI	7101.50	7225.00	7061.00	7125.00	20.50
BPL	466.50	471.80	463.00	465.00	-1.10
HCLTECH	607.70	608.00	601.75	605.55	-2.15
COALINDIA	193.95	195.00	192.00	193.00	-0.95
HINDUNILVR	2066.00	2068.75	2056.75	2062.95	-10.75
ZEE	280.80	281.90	275.20	279.35	-1.50
HEROMOTOCO	2456.00	2498.50	2425.05	2455.00	-13.65
INFY	779.05	784.70	774.40	778.00	-4.70
BRITANNIA	3187.00	3210.00	3155.00	3173.00	-19.50
ONGC	118.35	118.50	116.80	117.55	-0.80
TCS	2189.70	2193.45	2165.00	2178.00	-15.10
BAFINANCE	417.00	420.00	415.00	416.05	-3.15
NESTLEIND	15700.00	15845.00	15599.95	15634.95	-120.55
BAIHINSV	9590.00	9648.90	9535.00	9550.45	-83.30
RELIANCE	1511.00	1524.45	1505.00	1508.00	-13.55
IT	1340.00	1364.90	1340.00	1347.00	-11.20
INFRATEL	243.00	243.50	239.00	242.00	-2.30
WIPRO	247.90	247.90	244.75	245.20	-2.40
UPL	545.40	550.10	535.00	538.00	-5.30
ADANIPOWER	383.70	386.25	379.80	380.70	-4.05
YESBANK	42.30	43.45	41.85	42.25	-0.55
GRASIM	815.80	836.90	810.00	811.35	-10.65
NTPC	115.00	115.30	112.60	113.15	-1.60
TITAN	1228.00	1240.35	1208.85	1210.00	-17.85
ITC	237.00	237.40	234.30	234.65	-3.50
KOTAKBANK	1628.70	1629.00	1608.40	1617.00	-25.95
IOC	119.25	120.20	117.00	117.30	-2.35
GAIL	129.00	129.50	126.10	126.65	-2.85
TATAMOTORS	185.70	186.90	180.85	182.35	-4.15
BHARTIARTL	521.15	524.10	511.90	512.50	-11.75
POWERGRID	196.40	196.45	192.30	192.45	-4.50
SBIN	320.90	322.00	315.80	316.40	-7.65
HDFC	2433.00	2445.00	2388.50	2389.95	-60.80
HDFCBANK	1235.00	1235.00	1211.75	1213.50	-31.05
HINDALCO	203.55	203.55	197.40	200.00	-5.40
INDUSTSECT	1311.50	1312.00	1265.00	1275.00	-41.10
JSWSTEEL	265.45	265.90	258.30	260.35	-11.55
TATASTEEL	477.75	477.75	460.10	460.55	-22.85
VEDL	153.40	153.40	148.10	148.35	-7.55

NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	29083.75	29259.50	28895.00	28960.75	-193.00
AUROPHARMA	499.60	518.00	498.20	511.35	10.25
CEL	1674.00	1717.85	1660.10	1703.75	28.35
CONCOR	599.00	574.50	557.00	570.00	8.65
ICICIPRULI	521.00	533.35	516.35	527.80	7.85
LUPIN	738.00	759.90	734.10	751.10	10.95
SHREECEM	2309.90	2376.00	2296.15	2344.00	309.35
NHPC	27.25	28.20	26.85	27.70	0.25
PIDILITIND	1458.20	1481.70	1451.00	1465.55	7.95
PAGEIND	26199.00	26738.40	26100.00	26900.00	85.50
CADILAC	270.10	275.60	269.20	272.85	0.70
DRAGON	1910.00	1935.00	1893.70	1914.10	3.60
IBULHSGFIN	318.30	329.70	317.30	322.85	0.25
BERGEPAINT	562.00	569.50	557.35	560.00	0.25
HAVELLS	622.00	626.60	616.80	622.95	0.05
PEC	115.45	118.70	115.00	115.95	-0.40
INDIGO	1499.00	1513.40	1480.25	1495.55	-5.95
AMBUJACEM	214.60	218.90	213.00	215.00	-0.95
DMART	1945.50	1961.50	1928.10	1939.00	-9.60
NIACL	163.00	167.35	161.50	162.20	-0.85
MARICO	340.55	343.75	336.90	338.75	-1.80
MCDOWELL-N	575.00	582.90	572.65	574.25	-3.85
SRTANSFIN	1077.00	1096.00	1071.35	1075.10	-8.80
SBILIFE	999.80	1014.70	987.35	991.80	-8.00
HDFCAMC	3198.90	3200.30	3162.80	3178.80	-30.70
BOSCHLTD	14939.90	15098.65	14840.00	14870.00	-152.45
ACC	1555.00	1579.60	1544.15	1549.95	-13.95
ICICI	1348.40	1350.75	1330.75	1336.60	-15.75
UBL	1275.10	1286.30	1256.10	1260.80	-14.30
L&T	118.90	120.70	118.20	118.45	-1.50
HDFCLIFE	604.80	605.70	598.10	598.65	-8.60
BAJAJHLDRG	3330.00	3372.75	3290.00	3291.00	-47.95
ASHOKLEY	85.80	87.00	85.00	85.25	-1.25
BIOCON	289.00	297.90	286.00	290.00	-4.35
BANDHANBANK	478.40	484.40	473.90	474.50	-7.35
DABUR	500.40	505.85	491.65	492.60	-7.90
PGH	11399.80	11399.80	11111.90	11159.00	-178.60
PETRONET	277.50	277.95	271.30	272.30	-4.50
GODREJCP	748.00	752.55	735.00	736.20	-13.15
HINDPETRO	245.50	246.60	240.00	240.50	-3.30
PNB	61.95	62.25	61.10	61.15	-1.20
OFSS	2960.55	2984.90	2931.00	2931.20	-58.00
COLPAL	1511.00	1517.00	1475.05	1482.05	-32.30
GICRE	265.20	269.80	258.35	260.25	-5.80
DLF	261.50	264.00	255.80	255.80	-7.05
MOTHERSUMI	144.40	144.40	140.30	141.00	-4.10
HINDZINC	207.95	208.10	200.00	201.40	-6.45
BANKBARODA	93.25	93.90	92.00	92.60	-3.00
NMDC	128.00	128.00	123.35	123.55	-5.30
INDIA	5.85	6.05	5.75	5.80	-0.25
SIEMENS	1629.00	1639.00	1550.55	1555.05	-69.90

BSE 500

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP
ICICIBANK	540.00	545.10	531.80	536.35
HDFCBANK	1237.00	1237.95	1211.50	1212.90
WOCKPHARMA	299.00	358.85	298.65	352.90
PIIND	1492.00	1555.70	1488.90	1541.40
DRREDDY	3037.45	3207.40	3001.60	3188.95
IBULHSGFIN	318.50	329.65	317.00	323.00
TATASTEEL	477.60	477.60	460.25	462.40
RELIANCE	1515.05	1524.35	1505.00	1506.60
YESBANK	42.50	43.45	41.90	42.40
SBIN	321.70	321.90	315.75	316.20
INDUSINDBK	1319.00	1319.00	1267.60	1271.60
TATAMOTORS	185.90	186.90	180.95	182.25

Death toll in coronavirus climbs sharply

PTI ■ BEIJING

China continued to reel under deadly coronavirus epidemic on Monday with the death toll due to it sharply rising to 80 amid the country's National Health Commission reporting 2,744 confirmed cases of the fatal affliction till date.

The Commission also termed the condition of the 461 people being treated for the virus, officially known as 2019-nCoV, as "critical".

The Commission's said during the past 24 hours, 769 new confirmed cases, 3,806 new suspected cases and 24 deaths from the disease were reported.

By Sunday, the pneumonia situation had resulted in a total of 80 deaths, while 51 people had recovered and 5,794 remained as suspected patients, state run Xinhua news agency quoted the Commission as saying.

A total of 32,799 close contacts have been traced, the commission said, adding

30,453 among them were currently under medical observation while 583 others were discharged on Sunday.

Almost all provinces in China except Tibet have reported the virus cases.

In addition, 17 confirmed cases were reported in Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions and Taiwan, besides eight in Hong Kong, five in Macao and four in Taiwan.

Overseas, confirmed cases included seven in Thailand, four each in Australia and Singapore, three each in the United States, the Republic of Korea, Japan, France and Malaysia, two in Vietnam and one in Nepal.

The mayor of the Hubei province capital Wuhan, which has emerged as the epicentre of the epidemic outbreak, said he expects another 1,000 new patients in the city, official media reported.

"There are signs showing the virus is becoming more transmissible. These walking 'contagious agents' [hidden

carriers] make controlling the outbreak a lot more difficult," he said.

Mayor Zhou Xianwang said "it was possible to add about 1,000 cases" based on the number of patients in hospital being tested or undergoing observation in the city.

A high power committee, formed to fight the coronavirus epidemic under the chairmanship of Premier Li Keqiang, on Sunday said the virus' ability to spread was getting stronger and announced a slew of measures to combat it.

To curb the epidemic, China has decided to adopt a host of measures including delaying and reducing conferences and major events, extending the current Spring Festival holidays and supporting online work.

To reduce population flows, the meeting decided on measures such as extending the Spring Festival holiday, which is scheduled between Jan 24 and 30, and delaying the start of the spring semester at col-

leges and schools. It called for maximum efforts to reduce the mortality rate of patients and enhance their treatment.

More research will be conducted on cured patients and treatment measures will be further refined, with more training programmes scheduled for medical workers, an official statement said.

The Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Sunday said researchers have isolated viruses and were selecting a strain, Xu Wenbo, a director of CDC's virus institute said.

Xu told media that researchers had used high-throughput genetic sequencing to identify pathogens one day after the first four samples were sent from Wuhan on January 2.

China's National Health Commission on Sunday said the new coronavirus is contagious even in its incubation period, which lasts up to 14 days, and that the virus' ability to spread is getting stronger.



Community health workers check the temperature of a person who recently returned from Hubei Province, center of a virus outbreak, in Hangzhou in eastern China's Zhejiang Province on Monday. China on Monday expanded sweeping efforts to contain a viral disease by extending the Lunar New Year holiday to keep the public at home and avoid spreading infection.

Virus sends shockwaves through tourist industry

AFP ■ TOKYO

A deadly virus that has prompted travel restrictions in China is sending shockwaves through Asia's tourism industry, which has become increasingly reliant on growing numbers of Chinese visitors.

At least 81 people have died since the new strain of coronavirus emerged in China's Wuhan, and millions are now under an effective quarantine, with all flights in and out of the city grounded and a ban on Chinese tour groups domestically and abroad.

The measures come amid a boom in Chinese foreign travel, with the number of tourists from the country increasing nearly tenfold since 2003, according to a report by

research firm Capital Economics. But businesses in destinations that rely on the huge numbers of Chinese tourists are already feeling the heat, with complaints of "deserted" beaches and shops, and concerns about the future.

The outbreak carries echoes of the SARS crisis, which paralysed regional travel and battered local economies from late 2002. Chinese tourist numbers then fell by around a third.

"If they fell by a similar amount again, it would knock around 1.5-2.0 percentage points from (gross domestic product) in the most vulnerable countries," Capital Economics said.

In Japan, the fall in Chinese visitors was already being felt in Asakusa, a popular tourist

destination near the Sensoji temple.

"We've definitely been seeing less people this year," said Yoshie Yoneyama, 31, manager of a shop selling traditional Japanese sweets and a rice-based drink called amazake.

"I think there are less than half the numbers of last year or the year before," she told AFP.

The number of Chinese holidaying in Japan has exploded from around 450,000 in 2003 to 8.4 million in 2018, accounting for 27 percent of all inbound tourists as Tokyo works to expand the sector.

But it will now be "very difficult" for Japan to achieve its target of 40 million tourists in 2020, Yuki Takashima, an economist at Nomura Securities, told AFP.

And the effects will be felt

beyond hotels, restaurants and tourist sites, because many Chinese tourists visit Japan specifically to shop.

Electronic appliances and beauty products usually top of their lists, Takashima said, so retail outlets will see their bottom lines affected.

The crisis has already sent Japan's key Nikkei index plunging, with stock in Shiseido — a cosmetics brand popular with Chinese tourists — plunging more than five percent on Monday. "We can expect those stocks to continue to fall like dominoes," said Stephen Innes, chief market strategist at AxiCorp.

But he said Japan would be better placed to weather the storm than another top destination for Chinese tourists: Thailand.

Tourism accounts for 18 percent of the nation's GDP, with Chinese holidaymakers making up more than a quarter of total arrivals.

The country's tourism minister has already warned a crisis on the scale of SARS could cost an estimated USD 1.6 billion, and the effects are already clear in Phuket.

"For two days, the streets, the shops and the beaches have been deserted," said Claude de Crisey, who owns a 40-room hotel and a restaurant on the island. "Phuket has focused almost exclusively on Chinese tourism... if the situation continues, we will all be impacted," he told AFP.

Australia too, already reeling from the effects of the bushfire crisis, is likely to feel the impact.

UK court orders sale of yacht linked to Mallya

PTI ■ LONDON

A British court on Monday ordered that a luxury yacht owned by Force India Limited be sold and its proceeds be used to pay back Qatar National Bank to enforce its mortgage on the vessel.

During court proceedings, brought by the bank in the Admiralty Division of the High Court in England, it had been claimed that liquor tycoon Vijay Mallya's son Siddharth Mallya was the ultimate beneficial owner of the yacht.

However, the bank said that without grappling with that issue, their claim was focused on recovering outstanding loan payments estimated at around Euro 6 million.

"Security for the loan... included a personal guarantee from Dr Mallya, an individual closely connected with the borrower," notes the judgment handed down by Justice Nigel Teare in London on Monday. "The sum claimed in this action in rem is Euro 5 million plus interest and the costs of 'collection' which the claimant is entitled to recover," it adds.

The judgment also takes note of the fact that the Defendant, listed as "the owner of the yacht Force India", chose

not to appear at a scheduled trial earlier this month after its solicitors "came off the record" in November last.

The yacht itself remains under arrest in Southampton, a port on England's south coast, and court appointed Admiralty Marshal Paul Farren will now proceed with organising the appraisal and sale of the vessel in order to recover the costs.

As part of the process, any other claimants to the proceeds of the sale will be given notice to register their claims within an advertised period of time over the next six-10 weeks.

A consortium of Indian banks, led by State Bank of India, are likely to be among those claimants as they pursue a separate bankruptcy order against Mallya over unpaid loans related to his now-defunct Kingfisher Airlines.

"The court order today means the yacht must be sold and large sums of money be paid to the claimant (Qatar National Bank)," said Gideon Shirazi, the barrister who appeared on behalf of Qatar National Bank.

The yacht, described as a 49.9-metre Mangusta 165 superyacht, was owned by a company related to Gizmo Invest SA, whose ultimate ben-

eficial owner is claimed to be 64-year-old Mallya, and Force India's ultimate beneficial owner is said to be his son, Siddharth.

Shirazi told the judge on Monday that an allegation made by the defence that there had been "undue influence" involved in the mortgage process for the yacht was removed at a later stage in the court proceedings, causing significant extra costs to Qatar National Bank.

The judge agreed it had been a "striking allegation" and granted the claimant costs on an indemnity basis.

Mallya, meanwhile, remains on bail on a warrant executed by Scotland Yard in April 2017 pending a High Court appeal next month against his extradition order to India, signed off by former UK home secretary Sajid Javid last year.

The former Kingfisher Airlines boss had won a reprieve in July last year when a two-judge panel at the Royal Courts of Justice in London granted him permission to appeal against the extradition order of Westminster Magistrates' Court to face fraud and money laundering charges amounting to Rs 9,000 crores in India.

4 Chinese among 5 under observation in Pak

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

At least five persons, including four Chinese nationals, have been put under observation in Pakistan for suspected coronavirus infection, according to a media report. The deadly novel virus, which causes pneumonia-like illness, has already killed 80 people and infected more than 2,700 others in China.

Two samples from Multan have been sent to Hong Kong for confirmation as there are no lab-

oratories in Pakistan equipped to diagnose the pathogen. The Express Tribune quoted the health ministry sources as saying.

One of the two patients in Multan is a Pakistani national, the report said. On Saturday, National Institutes of Health chief Major General Dr Aamer Ikram said a Chinese national has been admitted to a hospital in Multan and kept in the isolation ward after he showed symptoms of the disease including flu, cough and fever.

Test reports are expected to

arrive in a couple of days, the report said. According to sources, the Chinese national travelled from China to Dubai and reached Karachi on January 21. After landing in Karachi, he took a flight to Multan.

Three Chinese nationals were also admitted to a hospital in Lahore and shifted to the isolation ward on Saturday.

According to hospital sources, the suspected patients were residents of the Chinese city of Wuhan and had recently

arrived in Lahore.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Office has confirmed that all Pakistanis in Wuhan, and in other parts of China, are safe.

The coronavirus, officially known as 2019-nCoV, was first reported in Hubei province's capital city Wuhan and has spread throughout China and around the world including the US, Australia and South Korea.

There are 41 incoming flights from China to Pakistan every week, mostly taking away and

bringing the Chinese.

Thousands of Chinese nationals who are working on projects in various cities in Pakistan as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor regularly travel between the two countries, raising fears they could spread the disease.

The coronavirus has caused alarm because of its similarity to SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), which killed nearly 650 people across mainland China in 2002-2003.

Anti-CAA protests mar R-Day celebrations in US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India's 71st Republic Day celebrations in the US on Sunday were marred by some peaceful protests and marches by a large number of Indian Americans in various cities of the country against the recent changes in the citizenship law.

Among Indian Americans, the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019, however, also had a fair share of its supporters who sought to counter protesters by asserting that "India cares for Neighbouring Minorities" and "CAA Won't Impact Indian Citizens."

The supporters, however, appeared to be outnumbered by protesters, who held peaceful rallies and marches in various US cities, carrying anti-CAA banners and raising slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and demanding CAA's repeal and revocation of the proposed National Register for Citizens.

They raised the demand ruing that India's secular fabric is under threat.

In some of the cities, particularly New York, Chicago, Houston, Atlanta and San Francisco having Indian consulates, and at the Indian Embassy in Washington DC, the protesters shouted slogans like "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Hindu, Muslim Sikh, Isai: Aapas Mein Sab Bhai Bhai".

The protesters, however, were countered by a number of Indian Americans who supported the enactment and congratulated the Modi Government for taking such a

bold step. The largest gathering of anti-CAA protestors was reported from Chicago where Indian Americans gathered in large numbers and formed several mile-long human chain.

In the American capital of Washington DC, more than 500 Indian Americans marched from a park near the White House to the Gandhi Statue in front of the Indian Embassy.

The anti-CAA protests in at least 30 US cities were organized by recently formed Coalition to Stop Genocide, comprising several organizations like Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC), Equality Labs, Black Lives Matter (BLM), Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) and Hindus for Human Rights (HfHR).

"The brutal crackdown by government in India on anti-CAA and anti-NRC protests has created a situation in which women in large numbers have come out on streets to challenge the divisive-communal-fascist agenda of the government," Magsaysay Award winner Sandeep Pandey said, addressing a gathering in Washington DC.

"It gives hope that democracy and Constitution can ultimately be saved by the common people from a government which is bent upon destroying them," he said.

IAMC president Ahsan Khan said from the Bay Area in California, the rally of Indian Americans represents an extension of the massive unrest in India against the ruling BJP government for its relentless

attacks against the secular Constitution.

"Indian Americans and people of conscience in the US are seeking accountability from the Hindu nationalist regime that wants to turn Indian Muslims into foreigners and render them stateless," said Khan after the rally in San Francisco.

"Protests happening not only in India but around the world represent a global consensus against the draconian policies of the Modi-Shah government," said Dr Shaik Ubaid from New York.

"All Indians are equal citizens and that is the foundational social contract between the Indian nation and its citizens," said Minhaj Khan from New Jersey.

"Breaking this contract has grave implications for the future of India as a country," he added.

Meanwhile in Houston, over 150 Indian-Americans rallied in support of the CAA and the NRC outside the Indian Consulate in Houston on Sunday, saying these measures were required to save the minorities in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

Carrying placards and banners with pro-Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register of Citizens messages, the demonstrators lauded the Indian government for giving "persecuted minorities from neighbouring nations a life of respect and dignity."

The event closed with singing of the national anthems of the USA and India.

'Pro-Pak elements infiltrate anti-CAA protests in US'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Pro-Pakistani elements have infiltrated the anti-CAA protests in the US to execute their hidden agenda against India, an Indian-American community leader has said.

During a recent protest against the CAA in Washington DC, posters were seen reflective of the presence of pro-Pakistani elements.

Not only this, at least two Pakistani-Americans were among the main organisers of the anti-CAA protests in Washington DC on Sunday, claimed Indian-American community leader Adapa Prasad.

The Citizenship

Amendment Act (CAA) came into force in India last December amid protests in India and around the world.

The Indian government has stressed that the new Act does not deny any citizenship rights but has been brought in to protect the oppressed minorities of neighbouring countries and provide them citizenship.

"Darakshan Raja, a Pakistani-American activist who also co-ordinates Kashmiri separatist protests in Washington DC area along with another Pakistani-American Muslim activist named Khudai Tanveer, were one of the main coordinators of the anti-CAA protests," Prasad

told PTI.

Prasad and his team shared videos and pictures of the individuals from the anti-CAA protests in Washington DC, which was attended by more than 500 Indian-Americans from in and around the city.

Prasad said one of the posters written in Urdu said "Hans ke Liya hai Pakistan, Larr ke lengey Hindustan".

"This in English means we easily got Pakistan, now we will fight out to get India," he said as he shared the picture of the said poster.

"This is disgusting. Pro-ISI and pro-Pakistani elements are using this protest to execute their hidden agenda which is depicted in their own poster,"

Prasad said.

He said the protests are also being misused by pro-Khalistani activists to push their agenda.

"Arjun Sethi, a pro-Khalistani activist, was also amongst the coordinators of the anti-CAA rally," Prasad said.

Sethi had recently testified before a Congressional Committee on Kashmir.

In recent weeks, some of the Indian-Americans, during private conversation in WhatsApp groups, had expressed apprehensions that their anti-CAA protests could be misused by elements close to ISI and Pakistan.

There had been moments

during which the organisers of these protests had increased scrutiny of those trying to lead the anti-CAA protests.

"It could be a trap to portray Indians and Indian Muslims in a negative light by someone," Mike Ghouse, an Indian-American who is the president of Washington DC-based Center for Pluralism, said in a recent blog.

Most of these anti-CAA protesters chant "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and carry Indian national flag.

Some of the eye witnesses told PTI that the "Hindustan Pakistan" poster written in Urdu were withdrawn quickly after it came to the notice of some of the organizers.

Pak Pashtun minority leader held for 'sedition'

PTI ■ PESHAWAR

A 27-year-old Pakistani Pashtun minority leader, known for criticising the country's powerful military, was arrested on Monday for alleged sedition, media reports said.

Manzoor Pashteen, chief of the rights-based alliance Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), attended a gathering on January 18 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Dera Ismail Khan city where he had allegedly said that the 1973 Constitution violated basic human rights, Dawn newspaper reported.

He was arrested along with nine other PTM workers from Peshawar, police said.

The PTM has been critical

of the Army's policies in the restive northwestern tribal areas where a massive operation against terrorists was carried out in recent years, leading to large-scale displacement and enforced disappearances, the report said.

It also calls for ending extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and unlawful detentions besides holding the practitioners responsible.

The PTM chief has been booked for criminal intimidation, promoting enmity between different groups, criminal conspiracy, sedition and condemning the creation of the country and advocating the abolishment of its sovereignty, the report said.

The FIR said that Pashteen

also made derogatory comments about the state.

Human rights watchdog Amnesty International has called for Pashteen's "immediate and unconditional" release.

"Manzoor Pashteen has been arbitrarily detained for exercising his human rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. He must be released immediately and unconditionally," it said on Twitter. Taking to Twitter, senior PTM leader and National Assembly member Mohsin Dawar said: "This is our punishment for demanding our rights in a peaceful and democratic manner. Manzoor's arrest will only strengthen our resolve. We demand the immediate release of Manzoor Pashteen."

The FIR said that Pashteen

Temple vandalised in Pak's Sindh province

PTI ■ KARACHI

Four unidentified persons vandalised a temple in a village in Pakistan's Sindh province following which a case was registered against them, according to a media report on Monday.

The Mata Deval Bhattani temple in a village near Thar's Chhachro town in Sindh province was vandalised by four men on Sunday night, Dawn newspaper reported.

A first information report (FIR) was registered on Monday against the four men, the paper said.

The police were looking for the culprits and had sought help from "local experts" who were examining the footprints of the miscreants to identify them, Chhachro Station House Officer Hussain Bux Rajar said.

The Special Assistant to Sindh chief minister on human rights, Advocate Veerji Kolhi, said that the miscreants had meant to disturb communal peace in the area and urged people of all communities to stay calm. He promised that those responsible will be brought to justice.

Hindus form the biggest minority community in Pakistan. According to official estimates, 75 lakh Hindus live in Pakistan. However, according to the community, over 90 lakh Hindus are living in the country.

Three rockets hit US embassy in protest-hit Iraqi capital

AFP ■ BAGHDAD

Three rockets slammed into the US embassy in Iraq's capital on Sunday in the first direct hit reported after months of close calls, as thousands of protesters kept up anti-government sit-ins across the country.

The attack marked a dangerous escalation in the spree of rocket attacks in recent months that have targeted the embassy or Iraqi military bases where American troops are deployed.

None of the attacks has been claimed but Washington has repeatedly blamed Iran-backed military factions in Iraq.

On Sunday, one rocket hit an embassy cafeteria at dinner time while two others landed nearby, a security source told AFP.

A senior Iraqi official told AFP at least one person was wounded, but it was not immediately clear how serious the injuries were and whether the person was an American national or an Iraqi staff member working at the mission.

The US embassy did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The US State Department called on Iraq late Sunday to "fulfil its obligations to protect our diplomatic facilities".

The attack took place earlier in the day than usual, with AFP reporters hearing the booms on the western bank of the river Tigris at precisely 7:30 pm (1630 GMT).

Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi and Speaker of Parliament Mohammed Halbusi both condemned the incident, saying it risked dragging their homeland into war.

Iraq has already been dragged into a worrying tit-for-tat between the United States and Iran over the last month.

A similar attack on a northern Iraqi base killed an American contractor, and the US retaliated with a strike on an Iran-backed faction known



Security forces try to disperse anti-government protesters during clashes in Baghdad (Iraq)

AP

as Kataeb Hezbollah.

Less than a week later, a US drone strike killed Iranian general Qasem Soleimani outside the Baghdad airport — prompting Iran to fire ballistic missiles at an Iraqi base where US troops are stationed.

Some 5,200 Americans are stationed in Iraq to lead the global coalition fighting the Islamic State militant group, but the US strike on Baghdad has rallied top Iraqi figures around a joint call to order them out. Vehemently anti-American cleric Moqtada Sadr organised a mass rally in Baghdad on Friday, where thousands of his supporters called for American troops to leave. Sadr had previously backed separate anti-regime protests sweeping Iraq's capital and south, even though he controls the largest bloc in parliament and top ministerial posts. Bolstered by his own protest on Friday, Sadr announced he was dropping support for the youth-dominated reform campaign rocking the country since October.

His followers, widely regarded as the best-organised and well-stocked of the

anti-government demonstrators, immediately began dismantling their tents and heading home.

Activists feared that without his political cover, authorities would move to crush their movement — and indeed, within hours, riot police tried to storm protest camps.

Those efforts continued into Sunday, with security forces using live rounds and tear gas to try to flush protesters out of squares and streets they had occupied for months.

One protester was shot dead in Baghdad and another in the flashpoint southern city of Nasiriyah, medical sources said, and dozens more were wounded across the country.

In the capital, riot police have tried to clear streets around the main protest camp of Tahrir Square but have yet to enter the symbolic area, where many protesters stood their ground even after tents there were dismantled.

Just after midnight in Nasiriyah, unknown assailants stormed the main protest camp in Habbubi Square and set the tents on fire, the flames lighting up the night sky, an AFP

correspondent there said.

Despite the renewed violence, thousands of students flooded the streets in the capital and across the south in a bid to keep national attention focused on their demands.

"Only for you, Iraq!" read a sign held by a young protester in the shrine city of Karbala, hinting at the movement's insistence on not being affiliated with any political party or outside backer.

In Basra, hundreds of students gathered to condemn the riot police's dismantling of their main protest camp the previous day, according to an AFP correspondent.

The youth-led protests erupted on October 1 in outrage over lack of jobs, poor services and rampant corruption before spiralling into calls for a government overhaul after they were met with violence.

More than 470 people have died, a vast majority of them demonstrators, since the rallies began. Protesters are now demanding snap elections, the appointment of an independent premier and the prosecution of anyone implicated in corruption or recent bloodshed.

Australian woman dies eating cake

Sydney (AFP): A woman died while taking part in a cake-eating competition to celebrate Australia Day, local media reported Monday.

Paramedics were called to a pub in the state of Queensland on Sunday afternoon after a woman was involved in a "medical incident".

Public broadcaster ABC reported the 60-year-old had a seizure after she "shovelled a lamington into her mouth".

Lamingtons, a traditional Australian dessert, are cube-shaped sponge cakes dipped in chocolate and covered in grated coconut.

The woman was rushed to hospital in the coastal town of Hervey Bay but later died, ABC reported.

She was a contestant in the Beach House Hotel's annual Australia Day lamington and meat pie eating contest.

In a post on Facebook, management and staff offered their "deepest condolences" to the woman's friends and family.

'Football Leaks' whistleblower also behind 'Luanda Leaks'

AFP ■ LISBON

The Portuguese hacker involved in the "Football Leaks" revelations is also the whistleblower behind the "Luanda Leaks" scandal embroiling the daughter of an ex-president, his lawyers said Monday.

Rui Pinto handed over "a hard-drive containing all data related to the recent revelations concerning Ms. Isabel Dos Santos's fortune, her family's and all the actors that might be involved in the fraudulent operations committed at the expense of the Angolan State," said a statement from his lawyers.

The tycoon daughter of former president Jose Eduardo dos Santos has vowed to fight corruption allegations which have stretched across Angola's state oil and diamond industries and banks.

Dos Santos has been accused of financial crimes

during her tenure at Sonangol, Angola's state-owned oil giant which she headed during her father's rule.

Pinto had forwarded the hard drive to the Platform to Protect Whistleblowers in Africa and the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, his lawyers said.

Pinto had "sought to help understanding complex operations conducted with the complicity of banks and jurists which not only impoverish the people and the State of Angola, but may have seriously damaged Portugal's general interest," the statement said.

A Portuguese court decided on January 17 to go ahead with the trial of Rui Pinto, Teixeira da Mota told AFP after a hearing in Lisbon, noting the number of offences he has been charged with has been reduced to 90 from 147.

Pinto was extradited from Hungary last March for allegedly attempting to black-

mail Doyen Sports, an investment fund, asking for between 500,000 and one million euros in return for not publishing documents he had obtained illegally from the computer systems of Doyen and of Sporting Lisbon.

His lawyers claim that he had abandoned his blackmail attempt on his own initiative.

They say Pinto is a "very important European whistleblower". The Football Leaks revelations allowed prosecutors in several countries, including Britain and France, to investigate possible wrongdoing in football.

Angolans call Isabel dos Santos "the princess", and she is Africa's richest woman according to Forbes, which estimates her assets at USD 2.1 billion.

Hundreds of companies, many based in tax havens such as the British Virgin Islands, are alleged to have helped dos Santos accrue her fortune.

Salvini's League fails to topple Italy govt in regional vote: Exit polls

AFP ■ BOLOGNA (ITALY)

Italy's populist leader Matteo Salvini appeared to have failed in his bid to win a key regional election and topple the country's fragile coalition government, according to exit polls late Sunday.

The far-right League had hoped to score a historic upset and force snap elections in the regional vote in Emilia Romagna, but a high turnout appeared to have favoured the incumbent centre-left candidate.

The Democratic Party's (PD) Stefano Bonaccini had won around 50 percent of the vote against the anti-immigrant League candidate Lucia Borgonzoni's 43 percent, according to projections made at 0100 GMT, after vote counting got under way.

The wealthy centre-north region of Emilia Romagna has been a stronghold of the Italian left for over 70 years, but while

left-wing values still hold sway in its cities, the right had rallied serious support in towns and the countryside.

Polls published before the pre-election media blackout showed the League neck-and-neck with the PD, which governs Italy in coalition with the anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S).

Turnout in the key region was almost double at around 67 percent compared with 37 percent in 2014, potentially thanks to the support of the anti-populist youth-driven Sardines movement.

Some 3.5 million citizens were eligible to cast ballots to elect the region's president.

"After 70 years there was a match in Emilia Romagna," Salvini told journalists after the first exit polls were published, without conceding defeat.

The candidate of former premier Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia, Jole Santelli, appeared to

have won as predicted in the smaller southern region of Calabria, exit polls said.

The League was hoping for a repeat of its historic win in October in Umbria, which had been a left-wing fiefdom for 50 years.

League candidate Borgonzoni, 43, was overshadowed by Salvini, who held daily rallies and inundated social media with snaps of him sampling delicacies in the Parma ham and Parmesan cheese heartland.

Salvini infuriated the left Saturday when he broke the pre-election silence — which under Italian law means candidates cannot campaign the day before a vote — by tweeting about the "eviction notice" he was set to deliver to the government.

PD candidate Bonaccini hoped to win on his track record in the region, which boasts low jobless figures and is home to "Made in Italy" success stories such as Ferrari and Lamborghini.

He also benefited from the Sardines movement, which was born in the region just a couple of months ago but has fast become a national symbol of protest against the far right.

But analysts said many local family-run, artisanal firms were disgruntled and feeling left behind by the march of globalisation.

The League triumphed in Emilia Romagna at the European Parliament elections in May, becoming the leading party with nearly 34 percent of the votes, topping the PD's 31 percent.

Just five years earlier it had taken home a mere five percent, compared to the PD's 53 percent.

Voter Andrea Setti, a 34-year-old bank employee, told AFP he felt it was even more important than usual for him to cast his ballot, as the region's political "colour", or allegiance, was nowhere near as clear cut as it used to be.

Democrats demand Bolton testify as impeachment trial resumes

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The stakes over witness testimony at President Donald Trump's impeachment trial are rising now that a draft of a book from former national security adviser John Bolton appears to undercut a key defense argument.

Bolton writes in the forthcoming book that Trump told him that he wanted to withhold hundreds of millions of dollars in security aid from Ukraine until it helped him with politically charged investigations, including into Democratic rival Joe Biden.

Trump's legal team has repeatedly insisted that the president never tied the suspension of military assistance to the country to investigations that he wanted into Biden and his son.

The account immediately gave Democrats new fuel in their pursuit of sworn testimony from Bolton and other witnesses, a question expected to be taken up later this week by the Republican-led Senate. The trial resumes Monday afternoon with arguments from Trump's defense team.

Bolton's account was first reported by The New York Times and confirmed to The Associated Press by a person familiar with the manuscript on the condition of anonymity to discuss the book, "The Room Where It Happened; A White House Memoir," ahead of its release March 17.

When the Times report went online Sunday night, the seven House Democratic managers immediately called on all senators to insist that Bolton be called as a witness and provide his notes and other relevant documents. Sen. Chuck Schumer, the Senate's top Democrat, issued the same call. Trump denied the claims in a series of tweets early Monday. "I NEVER told John Bolton that the aid to Ukraine was tied to investigations into Democrats, including the Bidens," Trump said in a tweet. "In fact, he never complained about this at the time of his very public termination. If John Bolton said this, it was only to sell a book."

Trump said people could look at transcripts of his call, and statements by Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelinsky

that there was no pressure for such investigations to get the aid.

Bolton, who acrimoniously left the White House a day before Trump ultimately released the Ukraine aid on Sept. 11, has already told lawmakers that he is willing to testify, despite the president's order barring aides from cooperating in the probe.

"Americans know that a fair trial must include both the documents and witnesses blocked by the President — that starts with Mr. Bolton," the impeachment managers said in a statement.

First, though, Trump's legal team will begin laying out its case in depth, turning to several high-profile attorneys to argue against impeachment.

The lawyers revealed the broad outlines of their defense in a rare but truncated Saturday session, where they accused House Democrats of using the impeachment case to try to undo the results of the last presidential election and drive Trump from office.

The legal team is expected to pick up on that theme and also dive into areas that

received negligible attention during the Democrats' presentation, including the now-concluded investigation into ties between Russia and Trump's 2016 campaign.

Trump's lawyers aren't expected to take as much time for their arguments as the Democrats, whose impeachment managers spoke for about 24 hours over three days.

But they also don't need to: Acquittal is likely in a Senate where Republicans hold a 53-47 majority, with a two-thirds vote needed for conviction. Still, they see an opportunity to counter the allegations, defend the powers of the presidency and prevent Trump from being weakened politically ahead of November's election.

Trump faces two articles of impeachment. One accuses him of abusing his power by asking Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden, his Democratic rival, at the same time that his administration withheld hundreds of millions of dollars from the country. The other alleges that Trump obstructed Congress by directing aides to not cooperate with the impeachment inquiry.

US army investigating plane crash in Taliban-held area

AP ■ KABUL

The US military on Monday said it is investigating reports of an airplane crash in Taliban-controlled territory in Afghanistan.

US Army Major Beth Riordan, a spokeswoman for US Central Command, said it remained unclear whose aircraft was involved in the crash.

Riordan declined to immediately comment further.

However, pictures on social media purportedly from the crash site showed what could be the remains of a Bombardier E-11A aircraft, which the US military uses for electronic surveillance over Afghanistan.

Local Afghan officials had said earlier on Monday that a passenger plane from Afghanistan's Ariana Airlines had crashed in the Taliban-held

area of the eastern Ghazni province. However, Ariana Airlines told The Associated Press that none of its planes had crashed in Afghanistan.

The conflicting accounts could not immediately be reconciled. The number of people on board and their fate was not immediately known, nor was the cause of the crash.

Arif Noori, spokesman for the provincial governor, said the plane went down around 1:10 pm local time (8:40 am GMT) in Deh Yak district, some 130 kilometers (80 miles) southwest of the capital Kabul.

He said the crash site is in territory controlled by the Taliban. Two provincial council members also confirmed the crash.

But the acting director for Ariana Airlines, Mirwais Mirzakwal, dismissed reports

that one the company's aircraft had crashed. The state-owned airline also released a statement on its website saying all its aircraft were operational and safe.

The mountainous Ghazni province sits in the foothills of the Hindu Kush mountains and is bitterly cold in winter. The Taliban currently control or hold sway over around half the country.

The last major commercial air crash in Afghanistan occurred in 2005, when a Kam Air flight from the western city of Herat to Kabul crashed into the mountains as it tried to land in snowy weather.

The war, however, has seen a number of deadly crashes of military aircraft. One of the most spectacular occurred in 2013 when an American Boeing 747 cargo jet crashed shortly after takeoff from

Bagram air base north of Kabul en route to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

All seven crew member were killed. The US National Transportation Safety Board investigation found that large military vehicles were inadequately secured and had shifted during flight, causing damage to the control systems that "rendered the airplane uncontrollable."

Afghanistan's aviation industry suffered desperately during the rule of the Taliban when Ariana, its only airline at the time, was subject to punishing sanctions and allowed to fly only to Saudi Arabia for Hajj pilgrimages.

Since the overthrow of the Taliban's religious regime, smaller private airlines have emerged, but the industry is still a nascent one.

Varadkar says EU has upper hand in UK trade talks

AFP ■ LONDON

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar believes the European Union has the upper hand in upcoming trade negotiations with Britain after Brexit, he said in an interview broadcast on Monday.

Varadkar argued the size of the EU, which will comprise 27 countries once Britain has left on Friday, means it holds more sway in talks with London over their future relationship.

The Irish leader, who is fighting a general election on February 8, also cast doubt on finalising a free trade deal this year, as insisted on by his British counterpart Boris Johnson.

"We (the EU) have a popu-

lation and a market of 450 million people. The UK, it's about 60 (million)," Varadkar told BBC television.

"So if these were two teams up against each other playing football, who do you think has the stronger team?" Varadkar, who played a pivotal part in the first phase of UK-EU divorce talks, met the bloc's chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier in Dublin on Monday.

The Irish leader added in the interview that Brussels would not accept anything less than a comprehensive free trade agreement with Britain moving forward.

"When I hear people talk about piecemeal, it sounds a bit like cake and eat," he said, refer-

ring to securing only a partial deal by the end of the year.

"That isn't something that will fly in Europe," London indicated earlier this month it could seek a piecemeal post-Brexit deal with the EU that leaves some issues unresolved but still lets it break free from the bloc at the end of the year.

Britain leaves the EU at 2300 GMT on Friday, when it will begin an 11-month transition phase during which existing arrangements remain unchanged. Johnson wants to agree the terms of the future relationship, modelled on the EU's free trade agreement with Canada, by the end of that period.

Bolivia prez asks all ministers to resign

La Paz (AFP): Bolivia's interim President Jeanine Anez asked all her ministers to resign a little more than three months before a general election, a statement from the presidency said on Sunday. The news came just hours after communication minister Roxana Lizarraga resigned in protest at Anez's decision to stand as a presidential candidate in the May 3 election.

When assuming the interim presidency on November 12, Anez had said she had no intention of standing for the full-time job. But that changed on Friday when she announced her candidacy. Anez "has decided to ask for the resignation of all ministers to approach this new stage in the management of the democratic transition," said the presidency's statement.

Auschwitz survivors to sound alarm

AFP ■ PSWIECIM (POLAND)

Seventy-five years after the liberation of Auschwitz, a dwindling number of elderly Holocaust survivors gathered at the former German Nazi death camp on Monday to honour its more than 1.1 million mostly Jewish victims and to share their alarm over rising anti-semitism.

More than 200 survivors came from across the globe to the camp the Nazis built at Oswiecim in then-occupied Poland, to share their testimony as a stark warning amid a recent surge of anti-semitic attacks on both sides of the Atlantic, some of them deadly.

Survivors dressed in blue and white striped caps and scarves symbolic of the uniforms prisoners wore at the camp, passed through its chilling "Arbeit macht Frei" (German for "Work makes you free") black wrought-iron gate.

Accompanied by Polish President Andrzej Duda, they laid floral wreaths by the Death

Wall in Auschwitz where the Nazis shot dead thousands of prisoners.

"We want the next generation to know what we went through and that it should never happen again," Auschwitz survivor David Marks, 93, said earlier at the former death camp, his voice breaking with emotion.

Thirty-five members of his immediate and extended family of Romanian Jews were killed in Auschwitz, the largest of Nazi Germany's camps that has come to symbolise the six million European Jews who died in the Holocaust.

From mid-1942 the Nazis systematically deported Jews from all over Europe to six camps — Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibor and Treblinka.

Organisers insist that Monday's memorial ceremony must focus above all on what survivors have to say rather than the bitter political feuds that have tainted the run-up to the anniversary.

not about politics," Ronald Lauder, head of the World Jewish Congress, told AFP in the Auschwitz camp, now a memorial and state museum run by Poland. "We see anti-semitism rising now and we don't want their (survivors) past to be their children's future, or their grand children's future," he added.

Royals, presidents and prime ministers from nearly 60 countries will attend the ceremony, but no top world leaders, some of whom opted instead to attend a high-profile Holocaust forum in Israel last week seen as rivaling the ceremonies in Poland.

Poland's President Duda boycotted the Jerusalem forum after he was denied the opportunity to speak there while Russian President Vladimir Putin was given the floor, despite having earlier falsely accused Poland of colluding with German Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler and contributing to the outbreak of World War II.

Duda was to make an address at the Monday ceremony

ny in Auschwitz alongside survivors.

While the world only learned the full extent of its horrors after the Soviet Red Army entered the camp on January 27, 1945, the Allies had detailed information about Nazi Germany's genocide against Jews much earlier.

In December 1942, Poland's then London-based government-in-exile forwarded a document, titled "The Mass Extermination of Jews in German Occupied Poland," to the Allies.

The document included detailed accounts of the unfolding Holocaust as witnessed by members of the Polish resistance, but drew disbelief and only muted reactions from the international community.

To inform the Allies, Polish resistance fighters Jan Karski and Witold Pilecki famously risked their lives in separate operations to infiltrate and then escape from Nazi death camps and ghettos in occupied Poland, including Auschwitz.

RoadDisaster

Researchers have revealed that living near major roads or highways is linked to higher incidence of dementia, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and MS — living less than 50m from a major road or less than 150m from a highway is associated with higher risk of developing neurological disorders



DOCYARD

DR B T CHIDANANDA MURTHY

Chief Medical Officer

JINDAL NATURECURE INSTITUTE,
BENGALURU



Boost your immunity

Winter and illness go hand in glove. While the flu and the sniffle is just a minor hassle for most, it is not the case for people with a weak constitution. If you have a compromised immune system, suffer from seizure disorders, or any other debilitating sickness, then we are sure you know that even a small cold can turn into a medical emergency, requiring you to make a trip to the hospital. Keeping yourself cocooned in a hypoallergenic bubble is also not an option. Doing that may keep the illness away but it is not going to magically improve your immunity. What preventive measures can you take to keep yourself safe from under-terminated illnesses without disrupting your daily routines? Let's take a look

■ **Take care of your gut:** The health of your digestive system is directly proportional to the robustness of your immune system. Make sure you incorporate a good probiotic supplement in your daily diet. If that is not possible, include probiotic foods like sauerkraut, kefir milk, kombucha, and yogurt. It will help maintain the balance of good bacteria in your gut, keeping your immune system healthy.

■ **Avoid immunosuppressant foods:** Caffeine, alcohol, white sugar and fatty foods suppress your immune system. Consuming a lot of fat-rich food items can also clog up your lymphatic system, making it more difficult for your body to fight infection. Wean yourself of such food items slowly to increase your body's natural defences.

■ **Do plenty of exercises:** Exercise helps boost the immune system by improving your circulation and reducing stress. The better the blood circulation, the more freely antibodies can move around in your bloodstream, making it easier for body to fight off illnesses. Exercise also reduces the level of stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol, increasing your lymphocyte count and improving immune function.

■ **Observe sleep hygiene:** Sleep is essential to keep the immune system in good shape, and yet it is something we tend to overlook often. You must aim to get at least eight hours of uninterrupted sleep every night to help your body repair itself from the damage caused by daily stressors, toxin exposure, and exercise.

■ **Drink plenty of juices:** Fresh juices contain a lot of antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals that help keep the immune system healthy in the winter. Adding ingredients like spinach, broccoli, kale, brussel sprouts, beetroot, berries and apples will bolster your immune system and keep it functioning at peak capacity.

■ **Keep your skin from drying out:** The dehydration and cold winter breeze can render your skin dry and flaky. The best elixir for dry skin is coconut oil. Apply it externally to keep your skin moist and fresh. Not only does it prevent your skin from flaking up, but it also strengthens the underlying connective tissue. Incorporating organic ghee in your daily diet also helps dealing with winter dryness apart from keeping your body warm.

■ **Detoxify your body:** No matter what the season, your body can always do with a little detoxification. Squeeze out a slice of lemon into a glass of lukewarm water, add a pinch of parsley and drink it before breakfast. It is effective at eliminating toxins from the system. Cabbage juice, rosemary tea, and ginger-tulsi tea are also equally good.

■ **Diet and Nutrition:** Plays a vital role in improving the immune response. Consume more citrus fruits, garlic, ginger, honey, cloves, kale, spinach, broccoli, yogurt and many others.

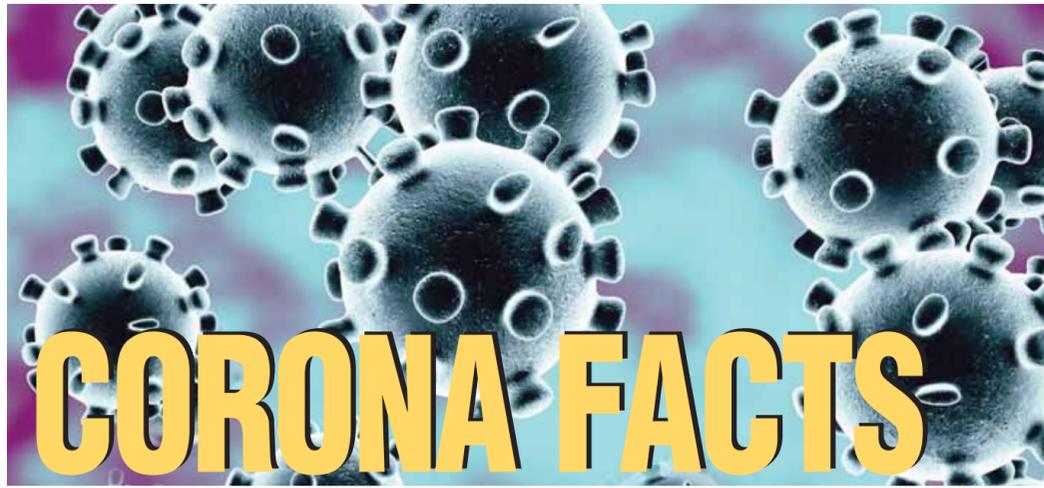
WARMFOODS

HONEY: Honey is thick, sweet liquid made by honeybees. It is rich in antioxidants, including phenolic compounds like flavonoids which helps to reduce the risk of heart attacks, strokes and some types of cancer. It may also promote eye health. It can also help lower blood pressure.

Honey is also known for its anti-inflammatory properties. You can drink it in milk or can simply apply it to the affected area.

It is also known to reduce the bad cholesterol levels thereby improving heart health. It also has healing powers. When applied to the skin, honey can be part of an effective treatment plan for burns, wounds and many other skin conditions. It is particularly effective for diabetic foot ulcers.

It may also help in boosting immunity.



CORONA FACTS

With over 56 deaths and Wuhan city quarantined, DR KK AGGARWAL tells you all there is to know about this deadly virus

Every decade a zoonotic coronavirus crosses species to infect human populations and in this decade, we have a virus, provisionally called 2019-nCoV, first identified in Wuhan, China, in persons exposed to a seafood or wet market.

The name of coronavirus comes from its shape, which resembles a crown or solar corona when imaged using an electron microscope.

The three deadly human respiratory coronaviruses viruses so far

- Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus [SARS-CoV]
- Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus [MERS-CoV]
- 2019-nCoV: The virus is 75 to 80 per cent identical to the SARS-CoV

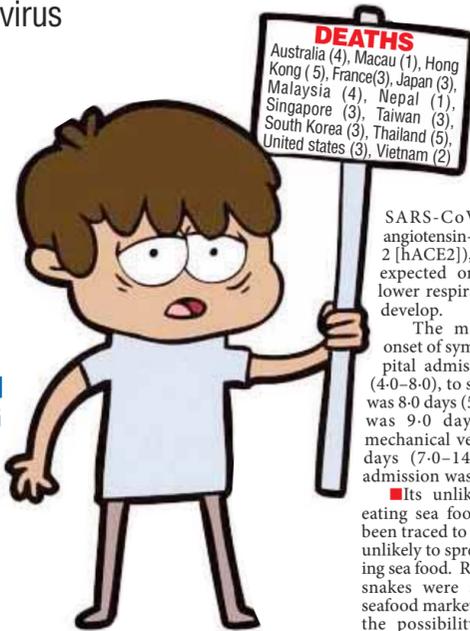
■ **Pathogenesis**
People infected with these coronaviruses suffer a severe inflammatory response.

■ It has high mortality. In the current situation the mortality rate is 3 per cent. The severity of illness is concerning; almost a third of patients developed acute respiratory distress syndrome requiring intensive care; six patients died; five had acute cardiac injury; and four required ventilation.

■ Its Zoonotic. It is closely related to several bat coronaviruses. Bats are the primary reservoir for the virus. SARS-CoV was transmitted to humans from exotic animals in wet markets, whereas MERS-CoV is transmitted from camels to humans. In both cases, the ancestral hosts were probably bats.

■ It is more infectious to humans. Notably, 2019-nCoV grows better in primary human airway epithelial cells than in standard tissue-culture cells, unlike SARS-CoV or MERS-CoV. It is likely that 2019-nCoV

THE NAME OF CORONAVIRUS COMES FROM ITS SHAPE, WHICH RESEMBLES A CROWN OR SOLAR CORONA WHEN IMAGED USING AN ELECTRON MICROSCOPE



DEATHS
Australia (4), Macau (1), Hong Kong (5), France (3), Japan (3), Malaysia (4), Nepal (1), Singapore (3), Taiwan (3), South Korea (3), Thailand (5), United States (3), Vietnam (2)

with recognised illness and not from patients with mild, non-specific signs.

It appears that 2019-nCoV uses the same cellular receptor as (human angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 [hACE2]), so transmission is expected only after signs of lower respiratory tract disease develop.

The median time from onset of symptoms to first hospital admission was 7.0 days (4.0-8.0), to shortness of breath was 8.0 days (5.0-13.0), to ARDS was 9.0 days (8.0-14.0), to mechanical ventilation was 10.5 days (7.0-14.0), and to ICU admission was 10.5 days.

■ Its unlikely to spread by eating sea food in India. It has been traced to snakes in China so unlikely to spread in India by eating sea food. Reports indicate that snakes were sold in the local seafood market in Wuhan, raising the possibility that the 2019-nCoV might have jumped from the host species — bats — to snakes and then to humans. However, how the virus could adapt to both the cold-blooded and warm-blooded hosts remains a mystery.

The writer is President CMAAO, HCFI and past National President IMA

will behave more like SARS-CoV.

■ Human to human infection is weak. Both SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV infect intrapulmonary epithelial cells more than cells of the upper airways. Consequently, transmission occurs primarily from patients

TRANSMISSION

Transmission of foodborne diseases on aircraft, including cholera, shigellosis, salmonellosis, and staphylococcal food poisoning, have been well documented.

Transmission of smallpox on aircraft was reported in 1965.

An outbreak of influenza occurred in 1979 among passengers on a flight that had a three hours' ground delay before takeoff. The influenza attack rate among the passengers was very high (72%), and was attributed to the ventilation system not operating during the ground delay. Epidemiological investigations have also indicated that measles may have been transmitted aboard international flights.

To date, no case of active TB has been identified as a result of exposure while on a commercial aircraft.

However, there is some evidence that transmission of M. tuberculosis may occur during long (i.e. more than eight hours) flights, from an infectious source (a passenger or crew member) to other passengers or crew members.

■ It's a large droplet infection. Transmission of 2019-nCoV probably occurs by means of large droplets and contact and less so by means of aerosols and fomites, on the basis of experience with SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV.

Universal precautions, the answer

- Quarantine patients for two weeks
- Diagnose on time
- Strictly adhere to universal precautions



DadiKaKehna

Those who have long, curly and wavy hair are always looking for ways to straighten them. Many resort to harsh chemicals.

ROSHANI DEVI shares home remedies that can help without damaging the tresses



Going for a party and need to straighten hair? Do you reach for your trusted hair straightener or head to a salon? Here are a few things that one can do without causing damage to the hair and getting a gloss.

Many of us have been using multani mitti on the face to rid of the pimples. Did you know that it can also help straighten hair? Make a paste using the powder. Apply this from the root to the tips. Leave it for over an hour. The results are great.

Use castor oil and soybean oil. Take two tablespoon castor oil and a tablespoon of soybean oil. Heat heat the together

and let it cool. Massage scalp and hair with it for a few minutes. Leave it on for about 30 minutes before Let your hair air-dry.

Use coconut milk and lemon juice. Mix one-fourth cup coconut milk and a tablespoon of lemon juice. Refrigerate overnight. Apply the mixture the next day — from the roots to the tips. Leave it for 30 minutes. Wash off with cool water and a mild sulfate free shampoo.

Use milk and honey. Mix one-fourth cup milk with two tablepoons of honey. Apply this on the hair. Leave it on for two hours. Wash off with cool water and a mild sulfate free shampoo.

TIPTOP

If you wish to lose those extra kg fat food options and eat what your great-grandma ate, said a top weight-loss surgeon.

NHS doctor Andrew Jenkinson, who has watched thousands try — and fail — to shed the extra weight, says people should stick to the traditional fare, like a full English breakfast. He advises people to buy food at traditional stores, like greengrocer, butcher and fishmonger, as our ancestors would have done. "Imagine you are taking your great-grandmother around shops. If there's any food she doesn't recognise, don't buy it," Jenkinson said.

In his book, *Why We Eat (Too Much)*, the bariatric surgeon presents what he learnt over decades of practice. He claims to have spoken to over 2,000 obese patients. "What they said about dieting was always the same story," he says.

While crash diets might appear to work in the first few weeks, he says, they usually backfire because they trick the body into believing it has to cope with a famine - and save energy.

"They all say they lose weight to begin with, but then put it on and end up heavier than when they started," the surgeon says. Thus the weight-loss regime comes to an end and the dieter is driven to eat more by powerful hunger hormones. He then ends up blaming the lack of will power, when the real culprit is a diet that is destined to fail. In his book, Jenkinson says a far better approach is to ditch the quick-fix solutions for an old-fashioned approach — buying fresh food daily and cooking it yourself.

— IANS

SLIMLINE

Researchers have developed a vaccine against African swine fever that appears to be far more effective than previously developed vaccines.

At present, there is no commercially available vaccine against African swine fever, which has been devastating the swine industry in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia.

African swine fever virus (ASFV) is highly contagious and often lethal to

domestic and wild pigs, according to the study, published in the *Journal of Virology*.

"This new experimental ASFV vaccine shows promise, and offers complete protection against the current strain currently producing outbreaks throughout Eastern Europe and Asia," said study researcher Douglas P Gladue from Plum Island Animal Disease Center, Agricultural Research Service, US Department of Agriculture.

— IANS

LET'S HAVE A JOINT SESSION



Elderly people need to be cautious in winters with checkups, prevention and exercise to overcome joint pain and fragility, says DR RAVI GAUR

When the temperature drops, adults run a higher risk of health problems and bone injuries. Cold air and damp weather contributes in a major way towards bone and joint flare ups, especially in people who already have a bone disease or are over 50 years old. When the barometric pressure drops, tissues in joints swell-up, pushing them against muscles and nerves in the area and causing pain. In winter, one tends to move less, which aggravates bone and joint problems more. Being a couch potato is bad for the joints.

As people age, after 50 years, calcium levels set in, resulting in degradation of bone mass, and people are suggested to get their bone density checked. Bone density measure is reported in T score levels that identify the strength and agility of bones. T score of -1 and above is considered normal, a score between -1 and -2.5 is a sign of osteopenia, a condition in which bone density is below normal, and may lead to osteoporosis. A T score of -2.5 and below indicates osteoporosis. Elderly people also witness increased arthritis pain during winters.

If older people sustain a fracture, it should not be seen as an isolated event. Just mending it does not suffice, preventive measures should be pursued. The fracture can be a result of osteoporosis (Hollow Bone Disease), general erosion



of bone mass or overall infirmity of bones. A complete assessment of bone structure is suggested after breakage.

In contemporary times, multiple treatment options are available which have proven to be very effective in controlling and partially reversing bone fragility. A yearly injection (Bisphosphonate) has proven to be effective in preventing aggravation of osteoporosis. There are other medicines — tablets and sprays — in the market that prevent this condition.

Bone mass peaks at the age of 34 and 35, and it is suggested that one should have adequate servings of dairy products and foods that are rich in calcium and Vitamin D, since bone infirmity is a silent epidemic that affects large sections of our population, not just in Delhi and NCR, but across the nation. Exercise is one of the best ways apart from sun-basking to slow or prevent problems with the muscles, joints, and bones. A moderate exercise program can help maintain strength, balance, and flexibility. Exercise helps the bones stay strong. It is important to eat a well-balanced diet with plenty of calcium. Women need to be especially careful to get enough calcium and Vitamin D as they age.

The writer is MD (Pathology), COO, Oncquest Laboratories Limited

STUDYCENTRE

A study of Northwestern University (NU) found that bacteria living in household dust can spread antibiotic resistance genes, and the researchers believe these genes could potentially spread to pathogens, making infections more difficult to treat. Bacteria can share many different types of genes as long as the genes have mobile segments of DNA. NU researchers were the first to find that antibiotic resistance genes in dust microbes have mobile capabilities, the Xinhua news agency reported. "We observed living bacteria have transferable antibiotic resistance genes," said Erica Hartmann, an assistant professor of environmental engineering in NU's McCormick School of Engineering.

Although it is rare for pathogens to live in indoor dust, they can hitchhike into homes and mingle with existing bacteria.

"A nonpathogen can use horizontal gene transfer to give antibiotic resistance genes to a pathogen," Hartmann explained. "Then the pathogen becomes antibiotic resistant." "Microbes share genes when they get stressed out," Hartmann said. "They aren't equipped to handle the stress, so they share genetic elements with a microbe that might be better equipped."

Hartmann recommends dusting with a damp cloth instead of using antimicrobial solutions, which can make bacteria more resistant to antibiotics.

The study was published in the journal — *PLOS Pathogens*.

— IANS

Trend Slazer

Deepika, Rishi in The Intern remake

Actors RISHI KAPOOR and DEEPIKA PADUKONE will star in the official Hindi remake of the Rober De Niro-Anne Hathaway starrer Hollywood comedy hit, *The Intern*.

Deepika wrote, "Thrilled to present my next. The Indian adaptation of *#TheIntern*."

Excited to be a part of the film, Rishi said, "*The Intern* is a very relevant film for the present-day Indian workplace milieu. It showcases human relationships beautifully. I am very excited to be working with Deepika and being a part of this heart-warming story. It is great that Warner Bros and AZURE are officially making this film in India."



'Considering the fact that Salman (Khan) sir is such a huge star, never have I ever imagined that I will get another chance to work with him again, after Bharat. When the film worked I was just happy with the fact that I had worked with Salman Khan. However, when the opportunity for Radhe came, I was on cloud nine.'
—Disha Patani



AYUSHMANN KHURRANA's lip-lock with co-star Jitendra Kumar is the highlight moment of *Gabru*, the first-launched track of the forthcoming comedy *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan*.

Ayushmann and Jitendra play on-screen lovers in the film, which aims at being a quirky comedy centred on homosexuality and the societal taboos around it.

Overall, the video makes for a fun watch, with Ayushmann breaking into the *nagin* dance at one point, with co-star Gajraj Rao.



Cardi B looks like nemesis Minaj

Rapper CARDI B has sparked off plastic surgery rumours lately and many netizens feel she resembles her nemesis Nicki Minaj now.

Cardi B stepped out for Clive Davis and the Recording Academy's pre-Grammy gala, during which people noticed difference in her physical features.

A user said, about her likeness to Minaj, "This is really mysterious why would Cardi go out to get her arch enemy's face put on hers? This is disturbing. I guess imitation really is a sincerest form of flattery." The troll went on speculating what works have been done on Cardi B's face.



A tribute to Kobe Bryant



Billie Eilish



Tanya Tucker

A SONG FOR DIVERSITY

The attendees at the 62nd annual Grammy Awards, besides paying a tribute to lost heroes, including basketball player Kobe Bryant and late rapper Nipsey Hussle, called out for more inclusiveness. Then 18-year-old Billie Eilish swept with five wins, capping off an incredible breakthrough year. Here are the top moments from the gala

Drama over fairness and inclusion at the Grammy Awards carried over to music's big night as newcomers and mainstays in the industry supported Sean "Diddy" Combs and his powerful speech putting the Recording Academy on a clock to fix the nomination process when it comes to rap and R&B in major categories. "I think if they smart, they listen to Diddy," soulful singer Lucky Daye said on the red carpet.

British rapper Labrinth added, "Hopefully there's a conversation to really think about what's happened." Days ago, the academy's just-ousted CEO Deborah Dugan claimed that the awards are rigged and filled with conflicts of interest. At the Clive Davis gala, Combs — who was honoured — spoke for 50 fiery minutes, saying in part: "So I say this with love to the Grammys because you really need to know this, every year y'all be killing my man. Man, I'm talking about the pain. I'm speaking for all these artists here, the producers, the executives. The amount of time it takes to make these records, to pour your heart into it and you just want an even playing field."

Combs urged in his speech that substantive change should come within 365 days. Legend Smokey Robinson had words of support for Combs, his friend but he said he wasn't surprised about the Grammy criticism. "Diddy could actually be a politician. I thought this speech was powerful. It touched on a lot of things people were afraid to say," he said.

Of Dugan calling out manipulation of the nomination process, he said, "It's not like it's news. We've known it all along. It's just coming to the forefront. All that is hidden will come to light."

Tyler, The Creator said backstage after his *Igor* won best rap album that he's "half and half" on the controversy over whether Grammy voting is fair. "On one side, I'm very grateful that what I made could just be acknowledged in a world like this," he said. "But also, it sucks that whenever we, and I mean guys that look like me, do anything that's genre-bending, they always put it in a 'rap' or 'urban' category. I don't like that 'urban' word. It's just a politically correct way to say the N-word. When I hear that, I'm just like why can't we just be in pop?" His other half feels like the "rap nomination was a backhanded compliment."

Bluesman Keb' Mo', who has served in academy positions over the years, said his experiences on the inside have been "nothing but integrity." He added, "Nothing's perfect but my experience is the Grammys trying to maintain integrity and the artistic process." Others said Combs' words and support will hopefully go a long way.

"I believe that, you know, sometimes there's always a tweaking that can be done. I think sometimes you may have to just revisit the process," said gospel artist Tasha Cobbs Leonard. "I have hope that that's what's happening now in every category."

The Grammys have been criticised over the years when Beyoncé, Kanye West, Eminem, Mariah Carey and other top stars have lost in major categories,



Priyanka Chopra Jonas with Nick Jonas

GRAMMYS ON TWITTER

- Most tweeted moments**
- Demi Lovato performs *Anyone*
 - BTS fans react to *Purple you* tweet
 - Billie Eilish wins Record of the Year

Most tweeted musicians

- BTS
- Demi Lovato
- Ariana Grande
- Camila Cabello
- Billie Eilish

Most tweeted songs

- *Old Town Road*
- *Bad Guy*
- *Anyone*



Singer and songwriter, Lizzo

including album of the year and best new artist. The rap and R&B stars often fall short of their pop, rock and country counterparts.

Boys Noize, along with Skrillex and Ty Dolla \$ign, also supported the cause on the red carpet. "Everybody should be here. More black, more female," Boys Noize said. Ty Dolla \$ign added: "The people will rise for sure."

Billie Eilish has won album of the year and record of the year to cap a dominant night of five victories at the Grammy Awards. The 18-year-old Eilish won

A LIST OF WINNERS

Record of the year: *Bad Guy*, Billie Eilish

Album of the year: *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?*, Billie Eilish

Best new artist: Billie Eilish

Best pop vocal album: *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?*, Billie Eilish

Best rap/sung performance: *Higher*, DJ Khaled featuring Nipsey Hussle and John Legend

Best rap album: *Igor*, Tyler, The Creator

Best comedy album: *Sticks & Stones*, Dave Chappelle

Best pop solo performance: *Truth Hurts*, Lizzo

Best rock song: *This Land*, Gary Clark, Jr

Best spoken word album: *Becoming*, Michelle Obama

Best music film: *Homecoming*, Beyoncé

Best country album: *While I'm Livin'*, Tanya Tucker

Best country song: *Bring My Flowers Now*, Tanya Tucker

Best country solo performance: *Ride Me Back Home*, Willie Nelson

Best rap song: *A Lot*, 21 Savage featuring J Cole

Best music video: *Old Town Road (Official Movie)*, Lil Nas X featuring Billy Ray Cyrus

Best score soundtrack for visual media: Hildur Guðnadóttir, *Chernobyl*

Best song written for visual media: *I'll Never Love Again*, Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper

album of the year for *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?* and record of the year for *Bad Guy*. Her album beat a group of nominees that included Lana Del Rey, Lizzo and Ariana Grande. "Can I just say that I think Ariana deserved this?" Eilish said as she accepted the award. Her other Grammys include best new artist, and song of the year for *Bad Guy*. She told the music stars in the crowd that "I grew up watching all of you."

John Legend, Meek Mill, DJ Khaled and a host of musicians paid tribute to Nipsey Hussle at the awards, filling the vast stage with a soaring performance of his music. The tribute kicked off with Mill performing a new song called *Letter to Nipsey*, which mentioned a letter President Barack Obama wrote in Hussle's honour. "When we lost you, it really put some pain on me," Mill rapped. "Real hitters never die."

Then DJ Khaled and Legend sang their collaboration with Hussle, DJ Khaled's track *Higher*, which later won the Grammy for best rap/sung performance. Legend sang while playing the piano as a choir sang along with them. Other performers including Kirk Franklin, Roddy Ricch and YG, each took turns doing solos.

Hussle was killed outside of his South Los Angeles clothing store in March 2019. Sunday's performance featured musicians, background dancers and Legend wearing traditional Ethiopian and Eritrean clothing in honour of Hussle's African roots. The tributes to Hussle were made even more poignant by the loss earlier in the day by another icon — basketball superstar Kobe Bryant.

He played for 20 years for the city's NBA team. Bryant's death in a helicopter crash earlier in the day was acknowledged in the opening minutes of the Grammys broadcast. Before her performance, Lizzo said, "This is for Kobe." She went on to perform *Truth Hurts* and *Cuz I Love You*.

Host Alicia Keys said she was feeling "crazy sad" about Bryant. She was joined on stage with Boyz II Men, who collectively sang *It's So Hard to Say Goodbye to Yesterday*. "The whole wide world lost a hero," the singer said in front of the audience. "We are standing her literally heartbroken in the house that Kobe Bryant built." The NBA legend, his 13-year-old daughter Gianna, and seven others were killed in the crash on a steep hillside in dense morning fog in Southern California. He was 41 and had retired from the Lakers in 2016.

Some shed tears for Bryant on the red carpet. Others were almost speechless ahead of the 62nd annual awards show. Music artists including Billy Ray Cyrus, Rick Ross and Kirk Franklin paid tribute to Bryant, the 18-time NBA All-Star and five-time champion. Debbie Allen, who is married to former Laker Norm Nixon, was seen crying. DJ Khaled said the news about Bryant's death was "devastating."

Actor Priyanka Chopra also paid tribute to the late basketball star Bryant in a special way. She took a moment to style her decorated nails with the number "24" written on her index finger. "RIP Mamba," Priyanka shared on her Instagram page with a purple heart

emoji, alongside an image of her tribute. While attending the Grammys, she walked arm-in-arm with her husband and singer Nick Jonas, wearing a custom Ralph & Russo design, which featured a plunging neckline and also included diamond-adorned pieces, fringe sleeves and intricate embroidery.

Outside Staples Centre, fans wearing Bryant's No 8 and No 24 jerseys flocked to the arena to show their respect for the Laker legend. A few hundred people gathered at LA Live in front of a mega screen with a smiling Bryant that read, "In Loving Memory of KOBE BRYANT 1978-2020".

With tears running down her cheeks, Demi Lovato stood on the Grammys' stage in a white ballgown and belted her new single *Anyone*, written just four days before her near fatal overdose in July 2018. It was the 27-year-old's first time at the Grammy Awards in two years and her first big performance since that fateful day.

At age 61, Tanya Tucker has won the first two Grammy Awards of her career, 48 years after her first hit at age 13. Tucker won best country album for *While I'm Livin'*, her first album of original material in 17 years. She also won best country song for *Bring My Flowers Now*, which is also nominated for overall song of the year. Tucker has been nominated for Grammys 14 times. He is still very young compared to the winner of the other major country Grammy, 86-year-old Willie Nelson, who took home best country solo performance for *Ride Me Back Home*. It was Nelson's ninth Grammy.

Hildur Guðnadóttir took home a Grammy for music she first thought no one would care to hear. The female composer won best score soundtrack for the HBO miniseries *Chernobyl* during the pre-telecast ceremony. The soundtrack already won her an Emmy late last year. And in January she became the first woman in 19 years to win best original score for *Joker* at the Golden Globes. "I think it fit really well with the images of the film, and I was happy with how the music worked with the narrative and characters in this series," she said backstage of the *Chernobyl* soundtrack. "But I never thought anyone would ever listen to the soundtrack record, honestly. I've very surprised to be here today."

Michelle Obama is a Grammy winner. The former first lady won her first Grammy Award for best spoken word album for the audio book of her 2019 memoir *Becoming*. Obama was not on hand to accept the award. Her husband, former president Barack Obama, has two Grammys in the same category, one for his 2005 audio book *Dreams of My Father* and another for his 2007 audio book *The Audacity of Hope*. The spoken word album category includes poetry, storytelling and audio books.

Beyoncé's *Homecoming* has won the Grammy Award for best music film. The Netflix film weaves together Beyoncé's 2018 performances at the Coachella music festival, which included numerous nods to historically black colleges and universities.

—With inputs from agencies

Sacred Games, Mirzapur among most-searched web content

A study on most searched OTT content reveals that *Sacred Games*, *Mirzapur*, *Made In Heaven*, *Criminal Justice* and *Lust Stories* have been appreciated globally.

According to a study by SEMrush, the most searched for web series online was *Sacred Games* followed by *Mirzapur*, *Made In Heaven*, *Criminal Justice* and *Lust Stories*. Each was searched on an average of 5.01, 3.51, 1.93, 1.77, and 1.37 lakh times respectively during the period mentioned. The global research tracked the most-searched web content between January and December 2019.

The study shows there is a huge audience that wants to see on-screen, life-like characters facing real-world challenges. Fernando Angulo, head of com-



munications at the Boston-based SEMrush, said, "Indian cinema has come a long way. Our study shows that the Indian audience is very sophisticated and have access

to content that is at par with what Hollywood produces. What makes web series even better than Hollywood fare is that Indian audience find it relatable.



It also has the character depth and narrative equal to the best anywhere".

While crime-based series have a huge following, web-series

centred on romance and cricket are popular as well. The study found, of the 10 most searched web series, *Inside Edge*, which delves into the highs and lows of

a fictional T20 cricket franchise, was searched an average 84,000 times.

Selection Day, another cricket-based series, was the 10th most explored web-series. Angulo added, "Our study is beneficial to brands that want to reach a sophisticated, cosmopolitan, enlightened audience that believes in societal change. We provide brands with the opportunity to associate themselves with stars and stories that are thriving online. Brands can include narratives of popular web series into their advertising. For instance, a brand that wants to reach young, professional, independent, and affluent women has a mirror into such women's wants. We've found how large the demographic of such women is."

—IANS

Lakers great, teen daughter & seven others also killed in helicopter crash LOSS OF A LEGEND

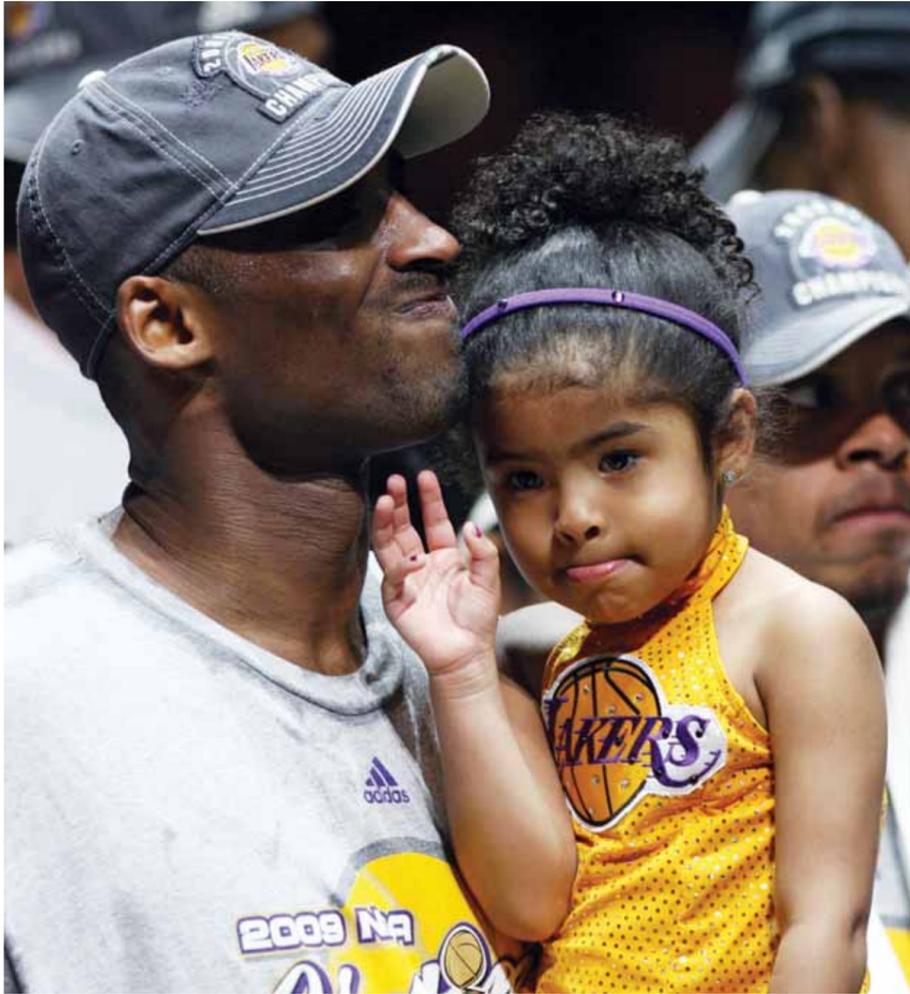
Kobe Bryant Factfile

Name: Kobe Bryant
Former Team: Los Angeles Lakers (1996-2016)
Position: Guard
Height: 6feet, 6inches, 1.98m

► Bryant was the son of Joe "Jelly Bean" Bryant, who played eight seasons in the NBA

AWARDS/CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Bryant won five NBA championships — 2000, 2001, 2002, 2009, 2010
- Named NBA Finals Most Valuable Player in leading Lakers to titles in 2009 and 2010
- Earned Olympic Gold medals with USA at 2008 Beijing Olympics and 2012 London Olympics
- Named NBA regular-season MVP in 2007-08 season and a record-breaking four-time NBA All-Star Game MVP — 2002, 2007, 2009 and 2011
- On January 22, 2006 scored a career-high 81 points in Lakers' 122-104 victory over Toronto, second-most points in a game in NBA history
- In 2018, his movie "Dear Basketball" won the Academy Award for Best Animated Short Film.
- Named an NBA All-Star 18 times - 1998 and 2000-2016
- Two-time NBA scoring champion - 2006 and 2007
- Had both his jersey numbers, 8 and 24, retired by the Lakers, an unprecedented move
- Scored 33,643 points, grabbed 7,047 rebounds and passed off 6,306 assists over 1,346 career NBA games
- Scored a season-high 60 points in his last NBA game on April 13, 2016 in a 101-96 Lakers' victory over Utah, becoming the oldest player in NBA history to score 60 points at 37 years and 234 days



In this June 14, 2009, photo, Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant celebrates with his daughter Gianna, following the Lakers 99-86 defeat of the Orlando Magic in Game 5 of the NBA Finals at Amway Arena in Orlando



A body is covered, left, while another sits at right at the scene of a helicopter crash that killed Kobe Bryant

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Nine people were killed in the helicopter crash that claimed the life of NBA star Kobe Bryant and his 13-year-old daughter, Los Angeles officials confirmed on Sunday.

Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva said eight passengers and the pilot of the aircraft died in the accident. "There were no survivors... There were nine people on board the aircraft, the pilot plus eight individuals," Villanueva said.

The helicopter crashed in foggy weather in the Los Angeles suburb of Calabasas. Authorities said firefighters received a call at 9:47 am about the crash, which caused a brush fire on a hillside.

The Los Angeles Police Department air support division grounded its helicopters until the fog lifted in the afternoon due to the weather conditions.

"The weather situation did not meet our minimum standards for flying," said police spokesman Josh Rubenstein.

"Saddened to hear about the tragic demise of Kobe Bryant, his daughter Gianna & others on-board the helicopter. My condolences to his family, friends and fans across the world. #KobeBryant."
—SACHIN TENDULKAR

"Absolutely devastated to hear this news today. So many childhood memories of waking up early and watching this magician doing things on the court that I would be mesmerized by."
—VIRAT KOHLI

"I am in shock over the tragic news of Kobe's and Gianna's passing. Words can't describe the pain I'm feeling. I loved Kobe — he was like a little brother to me. We used to talk often and I will miss those conversations very much. He was a fierce competitor, one of the greats of the game and a creative force."
—MICHAEL JORDAN

"Kobe was a legend on the court and just getting started in what would have been just as meaningful a second act. To lose Gianna is even more heartbreaking to us as parents. Michelle and I send love and prayers to Vanessa and the entire Bryant family on an unthinkable day."
—BARACK OBAMA

"Kobe Bryant, despite being one of the truly great basketball players of all time, was just getting started in life. He loved his family so much, and had such strong passion for the future. The loss of his beautiful daughter, Gianna, makes this moment even more devastating...."
—DONALD TRUMP

"For 20 seasons, Kobe showed us what is possible when remarkable talent blends with an absolute devotion to winning."
—NBA



England thump SA for series win

AFP ■ JOHANNESBURG

Ben Stokes and Mark Wood made a double strike shortly before tea, breaking stubborn South African resistance and setting up a 191-run win for England on the fourth day of the fourth and final Test at the Wanderers Stadium on Monday.

The win clinched a 3-1 series victory for England.

Set to make a world record 466 to win, South Africa reached 181 for two before Stokes bowled home captain Faf du Plessis for 35.

In the next over man-of-the-match Wood dismissed Rassie van der Dussen for 98. He went on to claim four for 54 to finish with match figures of nine for 100.

Quinton de Kock and Temba Bavuma shone briefly but South Africa were bowled out for 274.

Van der Dussen and Du Plessis batted for all but 13 minutes of an extended two-and-a-half hour afternoon session to give South Africa some hope, making the England bowlers toil on a hot afternoon.

But Stokes bowled a ball which hit a crack and kept low, deflecting off the toe of Du Plessis' bat into the stumps.

Van der Dussen looked set for a maiden Test century but in the next over he fell to Wood two short of the landmark.

It was the second wicket for Stokes — both which came at crucial times shortly before an interval. His first victim was opening batsman Dean Elgar, who was caught and bowled playing an awkward pull shot in the penultimate over before lunch. Stokes finished with two for 47.

De Kock and Bavuma batted brightly in a fifth wicket stand of 48 before Broad bowled a vicious bouncer which Bavuma gloved to wicketkeeper Jos Buttler.

Broad had Dwaine Pretorius caught at fine leg in his next over and the rest followed.

Vernon Philander, playing in his last Test, struck a couple of beefy blows before falling to Wood who supplied the coup de grace, another lifting ball flicking Anrich Nortje's glove on its way through to Buttler down the legside.

PTI ■ POTCHEFSTROOM

Indian wrist spinner Ravi Bishnoi's repertoire of skills will meet a match in Australian Tanveer Sangha's variations in a face-off between two talented tweakers during the quarter-final of the ICC U-19 World Cup here today.

The white ball cricket in recent times has seen wrist spinners emerge as an important cog and junior cricket is no different where Bishnoi, easily the tournament's most impactful bowler, would like to give his team the advantage over the Australian side.

With 10 wickets from three games, Bishnoi has proved why Kings XI Punjab has invested ₹ 2 crore on him during the auction.

Statistically, even Sangha

India start favourites vs Aus



has been at his best with 10 wickets with 5 for 14 against minnows Nigeria. But there's been a four-wicket haul against the West Indies and a wicket to show against England for the player of Indian origin.

Today, both the wrist spinners will be key to their team's chances and Australia will look to improve their dismal record against India at the junior level.

In the last five U-19 encounters since 2013 (different teams have played though), India have won four with one game being abandoned due to rain.

As a team, India are way ahead both in terms of quality as well as temperament with the likes of Yashasvi Jaiswal (two half-centuries), his opening partner Divyansh Saxena and skipper Priyam Garg showing glimpses of their talent.

In the bowling department, lanky UP boy Kartik Tyagi, who breaches the 140 kmp/h barrier quite regularly, and left-arm seamer Akash Singh, moving the white ball

back into the right-handers, are a handy combination.

And there is left-arm spinner Atharva Ankolekar, who came back brilliantly against the Junior Black Caps despite being attacked early on. He got three crucial breakthroughs but a finger fracture in his right hand could be an impediment while fielding.

While Jaiswal, Garg, NT Tilak Verma and Saxena make India's batting look strong, Australia skipper McKenzie Harvey (nephew of former Australian all-rounder Ian Harvey) is a tough customer with the bat as he showed with an innings of 65 against England in their final group game.

Sean puts Zim on front

AFP ■ HARARE

A fine second Test century by Sean Williams enabled Zimbabwe to dominate the opening day of the second Test against Sri Lanka in Harare on Monday, as they reached 352 for six at the close.

The Zimbabwe captain, who won the toss and chose to bat first, made 107 from 137 balls, an innings which swung between the swashbuckling, with 10 fours and three sixes, and the pragmat-

ic. He was well backed up by Brendan Taylor who made a run-a-ball 62 and Sikandar Raza who hit two sixes and four fours in his 72.

Looking to bounce back from



Sri Lanka bowler Lahiru Kumara, centre, celebrates the wicket of Prince Masvaure

last week's 10-wicket defeat in the first Test, Zimbabwe pressed on in the evening with Regis Chakabva on 31 and debutant Tinotenda Mutombodzi on 10.

Williams went on to bring up his second Test century — his first was against New Zealand in Bulawayo four years ago — by sweeping Embuldeniya for four.

Concussion substitute introduced in IPL Sarfaraz's double ton rescues Mumbai

No change in match timings as Mumbai will host final

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The title clash of the Indian Premier League (IPL) will be held in Mumbai on May 24 and the night matches will have usual 8pm start as the Governing Council decided against changing the timings, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly announced on Monday.

"There will be no change in the timing of IPL night games. It will start from 8 pm like earlier years," Ganguly told reporters after the IPL Governing Council meeting.

"We will have only five double headers (4pm and 8 pm) this time. We have decided to reduce the number of double headers," Ganguly said adding that the "final will be held in Mumbai."

In a first, concussion substitute and 'third umpire no ball' will also be introduced in the

New selection committee to pick squad for SA ODIs

NEW DELHI: The revamped selection committee with a new chairman at helm will pick the Indian squad for the three ODIs at home in March, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly said on Monday.

L Sivaramakrishnan, Ajit Agarkar, Rajesh Chauhan and Venkatesh Prasad are some of the key contenders to replace outgoing chairman MSK Prasad (South zone) and Gagan Khoda (Central zone) in the five-member panel.

"The Test squad for New Zealand has already been picked by the old committee and new committee's first

meeting will be held before home ODI series against South Africa. The interviews for short-listed candidates will happen soon," Ganguly said.

The BCCI President also informed that while Madan Lal and Sulakshana Naik are the members of Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC), Gautam Gambhir is being replaced as he can not hold any position being a Member of Parliament.

Meanwhile Ganguly also informed that all-rounder Hardik Pandya has still not attained match fitness after his back surgery.

upcoming edition of the popular T20 league, the former India captain informed.

"The concussion substitute and the no ball rule are new additions for the season," he said.

In a noble gesture, the BCCI will have an 'All Stars Game' between all top international

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

In-form Sarfaraz Khan rescued Mumbai with an unbeaten double century, powering the visitors to a comfortable 372 for five after a top-order collapse on the opening day of their Group B game against Himachal Pradesh.

The 22-year-old Sarfaraz, who had hit an unbeaten triple-hundred in the last game against Uttar Pradesh, took a listless HP attack to cleaners, hitting 32 fours and four sixes during his unbeaten 226-run knock.

Electing to bowl the picturesque HPCA stadium, the home pacers exploited the windy conditions, grabbing three quick wickets to leave Mumbai reeling at 16 for three.

Sarfaraz started the rescue act first by conjuring up a 55-run stand with 'crisis man' Siddhesh Lad (20), to steady Mumbai's ship.

And then he found an able ally in Aditya Tare (62), with whom he added 143-runs for



Mumbai's Sarfaraz Khan celebrates after completing his double hundred

the fifth wicket. Mumbai lost its fifth wicket on 214 and Sarfaraz with Shubham Ranjane (44 not out) then put an unbroken 158-run



stand, before umpires drew stumps early owing to bad light after 75 overs.

It was Sarfaraz show once again as he will strive to reach his second successive triple hundred, a rare feat in any form of cricket.

Gardens. Majumdar, who looked in formidable form, had some anxious moments as he survived a run-out chance to remain unbeaten, alongside Shahbaz Ahmed (39 not out) at the end of day one.

The home team turned the game around in the second session as Majumdar found a fine ally in wicketkeeper-batsman Shreevats Goswami (59). Scoring above four runs per

over, the duo stitched a 117-run fifth wicket stand to give Bengal the edge.

Earlier put in to bat, Bengal's top three batsmen, including last match's triple centurion, Manoj Tiwary (7), got out inside lunch.

VINAY GRABS SIX
CHANDIGARH: Puducherry found themselves on the mat at 37 for 4 after their veteran pacer R Vinay Kumar grabbed six wickets to bowl Chandigarh out for a paltry 134 in their top of the table Plate clash.

Vinay Kumar triggered a Chandigarh middle-order collapse with twin blows in his successive overs en route to 6/32 as the hosts were dismissed after lunch inside 38 overs after they were sent in to bat.

In reply, the Plate leaders Puducherry were reeling at 37 for four, trailing by 97 runs at close on first day with Chandigarh new ball bowler Shresth Nirmohi returning with figures of 3/17.

Nadal settles Kyrgios score

World No 1 beats home favourite in four-set classic to step closer for 20th Slam



AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Rafael Nadal won a grudge match with Nick Kyrgios to reach the Australian Open quarter-finals and keep the heat on Roger Federer's record for Grand Slam titles on Monday.

The world number one, labelled "super salty" by Kyrgios after he criticised the Australian's behaviour last year, fought off a furious challenge to go through 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/4).

As the tennis world mourned the death of Kobe Bryant, Kyrgios arrived at Rod Laver Arena wearing an LA Lakers shirt, and 15-year-old Coco Gauff had tributes to the basketball great scrawled on her trainers during the doubles.

Nadal and Kyrgios had been feuding after some bad-tempered matches but the Spaniard said he was impressed by what he'd seen from the often-temperamental Australian at this tournament.

Kyrgios fought back to challenge Nadal in a high-octane clash played in good spirit, with a polite handshake afterwards — a far cry from some of their previous exchanges.

"When he is playing like today



AP ■ MELBOURNE

with this positive attitude he gives a lot of positive things to our sport," said the Spaniard.

"He's one of the highest talents we have on our tour and I like the Nick Kyrgios during the whole of this tournament."

The 19-time Grand Slam winner will next play Austria's Dominic Thiem — his victim in the last two French Open finals — as the clay

4, 6-4 victory over Elise Mertens, taking a big step forward in a rapidly clearing women's draw.

The Wimbledon champion from Romania, who avoided an exodus of top seeds in the previous round, will next play Estonia's Anett Kontaveit, a 6-7 (4/7), 7-5, 7-5 winner against Iga Swiatek of Poland.

"She's strong, I'm here just to face any challenge I have. So I'm not thinking negative," Halep said of Kontaveit. "I just want to go there and to give my best." Angelique Kerber, the 2016 champion, was the latest big name to fall as she went down to Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (7/4), 6-2.

Pavlyuchenkova's quarter-final will be against Garbine Muguruza, the two-time Grand Slam champion who is resurgent since reuniting with coach Conchita Martinez, beating Kiki Bertens 6-3, 6-3.

"It's like couples, we all want Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston to get

Australian Open
Live from 5:30am IST
SONY SIX & TEN 2 NETWORK

back together, right?" joked Martinez, the 1994 Wimbledon champion.

Earlier, Martina Navratilova and John McEnroe were among the big names to criticise Court, the 24-time Major-winner whose 1970 sweep of the Grand Slam titles was marked with a short ceremony at Rod Laver Arena.

Navratilova said the devout Christian's deeply conservative views were "actually hurting people", while fellow American legend McEnroe called Court a "crazy aunt".

In today's quarter-finals, six-time champion Roger Federer will play America's Tennyson Sandgren and title-holder Novak Djokovic, going for his eighth title, is against big-serving Canadian Milos Raonic.

Australia's women's world number one Ashleigh Barty plays two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova, and Tunisia's Ons Jabeur, the top-ranked player from Africa, takes on America's Sofia Kenin.

Struggling Napoli beat leaders Juve to spoil Sarri San Paolo return

AFP ■ NAPLES

Piotr Zieliński and Lorenzo Insigne scored in the second half as struggling Napoli shocked champions Juventus 2-1 to spoil coach Maurizio Sarri's return to the Stadio San Paolo on Sunday.

Sarri had not been back to Naples since being sacked in May 2018 after three successful campaigns, and before moving to Chelsea.

This season he has taken over eight-time reigning champions Juve, a move seen as a betrayal by his former team, the two-time Serie A runners-up.

Juve missed the chance to open up a six-point lead on Inter Milan at the top of the table, after Antonio Conte's side were held for their third consecutive

Past haunts the present



AFP ■ NAPLES

draw.

Inter are three points behind Juve with Lazio a further two points adrift in third after city rivals Roma ended Simone Inzaghi's side's 11-match winning streak.

"It is pleasant and exciting

to go back," said Sarri despite the whistles and insulting banners of his former fans, reserving his criticism for his "under-par, mentally bland" team.

"We lost a match against an opponent who had done the minimum to win," he added.

"We were passive throughout the game, always halfway between pressure and waiting, we made mistakes."

In Naples, Zieliński broke the deadlock after 63 minutes finishing off a rebound after Insigne was denied by Juve goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny.

Insigne volleyed in a second after 86 minutes to an explosion of joy among the crowd.

Cristiano Ronaldo pulled a goal back as the game headed into injury time for his 13th goal in nine consecutive games in all competitions.

The visitors pushed for the equaliser but Alex Meret smothered Gonzalo Higuain's goal-bound effort, as Juve crashed to just their second defeat of the season.

Warriors look to bounce back against Rockets

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Awadhe Warriors will look to capitalise on home advantage and bounce back to form when they take on the Mumbai Rockets on the final day of their home leg at the Premier Badminton League here today.

With both coming off a loss in their last tie, it will be a stern test of nerves for the two teams.

The Awadhe Warriors suffered a 1-2 loss at the hands of Hyderabad Hunters while the Rockets went down 2-5 to the Pune 7 Aces in their previous outings. Having begun their campaign on a high with a gritty 4-3 victory over the North Eastern Warriors, the Awadhe Warriors were aiming to continue their winning streak but the Hunters proved to be too strong.

Despite the outcome not



going their way, they had a few positives coming out of the match.

Ko Sung Hyun and Shin Baek Cheol's partnership is growing stronger day by day.

The pair, who won three BWF titles last year, has taken their confidence into the league and remains unbeaten so far.

Former world No 10 Wong Wing Ki Vincent gave an effortless display in front of the roaring home fans while Subhankar Dey's stamina and tenacity impressed one and all.

The Warriors also have world No 14 Beiwen Zhang in their ranks. "Our last match did not go our way but that hasn't dampened our spirit. The crowd support here has been fantastic. We are looking forward to finishing our home leg with a win," said Zhang.

Meanwhile, Mumbai Rockets will be gunning for their first victory of the season after a disappointing start for the former runners-up that saw them lose to the high-flying Chennai Superstaz and the Pune 7 Aces.

Pioneer crush Amar Ujala

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A brilliant bowling display helped The Pioneer crush Amar Ujala by seven wickets in the opening match of the 10th Kabir Shah Media Cricket Tournament at KD Singh 'Babu' Stadium on Monday. Batting first, Amar Ujala batsmen never looked at ease against the disciplined bowling unit of The Pioneer and could score only 106 runs for the loss of nine wickets in the stipulated 20 overs.

Ramakant Shukla, who was the most successful bowler with three wickets, was adjudged 'Man of the Match'. Ashutosh Pandey picked two wickets. Rajeev Anand and Mayank Dixit were the main contributors for the losing team with 21 and 18 runs, respectively.

In reply, The Pioneer achieved the target in mere



Man of the match Ramakant Shukla

Indian women lose 1-2 to NZ

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

The Indian women's hockey team lost 1-2 to New Zealand in its second match of the ongoing tour here on Monday. The Indians had earlier defeated New Zealand Development squad 4-0 in the opening match of the tour.

New Zealand started the game on an attacking note and earned a penalty corner early in the first quarter and the chance was brilliantly converted by Megan Hull in the third minute of the match.

India drew parity when young Salima Tete converted a penalty corner in the dying minutes of the first quarter. The visitors matched New Zealand in the second and third quarters but a defensive error in the final 15 minutes cost India dearly as they concede a penalty stroke, and Megan Hull made no mistake from the spot.

India's chief coach Sjoerd Marijne was disappointed with the result.

"We created enough scoring opportunities but we were not productive enough. New Zealand were very successful in the little changes they got. They executed them well," he said.

"It is not about how many opportunities you create but how effective you are. New Zealand were stronger today and in the beginning we were struggling with that. But after the first quarter, we played much better."

"We created eight shots on goal and four penalty corners. We are definitely working on being more effective in the coming matches," he added.

India will again take on New Zealand in the third match of the tour on Wednesday.

नगर पालिका परिषद, पलियाकलां-खीरी

विकास के पथ पर अग्रसर

नगर पालिका परिषद पलिया कलां (खीरी)

गणतंत्र दिवस (26 जनवरी 2020) के अवसर पर हार्दिक बधाई एवं शुभकामनायें देती है तथा नगरवासियों से निम्न अपेक्षाएँ रखती है:-

1. शहर को स्वच्छ रखने के लिए आप सभी अपने घरों में गीले व हरे रंग के दो डस्टबिन रखें तथा घरों से निकलने वाले सूखे कूड़े को नीले रंग के डस्टबिन में गीले कूड़े को हरे रंग के डस्टबिन में एकत्रित करके नगर पालिका द्वारा अधिकृत सीटी बजाकर घर-घर से कूड़ा एकत्र करने वाले पालिका कर्मियों को हों दें। कूड़े को किसी भी दशा में नाले/नाली, सड़क अथवा खुले स्थान में न फेंके और न ही जलाएँ। कूड़ा खुले में फेंकने से ही नालियाँ, सड़कें एवं हमारा परिवेश गन्दा होता है। ऐसा करना दण्डनीय अपराध है।
2. आपका नगर स्वच्छ स्वस्थ-2020 में भाग ले रहा है जिसमें अपने नगर को सर्वश्रेष्ठ रैंकिंग दिलाना जाने की हमारी जिम्मेदारी हमारी ही है। नगर को गलियाँ तथा नालियाँ को साफ रखने में अपना सहयोग प्रदान करें।
3. आप सभी स्वच्छता एप अपने मोबाइल में डाउनलोड करें तथा स्वच्छता सम्बन्धी गतिविधियों/ शिकायतों को उसमें अपलोड करते रहें जिससे आपके अपने नगर को श्रेष्ठ रैंकिंग प्राप्त हो सके।
4. घर में बेकार पड़ी हुई प्लास्टिक बोतल/गैलनों में पौधे लगाकर उनको रिसाइकिल करने में सहयोग प्रदान करें। इससे अब तक निर्मित प्लास्टिक का कुछ भाग शही से रिसाइकिल हो जायेगा तथा पर्यावरण पर अपना कुप्रभाव नहीं डाल पायेगा।
5. सभी भवन स्वामियों को सूचित किया जाता है कि अपनी-अपनी गृहकर बकाया धराराशि को सम्बन्धित कर्मचारियों के पास जमा कर रसीद प्राप्त करें। पालिका के समस्त करों/दियों के बकाया की अदायगी समय से अवश्य करें।
6. जल ही जीवन है, इसे व्यर्थ न बहाये जल की बचत करें। तथा प्रयोग के उपरान्त पानी की टोटियों को खुला न छोड़ें।
7. सड़कों, रोड पट्टी पर सामान रख कर अतिक्रमण न करें जिससे आमजन को आवागमन में असुविधा न हो। सड़कों/खड्डना आदि पर जानवरों को न बांधें तथा पशुओं को आवारा खुला न छोड़ें।
8. खुले में शौच न जाए, शौचालय का प्रयोग करें। प्रत्येक घर में शौचालय बनवाएँ।



(महेन्द्र कुमार चौधरी)
अधिशासी अधिकारी



शारदा प्रसाद
ईओ लेखाकार



(महमूद हुसैन खां)
अध्यक्ष

समस्त कर्मचारीगण/सभासदगण

नगर पालिका परिषद, पलियाकलां-खीरी



एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

स्वच्छ भारत मिशन ग्रामीण के अन्तर्गत जनपद की उपलब्धियाँ एक नजर

स्वच्छ भारत मिशन (ग्रामीण) जनपद मीरजापुर में 02 अक्टूबर 2014 से क्रियान्वित किया जा रहा है इसके पूर्व इस योजना का नाम निर्मल भारत अभियान था जो मई 2012 क्रियान्वित किया जा रहा था। स्वच्छ भारत मिशन (ग्रामीण) के अन्तर्गत अब तक कुल 293874 शौचालयों का निर्माण कराया गया है स्वच्छ भारत मिशन (ग्रामीण) के अन्तर्गत जनपद मीरजापुर प्रदेश का पहला ऐसा जनपद बनने का गौरव प्राप्त किया जिसने विकास खण्ड सीखड़ को 5 जून 2016 को प्रदेश का पहला शौचमुक्त (ओडोडीएफओ) विकास खण्ड घोषित किया जिसके बाद जनपद में स्वच्छता को लेकर जनपद स्तर से ग्राम पंचायत स्तर तक प्रतिस्पर्धा पैदा हो गयी। जिसमें नये-नये प्रयोग तथा शौचालय दान महादान रखाबंधन पर भाईयो द्वारा शौचालय बनाकर बहनों को देना (ब्रदर नॉ 1 प्रतियोगिता), ओडीएफ ओलम्पिक गड्डा खोदो शौचालय जोड़ो, प्रदेश का पहला दिव्यांग शौचालय, शौचालयों के साथ इन्सीनरेटर तथा कम्प्रेस विधि के द्वारा 18925 शौचालयों की धनराशि अवमुक्त कर 26267 शौचालयों का निर्माण कर मु 96000000.00 शासकीय धनराशि की बचत तथा स्वच्छ सुन्दर शौचालय प्रतियोगिता अभियान के अन्तर्गत उत्तर प्रदेश से विकास खण्ड छानने की एक मात्र महिला ग्राम प्रधान श्रीमती पुष्पा देवी, ग्राम पंचायत गोगांव, मीरजापुर को मा 0 प्रधानमंत्री जी भारत सरकार द्वारा दिनांक 11 फरवरी 2019 को कुश्नेत्र हरियाणा में आयोजित कार्यक्रम में 'स्वच्छ शक्ति-2019' पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया गया। जनपद में ओ.डी.एफ. एस एवं प्लस के अन्तर्गत गंगा के किनारे स्थित 134 ग्राम पंचायतों का डीपीआर बनाकर ठोस एवं तरल अपशिष्ट प्रबन्धन की कार्यवाही की जा रही है।

खुले में शौच से मुक्त के उपरान्त ओडोडीएफओ प्लस के अन्तर्गत ग्राम पंचायतों में ठोस एवं तरल अपशिष्ट प्रबन्धन के क्षेत्र में प्रदेश में पहली 5 ग्राम पंचायतों में कराये गये/कराये जा रहे कार्यो का प्रगति विवरण

मुख्य सचिव, उ०प्र० शासन के शासनादेश संख्या- 195/33-3-2015-110/2012 पंचायती राज अनुभाग-3 दिनांक 06 फरवरी 2015 के बिन्दु संख्या-10 में भारत सरकार के गाइड लाइन के अनुसार परिवार संख्या 150 पर मु 7.00 लाख, 300 परिवार पर मु 12.00 लाख 500 परिवार पर मु 15.00 लाख एवं 500 से अधिक परिवार पर 20.00 लाख की धनराशि ठोस एवं तरल अपशिष्ट प्रबन्धन हेतु देने की व्यवस्था है तथा ओडोडीएफओ प्लस एवं ओडोडीएफओ एस0 तथा उसके स्थापित हेतु गंगा के किनारे प्रथम चरण में निर्धारित धनराशि के सापेक्ष 50 प्रतिशत 05 ग्राम पंचायतों विकास खण्ड सीखड़ के कठवा एवं आब्लो सुल्तानपुर, विकास खण्ड नारायणपुर में रामरायपुर विकास खण्ड सीटी में भटौली एवं विकास खण्ड छानने में मैदपुर में मु 39.50 लाख अवमुक्त कर कार्य किया जा रहा है। पंचायतों में कूड़ा कचरा कलेक्शन यूनित (कूड़ाघर), प्रत्येक 20 घरों पर पालीथीन बैंक एवं इन्सीनरेटर (बर्न यूनित), कूड़ा ट्राली साइकिल, प्रत्येक घरों में लाल कलर का डस्टबिन, प्रत्येक हेण्डपम्पों के गन्दे पानी के उचित निस्तारण हेतु रिचार्ज शिफ्ट, गांव के गंदे पानी के निस्तारण हेतु तालाबों के महानों पर वेड फिल्टर के द्वारा पानी की सफाई (बत्तख पालन, केली पौधे का लगाया जाना) गोबर एवं अन्य कचरे के निस्तारण हेतु बर्मी कम्पोस्ट कम्पोस्ट पिट एव नडक का निर्माण तथा गांव के गंदे पानी के उचित निस्तारण हेतु ह्यूम पाईप के द्वारा नाली एवं पक्के नाली का निर्माण तथा डोर टू डोर कडा कलेक्शन का कार्य किया जा रहा है। उक्त के अतिरिक्त 20 ग्राम पंचायतों में 50 प्रतिशत धनराशि मु 0 196.97 लाख ठोस एवं तरल अपशिष्ट प्रबन्धन हेतु धनराशि अवमुक्त करने की कार्यवाही चल रही है।

सौजन्य से - जिला स्वच्छ भारत मिशन मैनेजमेन्ट कमेटी/पंचायती राज विभाग, मीरजापुर।।