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SAVE THE
COMMON SPIRIT

MONEY 11
GOOGLE TO BUY 7.7% STAKE IN JIO; TO
MAKE AFFORDABLE SMARTPHONES

SPORT 14
CHELSEA BEAT NORWICH IN
PREMIER LEAGUE CLASH

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Gandhis pilot Sachin home

As Sachin insists he is still Cong man, high command orders Gehlot not to criticise Pilot, much to CM's chagrin

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



After rebel leader Sachin Pilot asserted he was still a Congressman and had no intention to join the BJP, the Congress top leadership has stepped in to bring him back to the "family" even as Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot seemed totally opposed to his "homecoming".

In his separate media interaction, Pilot laid emphasis on attempt to malign him before the Gandhis by alleging that he hobnobbed with the BJP. If his emphasis on "Gandhis" was his way to reach out to them, then it didn't go unanswered. For the first time during the entire crisis, Sonia Gandhi reportedly asked Ashok Gehlot not to criticise the former Deputy CM and make way for his return.

Sources said soon after Gehlot slammed Pilot before the media, he received a call from the party chief who advised him to take steps to defuse the situation and not do anything to belittle Pilot.

This followed a press conference by Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala in Jaipur who appealed to Pilot to return "home" (Congress) and give up the BJP's hospitality at Manesar under the Haryana Government.

Later, Gehlot, who had been foul-mouthing Sachin

Pilot also came with a tweet that he "loved" the new generation of leaders and tomorrow belongs to them. This was an apparent reference to his former Deputy CM.

Sources said that Rahul Gandhi, who has not been involved in Gehlot-Pilot face-off all these days, directed senior Congress leaders to get in touch with Pilot and pave the way for ensure his return.

But buoyed by the fact that several Pilot supporter MLAs were sending feelers to come back to Jaipur, Gehlot unleashed a scathing attack on Pilot in the afternoon, accusing Pilot of indulging in horse trading to topple the Congress Government in Rajasthan. Taking a jibe at Pilot Gehlot said that only English fluency and being handsome is not everything.

Claiming that the Pilot camp was also hand-in-glove with the BJP's attempts at horse-trading in the recent Rajya Sabha elections, Gehlot said, "Horse trading was being done in Jaipur, we have the

proof. We had to keep people at a hotel for 10 days, if we had not done that, the same thing that is happening in Manesar now would have happened back then."

In the morning, reflecting Gehlot's hard stand, Rajasthan Speaker issued notices to Pilot and 18 other rebel Congress MLAs after the party sought their disqualification from the State Assembly.

Sacked Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot and the other MLAs were asked to respond to the notices by Friday. The notices were issued on Tuesday.

The MLAs had defied a whip and did not attend its legislature party meetings held on Monday and Tuesday.

"Notices have been issued to 19 rebel MLAs, including Sachin Pilot, yesterday," Speaker CP Joshi said.

Sources said the notices were sent after the chief whip of the Congress in Rajasthan Assembly, Mahesh Joshi, wrote to the Speaker, seeking proceedings against the rebel MLAs in accordance with the 10th Schedule of the Constitution.

The Congress also cited past Supreme Court rulings to seek their disqualification. Notices have been sent to all rebels through e-mail and WhatsApp. Physical copies have also been delivered to the official Jaipur addresses and constituency addresses of the rebel MLAs.

Among those sent notices are Vishvendra Singh and

Hobson's choice for Pilot: Homecoming

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rebel Congress leader Sachin Pilot is now left with few options but to climb down after several MLAs close to him opposed any truck with the BJP and risk their membership of the Assembly after they were served disqualification notice by the Rajasthan Speaker.

Making this difficult for Pilot is Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, who is opposed to the efforts mooted by the Central leadership to bring back pilot once again in the "Congress family". Sources said Gehlot wants Pilot to be expelled from the party contending that Pilot could remain a "threat forever" to the stability of the State Government.

After his unceremonious exit as Rajasthan Deputy CM and State PCC president, it will be interesting to see whether Pilot turns this rebellion into a turning point in his political career. One of the options before him is to accept a compromise formula to be back as PCC chief. And there he can also have a major say in the next panchayat elections in State politics.

It's unlikely that Pilot will like to be back in the Government and work under Gehlot any more as Deputy Chief Minister.

Another option for Pilot is

to form a regional outfit with his loyalists, challenging both the Congress and the BJP in the next elections in Rajasthan, a State, which traditionally has, for at least the last two decades, witnessed the consecutive rule of the BJP and the Congress.

Pilot has a stronghold on the Meena-Gujjar community and both communities have 8 per cent vote shares each in the State. In eastern Rajasthan, the Congress won several seats in the 2018 Assembly elections because of the support of both these two communities.

Another possibility, which though Pilot has denied, is to get in touch the BJP and break a sizeable number of MLAs to head a BJP-led Government.

But this option is not likely to be a cakewalk for Pilot. The likes of former Chief Minister Vasundhara Rajé, veteran leader Gulabchand Kataria, State party president Satish Poonia are unlikely to agree on Pilot as one of the CM candidates. Rajé will be an important factor for the BJP before it considers including Pilot in the party. Despite the electoral losses, Vasundhara continues to command Rajasthan BJP with a stronghold. The BJP was to convene a meeting of senior MLAs and leaders on Wednesday but the meeting has now been deferred.

Trump's U-turn on visa policy, Indians relieved

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The Trump administration has agreed to rescind its July 6 rule, which temporarily barred international students from staying in the United States unless they attend at least one in-person course, a federal district court judge said on Tuesday.

The U-turn by the Trump administration comes following a nationwide outrage against its July 6 order and a series of lawsuits filed by a large number of educational institutions, led by the prestigious Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), seeking a permanent injunctive relief to bar the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from enforcing the federal guidelines barring international students attending colleges and universities offering only online courses from staying in the country.

As many as 17 US states and the District of Columbia, along with top American IT



Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), 1,94,556 Indian students were enrolled in various academic institutions in the US in January.

Judge Burroughs said the policy would apply nationwide.

"Both the policy directive and the frequently asked questions would not be enforced anyplace," she said, referring to the agreement between the US government and MIT and Harvard.

Congressman Brad Schneider said this is a great win for international students, colleges and common sense.

"The Administration needs to give us a plan to tackle our public health crisis - it can't be recklessly creating rules one day and rescinding them the next," he said in a tweet.

Last week, more than 136 Congressmen and 30 senators wrote to the Trump administration to rescind its order on international students.

"This is a major victory for the students, organisers and institutions of higher education in the #MA7 and all across the

Continued on Page 10

Jharkhand Cong alleges BJP trying to lure MLAs

PNS ■ RANCHI

State Congress chief and Jharkhand Finance Minister Rameshwar Oraon has claimed that the BJP is continuing its 'Operation Lotus' in the State to topple JMM-Congress-RJD Government and has tried to lure at least four Congress legislators in its fold with "gift".

Accusing State BJP, the State Congress president claimed that like Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, the BJP is working on a sinister plan. He said that the BJP is trying to buy Congress MLAs by luring them.

Oraon said, "The BJP is still to digest how the Congress and JMM were able to form the Government. Congress MLAs are being lured with ministerial berths and money."

Oraon said, "BJP doesn't believe in democracy and always in move to destabilize an elected Government. Four Congress MLAs informed me that BJP leadership has approached them offering them money and post."

He further said that he has

informed State Congress in-charge RPN Singh in this connection. The Congress president lashing out at the BJP leadership alleged that during Rajya Sabha elections too these four Congress MLAs were lured by the saffron party.

"BJP doesn't believe in democracy as the entire Country has seen how BJP was able to form government in Goa, Manipur and Madhya Pradesh. The Congress leadership has spoken to Chief Minister Hemant Soren on the issue," Oraon said.

Jharkhand Congress unit's fresh allegation has come at a time when there is political instability in Rajasthan.

The Ashok Gehlot Government in Rajasthan is facing rough weather with his deputy Sachin Pilot declaring open rebellion against the CM. Pilot has claimed the Gehlot government is in minority and that he has support of 30 Congress MLAs in the 200-member State Assembly. The Rajasthan episode has given a chance to the non NDA parties

Continued on Page 10

Respect peace protocols at borders: India to China

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After ensuring that troops have withdrawn from the stand-off sites at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh, India and China mutually agreed on modalities to implement the next phase of disengagement. In the 15-hour marathon talks, India also made it clear that all protocols for border management for maintaining peace have to be followed.

This was the fourth round of talks between the Corps Commanders Lt General Harinder Singh and Major General Liu Lin on Tuesday in Chushul, Ladakh, in the last one and a half months with the Indian side also insisting in the latest round that onus is on China to pull back speedily, sources said here on Wednesday.

Given the sensitive nature of talks, Army Chief General M M Naravane held at least two sessions of talks in New Delhi on Wednesday to analyse the parleys. He later briefed the top political leadership while senior commanders also apprised the China Study Group. This high-powered group comprises senior officials of Home,

Defence and External Affairs Ministries.

In a related development, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will make an on the spot review of the situation on the LAC during a two-day visit starting July 17. The Army Chief will accompany the Minister who is likely to visit some forward posts in Ladakh. Rajnath was earlier scheduled to visit Leh on July 3. It was postponed as Prime Minister Narendra Modi toured the forward areas there on July 3.

Reacting to the latest round, China on Wednesday said the parleys held to reduce tension at the border had made progress in disengaging troops in the western section of the disputed boundary.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said it hoped New Delhi would work with Beijing to safeguard peace and tranquility in the border areas.

Responding to a query on the talks, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said: "As I know on July 14, border troops of China and India held the fourth round of commander-level talks building on the consensus of the previous three rounds and the implementation of relevant work

have reached progress on promoting further disengagement between troops at the western section of the boundary and de-escalating tensions."

"We hope India can work with China to implement our consensus with real actions and jointly safeguard peace and tranquility in the border areas," she said in her short response without sharing details or elaborating on the exact agenda of the talks.

As regards the Corps Commander level talks which ended at 2.00 am on Wednesday after starting at 11.30 am on Tuesday, there was no official word in New Delhi so far. However, sources said the Indian military conveyed a "very clear" message that status quo ante must be restored in eastern Ladakh.

The two commanders agreed to keep all line of communication open and are likely to meet again next week to review the second phase of disengagement. It comprises troops from both sides retreating more than three to four km from all the stand-off sites.

The two commanders also agreed to take stock of the pace of thinning out troops from the



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath paying tributes to former CM of Uttar Pradesh Dr Sampurnanand on the occasion of UP Sainik Schools' diamond jubilee celebrations in Lucknow on Wednesday

Over 91 pc students pass class 10 exams

New Delhi (PTI): Girls outshone boys yet again in class 10 examination, results of which were announced by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Wednesday, recording a pass percentage of 91.46.

There has been a marginal increase of 0.36 per cent in the pass percentage as against last year. However, the number of students scoring above 90 per cent and 95 per cent have reduced this year by 3 per cent and 1 per cent, respectively.

The board did not announce any merit list this year in view of the exceptional circumstances amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Abducted BJP leader rescued from Baramulla

Srinagar: A BJP worker, kidnapped by terrorists in Baramulla district of Jammu & Kashmir on Wednesday, was rescued by the evening, officials said here.

Mehrajuddin Malla, who is also the vice-chairman of Municipal Committee Watergam, was kidnapped at Marazigund in Rafiabad area of the district while he was on his way to Sopore town. After the killing of a young BJP leader Sheikh Wasim Bari, former district president Bandipora, the abduction of another BJP leader had kept senior police officers on their tenterhooks throughout the day with several police teams working on the case.

IIT-D develops cheapest Covid test kit at ₹650

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday launched the IIT-Delhi developed low-cost coronavirus testing kit worth ₹650 approximately. The test kit, Corosure, has been touted as the most affordable probe-free RT-PCR diagnostic kit available whose test results would be available in three hours and the sensitivity of the tests are comparable to kits that are currently available and has been approved by the ICMR.

HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank and HRD Minister of State Sanjay Dhotre took to twitter to launch the affordable testing kit.

Newtech Medical will produce the affordable coronavirus testing kit which is cheaper than the usual RT-PCR kits because it does not require



the "probe" components that are imported. On the occasion, Dhotre said amid the coronavirus crisis, when widespread testing is most needed, this very low-cost diagnostic kit is a great feat that the IIT-Delhi has achieved in such a short peri-

od. "Innovation and entrepreneurship are complimentary to each other, and are also most crucial for an Atmanirbhar Bharat. IITs have very robustly nurtured these two. Even in schools across the country, climate for innovation and new

technology is being created very actively," Dhotre said.

He also said the country's youth have a lot of passion and potential for innovation and entrepreneurship. They only need to be provided right climate, resources and motivation. IITs have done a great job in this sphere, Dhotre said.

"This IIT Delhi technology should change the paradigm of Covid testing in the country, both in terms of scale and cost. This product, approved by the ICMR and the DCGI, is being launched tomorrow. Two million tests at an unbeatable price," said IIT Delhi Director Ramgopal Rao on Tuesday.

"The sensitivity of this in-house assay is comparable to that of commercially available kits," said Professor Vivekanandan Perumal, lead member of the team.

6,700 personnel of CRPF, BSF Covid +ve, 36 die

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Over 6,700 personnel of the Central paramilitary forces, like CRPF and BSF, have contracted Covid-19 till so far. Of them 3,093 are still active cases while 36 patients have died.

The CRPF tops the list with 2,290 cases out of which 1,117 are active. As many as 1,160 patients have recovered and 13 died.

Closely following the CRPF, the Border Security Force (BSF) has recorded 2,093 cases out of which 1,024 are active and 1,060 patients have been cured.

The force has suffered nine casualties due to Covid-19.

Covid cases rise unabated; 197 test positive in city

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The rise in coronavirus cases continued unabated in the state capital as 197 more persons tested positive while four succumbed to the deadly virus on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, 1,685 more tested positive across the state, taking UP's coronavirus tally to 41,263 as the death toll rose to 1,012 with 29 people losing the battle against the coronavirus.

Lucknow's Chief Medical Officer Dr Narendra Agarwal said that 18 people tested positive in Gontinagar, 11 in Lucknow Nagar Nigam, 10 in Aliganj, seven in Rajajipuram, Chinhat and at Sitapur road, Six in Alambagh, five each in Balaganj, Cantonment and Kanpur road LDA colony, four each in Jankipuram, Arjunaganj and Picnic spot road, three each in Rajendranagar,

Telibagh, Aishbagh, Kalyanpur, Badshahnagar and Rae Bareilly road, two each in Indiranagar, Chowk, Nagram, Gontinagar Extension, Kursi road and Para road, and one each in Maulviganj, Basantpur, Hussainganj, Krishnaganj, Hazratganj, Rakabganj, Aminabad, Mahanagar, Charbagh, Sarvodayanagar and Faizabad road.

On Wednesday, 56 COVID-19 patients were discharged from hospitals in the city. KGMU spokesperson Dr Sudhir Singh said a 60-year-old COVID-19 patient from Ballia died on Wednesday. The patient, admitted to KGMU hospital on July 13, was suffering from coronary artery disease and died of respiratory failure.

Dr Singh said an assistant professor from Centre of Advanced Research tested pos-

itive and 12 persons who came in his contact would be tested for coronavirus. Besides, he said, a clerk from KGMU registrar's office and a technician of Transfusion medicine department also tested positive and 22 persons who had come in his contact would be tested.

The state witnessed 29 COVID-19 deaths in the past 24 hours - four in Lucknow and three each in Amroha, Jhansi and Kanpur, and one each in Saharanpur, Firozabad, Moradabad, Ayodhya, Rampur, Basti, Sambhal, Sultanpur, Gorakhpur, Muzaffarnagar, Shamli, Fatehpur, Farrukhabad, Kushinagar and Unnao.

The recovery rate remained high with 763 COVID-19 patients being discharged from hospitals in the state. With this, 25,743 coronavirus infected persons have completely recovered in UP.

CM directs nodal officers to monitor Covid hosps

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Asking officials to take special caution in the districts of Lucknow, Kanpur Nagar, Amroha and Jhansi where coronavirus cases have gone up, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed additional directors and joint director level officers of the Health department posted in districts as nodal officers to monitor all arrangements of Covid hospitals on a regular basis.

"Take special care of districts like Lucknow, Kanpur Nagar, Amroha and Jhansi. Doctors and nursing staff should take regular rounds in the hospitals and paramedics should monitor the condition of patients. Officials should also ensure adequate availability of oxygen in all hospitals, medical colleges and institutes, including Covid and non-Covid hospitals," Yogi said while presiding over a high-level Unlocked meeting at his official residence here on Wednesday.

He directed officials to conduct cleanliness and sanitation drive in an effective way on Saturdays and Sundays. "There are reports that some districts are not following the guidelines. They should follow it to

the T," he said.

The chief minister also said that the use of plastic should be discouraged to make cleanliness and sanitation drive a success.

The chief minister was apprised in the meeting that Uttar Pradesh was soon going to become the state conducting the maximum COVID-19 tests in the country. He laid stress on further increasing the testing. He also said that the required precautions for prevention and awareness were the only treatment till the Covid vaccine came.

The chief minister laid special emphasis on saving police personnel from coronavirus infection and said the staff going on enforcement duties should compulsorily use masks, gloves and sanitiser.

The chief minister asked officials to use technology to save human lives from lightning. "Through technology, the alert may be issued to nyaya panchayat level to save lives," he said.

The chief minister also directed the chief veterinary officers to make regular inspection of cow shelters to take care of health of cattle and ensure proper supply of green fodder.

Yogi govt protecting interests of only big business houses: SP

Lucknow (PNS): Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav accused the Yogi Adityanath government of protecting the interests of big business houses under the cover of the COVID-19 crisis while ignoring the interests of the poor and the farmers. "The farmers suffered huge losses due to the unseasonal rains earlier this year and before they could recover from the losses, their crops have been destroyed by floods and locust attack. So far no relief has been provided to farmers who have also suffered due to lockdown," the SP chief said in a statement issued here on Wednesday.

"Ever since the Bharatiya Janata Party came to power in UP in March 2017, it is taking the farmers for granted, making tall promises while delivering nothing. There was no procurement of the Rabi crop from farmers as per the Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme announced by the Centre. Purchasing centres were not opened in many districts and where they opened, the farmers were harassed on one pretext or the other," the SP chief alleged.

Akhilesh Yadav said the Samajwadi Party had raised the demand of Rs 10 lakh compensation to farmers but the BJP government ignored it. He said hundreds of farmers had committed suicide in the Bundelkhand and Brij areas while lightning had also claimed the lives of many people.

He said the BJP had announced in its manifesto (Sankalp Patra) that the farmers would get one-and-half times the cost of production of crop but they were not even getting the cost of production. The former chief minister of UP said that the claim of doubling the farmers' income was a lie from the very first day. "Leave the year 2022, during the BJP government, farmers will feel hopeless even till 2024," he said.



NOTICE

I, Army No. 3005540-L Rank Hav. name Dhanne Singh S/o Kalyan Singh Rathore R/o Village and Post - Redi Bhurawas, Tehsil - Taranganagar, District - Churu, Pin - 331304, Rajasthan, Unit 9, Rajput C/o 56, APO wants to rectify my son's name from Yashvardhan to Yashvardhan Singh in my Service Records. His date of Birth is 11.02.2007.

NOTICE

I Divyansu Singh son of Satyendra Kumar Singh residence of Vill-Bawara, Post-Banjaripur, Dist-Ghazipur, Pin-233001, State-Uttar Pradesh, have change my name from Divyansu Singh to Divyanshu Singh vide affidavit dated 15.07.2020 before Prayagraj (Allahabad) UP.

NOTICE

I, GOURAV KUMAR SRIVASTAVA, S/o Vinod Kumar Srivastava, R/o Flat No C307, SILVERLINE Apartment, Opposite of 334 College, Chinhat, Ganeshpur Rahmanpur, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-227105, has changed my name from GOURAV SRIVASTAVA to Gourav Kumar Srivastava for all purposes.

UP at third position in COVID-19 testing

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh has created a new benchmark on COVID-19 testing by carrying out 12,77,241 tests to become the third state in carrying out most tests in the country after Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

The striking feature is that UP achieved the first 6-lakh test-mark in four months and the second 6-lakh-mark in just 20 days starting from June 24.

Besides, UP has the distinction of having less positive cases per million. In this category too, it is now at the third place after Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh.

The was disclosed by Additional Chief Secretaries Awanish Awasthi (Home) and Amit Mohan Prasad (Health) here on Wednesday.

They said after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath fixed a target of 50,000 COVID-19 tests per day by this month end, the number of total tests would increase and UP would certainly

reach the second position beating Maharashtra.

"A new testing lab is being set up in Ghaziabad and it will enhance the testing capacity of the state. Besides, new labs will also start in private hospitals," they said. Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Awasthi said that UP also had less number of positive cases per million after Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh and efforts were on to beat both the states in this category too.

"UP has the distinction of less (Covid) deaths and positive case rate in the country and it proves that the government is doing its work in controlling the virus," he added.

The additional chief secretary said that UP was one of the few states in the country to order that asymptomatic COVID-19 patients be admitted to Level-1 hospitals so that they do not spread the virus.

Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad said good results had been achieved through Covid helpdesks set up in large numbers in the state where preliminary health screening with infrared thermometers and pulse oximeters were being done.

"Till date, 52,418 Covid helpdesks have been set up in the state and 21,303 people with symptoms have been detected by them and they were being tested for coronavirus infection," he said.

Prasad said that during door-to-door surveillance for detecting coronavirus cases till July 13, around 15,82,322 teams visited 4.89 crore houses and screened over 18.73 crore population.

"These teams have pasted stickers and marked every house while they have noted down the people with comorbid conditions like diabetes, hypertension, cancer, and kidney, liver, heart and other ailments. These details will be digitised and used for non-communicable diseases prevention campaigns," he said.

The door-to-door surveillance in six districts of Meerut division was done between July 2 and 12 and in the rest of the state it commenced on July 5 and will end on Wednesday.

Prasad said that there were 14,628 active cases in the state while 25,743 COVID-19 patients had recovered, including 762 who were discharged from hospitals on Wednesday.

There are 14,635 people in the isolation wards of Covid hospitals and 4,021 in the institutional quarantine.

Prasad said on Tuesday, 45,302 tests were conducted — 2,666 of 5-sample pools and 343 of 10-sample pools. He said in the 5-sample pools, 336 were found positive and in the 10-sample pools, 73 were found positive. At present around 1.67 lakh health teams have covered 1.21 crore houses in the state and screened over 6.18 crore people in 28,560 containment areas.

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Tilhar's road mishap was a murder

Lucknow (PNS): Arrest of a truck driver in Shahjahanpur in connection with the death of a man and a woman in a road mishap revealed that it was a well orchestrated murder over a love triangle and that the plot was cleverly camouflaged to look like an accident. The accident was reported last Friday from Tilhar town where Harbhagat Singh

and his friend Gudiya Devi, who was riding pillion, were killed after being run over by a truck. Singh's wife, Deepa Devi, filed a complaint and Tilhar police registered an FIR against driver Vishram Yadav, who fled after the mishap. He was caught on Monday night and during interrogation he revealed the plot behind the murder.

यूनियन बैंक ऑफ इंडिया
A Government of India Undertaking

Regional Office : 117/H-1/240, Pandu Nagar Kanpur-208005
Head Office : 239, Vidhan Bhawan Marg, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

APPENDIX - IV - A [See Proviso to rule 8 (6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable assets under the securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 Read with Proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower (s) and guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor Union Bank of India, the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the authorised officer of Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) will be sold on "As is Where is," "As is What is," and "Whatever there is" on **Dated 19.08.2020** for recovery due to the Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) from Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) with the details given below.

The under mentioned property/properties will be sold by "Online E- Auction through website <https://www.bankauctions.com> for recovery of an amount with Interest & Other Expenses.

Last Date of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) : 18-08-2020 up to 4.00 pm

Sl. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower / Guarantor / Description of Property & Date of Demand Notice & Possession Notice / Amount of Debt	Reserve Price		E-Auction Date & Time
		EMD Price	Bid Increment Amount	
Branch-Swaroop Nagar, Kanpur- A/c No. for Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) / BID Amount : e-Auction Sundry Deposit A/c No. : 394801980050000 Inward RTGS Account of Union Bank of India, Branch Swaroop Nagar, Distt. Kanpur, IFSC Code : UBIN0539481				
1.	Name of Borrower : Shri Omendra Singh Chauhan S/o Shri Shyam Singh Chauhan, R/o : House No. 176-A, Gopal Nagar, Kanpur Nagar. O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 18,03,541.67 + Intt. + Other Expenses Description of Mortgage Property : House No. Part of 1928 (Corner Plot), Daheli Sujapur, Distt.-Kanpur (U.P.). Owner of Property : Shri Omendra Singh Chauhan S/o Shri Shyam Singh Chauhan, R/o : House No. 176-A, Gopal Nagar, Kanpur Nagar. Area : 57.97 Sq. Mtr., Bounded : North-Part of Aarzi No. 3/677, South-7.62 Mtr. Road, East-Part of Aarzi No. 1928, West-7.62 Mtr. Road. Demand Notice Date : 09.08.2019, Date of Constructive Possession : 24.12.2019	₹ 14,30,000/-	₹ 1,43,000/-	19-08-20 & 10.30 am to 11.00 am
2.	Name of Borrower : Shri Sanjay Kumar S/o Shri Chhote Lal & Smt. Omwati W/o Shri Sanjay Kumar, Both R/o : House No. L-628, Awas Vikas No. 1, Keshawpuram, Kalyanpur, Kanpur Nagar (U.P.) & also at House No. 3/736, EWS, Awas Vikas-3, Ambedkarapuram, Kalyanpur, Kanpur Nagar (U.P.) O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 13,38,324.80+Intt. + Other Expenses Description of Mortgage Property : House No. 3/736, EWS, Awas Vikas-3, Ambedkarapuram, Kalyanpur, Distt. Kanpur Nagar (U.P.). Owner of Property: Smt. Omwati W/o Shri Sanjay Kumar, R/o : House No. L-628, Awas Vikas No. 1, Keshawpuram, Kalyanpur, Kanpur Nagar (U.P.). Area : 25.11 Sq. Mtr. Bounded : North- House No. 3/677, South-9 Mtr. Road, East- House No. 3/737, West- House No. 3/735. Demand Notice Date : 05.02.2019 & Publication Date : 22.06.2019 Date of Constructive Possession : 06.03.2020	₹ 12,00,000/-	₹ 1,20,000/-	19-08-20 & 11.00 am to 11.30 am
3.	Name of Borrower : Mohd. Jaiuddin Azami S/o Mohd. Iqbal Azami & Smt. Sitara Begum W/o Mohd. Jaiuddin Azami, Both R/o : House No. 107, Basant Vihar, Naubasta, Distt. Kanpur Nagar (U.P.). O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 30,75,332.80+Intt. + Other Expenses Description of Mortgage Property : Land & Building situated at Aarazi No. 5-D/301, Awas Vikas No. 2, Hanspuram Naubasta, Distt. Kanpur Nagar (U.P.). Owner of Property: Mohd. Jaiuddin Azami S/o Mohd. Iqbal Azami, R/o : House No. 107, Basant Vihar, Naubasta, Distt. Kanpur Nagar (U.P.). Area : 174.07 Sq. Mtr. Bounded : North- 12 Mtr. Wide Road, South- House No. 5D-321 & 322, East- House No. 5D-302, West- 9 Mtr. Wide Road. Demand Notice Date : 06.06.2019, Date of Constructive Possession : 24.12.2019	₹ 85,00,000/-	₹ 8,50,000/-	19-08-20 & 11.30 am to 12.00 pm
4.	Name of Borrower : Shri Sarvesh Kumar Gupta & Smt. Meera Gupta, Both R/o : House No. E-411/697, Ratanpur, Panki, Distt. Kanpur (U.P.) & Also at House No. 294/366, EWS Ratanpur Panki, Distt. Kanpur (U.P.). O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 12,69,444.41+Intt. + Other Expenses Description of Mortgage Property : House No. E-411/697, situated at Ratanpur, Panki, Distt. Kanpur Nagar (U.P.). Owner of Property : Shri Sarvesh Kumar Gupta & Smt. Meera Gupta, Both R/o : House No. E-411/697, Ratanpur, Panki, Distt. Kanpur (U.P.) & Also at House No. 294/366, EWS Ratanpur Panki, Distt. Kanpur (U.P.). Area : 38.88 Sq. Mtr./422 Sq. Ft., Bounded : North- 7.50 Mtr. Road, South- House No. E-432, East- House No. E-410, West- House No. E-412 Demand Notice Date : 05.12.2018, Date of Constructive Possession : 06.03.2019	₹ 11,40,000/-	₹ 1,14,000/-	19-08-20 & 12.00 pm to 12.30 pm
5.	Name of Borrower : Shri Dev Shakti S/o Shri Jageshwar Tripathi & Smt. Prabha Tripathi W/o Shri Dev Shakti, Both R/o : House No. 17/378-A, Pahadpur, Arra Bingsawan, Naubasta, Distt. Kanpur (U.P.). Guarantor : Smt. Maya Singh Chandel W/o Shri Rajkumar Singh Chandel, R/o : House No. H-519, Satiyarn Vihar, Kalyanpur, Distt. Kanpur (U.P.). O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 27,71,217.65+Intt. + Other Expenses Description of Mortgage Property : Residential House Situated at Part of Arazi No. 378, Mauza situated at Arra, Pahadpur Bingsawan, Naubasta, Kanpur Nagar (U.P.). Owner of Property : Shri Dev Shakti S/o Shri Jageshwar Tripathi, R/o : House No. 17/378-A, Pahadpur, Arra Bingsawan, Naubasta, Distt. Kanpur (U.P.). Area : 133.78 Sq. Mtr. Bounded : North-Plot of Daroga Ji, South-Plot of Sachan, East-Part of Arazi, West- 25 Ft. Road. Demand Notice Date : 07.06.2019, Date of Constructive Possession : 19.09.2019	₹ 37,00,000/-	₹ 3,70,000/-	19-08-20 & 12.30 pm to 1.00 pm
6.	Name of Borrower : Shri Kamlesh Kumar & Shri Mehangu Lal, Both R/o : House No. 85/65, Shaker Mill Khalwa, Laxmi Purwa, Distt. Kanpur (U.P.). O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 7,86,559.40+Intt. + Other Expenses Description of Mortgage Property : Constructed House at Arazi No. 203 (Part), Situated at, Mauza Juhu Khurd, Kanpur (U.P.). Owner of Property : Shri Mehangu Lal, R/o : House No. 85/65, Shaker Mill Khalwa, Laxmi Purwa, Distt. Kanpur (U.P.). Area : 41.80 Sq. Mtr. Bounded : North- Part of Arazi, South- Part of Arazi, East- Part of Arazi, West- 30 Ft. Wide Road. Demand Notice Date : 06.03.2019, Date of Constructive Possession : 04.06.2019	₹ 14,00,000/-	₹ 1,40,000/-	19-08-20 & 1.00 pm to 1.30 pm

TERMS & CONDITIONS OF ONLINE E-AUCTIONS SALE : (1) The REFUNDABLE Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) 10% of Reserve Price shall be payable by interested bidders through NEFT/RTGS/FUNDS Transfer on or before Dt. 18-08-2020 latest by 4.00 pm of Union Bank of India, Concern Branch & Concern A/c No. & Concern IFSC Code or by DD/Pay Order favouring Union Bank of India Concern Branch Payable at District Kanpur. (2) Bidders are Advised to visit the Bank's Website : www.unionbankofindia.co.in for detailed terms & conditions of e-Auction sale & other details before submitting their bids for taking part in the e-Auction. Bidder may also visit the Website : www.bankauctions.com of service Provider M/s C-21 India Pvt. Ltd. Address : Udyog Vihar, Phase 2, Gulf Petrochem Building, Building No. 301, Gurgaon, Haryana. Pin: 122015, e-mail ID : support@bankauctions.com /Helpline Number: +91-124-4302020/21/22/23/24, (Contact person-Mr. Mithlesh Kumar, Mob-07080804466). (3) The terms & conditions of sale shall be strictly as per the provisions of the Security Interest Rules (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. (4) The Interested bidder may contact Property Sl. No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 Branch Swaroop Nagar, Distt. Kanpur Authorised Officer (Branch Head/Chief Manager) Shri Sanjay Kumar (M) 9918500735 & E-mail ID : cbsswaroopnagar@unionbankofindia.com

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8 (6) / Rule 9 (1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES 2002

This may also be treated as notice u/r 8(6) / rule 9 (1) of Security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to the borrower/s and guarantor/s of the above loan accounts about the holding of E-Auction sale on the above mentioned date.

Date : 16.07.2020 Place : Kanpur Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India

यू.पी. प्रोजेक्ट्स कारपोरेशन लि.
CIN : U15209UP1976SGC004285
कार्यालय पत्तिकाया प्रबन्धक, इकाई-11, डेवकनी पुलिस चौकी के पास, डेवकनी, अयोध्या
सुरासुरा 05278-244501, ई-मेल: pm_11@upprojects.org

पत्र सं: 130/पीसीएल/परिपत्र/अयो/ई-टेंडर दिनांक: 15.07.2020

अल्प कालीन ई-निविदा सूचना

जनपद सुल्तानपुर जेल में कन्दोले रूप एवं पुलिस चौकी के निर्माण कार्य हेतु इस कार्यालय की निविदा संख्या 03/2020-21/PCL/PM/Ayodhya-e-tender, दिनांक 15.07.2020 द्वारा ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की गई है, यह निविदा <https://www.etender.up.nic.in> के पोर्टल पर दिनांक 19.07.2020 से 05.08.2020 के अपरान्ह 3:00 बजे तक डाउनलोड/ अपलोड की जा सकती है, जिसकी टेनिकल विड दिनांक 05.08.2020 को अपरान्ह 4:00 बजे अधोहस्ताक्षर की कार्यालय में खोली जायेगी। निविदा से सम्बन्धित अन्य विवरण शर्तें कारपोरेशन की वेबसाइट www.upprojects.org पर देखी जा सकती है।
परियोजना प्रबन्धक, निर्माण इकाई-11, अयोध्या

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ
WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR DOCTORS

No.- 797-E/Gaz/Selection/CMP/Agra Div./NCR/17-18 Dated 13.07.2020
Engagement of full-time Contract Medical Practitioners (CMP)
(General Duty Doctor at CH/PRYJ on Contract basis upto December 2020)

North Central Railway invites application from the doctors of "Open Market" as well as "Retired Government Medical Officers of State Government/Central Government/IRMS officers (Railways)", to engage 30 (Thirty) full-time Contract Medical Practitioners (CMP) General Duty Doctor at CH/PRYJ on Contract basis for a duration of upto December 2020 as per details given below:

Name of Posts : CMP /General Duty Doctor at CH/PRYJ
Number of vacancies : 30 (Thirty)
Community Break up : UR - 16, OBC - 5, SC-06, ST-03 Total-30

Date, Time & Venue of Walk-in-Interview:

Walk-in-Interview through audio/ video	Date	Time
	22.07.2020 (Wednesday)	10.00 hrs

Note:-

(i) Candidates must available for walk in interview through audio/video by 10.00 Hrs. on 22.07.2020 (Wednesday).

(ii) Candidate must submit their applications on the prescribed proforma enclosed alongwith relevant documents on e-mail ID drsanjay2003@gmail.com.

(iii) In case, the numbers of candidates are more and they cannot be interviewed on the scheduled date/day, they will be interviewed on the next working day/days.

(iv) Last date/time of submission of application :- 17.00 Hrs. on 21.07.2020.

The format of application form and all other details Educational qualification, Age, Important information about the recruitment process can be seen and downloaded on the website of North Central Railway: www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

Application format of Walk-in-interview for the doctors of "Open Market" as well as "Retired Government Medical Officers of State Government/Central Government/IRMS officers (Railways).
(Kindly indicate)

The General Manager (P)
Headquarters Office
North Central Railway
Subedaraganj, Prayagraj.

- Name (in block letters) _____
- Father/Husband's Name (in block letters) _____
- Permanent address: _____
- Postal Address: _____
- Mobile No. _____ E.mail id _____
- Date of birth: _____ Age as on 01.07.2020 (___ Days ___ Months ___ Years).
- Date of retirement (Applicable only for retired doctors) _____
- Category to which belongs i.e. SC/ST, OBC, UR (Please write) _____
- Nationality _____
- Have you worked in Railway as a CMP, if yes, give details _____
- Educational/Professional Qualifications:

Examination	Year of Medical passing	Medical College /University	No. of Attempts	Percentage of Marks
High School/Equivalent				
Intermediate/Equivalent				
MBBS Part I				
MBBS Part II				
MBBS Part III				
Aggregate % in MBBS				
PG (MD/MS/Dip. all are taken to be PG equivalent (Kindly indicate discipline)				

- Registration No. of Medical Council _____ State where registered _____
- Experience, if any _____

Latest passport size photograph of candidate duly self attested half on photo and half on application

14. Self attested documents required along with the original are as under :-

- One recent passport size photograph.
- Certificate indicating the Date of Birth (High School/Equivalent certificate)
- MBBS Degree with marks sheets (All parts) and Certificate of any higher Medical Qualifications, if any of Recognized University. (For the candidates applied for General Duty Doctors)
- Internship completion Certificate.
- Registration certificate for Medical council of State/India.
- House job certificates, if any.
- Certificates in support of caste in case of SC/ST & OBC issued by the appropriate authority.
- Attested copy of Pension Payment Order (PPO) in case of Retired Government Medical Officers of State Government/Central Government/IRMS officers (Railways) only.

I hereby declare that all the statements given in this application are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, I understand that in the event of any information given herein, is found false or incorrect or concealed, the contract will be liable to be terminated and any civil/criminal legal action can be taken against me for this. I understand that I am not eligible for any TA/DA for this interview.

Place: _____
Dated: _____

Signature of the Candidate
768/2020 v

f North Central Railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

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.

CM pays tributes to martyrs at Sainik School



CM Yogi Adityanath planting a sapling at Sainik School

focusing on women empowerment and after coming to power in UP, the government made a provision for admission of girls to Sainik School. He asserted that the state government does not discriminate between girls and boys. The CM said that the conclusion of the diamond jubilee celebrations in 2021 should witness the presence of President Ram Nath Kovind.

Addressing members of the defence forces present on the occasion, he said their presence was a matter of pride for the school and that Sainik School was playing a major role in protecting the country.

The CM congratulated the school administration for holding the programme in the times of Covid-19 and said many alumni could connect through the digital platform with the programmes which would be organised. "It is our responsibility to get linked so that we can stand together in the face of a disaster," he added.

Earlier, principal Lt Col Udai Pratap Singh welcomed Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Deputy Chief Minister Dr Dinesh Sharma. The CM also laid a wreath at the war memorial and garlanded the bust of Dr Sampurnanand. A plantation drive was also conducted in the school premises. Col Singh presented the historical richness of the school and its contribution to the defence forces.

"So far, this institution has produced more than 1,000 officers in the defence forces. Not only this, the school has also produced several bureaucrats, doctors, engineers, top management executives, judges and successful businessmen," he told the audience. The diamond jubilee logo and special cover were also unveiled on the occasion. Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma also addressed the cadets and encouraged the staff.

CBSE results: Achievers keen on working for country

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Students who scored high percentage in CBSE (Class X), results of which were declared on Wednesday, are keen on working for the country and have high aspirations to make a mark in their respective fields.

Ayush Singh of Rani Laxmi Bai Memorial School, who is the son of an entrepreneur, secured 98.2 per cent. He said it was practice and more practice which helped him score high marks. Ayush said he wanted to become an IAS officer because it was his father's dream as he could not crack the exams. "Besides, if one cracks this exam, one can get a chance to do a lot for the country. I want to do something in the field of education because it is the only thing which can take the country far. Take the case of countries like Japan which have focused on human resources to march ahead," he said.

Divya Tripathi of the same school said she was very happy with her marks (98%). "To be honest, it was on the expected lines. I want to become an IAS officer," she said, adding that she revised whatever she studied for two hours on a daily basis and also read novels.

Aryan Singh of SKD Academy, who scored 90.8 per cent, said he was happy with his marks. Aryan said he wanted to join DRDO as a research scientist. "These exams are held after Class 12th and if I am able to crack it, I will be able to fulfil my dream. I have been inspired by the likes of former President APJ Abdul Kalam and scientist CV Raman," he said. About his preparation, he said he studied for 6-8 hours daily even as his school provided great support.

He said he wanted to make weapons for the army and was inspired by the defence forces because his grandfather had been an army personnel.

Deepthi Tripathi of the same school scored 93 per cent marks and said the best way to prepare was to do regular revision. She said she was looking forward to becoming a cardiologist and



wanted to provide free medical help to the poor.

"I also want to work in the field of education. There are many poor kids who want to study but they do not have money to pursue studies. I want to reach out to these children and teach them," she said.

Udit Singh, who secured 92.8 per cent marks, said he wanted to join NDA. "I had some problems in maths while I was making preparations but the same were looked into by the teachers," he said. Udit said he wanted the state government to provide better facilities to schools and do more work in digital format.

Nidhi Yadav, who scored 90 per cent marks, said she wanted to become an IAS officer. Regarding her success mantra, she said she studied 6-7 hours on a daily basis. About her ambitions, she said she wanted to serve the country by becoming an IAS officer.

Meanwhile, a majority of the students scored above 90 per cent marks with several securing 96-98%. Lucknow Public Collegiate witnessed euphoric moments even as the students were overwhelmed with joy. Adeb Ahmad was the topper with 98%, followed by Nyasa Singh 96.6%,



(Top) Abhishek Yadav, the son of a constable, with his family after scoring 98.4 per cent in CBSE Class X exams, results of which were declared on Wednesday. (Above) Divya Tripathi (98%) with her parents

Dharmendra Singh 95.4% and Abhiraj Patel 94.6%.

Bhavya Manchanda topped Delhi Public School (Indira Nagar) with 96.4% marks, followed by Arnav Srivastava & Aditya Srivastava 96.2% each and Rachit Srivastava 96%. Eight students scored 100% marks in different subject. In English, Bhavya Manchandani and Rachit Srivastava scored 100 each. Bhavya Manchandani, Archisha Verma, Pratyaksh Garg, Tanushree

Chatterjee and Pratul Agarwal scored 100 each in Maths while Mariya Alam and Aniket Bhattacharya scored 100 each in Social Science. All the 117 students who appeared for the exams passed with 62 having scored 90% or above marks.

Sara Singh of LPC (Amrapali Yojana) was the topper with 98.4% marks. The students of Lucknow Public Schools and Colleges came out with flying colours. A total of 1,206 students appeared for

Abhishek, Sara excel with 98.4% each

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Abhishek Yadav of Rani Laxmi Bai Memorial School and Sara Singh of Lucknow Public School scored 98.4 per cent marks each in the CBSE Class X exams, results of which were declared on Wednesday.



Sara Singh

It was a jubilant moment for Abhishek as his family celebrated the success with him. Son of a constable at 35 PAC Battalion, Abhishek said he was on cloud nine and his aim was to become an IAS officer. About his preparations, he said he studied for a couple of hours daily. "I studied NCERT books thoroughly and revised regularly," he said.

Topper of his school, Abhishek said he was motivated by his father to give IAS exams a shot because he wanted to serve the country and people. He said he wanted to work on issues such as poverty and illiteracy which were

plaguing the country. He said he during lockdown, he just chilled and surfed the internet.

Sara Singh, who is the daughter of a doctor, said she simply followed the instructions of her school teachers to get high marks. "I studied from NCERT books and made short notes. I want to do something in the field of technology. I have taken Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics in Class IX and hope to enter the IITs and pursue research," she added.

the exams and 37 scored 95% or above while 199 secured 90% or above.

The result of SKD Academy too was 100%. Vishakha Ramesh Annulwar of Vikrant Khand branch was the topper with 97.8% marks, followed by Aryan of Vrindavan Yojana branch with 97.4% marks. Ananya Singh secured third spot in the school with 97% marks, followed by Sneha 96.8%, Akanksha 96.6% and Shachi 96.4%.

As many as 45 students of Red Rose Senior Secondary School secured above 90% marks. Smariddhi Chaurasiya topped with 98%, followed by Shishir Chaudhary 96.4%, Utkarsh 96%, Ayush Srivastava 95.2%, Nikhil Pathak 95.2% and Arpita 95%.

As for Amity International School, Harsh Gupta topped the Vrindavan Yojana campus with 96.8%, followed by Yashi Singh 95% and Srishti Singh 94.6%.

Karishka Singh with 97.6% topped the Viraj Khand (Gomti Nagar) campus, followed by Chhavi Bhatt, Gopal Pandey and Snehal Kansal 97.2% each and Aradhya Dixit 95.6%. Gopal Pandey and Snehal Kansal scored 100 each in Maths while Tanya Singh in English and Mukund Pathak in Social Science.

Supriya Raghuvansh brought laurels to DPS (Eldeco) by securing 98%.

Tanu Aggarwal topped Cathedral Senior Secondary School with 98.33%. Out of the 185 students who appeared for the exams, 30 scored 90% or above, with three students scoring 100 in Science, Maths and Computers.

Meanwhile, Divyanshi Dubey of Shivani Public School scored 96.8 per cent marks while Yuvraj Singh 94.6%, Tanya Singh 94.4% and Ankit Kumar 93.4% were also among the school toppers.

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भूजल संरक्षण आज करें
कल के लिए जल सुरक्षित करें

योगी आदित्यनाथ
मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

संदेश

मूझे यह जानकर अत्यन्त प्रसन्नता की अनुभूति हो रही है कि भूजल जन-जागरूकता के उद्देश्य से उत्तर प्रदेश में दिनांक 16 से 22 जुलाई, 2020 तक 'भूजल सप्ताह' आयोजित किया जा रहा है।

भूजल एक महत्वपूर्ण एवं बहुमूल्य प्राकृतिक संसाधन है। विगत दो दशकों में विभिन्न कारणों से भू-गर्भ जल की मांग में हुई अप्रत्याशित वृद्धि से जहाँ एक ओर इसकी उपलब्धता में कमी आई है, वहीं दूसरी ओर भूजल प्रदूषण एवं जल प्लावन की समस्याएँ भी उत्पन्न हुई हैं। इसके दृष्टिगत जल संरक्षण से जुड़े कार्यों में वृहद स्तर पर जागरूकता सृजित करना आवश्यक है। 'जल की हर एक बूँद' को संरक्षित करने के उद्देश्य से 'भूजल सप्ताह' का आयोजन एक सराहनीय प्रयास है।

राज्य सरकार भूजल संरक्षण के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है। प्रदेश में भूजल संसाधनों की सुरक्षा, संरक्षण, प्रबन्धन एवं नियमन किए जाने के उद्देश्य से उत्तर प्रदेश भूगर्भ जल (प्रबन्धन और विनियमन) अधिनियम-2019 प्रख्यापित किया गया है। मूझे पूर्ण विश्वास है कि 'भूजल सप्ताह' के दौरान कोविड-19 से सुरक्षा सम्बन्धी प्रोटोकॉल का पूर्ण पालन करते हुए विविध कार्यक्रमों का आयोजन किया जाएगा।

'भूजल सप्ताह' के अवसर पर आयोजित होने वाले कार्यक्रमों की सफलता हेतु मेरी हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं।

प्रदेश में सिंचाई, पेयजल एवं औद्योगिक क्षेत्रों में जलापूर्ति का मुख्य स्रोत भूजल संसाधन हैं, परिणामस्वरूप इस प्राकृतिक स्रोत पर बढ़ती निर्भरता से भूजल संसाधन संकटग्रस्त स्थिति में पहुँच गए हैं, जो गंभीर चिन्तन का विषय है।

प्रदेश सरकार भूजल प्रबंधन एवं संरक्षण हेतु प्रतिबद्ध है। भूजल संसाधनों की सुरक्षा, संरक्षण, प्रबन्धन एवं नियमन के उद्देश्य से उत्तर प्रदेश ग्राउंड वाटर (मैनेजमेंट एण्ड रेगुलेशन) अधिनियम-2019 प्रख्यापित किया गया है। इसमें पंचायत स्तर, स्कूल-कॉलेज के भवनों पर तथा अन्य समस्त शासकीय भवनों पर रुफटॉप रेनवाटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्रणाली की स्थापना के प्राविधान किये गये हैं, जिससे अधिकाधिक वर्षा जल संचित किया जा सके। भारत सरकार से समन्वय स्थापित करते हुए अटल भूजल योजना के माध्यम से बुंदेलखण्ड तथा पश्चिमी उत्तर प्रदेश के भूजल समस्याग्रस्त 26 विकास खण्डों में समग्र भूजल प्रबन्धन हेतु प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं।

'भूजल सप्ताह' में हम संकल्प लें कि अपनी दिनचर्या में पानी का दुरुपयोग रोकेंगे, भूगर्भ जल के अंधाधुंध दोहन को नियंत्रित करेंगे तथा भावी जल निधि के रूप में वर्षा जल को संचित कर भूजल स्रोतों को बचाएँगे।

'भूजल सप्ताह' के आयोजन की सफलता की कामना करता हूँ।

डॉ. महेंद्र सिंह
मंत्री, जल शक्ति विभाग
उत्तर प्रदेश

भूजल सप्ताह

16 से 22 जुलाई, 2020

सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

Husband, in-laws held after woman found hanging

Lucknow (PNS): Two days after the mysterious death of a woman, who was found hanging inside a marriage hall in Bazaarkhala, police on Wednesday arrested her husband Aman Masih and in-laws (Sanjay Masih and Gudiya) on the charges of dowry death. The police said Shalini aka Rose Merry had committed suicide and her brother Shailendra Kumar had lodged a case.

Shalini (21) was found hanging inside Aishbagh Manoranjan Kendra close to her

house on Monday. Her father-in-law Sanjay Masih is a peon at the marriage hall.

"The police did not investigate why her husband Aman Masih did not inform them when he first saw her hanging. The police also did not investigate how the woman reached so high (15 feet) to end her life following torture by her husband and in-laws for dowry," kin of the deceased said.

The SHO said the autopsy report revealed that the woman had committed suicide.

Meanwhile, the Mahanagar police arrested a man for

"Asphyxia due to hanging was ascertained as the cause of death in the autopsy report," the SHO said.

Meanwhile, the Bazaarkhala police on Wednesday arrested a person, identified as Raju aka Shafiq Ahmad, on the charges of abetment to suicide. The police said Raju forced Naveen of Aishbagh to commit suicide and deceased's brother Jugal Kishor had lodged a case in this connection on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the Mahanagar police arrested a man for

allegedly acting fresh with a minor girl on Tuesday. Reports said the accused, identified as Taj Mohammed of Bahraich, was presently staying in Nishatganj and he acted fresh with the girl who called the police control room. A PRV team reached the scene and located the accused. The team later handed Taj to police and he was booked under Section 354 of IPC and also under POCSO Act.

THEFT

Thieves sneaked into a medical store in Shivaji Market in Ghazipur police station area some time on Tuesday night and made off with Rs 18,000 in cash. Sanjay Sharma of Indira Nagar said he had closed the shop on Tuesday night and when he reached there on Wednesday morning, he found it burgled. "The thieves collected the cash by breaking open the chest box and decamped with it," he said.

TP Nagar halt station to be upgraded as coaching terminal

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Lucknow division of Northern Railway is working on upgrading the Transport Nagar halt station in Sarojininaray area as a coaching terminal where passenger trains will also stop in the time to come. In this way, Lucknow will have an additional railway station in cis-Gomti area.

"The Transport Nagar halt station was to be upgraded as a coaching terminal like a railway station in Gomti Nagar. The railways is working on this. It will help in decongesting rail traffic at Charbagh railway station," DRM, NRE, Sanjay Tripathi said.

The Transport Nagar halt is located at this 19-km railway section between Alamnagar and Uthretiya and freight trains coming from Moradabad bypass via this rail section to reach Sultanpur and Rae Bareilly. Presently, at this transport Nagar halt, the railways has deployed a station master to supervise train operation and railway employees to give green/red signals to freight trains by waving flags.

Under the scheme, the NR will develop Transport Nagar halt station in a three-platform railway station where passenger trains will also stop.

The length of each platforms will be 600 metres. Besides, the railways will do track doubling work on this rail section (bypass railway track for freight train between Alamnagar and Uthretiya at which Transport Nagar halt station is located).

The railway officials said the upgradation of Transport Nagar halt station as a coaching terminal would be a game-changer in time to come and would prove to be of great use to residents of Bangla Bazaar, Ashiyana, Sarojininaray, Bijnor, Transport Nagar and Telibagh.

"The new coaching terminal at Transport Nagar may prove to be a game-changer for the route and will help in decongesting the already overloaded current coaching terminals besides the Charbagh railway station. The Transport Nagar Metro station is close to the Transport Nagar halt station and passengers may take the metro to reach the halt station or may alight at the halt station to take metro trains to their destinations," the officials said.

They said some new trains may be introduced after the Transport Nagar halt station is completed and it would further help the passengers.

DELHI JAL BOARD
GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (NORTH WEST)-I
H-BLOCK UDYOG NAGAR INDL. AREA
PEERA GARHI CHOWK NEW DELHI-41

NIT NO-17/EE(NW)/1(2020-21)
PRESS NOTICE TENDER

S. No.	Name of Work	Amount Put to tender (Rs.)	E/M Rs. & Processing Fees	Date of release of tender in procurement solution/D. No.	Last date/ time of receipt of tender through eprocurement solution
1.	Engagement of 20 No. Beldars on hire basis for day to day maintenance of water lines in Kirari (AC-09) under ZE-EE(NW). (Re-invited)	Item Rate	70,000/- 500/-	14/07/2020/ 2020_DJB_192661_1	24-07-2020 at 3.00 P.M.

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

ISSUED BY P.R.O (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 102/2020-21

Sd/-
(Himanshu Agarwal)
EX. ENGINEER (NW)-I

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ
Tender Notice

E-Tender No. PRYJ-Sig-406-2020-21
Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer / Coordination / North Central Railway/ Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite E-TENDER on prescribed form for the following work up to 12.00 hrs. on 05.08.2020. The detail of the Tender is as under:

Tender No.	Name of work	Approximate Cost	Earnest Money	Cost of Tender Document	Completion period	Date of closing of tender
PRYJ-Sig-406-2020-21	Comprehensive AMC of station makes IPS Systems installed in the section KAA-GZB of PRYJ Division for one year	₹7832462.88	₹156700/-	₹5000/-	12 months	05.08.2020

2. Availability of Tender forms: Tender forms shall be available on www.ireps.gov.in 21 days prior to date of opening of the tender. **3. Earnest Money to be deposited:** The prescribed amount of Earnest Money as mentioned above must be deposited along with the tender form Online through Internet Banking or Online Payment gateway only. The tenderer(s) should note that, in any case, the Earnest Money in any other form than specified above shall not be acceptable. Tenderers without earnest money shall be summarily rejected. **4. Time date & place of opening of tender:** Tender will be opened through E-tender at office of Divisional Railway Manager, Prayagraj on or after pre-determined date at 12.30 hours. In case tender opening date happens to be holiday, tenders will be opened on the next tender working day. **5. Validity of offer:** 45 days from the date of opening. **6. Right of Railway to deal with tender:** Railway administration reserves the rights to postpone/modify or to cancel the tender without assigning any reasons. **772/20(AN)**

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

Government
E-mail: ID-sectrb_2006@yahoo.co.in
Of Odisha Tel/Fax - 0671-2301751/2302751
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
CUTTACK (R&B) CIRCLE, CUTTACK
(e - PROCUREMENT NOTICE)

B-150

Bid Identification No. S.E.Ctc.(R&B) 6/2020-21.

1. The Superintending Engineer, Cuttack (R&B) Circle, Cuttack on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites on Percentage rate basis bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for Road work as mentioned below.

2. No. of work :- 3 Nos.
3. Nature of work :- Bridge work.
4. Class of contractor :- 'A' & Special Class
5. Tender paper cost :- Rs. 10000/- (online)
6. Available of bid documents :- From 17.7.2020 to 16.00 Hours of 30.07.2020 in the web site.
7. Date of opening of bid :- Dt. 31.07.2020 at 11.00 Hours.
8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said web site.

Sd/- T.P.Mishra
Superintending Engineer
Cuttack(R&B)Circle

OIPR : 34012/11/0006/2021

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ
E-Tender Notice

Tender Notice No: 1820202021 Date: 10.07.2020
Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering) / North Central Railway / Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites the following E-Tenders on Prescribed form for the following works up to 13:30 hrs, on 05.08.2020. The details of the tenders are as under.

Tender No.	Name of work	Approx. Cost	Earnest Money
75	Manual Deep Screening and other Associated P-way work in the Section of SSE / PW/II /CNB under ADEN / Line/CNB.	₹11033742.84	₹205200/-
76	Post BCM work of Main Line and other Associated P-way work in the Section of ADEN/ Line / CNB.	₹8968206.26	₹179400/-
77	Complete Track Renewal (Primary) by PQRS in GOY-BZM Section and Other Associated P-way Work under ADEN / Line / CNB.	₹10793941.31	₹204000/-
78	Complete Track Renewal (Secondary) of loop lines and other Associated P-way work in the section of SSE/P.way/II / CNB under ADEN/Line/CNB.	₹9685894.54	₹193700/-

Cost of Tender form: ₹5000/-, **Completion Period:** 06 Months, **Date of Opening of tender:** 05.08.2020, **Similar work for Eligibility Criteria:** P-way work. **Note:** 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders is available on website www.ireps.gov.in up to 13:30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 05.08.2020. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightaway ignored and shall not be considered. 4. The tenderer shall submit a copy of certificate as given in tender document in standard format for Tender No.75,76,77 & 78 having advertised value more than 50 Lakh, without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected. 5. The supplier/contractor of goods and / or services would be subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. 6. Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 7. This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. 8. Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) & Tender Document Cost (TDC) in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. 9. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 10. Tender on line can be submitted up to 13:30 hrs. on 05.08.2020. 11. Along with other instructions given to Tenderers, Tenderers are required to Pay special attention on Para 12.1 (a) Note (ii) of Tender Document for EM Deposit and Para 13.0 (h) of Tender Document for Rate quoting and Performance Guarantee submission. **764/20(AN)**

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

SOUTH ASIAN ENTERPRISES LIMITED
Regd. Office: Mikky House, K-Block, Kidwai Nagar, Kanpur-208011
Corp. Office: 2nd Floor, 13, Sant Nagar, East of Kailash, New Delhi-110065, Ph. No.011-46656666, Fax No.011-46656669
CIN No.L91990UP1990PLC011753, Website: www.sael.co.in, Email: southasianenterprises@gmail.com

STATEMENT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2020
(Rs. in Lakhs)

S. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Year Ended		
		31.03.2020 (Audited)	31.12.2019 (Unaudited)	31.03.2019 (Audited)	31.03.2020 (Audited)	31.03.2019 (Audited)	
1	Total Income from Operations (Net)	117.45	17.73	40.74	198.12	167.86	
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional Item and Or extraordinary Item)	69.52	(7.42)	(15.15)	53.40	(32.65)	
3	Net profit/(Loss) for the period before Tax (After Exceptional Items and or Extraordinary items)	69.52	(7.42)	(15.15)	53.40	(32.65)	
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after Tax (After exceptional Items and or Extraordinary items)	69.81	(7.23)	(14.60)	54.24	(31.36)	
5	Total comprehensive Income (Comprising Profit/ Loss for the period and Other comprehensive Income)	186.06	(39.08)	(5.35)	125.41	(108.84)	
6	Equity Share Capital	-	-	-	399.90	399.90	
7	Reserves excluding Revaluation Reserve as per balance sheet as on March 31, 2020	-	-	-	322.25	197.31	
8	Earnings Per Share for continuing operation (of Rs.10/- each)	1.75	(0.18)	(0.37)	1.36	(0.78)	

NOTES:
1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly and Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly and Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange's website at <http://www.bseindia.com> and also on the Company's website at www.sael.co.in.
2 Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items adjusted in the Statement of Profit and Loss in accordance with Ind AS Rules.
3 Corresponding figures of the previous period have been regrouped / rearranged, wherever necessary.

For and on behalf of the Board
T. B. Gupta
Managing Director
DIN: 00106181

Place: New Delhi
Date: 15.07.2020

PARADIP PORT TRUST
CORRIGENDUM-1
dt. 13.07.2020 TO

e-TCN No. TD/TM/GEN-235 (Vol-IV)/201717 dt. 24.06.2020 for "Allotment of 08 (Eight) nos. of Mechanical Iron Ore/Iron Ore Pellet plots at IOHP". Last Date of Bid Submission: 20.07.2020, 1500 Hrs. Bid Opening Date: 21.07.2020, 1200 Hrs. Refer our website for details of Corrigendum-1 published at: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Traffic Manager PPT/PR/128/20-21, Dt. 14.07.2020

U.P. POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LTD. TENDER
NOTICE Sealed tenders are hereby invited in two parts (containing earnest money in 1st part and rates terms & condition in 2nd part) from manufacturer / authorized supplier / experienced contractors as details given below. **Tender No.02/2020-21** Work for construction of retaining wall at Location No. 57A of 132 KV Mohammadabad-Azamgarh Line as per tender specification. Earnest money for Tender No. 02/2020-21 Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand Only) in shape of F.D.R./C.D.R./D.D. in favour of Executive Engineer Electy. Transmission Division Mau. The above all tenders will be opened on date 24.07.2020

TERMS & CONDITION :
1. Tender document can be obtained from this office by paying tender fee against tender No. 02/2020-21 for Rs. 200 +36+236.00 in shape of cash / D.D. in favour of Undersigned up to 14:00 hrs. at the office till opening date. Tender fee is non refundable. 2. The above tender should be reached to this office on the date of opening at 14:00 hrs. & shall be opened at 15:00 hrs. before all tenders / representatives. 3. If the opening date falls on holiday, tender shall be received & opened on next working day. 4. The undersigned reserves the right to reject, split, cancel any or all the tenders and accept in full or part without assigning any reasons thereof. 5. Tender documents will be sold only to those firms / contractors who are registered in trade tax department and have past. 6. Tender part-II will be opened after receipt of part-I in complete form. **Executive Engineer Electy. Transmission Division, U.P.P.T.C.L. Mau. No. 1025, Date 13.09.2020 SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF NATION**

Missing woman's body recovered from river

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The body of a missing woman cook at a government-run primary school was recovered from Gomti river in Maal police station area on Wednesday. Police said the woman committed suicide and the body bore no injury marks. However, deceased's brother suspected foul play and said she had injuries on ear and nose. The police said the body was sent for autopsy and further investigation was underway.

As per reports, villagers in the area spotted the body in the river at Basahri Ghat in Maal and alerted the police. A team of police reached the scene and recovered a polythene bag some metres away. Her Aadhaar card ID cards of other family members were found in the bag. The police contacted her family and she was identified as Anita Pandey of Kumhravan village in Itaunja. She was married to Sandeep Pandey and worked as a cook at a primary school in the village.

2 SHOs sent to lines

Lucknow (PNS): Two SHOs were on Wednesday sent to Reserve Police Lines after being removed from their posts while six SHOs were reshuffled in a move aimed at improving the policing and checking crime in the state capital.

According to police spokesman, Vikas Nagar SHO DK Shukla and Sushant Golf City SHO Ajay Kumar Singh were sent to lines following their poor performance. Vibhuti Khand SHO SB Shukla was shifted to Wazirganj while inspector Sanjay Shukla, who was attached with the office of DCP (Central), replaced SB Shukla.

Inspector Sachin Singh was appointed as Sushant Golf City SHO while inspector Rishi Dev as Vikas Nagar SHO. Inspector Dharmendra Singh Yadav was appointed as Aminabad SHO replacing inspector Sunil Kumar Dubey, who was shifted to Jankipuram in the same capacity. Sources said the former Vikas Nagar SHO had waded into controversy for allegedly talking in a harsh tone with a woman complainant. The issue was highlighted after the woman complained to mediapersons, but Shukla was not removed then. The sources said there were complaints against the former SHO of Sushant Golf City too and action was taken consequently.

IT Development Agency (I.T.D.A.)
(Department of Information Technology Government of Uttarakhand)

ITDA
17/18, Plot No. 17/17, IT Park, Sahasrabudhar Road, Dehradun-248001
Ph: 0135-260000, Email: itda@itda.gov.in

Tender Notice No.01/ITDA/PJ/05/2020-21/020-Project dated 02/07/2020
Corrigendum-I

Selection of Service Provider for Procurement of Smart Phone & Tablet

A corrigendum has been uploaded on procurement portal <https://www.uitenders.gov.in> regarding changes in tender dates.

Other terms and conditions of tender document will remain same.

DIRECTOR

CITY BRIEFS

2 SBI BRANCHES INAUGURATED
Chief general manager of State Bank of India, Lucknow Circle, Ajay Kumar Khanna inaugurated two new branches in the city for the convenience of customers. The first branch (SME branch) was inaugurated at Moti Mahal Marg in Hazratganj and another at Shaheed Path near Medanta Hospital. Khanna said these branches would not only benefit micro, small and medium entrepreneurs in Lucknow but also other customers. General managers of State Bank Dignvijay Singh Rawat, Gajendra Singh Rana and Alok Surendranath Sinha were also present on the occasion.

FIRST PRIZE
Anshi Dubey, a Class VII student of CMS, Aliganj Campus I, won the first prize in National Poster-Making Competition, which was jointly organised online by Lex Assisto and National Association for Legal Aid and Development.

RAJASTHAN STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
Head Office, Parivahan Marg, Jaipur

NIT for Supply, Deployment and Maintenance of FASTags on RSRTC Buses

Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation (RSRTC), Jaipur invite bids from eligible bidders who have necessary qualifications and experience to carry out the work for Supply, Deployment and Maintenance of FASTags on RSRTC Buses in a time bound manner. Details of this tender notification and eligibility criteria can be seen in the NIT exhibited on website <https://eprocure.raajasthan.gov.in>, <https://rsrtc.raajasthan.gov.in> and <https://sppp.raajasthan.gov.in> from 09th July 2020 onward.

UBN No. RT-C2021WS0B00078
Advt. No. 35/2020-21
Raj.Samwad/C/20/2258

Executive Director (Traffic)

E-TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of the president of India, Commandant 32nd BN, ITBP Maharajpur Kanpur UP invites e-procurement tender under Two Bid System (Technical Bid & Commercial Bid) for the Work of :- **Servicing & Overhauling For 125 KVA DG Set at 32nd Bn ITBP Kanpur (UP) for the year 2020-21.**

Tender Publishing Date/Time-11.07.2020 at 1600 Hrs.
Tender Opening Date/Time - 20.07.2020 at 1600 Hrs.

Notes :
i) All details, regarding the subject tender are available on our website www.itbp.gov.in & www.eprocure.gov.in / CPPP /. Any change / modification in the Tender Enquire will be intimated through our websites only. Bidders are therefore requested to visit our website regularly to keep themselves updated.

-sd-
Commandant
davn 19112/11/0044/2021 32nd BN ITB Police Force

लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण
(ISO 14001:2004, ISO 9001:2008 प्रमाणित संस्था)
प्राधिकरण भवन, विठ्ठल खण्ड, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ (उ.प्र.)
फोन: 0522-2302586 वेबसाइट: www.ladulucknow.co.in

संख्या: 13 / ई-निविदा / पु.अ. / 2020-21 दिनांक 15.07.2020

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 ठेकेदारों से ऑनलाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। कार्य से सम्बंधित विस्तृत निविदा-नोटिस तथा डाउन लोड निविदा-प्रश्न लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट "http://www.ladonline.in" पर देखा जा सकता है, जिसमें धरोहर प्रस्ताव, निविदा डालने की तिथि, श्रेणी, कार्य पूरा करने की अवधि एवं ई-निविदा लागत तथा अन्य नियम व शर्तों का उल्लेख है। कार्य से संबंधित ई-निविदा-प्रश्न वेबसाइट "http://etender.up.nic.in" पर उपलब्ध होंगे तथा ई-निविदा करने होंगे।

क्र. सं.	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की लागत (रु. लाख)	ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि
1	बसन्त कुञ्ज योजना के सेक्टर-ए, बी एवं एच में मुख्य सड़कों के सुदुर्दीकरण का कार्य।	437.27	13.08.2020
2	यातायात सुचारु हेतु दुम्सपोट नगर योजना-नगर्गत मूखण्ड संख्या सी-36 से कानपुर रोड योजना तक 24.0मी. सड़क के दक्षिणी व उत्तरी मार्ग के सुदुर्दीकरण का कार्य।	358.44	13.08.2020
3	यातायात सुचारु हेतु दुम्सपोट नगर योजना-नगर्गत मूखण्ड संख्या सी-1/45 से सी-10 तक 24.0 मी. सड़क के उत्तरी मार्ग के सुदुर्दीकरण का कार्य।	340.66	13.08.2020
4	दुम्सपोट नगर योजना-नगर्गत फेज-1 में सड़क, नाली मरम्मत का कार्य।	201.16	13.08.2020
5	सी.जी. सिटी योजना के दक्षिणी भाग में निर्मित एस.आई.जी./ई.डब्ल्यू.एस. एवं अमल/पराग डेरी के सामने सड़क पर बी.एम. व एस.डी.बी.सी. का कार्य।	162.81	13.08.2020
6	गोमती नगर विस्तार योजना भाग-1ए स्थित जनेश्वर मिश्र पार्क के भाग-3 में औद्योगिक अनुसूचना का कार्य।	115.40	13.08.2020
7	गोमती नगर विस्तार योजना भाग-1ए स्थित जनेश्वर मिश्र पार्क के भाग-2 में औद्योगिक अनुसूचना का कार्य।	110.79	13.08.2020
8	श्रीक स्थित ज्योतिबा फुले मल्टीलेवल पार्किंग की वाहय सड़क की मरम्मत एवं बी.एम./एस.डी.बी.सी. का कार्य।	79.75	06.08.2020
9	पुराना लखनऊ हस्तनिर्माण के समेकित विकास कार्यों के अन्तर्गत मार्ग प्रकाश, डेकोरेटिव लाइट, फसाड लाइटिंग एवं लेण्ड स्केपिंग लाइटिंग सम्बंधित कार्य के वार्षिक संचालन एवं अनुसूचना का कार्य।	77.86	06.08.2020
10	बसन्त कुञ्ज योजना के सेक्टर-एच के आश्रयहीन पार्क में क्षतिग्रस्त नाले के सुदुर्दीकरण का कार्य।	73.33	06.08.2020
11	टिकैटरवाय तालाब के सौन्दर्यीकरण का कार्य।	69.47	06.08.2020
12	एशबाग में जमुना झील में पूर्वनिर्मित सिविल कार्यों की सफाई एवं अनुसूचना का कार्य।	63.85	06.08.2020
13	जानकीपुरम योजना सेक्टर-जे कुसी रोड स्थित सृष्टि अपार्टमेंट में पूर्व से स्थापित जनेश्वर हेतु सिंक्रोनाइजिंग पैनेल लगाने तथा अपार्टमेंट के आवातियों को जनेश्वर की वैकल्प विद्युत आपूर्ति उपलब्ध कराने का कार्य।	62.74	06.08.2020
14	लखनऊ शहर के अन्तर्गत (विशाल खण्ड) गोमती नगर में 17 विभिन्न पार्कों के जीर्णोद्धार, सौन्दर्यीकरण एवं एक वर्ष के रख-रखाव का कार्य (कार्य-योजना में अंकित क्र.सं.-123 से 134 तक तथा 136 से 140 तक के अनुसार)	55.35	06.08.2020
15	सुचारु यातायात व्यवस्था हेतु कर्कीट ट्रैफिक माइबुलेटर की आपूर्ति का कार्य।	48.32	30.07.2020
16	जानकीपुरम योजना सेक्टर-जे में क्षतिग्रस्त पानी की लाइनों को बदलने एवं मरम्मत का कार्य।	45.17	30.07.2020
17	एशबाग योजना में जमुना झील की सफाई का कार्य।	38.09	30.07.2020
18	जानकीपुरम योजना सेक्टर-जे विस्तार में सृष्टि अपार्टमेंट के अन्तर्गत कबल हाउस का निर्माण कार्य।	37.12	30.07.2020
19	सी.जी. सिटी (एक जगह) दक्षिणी भाग में लगे विभिन्न प्रजाति के पेड़ों का 02 वर्ष का रख-रखाव तथा जंगली झाड़ी की कटाई-छटाई, सफाई एवं कुञ्ज निस्तारण का कार्य।	36.34	30.07.2020
20	लखनऊ शहर के अन्तर्गत (विशाल खण्ड में) 15 विभिन्न पार्कों के जीर्णोद्धार, सौन्दर्यीकरण एवं एक वर्ष के रख-रखाव का कार्य (कार्य-योजना में अंकित क्र.सं. 70 से 84 तक के अनुसार)	35.52	30.07.2020
21	कानपुर रोड योजना के सेक्टर-एल में विद्युतीकरण का कार्य।	33.36	30.07.2020
22	जानकीपुरम पार्क की दैनिक सफाई व्यवस्था का कार्य।	27.00	30.07.2020
23	बसन्त कुञ्ज योजना के सेक्टर-बी. सी. डी एवं आश्रयहीन पार्क की सौधर लाइन/नालियों की सफाई तथा सड़कों पर स्वीपिंग एवं टोस अपशिष्ट निस्तारण हेतु स्वीपर गैंग की आपूर्ति का कार्य।	23.73	30.07.2020
24	लखनऊ शहर के अन्तर्गत (विशाल खण्ड में) 09 विभिन्न पार्कों के जीर्णोद्धार, सौन्दर्यीकरण एवं 1 वर्ष के रख-रखाव का कार्य (कार्य-योजना में अंकित क्र.सं. - 147, 159 से 166 तक अनुसार)	23.66	30.07.2020
25	गोमती नगर योजना के विकास खण्ड में स्थित बस अड्डा/बजट होटल को शहीद पथ से मिलाने वाली रोड के शौधीकरण एवं सुदुर्दीकरण का कार्य।	21.76	30.07.2020
26	जानकीपुरम विस्तार योजना के अन्तर्गत सेक्टर-3 व 4 में नियमित सड़क पट्टी, नाला व नाली की सफाई एवं मलवा निस्तारण का कार्य।	19.32	30.07.2020
27	गोमती नगर योजना-नगर्गत नेहरू इन्वेल्व में आर-97 (SME) के आस-पास इन्टरलॉकिंग एडवांस लगाने एवं नाली का निर्माण कार्य।	17.40	30.07.2020
28	नवीन प्राधिकरण भवन में अनुसूचना कार्यों के सम्मान हेतु स्लब, कार्पेन्टर व हेल्पर गैंग की आपूर्ति का कार्य।	13.29	30.07.2020
29	पंचशील योजना, गोमती नगर में सियादों के वार्षिक अनुसूचना एवं संचालन का कार्य।	9.30	27.07.2020
30	गोमती नगर विस्तार योजना भाग-1ए स्थित जनेश्वर मिश्र पार्क में विभिन्न स्थानों पर क्षतिग्रस्त कोटा स्टोन बदलने का कार्य।	8.63	27.07.2020
31	बसन्त कुञ्ज योजना के सेक्टर-बी. डी. आई एवं आश्रयहीन पार्क के ओवर हेण्ड टैक की सौधियों पर गेट लगाने का कार्य।	3.85	27.07.20

43 new COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

There is no let up in finding a high number of COVID-19 cases as 43 new patients have been detected on Wednesday. With this, the total number of cases in the district has inched further close to 1K-mark. The total number of COVID-19 patients has increased to 979. Besides, the city has also seen two more deaths increasing the total toll to 30.

According to Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh, the district has seen two more deaths. There was a male aged 53 from Chamrauta Mahalgolghar, Kachahari who was suffering from COVID-19 with diabetes mellitus, hypertension and cardiovascular arteries disease and the other was a male aged 32 from



Security at hotspot Jawahar Nagar Extension (Bhelupur) in Varanasi on Wednesday

Hukulganj, Nai Basti (Lalpur-Pandeypur) who was also suffering from corona positive with severe acute respiratory infection. Earlier, by 11.00 a.m. as many as 11 patients were

found positive out of 162 reports received.

During the day as the follow-up reports of 17 patients were found negative they have been discharged from the hos-

pitals.

With this, the total number of patients who have been recovered has increased to 491, leaving 458 active patients. There were 432 hotspots in the district by Tuesday with the addition of 17 new ones. The number of red zones has increased to 211. There were 277 active hotspots which included 66 orange zones. The rest of 155 have become green zones.

Meanwhile, after imposing several restrictions, the local administration has tightened its action against those violating the COVID-19 norms. In almost all the areas, the police took action against those moving in the markets without wearing masks and riding motorcycles and other vehicles without wearing helmets and using safety belts.

21 test positive in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Prayagraj city reported a total of 21 positive cases of coronavirus late on Tuesday night taking the tally of the COVID-19 cases to 668 of them 416 patients have fully recovered and discharged from the hospital. Currently, the district has 230 active cases who are undergoing treatment in different COVID hospitals of the city.

All the 21 cases reported in city belonged to two from Bara, one Karchana, one Kareltagabagh, one Phulpur, two Shankargarh, two Daraganj, one Shivkuti, one Kareli, one Lukerganj, two Georgetown, one Pretam Nagar, one Rajruppur, three Malviya Nagar, one Bharatganj and one Myor Road.

Of the total detected patients, six tested through antigen kits, two from True-nat-machine and while the 13 reports of COVID-19 were received from RTPCR.

Following positive cases are found included Sandeep Kumar (38), S/O Jagbir Singh Room no -8, Mohammad Idris (31), S/O Abdul Kadir Room no -4. Both residents of Ganga Bhawan Guest House and employees of PPGCL, Bara. Anoop Chakravarty (60), S/O Adheer Chandra, R/O 688, Beni Madhav Mandir Gali, Daraganj, Prayagraj, Asymptomatic, Santosh Kumar Dubey (60), Ayush Dubey (20), S/O Santosh Dubey. Both resident of 645, Children Hospital Colony Hasimpur Road, Prayagraj, Animesh Chatterjee (56), S/O Lt Shyam Chandra, R/O 77/2, Industrial Colony, Naini, Prayagraj, Opposite PAC Quarter guard. Contact of positive patient Ajay, Abhishek Pandey (25), S/O Ram gulam, R/O 232M, Tilak Nagar,



Allapur, Prayagraj, Matadeen (30), S/O Ramachal Gupta, Shivpura, Amiliya Kala, Ramanagar, Urua, Prayagraj. Vivek kumar (30) S/O Santosh Singh, R/O Umari, Saidabad Prayagraj Asymptomatic, Khushi Gupta (18), D/O Sanjay Gupta, R/O 248A/185B, Atarsuiyya, Prayagraj, Contact of positive patient Shivkumari Gupta, Shyam Shundar (34), S/O Balmukund, R/O Badai ka Poora, Deeha, Karchana Prayagraj, Asymptomatic, Meera Tiwari (65) W/O L B Tiwari, R/O 40/22, P D Tandon Park, Vivekanand Crossing, Civil Lines, Ganesh Kumar Agarwal (75), S/O Laxmi Chandra, R/O 20/24, Meerapur, Prayagraj, Asymptomatic.

Shivjeet (42), S/O Lalit Prasad Kesarvani, R/O Saidabad, Prayagraj, Sada Singh (70), S/O Bajrang Singh, R/O 538, Colonelganj, Prayagraj, Nirmala (65), W/O Krishnadev, R/O Fatehpur Ghat, Manauri Prayagraj, Kishan Singh (94) R/O Kareli Firoz Khan (57), R/O Prayagraj, Mangla Prasad (57) Shankargarh, Mahesh Keshari

(60) R/O Duniya Ganj Akbarpur, Phoolpur, Prayagraj and Kaushlendra Mishra (30) resident of Teliyarganj, Prayagraj.

MAJORITY OF PEOPLE HAVE CORONA SYMPTOMS: Majority of the people in the city have all the symptoms of coronavirus but they seem to be quite reluctant for testing. It is because they fear that their report may come up positive and they will have to be admitted to COVID Hospitals.

Such people came to light when the team of the Health department started going door-to-door for a survey. When inquiries started about each member of the family, a large number of people came out with symptoms of coronavirus. And when they were tested for Covid, they also turned out to be positives.

According to doctors, the primary symptoms of coronavirus are fever, cough, cold and difficulty in breathing. All this disease was common before the corona period. However, ever since the coronavirus has spread, the same disease has become dangerous.

It is not that all cough-fever are symptoms of corona. It is also not that if there is a cough or fever in any person, it cannot be a corona.

Doctors said that if one has a cough and fever, he/she should not prefer medicine on their own, they should immediately contact the doctor. If the doctor thinks that there may be corona in it, then he will get the corona test done to that man. Fearing corona and sitting in the house is a danger of spreading the infection to other family members.

Dr Rishi Sahai, the Nodal Officer for COVID-19, said that in the survey conducted door-to-door, all such patients were found to have symptoms of corona. However, instead of going to the doctor, they remained at home. Many patients came positive in the test. If anyone feels symptoms of coronavirus, then the former immediately consult a doctor and if necessary, get a corona test done together, added Dr Sahai.

More than 200 corona patients have been found in the last five days. At this juncture, the number of patients in L1, L2 and L3 Hospitals has become very high. If we talk about Tej Bahadur Sapru (Beli) Hospital, around 70 corona positive patients have been admitted here in four days.

Nodal Officer for COVID-19, Dr Rishi Sahai said that now the railway hospital has also been made operational for admitting corona patients. After this, the Hospital of Homoeopathic Medical College, Phaphamau and ESI Hospital of Naini will be made operational for the same purpose. Corona patients will be admitted here, added Dr Sahai.

Jubilation among CBSE Class X students

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

There was a jubilating mood among the students of Class X in all the schools affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) here on Wednesday as majority of local schools fared superbly well in the examinations. Though due to COVID-19 pandemic, the students could not turn out their schools and celebrate the day along with their teachers and friends, they were greeted by them through various online platforms. With the announcements of the results, all the three leading secondary boards have declared their High School and Intermediate results despite the continuous of pandemic crisis.

Chairman of Sunbeam Group of Educational Institutions Dr Deepak Madhok said Archana Patel (Bhagwanpur) and Shakshi Patel (Lahartara) topped the group with 98.4% marks each. Besides, Rakshit Jha, Raksha Mumtaj (both Bhagwanpur), Bhavya Agrawal (Lahartara) and Ashish Singh (Varuna) stood second securing 98.2% marks.

Pragyan Srivastava, Anushka Rai (both Bhagwanpur) and Vani Satsangi (Lahartara) finished third with 98% marks. In Bhagwanpur branch, 317 students appeared in the examinations and 52 of them got more than 95% marks and 124 above 90% apart from 47 students secured 100% in one of their subjects. In Lahartara, 260 students appeared and 29 got more than 95 per cent marks and 70 above 90%. In Varuna, 270 students appeared while 18 got more than 95% and 79 above 90%. In Sunbeam Suncity, 225 appeared in the examinations while nine got above 95% and 50 over 90%. All the toppers were greeted online by Director Bharti Madhk, Deputy Director Amrita Barman, Assistant Director Pratima Gupta, hony. Director Harsh Madhok, Dean (Academic) Aditya Chaudhary and CAO Sandeep Mukherjee. Maintaining its Class XII



CBSE Class X topper of Sunbeam Academy Shivangi Tiwari seeking blessings from guardians in Varanasi on Wednesday

results, one of the leading groups, Sunbeam Academy performed well in Class X also. The toppers were greeted by group Secretary Jagdeep Madhok, Director Poonam Madhok and Principal KK Panda. Giving details about toppers, operation head Rohan Madhok said that Shivangi Madhok topped the school with 97.2% marks, followed by Varun Upadhyay 96%, Mushkan 95.4%, Anand Kumar Yadav 94.8%, Devashu Maurya 93.4%, Rishabh Tiwari 93.4%, Prakash Narayan Prajapati 93.2%, Arya Singh, Amit Kumar, Khushi Gupta, Sanjana Tiwari (all 93% each). As many as 35 students of the school secured more than 90% marks.

Principal of DPS-Varanasi Mukesh Shelat said 'it was a moment of joyous celebration for the school as the entire batch of 300 students cleared the exam. Payodhi Shamvati topped the school with 98.4%,

followed by Asmi Shekhar 97.6%, Tushita Tandon and Atmana Gupta both 97%, Ayush Pandey 96.6% and Ayush Dwivedi 95.8%. Out of a total of 300 students, 108 students scored over 90%.

Director of Happy Model School, Kuruhwa said that the results of the school were 100 per cent. Aditya Kumar Singh topped the school with 97% marks while Pragna Singh was second with 96.4%. They were followed by Akansha Mandal 96%, Aryan Singh 95.8%, Ayasha Ansari 95.8%. Besides, Anurag Rai got 100 marks out of 100 in English, while Harshita Singh 100 in Hindi. As many as 77 students secured more than 90% marks. Manager of Children Academy Group of Schools Mahipal Das said that Avni Nagar topped the school with 95.4% marks, followed by Khushi Kapoor 94.2%, Kalash Maurya and Vivek Maurya, both 90%. Principal Nayana Mahapatra

greeted all the students who fared well in the examinations.

Chairman of Seth MR Jaipuria School (Banaras) Deepak Kumar Bajaj said that the results of both the campuses at Babatpur and Parao were 100 per cent. Principal Sudha Singh (Babatpur) said that Suryansh Singh topped the school with 95.4% marks followed by Navya Mishra 94.2% and Avinav Anand 94%. Principal Ashish Saxena (Parao) said that Nimish Agrawal topped the school with 93.2% marks, followed by Gautam Agrawal 93% and Sati Singh 92.4%. Besides, Ishan Dishaal secured 100 marks in Social Science.

Principal of Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV), Banaras Hindu University (BHU) Dr Diwakar Singh and vice-principal Binita Singh said that the results of both first and second shifts were 100 per cent. In first-shift, Shreya Singh topped with 97.2% followed by Himanshu Kumar and Kalpana Singh 96.6% each and Shrishti Singh 95.4%. Among second-shift students, Adil Ali topped with 93.8% followed by Anishika Singh and Anvesha Singh 93.4% each and Raj Patel 92.2%. Manager of Swami Harsevanand Public School (SHPS) Baba Prakashdhyananand said that the results of the school were 100 per cent. Rajneesh Gupta topped the school with 97.17% followed by Vishal Tiwari 95.33%, Tejas Pandey 91.83%, Nisha Singh 91.33%, Satya Yadav 91.33% and Ananya Pandey 91%. Pro-vice chairman of DPS-Kashi Ayush Poddar and principal Sunil Kumar Rawat said that the results were 100 per cent and Alishwa Noor topped the school with 94.83% followed by Shivani Priyadarshani 93.50% and Krishna Kumar Agrawal 92.33%. Besides, there was also a joyous moment among the students of various other groups including Sant Atulanand, DALIMSS apart from CHBS and CHGS, all KVs and many others as all the schools fared well in the examinations.

Ganga, Yamuna water levels rising

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Water level of the Ganga and the Yamuna is gradually increasing but the danger mark is too far away.

Showers in the catchment areas of the twin rivers and their tributaries have resulted in sudden rise in the water level but on Wednesday the pace of rise in water level was very slow. Water levels in both the rivers witnessed a rise of six cm during the past 24 hours.

The Flood situation in downstream districts is a bit grim, but Prayagraj is not at all in danger. On Wednesday water level of the Ganga was recorded as 77.80 mt in Phaphamau and 73.58 in downstream Chhatnag, while the Yamuna water level in Naini was 74.14 mt. Red mark of both the rivers reads 84.534 mt in Prayagraj.

About five days ago both the river had swollen alarming-



Water level of Ganga river rising after heavy monsoon rain in Prayagraj.

Pioneer

ly in 24 hours, but after two days the water had receded. Ghatiyas and Pandas have,

however, started shifting their takhat and platforms to safer places. Bathers are visiting the

Sangam and different ghats to take a holy dip in the auspicious month of Shravan.

Prayagraj Express completes 36 yrs of excellent service to nation

ALLAHABAD (PNS): Prayagraj Express, the flagship train of North Central Railway is completing 36 years of excellent service to the nation on July 16 this year. On this date last year Coral anniversary of this highly patronised service between Prayagraj and New Delhi was celebrated in befitting manners at Prayagraj Jn.

Introduced on July 16, 1984, Prayagraj Express has been providing quality journey experience and has achieved many milestones in the last four decades. Started with 17 vacuum braked red coloured coaches it was converted to 24 coach blue coloured air braked stock in 2003 and latest LHB rake with effect from December 16, 2016. Popularity of this train can be gauged from the fact that it runs with maximum possible composition for any passenger train of 24 LHB coaches.

Owing to COVID-19 situation regular passenger services were suspended for over 50 days and started w.e.f 12.05.20 and 01.06.20 in form of AC specials and other special trains including two originating specials between Prayagraj-New Delhi and Kanpur-New Delhi. As of now 126 special trains including two originating trains of NCR are catering to essential journey needs of passengers from different stations over

North Central Railway. In view of COVID-19 pandemic elaborate arrangements for social distancing, hygiene and sanitation have been made for stations handling these special trains and originating and passing trains with scheduled stoppage over NCR.

Under the comprehensive sanitisation protocol for originating special trains pre-infection of rakes on arrival, intensive cleaning of frequent touch area of coaches, extra fresh air circulation in air conditioned coaches, pre-heating of AC coaches for disinfection, provision of awareness stickers inside coaches, provision of sanitiser inside coaches, post maintenance disinfection are being ensured by coaching depots of Prayagraj and Kanpur. To mitigate any chance of infection face shield, gloves, mask/face cover, sanitiser are provided to all railway and contractual staff rendering essential on-board services in these originating specials. All on-board staff are also being screened thermally and for any other COVID-19 symptoms before start and after completion of journey in each direction.

Conventionally Sodium Hypochlorite solution is being used for sanitisation of coaches, however because of corrosive nature prolonged use of

this solution is not desirable for sanitisation of coaches specially on the areas like berths, floor, critical metallic part of coach. General Manager North Central and Northern Railway Rajiv Chaudhry has been continuously stressing on working out a more user friendly and effective alternative of Sodium Hypochlorite solution. Rising to this challenge, rolling stock maintenance engineers of North Central Railway have come up 70 per cent alcohol/ Chloroxylenol (4.5 -5.5 per cent)/ Benzalkonium Chloride/ Hydrogen peroxide based disinfectant for coach sanitisation which are non-corrosive to metal component and suitable for public exposure.

Use of such commercially available and tested alternatives of Sodium Hypochlorite is being started by coaching depots of Prayagraj, Jhansi and Agra divisions for sanitisation of coaches. Based on experience in coach sanitisation use of alternative compounds shall also be proliferated to other application areas like stations, offices etc. to have maximum protection against the virus without any adverse effect on users and materials.

SUICIDE: Upset over getting low marks in the CBSE board intermediate examination, a student of Naini committed suicide by hanging him-

self late on Tuesday night. He was a resident of Shramik Basti. The family members were stunned to see his body hanging from the rod of the tin shed. Family members hurriedly took him to a local doctor, where he was declared dead. Police reached the spot and took the body of the victim into its custody and sent it to mortuary for the postmortem examination. Shyam Sundar Singh, a resident of Shramik Basti of Naini, works in the Jal Sansthan. Of his five siblings, the youngest one Nitin Singh (18) was a student of Maharishi Vidya Mandir Inter College. He did the intermediate examination from the CBSE board. He saw his result on Tuesday morning. Due to lower marks, he had reportedly become very upset. Family members were trying to convince him.

Meanwhile, at around 11 o'clock on Tuesday night, he closed the room and tied his neck with a gamchha from an iron rod in the tin shed and hanged himself to death. The door was closed when the family went to call him. People in the vicinity reached there after hearing the shrieks. Somehow, having broken open the door, he was brought down from the gallows and immediately taken to a hospital. The doctors there declared Nitin dead.

'China, Pak promoting cyber attacks in India'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Former Deputy National Security Advisor SD Pradhan said that many countries are promoting cyber attacks for the theft of strategic information of other countries as three lakh hackers of China and ISI of Pakistan are involved in such actions and during the last five years, India has suffered 1.29 lakhs serious cyber attacks. Delivering a lecture on data security, he underlined that from the point of view of India's security, policies have to be made keeping in mind the challenge of cyber attacks. He was addressing a three-day national webinar on '5G technologies: Fostering holistic approach for digital access' being organised under the joint aegis of Department of Library and Information Sciences, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Students for Holistic Development of Humanity on Tuesday.

Former Union Minister of State for Communications and Railways Manoj Sinha as the chief guest discussed the importance of ICT and various aspects in detail. He mentioned various technical chan-

nels in the implementation of policies related to health, education and economic sector. Director of Indian Institute of Management, Tiruchirappalli, Dr Bhimarai Maitriji presented a lecture on 'transforming the education through e-learning'. He said due to COVID-19 pandemic in the present times when face-to-face learning is difficult, digital transformation opened the latest doors for education, emphasising that the advancement in technology, that is, the arrival of 5G technology, will ensure greater progress in this field. Ex-national president of ABVP and SHoDH advisor Prof Milind Sudhakar Marathe presented comparative analysis of 5G technology with prior technology and connected it to real life application. He also mentioned its impact in the field of economic activities and laid special emphasis on working in three areas - Connect India, Propel India and Secure India (Data Security, Data Safety and Data Savvy). Head of Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore Prof Devika P Madalli said that the data has become the basic need today. The webinar was also

addressed by CSR Prabhu and Dr Shishir Shukla from the Netherlands and discussed applications of 5G technology. Convenor Prof Aditya Tripathi welcomed the speakers, while Dr Rajni Mishra proposed the vote of thanks. It was conducted by Dr Girish Kumar. The webinar was also attended by Dr Alok Pandey, Dr Abhinav Singh, Dr Jitendra Kumar Shukla, Dr Kunwar Singh, Dr Sriram Pandey, Dr Ashwani Singh, Aishwarya Verma and about 1200 participants from the country and abroad.

23 COME FORWARD TO DONATE PLASMA: As many as 23 recovered COVID-19 patients including a couple have so far come forward to donate their plasma voluntarily for the plasma therapy.

It may be said here that after the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) had given its nod for the plasma therapy, the plasma bank had been opened at the blood bank in Sir Sunderlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (BHU). The District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma had made an appeal to the recovered COVID-19 patients to contribute in saving life of the

patients affected with this highly infectious disease through plasma therapy. The appeal of the DM received positive response and as many as 23 recovered COVID-19 have so far come forward to donate their plasma for the plasma therapy. The volunteers of Red Cross Society contacted the COVID-19 patients that recovered from the disease and motivated them to donate their plasma for the plasma therapy so as the life of other COVID-19 patients could be saved. The secretary of society and ACMO Dr Sanjay Rai informed that as many as 12 recovered COVID-19 had given their consent to donate their plasma for the plasma therapy earlier and a total of 12 more such recovered patients came forward a day before to donate their plasma for this noble cause. He said that such recovered patients could contact on his mobile number-9415225999 for the voluntary plasma donation.

Three aphaeresis machines have been installed in the blood bank of Sir Sunderlal Hospital to receive blood of the patients recovered from COVID-19 and thereafter separate plasma from the blood of the donor.

Minister stresses on controlling corona spread, deaths

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

State Medical and Health Minister Jai Pratap Singh has stressed the need to control the spread of coronavirus infection and the COVID-19 death rate.

Addressing the district and health officials at the Circuit House here on Wednesday, Singh said coronavirus positive cases were rising alarmingly in 11 districts of the state as a result of which the COVID-19 death rate was going up sharply and there was need to control both at all cost.

The minister said that as part of the strategy to check coronavirus transmission, there was a need to give momentum to contact tracing and speed up testing. He said it was equally important to spread awareness among people about social distancing and hand washing, which alone could check the transmission of the deadly virus.

Singh said that patients who approach hospitals for surgery should be tested for coronavirus infection TrueNat Beta Test and those testing negative be shifted to Ursula Hospital for surgery without any delay.

He said delay in surgery could be fatal for the patient hence the doctors should prioritise surgery.

The minister directed the health authorities to prepare data after counselling the coronavirus positive patients, especially regarding their present condition. He asked the doctors



The State Health Minister, Jai Pratap Singh addressing a meeting at Circuit House on Wednesday.

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81 more test +ve in Kanpur

KANPUR (PNS): Kanpur Nagar reported 81 new coronavirus cases on Wednesday.

Chief Medical Officer Dr AK Shukla said 81 of new positive cases were detected between Tuesday evening and Wednesday evening taking the total number of coronavirus infections in the city to 2,013. He said with 32 COVID-19 patients being discharged in the past 24 hours, 1,187 infected persons had been cured in the city and at present 728 active cases were undergoing treatment. The CMO said with six more COVID-19 deaths in the city, the death toll stood at 98 on Wednesday evening. He said 1,125 samples were taken, the highest 378 from surveillance areas.

concerned to daily evaluate the record.

He directed the authorities to work to the optimal and ensure that there were no complaints from coronavirus infected persons, specially those in quarantine.

It may be mentioned here that the major complaint has been about senior doctor not making rounds of wards and no fixed time for dinner and

breakfast to the people in the quarantine centres. The patients in quarantine centres have many times complained about the poor quality of food given to them and have appealed to the authorities to allow them to get food from their homes.

Singh said the survey committees and the surveillance teams need to work out full data and hand it over to the

authorities so that they could understand the trend. He said the emphasis should be on more testing so that the death rate could be successfully controlled.

Earlier, the minister made a surprise visit to Ursula Hospital and inspected the Emergency section and took feedback from the help desk.

He then visited the Ursula Holding Area where the patients are kept in waiting till the coronavirus test results come and then referred to the respective wards.

He then visited the Burn Ward which has been converted into a Record Room.

He was accompanied by Chief Medical Superintendent Dr Shalendra Tiwari, District Magistrate BR Tiwari, Chief Medical Officer Dr AK Shukla dozens of doctors and administrative officials.

'Holistic development essential for uplift of education'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma while addressing a webinar on teachers' online training jointly organised by Jaipuria School of Business and Saamarthya Teacher Training Academy and Research (SITAR) on Wednesday said a holistic development was essential for the uplift of education.

He said the current times was to arm the students with skill not just bookish knowledge so that they could contribute to nation's development.

Sharma said united and concerted efforts had to be made for all-round development of the country.

He said concrete education depended on the quality of teachers and SITAR was doing a yeoman's job in this regard and would certainly improve the talent of teachers and ensure the benefit was passed on to the students as well.

He congratulated the organisers for holding the webinar for the concrete development in education of the country.

President of Seth Anandram Jaipuria Group of Education, Shishir Jaipuria, said across the world there were radical changes in the field of education and this was due to the availability of modern technology and also the current situation which had surfaced not only in India but across the world.

He said changes in education were permanent and all institutions would have to adapt and adapt for survival. He said flexibility was highly essential for institutions and teachers as well and the need was to adapt to hybrid technology.

SITAR President Vinod Malhotra said online training to teachers would continue and this would help in completing the syllabus.

Others who spoke included Anil Swarup, Anurag Tripathi, Aradhana Shukla, Ken Joshua and Mark Parkinson.

Guidelines for opening shops

KANPUR (PNS): District Magistrate BR Tiwari said in view of the rampant spread of coronavirus, it had been decided that the all markets would remain closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

He said all prominent markets would open only on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. He said wholesale foodgrains shops would open on Fridays.

Tiwari said shops selling auto parts will open on Fridays and also liquor shops, restaurant, Malls, departmental stores and beauty parlours. He said these shop would open from 6 am to 9 pm.

He said no specific guideline was being issued for religious places but if the religious heads deemed fit they could reopen the places of worship but with strict social distancing, sanitisation and sporting of masks. It may be mentioned that all the religious heads have agreed to keep the places of worship closed till July 31.

He said for four days the shops were allowed to open between 9 am and 9 pm but the time limit had to be adhered at all cost. He said buses and tempos had been allowed but they would ferry only the passengers wearing mask and only in limited number.

UPSIC: Uttar Pradesh Small Industries Corporation (UPSIC) is going to set up Common Facility Centre (CFC) in Dadanagar Industrial Area here. The CFC will provide packaging and marketing facilities to city industrialists under one roof.

It may be recalled that under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme, the government has planned to set up a Common Facility Centre in each district.

Keeping in view the demand of Kanpur industrialists and entrepreneurs for a CFC in the city, the UPSIC has sent a proposal to the state administration in this regard.

The CFC will be set up on 71 square metre plot in Dada Nagar Industrial Area.

Woman killed in attack

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

A woman was killed and three others injured when some unidentified persons attacked them in their house in Mujehra village under the Chilh police station on Tuesday night. According to a report, some persons entered the house of Bhagwati Prasad Srivastava (59) late on Tuesday night and stabbed him and his three family members, Sushila (55), Urmila (50) and Sandeep (35). On hearing their cries their neighbours gathered at the spot, rescued them and informed the police. The injured were taken to the district hospital where Sushila was declared as brought dead, Sandeep was admitted there while Bhagwati and Urmila were referred to trauma centre

in Varanasi. On the application of Sandeep the police registered a case against two unidentified persons and was investigating the case. District police authorities visited the place and sealed the house for investigation.

APPREHENDED: Katra Kotwali police on Tuesday



nabbed Rohit Saroj, a resident of Jopa village under Vindhyachal police station, who had been jailed for gan-

grape. He carried a reward of ₹15,000 on his head and Gangster Act had been invoked against him. SHO Katra Kotwali Ramesh Chandra was tipped off by an informer that the accused was hiding in Hathia Fatak area and was ready to go another place the police swung into action, raided the place and arrested him. Meanwhile Vindhyachal police arrested a criminal and recovered a country-made gun and two cartridges from him on Tuesday. S-I Ravikant Mishra was patrolling the area when he spotted a suspicious-looking person on the VIP road. The police then intercepted him, frisked and recovered the country-made gun and two cartridges from his possession. After registering a case the police sent the accused to jail.

Fans being installed in AC hybrid coaches

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

North Eastern Railway (NER) administration is committed to making rail travel comfortable by continuously improving passenger amenities. The sequence of improvement and expansion of passenger amenities continues as a constant process. In this order high-quality fans are being installed in air-conditioned hybrid coaches, said Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh.

In hybrid AC coaches provision for brushless DC motor-driven fans is being made. Due to their high quality besides better cooling in the entire coach air circulation is very effective as well. Even after the AC plant closed, the temperature in the coaches remains cool for a long time. Due to the brushless motor these fans work for a long time and there is less need for their maintenance. In the

past in case a train halted at a station or on the way for a long time air-conditioned coaches used to heat up due to battery discharge. The passengers had told about it in their feedback from time to time and railways taking a note of it

made arrangement for installing fans for their convenience. With the arrangement for brushless DC motorised fans such problems will end and rail travel in such coaches too will become comfortable. The hybrid air-conditioned coach was used earlier in the Gorakhpur-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus Express which has been replaced by a high-quality LHB coach. Now these hybrid air-conditioned coaches with fans attached will be used in the Izzatnagar division's train 15076/15075 Tanakpur-Shaktinagar-Tanakpur Triveni Express.



Woman meets watery grave

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

A 60-year-old old woman drowned in Khajuri river under Lalganj police station. According to a report, Maina Devi, a resident of Khajuri village, had gone to bathe at the checkdam constructed in the village when her foot suddenly slipped and she went into the area where the water was deep. She cried for help but all her efforts ended in vain. On getting information about the matter her family members reached the spot and got her body fished out from the river.

In another incident a teenage girl drowned when she had gone to bathe in the Ganga in Nadini village under Vindhyachal police station on

Tuesday. As per the reports received here, Sughara Devi (15), daughter of Pappu, a resident of Koirauna village of Bhadohi had come to her maternal uncle's house in Nadini village under the Vindhyachal police station. On Tuesday afternoon she had gone to bathe in the Ganga along with her mother. While bathing there her foot slipped and she was swept away by the strong currents and was drowned. On Wednesday her body was found floating in the river near Nadini village.

VICTIM IDENTIFIED: The man who had fallen into a ditch and died near Indranagar on Rajgarh-Chunar road under Madihan police station on Monday night

had been identified. On Tuesday the police had identified as Ashesh (32), son of late Kallan, a resident of Saibasa village under the Manda police station in Prayagraj.

Meanwhile another report said that a youth died when an insect bit him in Raikal village under Madihan police station on Tuesday. As per reports, Subhash, son of Taulan, felt uneasy on Sunday night and informed his kin that he had been bitten him by some insect. On Monday he was brought to PHC Patraha from where he was referred to district hospital but during treatment his family members got him discharged from there and brought him to their residence where he died on Tuesday.

Man crushed to death by tractor

CORRESPONDENT ■ BANDA

Bhola (65), son of Sukhha was crushed to death by a speeding tractor on the Jhansi-Mirzapur highway on Tuesday. The police sent the body of the victim for the post-mortem examination, arrested the driver and impounded the tractor. SHO City Kotwali Dinesh

Singh said that the deceased, Bhola, was a resident of Achhraund village under Mataundi police station and was going to Banda city in connection with some personal work. SHO said that as soon as he reached Sankat Mochan temple the tractor coming from behind hit him and he was crushed to death. SHO said that

tractor driver, Chunbaad, a resident of Buragarh village had been arrested.

In another incident Saad (15), son of Ahmed, a resident of Barauli village under Ajaygarh police station was drowned while he was bathing in a canal in the village. The police had recovered the body of the deceased.

Students felicitated Illicit liquor seized

CORRESPONDENT ■ JALAIN

The students of Morning Star Senior Secondary Academy had excelled in the CBSE class XII examination results of which were declared on Monday.

Principal Rajneesh Singh said that Navneet Sachan was the topper of the school with 97 per cent marks, Manya Agarwal got 96.6 per cent, Shradha Savita and Suyash Purwar obtained 96.2 per cent, Ayush Donderiya got 95.6 per cent, Priyanshu Shivhare got 95.4 per cent, Utkarsh Dwivedi secured 95 per cent, Anshi Suhane and Rudransh Kaushal got 94.8 per cent, Divyanshi Makhija and Kshiti Dev got 94.4 per cent, Aman Vishwakarma, Prinsi Kushwaha and Shivam Rathore scored 94 per cent marks, Nikhil Sahu and Saloni Kushwaha got 93.6 per cent, Keshav Soni 93.2 per cent, Shailei Gupta and Kashish Deep Yadav 92.8 per cent, Abhay Shivhare 92.6 per cent, Swarnim 91.6 per cent, Bhumika Parihar 91.4 per cent, Devendra Shrivastava 91 per cent, Ayush Chaurasia 90.8 per cent and Isha Singh 90.4 per cent. All the students were felicitated by principal Rajneesh Singh, Jogendra Singh and Ashutosh Sharma were also present.

CORRESPONDENT ■ MAHOBA

One accused was arrested along with 20 litres of illicit liquor from the Gahruli trifurcation in Kharela town on Tuesday. He was later identified as Kalyan alias Kallu Khangar (31), a resident of Baranay village under the Kharela police in Mahoba. A case was registered against him under relevant sections of the law in this connection. The arrest during was made by a team constituted by Kharela police station incharge Raju Singh during a drive launched against illicit liquor/gambling on the direction of Superintendent of Police Manilal Patidar. The police team which made the arrest comprised S-I Bhopendra Pratap Singh and constable Sandeep Kumar.

Meritorious students honoured

CORRESPONDENT ■ JALAIN

Shree Vinayak Academy International Senior Secondary School honoured meritorious students after the CBSE class XII examination results were declared on Monday. The management team comprising Deepak Gupta, Shalendra Gupta and Rajkumar Gupta along with principal Divyendu Tripathi garlanded the students and wished them a bright and prosperous future. Nishu Raghav who had scored 98 per cent marks was the district topper. Principal said that out of the 253 enrolled students 15 had secured more than 95 per cent marks, 35 of them had got more

than 90 per cent and 49 students got between 80 per cent and 90 per cent marks. All the enrolled students had secured good marks. Giving details the principal said that Siddhant Khare had scored 97 per cent marks, Shreyansh Gupta 96.8 pc, Sanjana Patel 96.6 pc, Radhika Gupta 96.4 pc, Pratham Chaturvedi 95.8 pc, Anshika Tripathi 95.6 pc, Animesh Awasthi 95.6 pc, Vedant Gupta 95.4 pc, Agrim Gupta 95 pc and Aditya Chandel 95 pc. Meanwhile vice-principal RL Niranjan, coordinator Navneet Dubey, Aparna Tripathi, Rohit Vinayak, Ashutosh Badal, Surendra Tripathi, Mahendra S-I Bhopendra Pratap Singh and constable Sandeep Kumar were also present.



DIOS Bhagwat Patel felicitating Nishu Raghav

KDA bulldozes illegal shops in Bingawan Maurang Mandi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Development Authority, with the help of district administration and police, bulldozed dozens of illegal shops constructed on the roadside in Bingawan Maurang Mandi on Wednesday.

The protest by the unauthorised occupants fizzled out when they were asked to show any valid documents relating to construction of their shops.

It may be recalled that building material traders, who were shifted from Naubasta to Bingawan Maurang Mandi, had complained the KDA officers about the unauthorised temporary and pucca shops on both the sides of the road there. These shops, they said, besides affecting their trade, would also create problems in smooth entry of trucks bringing building material to the Maurang Mandi.

Taking cognisance of their complaint, Zone-3 enforcement officer Alok Kumar Verma and KK Singh, led by Tehsildars Rajiv Ratan Pratap Singh and Vyas Narain ordered



Unauthorised shops being bulldozed off by KDA in Bingawan Maurang Mandi on Wednesday.

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demolition of 12 unauthorised shops constructed on the roadside. At the same time, they got the entire road to the Maurang Mandi freed of encroachments by various street vendors.

During the drive, police force from Vidhnu and Naubasta police stations was present.

Meanwhile, as part of the

ongoing anti-encroachment drive, the KDA sealed unauthorised constructions being carried out against the approved layout on 1,012 sq. ft. area by Ramesh Chandra Verma in Kapli village on Tuesday.

The enforcement squad led by the Zone 2 executive engineer reached the spot and

sealed the unauthorised construction.

The officials also found that the slab laid on RCC columns on around 600 sq ft area by Manoj in Kapli village was against the provisions of UP Urban Planning & Development Act, 1973. A notice had been served on him but he continued to carry out the construction. The KDA sealed the entire premises.

Similar construction work being carried out by Raja Awasthi on his 3,600 sq ft plot in Kapli village was also sealed along with another unauthorised construction being carried out by Jitendra on 45 x 50 sq ft plot.

It may be recalled that KDA Secretary SP Singh has directed the officials to continue the drive against unauthorised constructions and illegal possession on KDA land.

In the drive held on Tuesday, Executive Engineer RRP Singh, Junior Engineer Rajiv Lochan Tewari, team of enforcement department and local police force were present.

Students once again prove their mettle

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Principal of Sir Padampat Singhania Education Centre, Bhawna Gupta, addressing the achievers of Class X AISSE 2020 examination on Wednesday said the brilliant result in the Board examination was a manifestation of the collective effort of the optimistic and idealistic management, diligent students, committed pedagogues and the supportive parents. She said the online and learning had reaped a rich harvest of outstanding results. She congratulated the ardent and devoted team of educators and students on the outstanding success of the AISSE-2020 result.

She said that the students of the school once again proved their mettle on their own set standards and it would certainly not be any exaggeration to state that the school had carved a niche for itself in the field of imparting quality education. She said 15 students notched 100/100 in various subjects. She added that 21 students secured 95 per cent and above in aggregate and 77 students attained 90 per cent and above. She said the topper was Jyotsna Mishra who scored a whopping aggregate of 98.6 per cent (excluding



The principal of SPSEC, Bhawna Gupta with the AISSE 2020 toppers.

Pioneer

Computer Application) and 99 per cent (including Computer Application).

Gupta said Jyotsna brought laurels to the school by scoring the highest and securing first position in Kanpur City. She said Akshat Agarwal with his marvelous score of 98.2 per cent bagged third position. She said the 100 per cent result was the hallmark of the school's academic triumph of the year.

The Chairperson, Manorama Govind Hariji

Singhania, the Vice Chairman, Abhishek Singhania and the Vice Chairperson, Varsha Singhania, the mentors of the institution had always emboldened the team to rise to their highest potentials. She said the encouragement extended by them in all the endeavours was unparalleled.

WOODBINE GARDE-NIA SCHOOL: The Principal of the Woodbine Gardenia School, Sumita Mukherjee has informed that the school has

secured 100 per cent result in CBSE X the results of which were declared on Wednesday. She said the Mahim Katiyar was the topper of school with 97.83 per cent. She said toppers of the school were Sarthak Niranjana, Vaishnavi, Iti Singh, Abhay Singh, Kartikey Shukla, Janhvi, Nikhil Tripathi, Ritika Saxena and many more.

The Chairman Shahid Rehman congratulated the students on the wonderful performance.

Forces can buy ₹300 cr weapons without nod

Defence Ministry grants emergency acquisition powers for exigencies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Given the tension at the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the Defence Ministry on Wednesday, in a significant move, granted emergency powers to the armed forces to procure weapons without delay. They can now buy systems up to ₹300 crore on an urgent basis without clearances.

The decision was taken at a special meeting of the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. It was convened considering the security environment due to the prevailing situation along the Northern Borders and the need to strengthen the armed forces.

"The DAC delegated the powers for progressing urgent capital acquisition cases up to ₹300 crores to the armed forces to meet their emergent operational requirements. This will shrink the procurement time-



lines and ensure placement of orders within six months and commencement of deliveries within one year," the Ministry said.

Incidentally, similar emergency powers were given after the Balakot air strikes in February 2019. The armed forces have separate financial powers given to Vice Chiefs under the revenue route to procure ammunition and spares.

The latest order comes even as the Army has initiated the process to buy more than 74,000 Sig Sauer assault rifles from the US on fast track basis. These rifles will considerably enhance the firepower capabilities of the infantry soldiers guarding the 4,000 km long LAC facing China and

750-km long Line of Control (LOC) with Pakistan besides combating terrorism and infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir and the north-east.

It has also placed an order for Israeli-made light machine guns (LMG) besides 250 missiles of Spike Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM) from Israel. In addition, the Army is also looking to procure additional Heron unmanned Aerial vehicles (UAV) and man portable air defence systems among others.

The latest DAC decision comes days after Rajnath recently cleared acquisitions worth over ₹39,000 crore including acquisition of 33 frontline fighter jets besides missiles and ammunition.

Covid can take heavy toll on doctors: IMA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

It is not well with the health of the doctors taking care of Covid-19 patients, for as many as 99 doctors have succumbed to the disease while 1,302 others have been infected in the country.

Issuing a red alert, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) on Wednesday called for tempering the working hours for doctors' safety and monitoring on daily basis the provision of PPEs, physical distancing and sanitisers.

Operation theaters, labour rooms, laboratories and casualties require special care. ICUs and Critical Care units deserve close scrutiny for adherence to best practices and protocols, the IMA said which represent the medical professionals in the country.

The IMA pointed out that database of the National Covid Registry shows that in all 99 doctors died. Of them, 73 doctors were above 50 years of age, accounting for 75 per cent of the total deaths among doctors. While 19 doctors were in the age group of 35-50 years, accounting for 19 per cent of the deaths and seven doctors were in the age group of below 35 years, accounting for 6 per cent of the doctor deaths.

In all, 1,401 doctors were exposed to the virus. Among the 1,302 doctors infected, 586 are practicing doctors, 566 resident doctors, and 150 house



surgeons.

"Covid-19 death amongst doctors is of great concern. Medical profession remains the beacon of hope for the nation to lead the exit from the pandemic. IMA strongly advocates the leadership of doctors in adopting all scientific best practices. Wide dissemination of such knowledge is happening through an avalanche of webinars helping doctors to face the challenge," said IMA president Dr Rajan Sharma and honorary secretary general Dr RV Asokan in a joint release on Wednesday.

"If Covid-19 mortality has to be lessened, it has to start with doctors and hospitals. This requires intense review and updating of all administrative set ups in the hospitals including the infection control protocols," the IMA heads said suggesting that gaps in providing for the safety of doctors, nurses and staff be closed.

They stressed on the need for a feedback system from the doctors, employees and public needs to be in place besides adhering to cleaning and sanitisation protocols.

"Administrative gaps are being addressed. Clinics and nursing homes have opened.

Coronavirus may attack patients' nervous system, cause anxiety, depression: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Depressed mood or anxiety exhibited in Covid-19 patients may possibly be an indication that the virus has affected the central nervous system (CNS), according to a study published in the journal The Laryngoscope.

The study said that these two psychological symptoms were most closely associated with a loss of smell and taste rather than the more severe indicators of the novel coronavirus such as shortness of breath, cough or fever.

"The unexpected results that the potentially least worrisome symptoms of Covid-19 may be causing the greatest degree of psychological distress could potentially tell us something about the disease," said study researcher Ahmad Sedaghat from the University of Cincinnati in the US.

For the study, the research team conducted a prospective, cross-sectional telephone questionnaire study which exam-

ined characteristics and symptoms of 114 patients who were diagnosed with Covid-19 over a six-week period at Kantonsspital Aarau in Aarau, Switzerland.

The severity of the loss of smell or taste, nasal obstruction, excessive mucus production, fever, cough and shortness of breath during COVID-19 were assessed.

At the time of enrollment in the study, when participants were experiencing Covid-19, 47.4 per cent of participants reported at least several days of depressed mood per week while 21.1 per cent reported depressed mood nearly every day.

In terms of severity, 44.7 per cent of participants reported expressing mild anxiety while 10.5 per cent reported severe anxiety.

"We think our findings suggest the possibility that psychological distress in the form of depressed mood or anxiety may reflect the penetration of SARS-CoV-2, the

virus that causes COVID-19, into the central nervous system."

Sedaghat said researchers have long thought that the olfactory tract may be the primary way that coronaviruses enter the central nervous system.

Studies using mouse models of that virus have shown that the olfactory tract, or the pathway for communication of odours from the nose to the brain, was a gateway into the central nervous system and infection of the brain.

"These symptoms of psychological distress, such as depressed mood and anxiety are central nervous system symptoms if they are associated only with how diminished is your sense of smell," Sedaghat said.

"This may indicate that the virus is infecting olfactory neurons, decreasing the sense of smell, and then using the olfactory tract to enter the central nervous system," he noted.

Hospitals are functioning to capacity. Protocols and procedures are in place. Doctors need to take charge of the sit-

uation and ensure the safety of themselves, their families, their colleagues and staff," they said calling upon the senior doctors

who are decision makers for the institutions to take more responsibility to take care of their flock.

Modi urges youth to upskill to tap enhanced opportunities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday urged the youth to learn more skills to enhance opportunities in the changed world order due to the pandemic crisis. And he laid out the mantra for them: Skill, re-skill and upskill.

He was addressing a web conference on the occasion of the fifth year of the Skill Development Mission. Referring to the portal launched recently for mapping the skilled employees and employers, Modi said this would help the skilled workers, including the migrant workers who have returned to their homes, to access jobs easily and the employers to contact skilled employees.

"The biggest strength of the millennials is their ability to get skilled. The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has changed the work culture and started the concept of work from home; for this the youth are acquiring new

skills keeping in mind the new work culture and new nature of job," said Modi.

"People ask me business and markets are changing too fast, it's hard to remain relevant. In times of corona, this is even more relevant. My answer to that is to skill, re-skill and upskill. To keep learning new skills is to re-skill and continuing to scale it up is to upskill," he added.

The Prime Minister stated that the Skill India Mission launched five years back has led to creation of a vast infrastructure for skilling, reskilling and upskilling and enhancing opportunities to access employment both locally and globally. It has led to hundreds of PM Kaushal Kendras being set up across the country and an increase in the capacity of the ITI ecosystem. Due to these concerted efforts, more than five crore youth have been skilled in the last five years, said Modi.

He described skills as a gift

which we can give to ourselves and added that skills are timeless, unique, a treasure trove and a means by which one can not only become employable but also help in leading a satisfying life. He said that a natural attraction to acquire new skills provides new energy and encouragement in one's life. Skills are not only a means to a livelihood but also a reason to feel lively and energetic in our daily routine. The Prime Minister also brought out the distinction between 'knowledge' and 'skills' in his address. He illustrated this with an example - that knowing how a cycle runs is 'knowledge' while actually being able to ride a cycle was a 'skill'. It is important for the youth to realise the difference between the two and their different contexts and implications.

With an example from carpentry, he explained the nuances between skilling, reskilling and upskilling.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the incidence of novel coronavirus infection goes up globally, universal testing besides implementing precautions like handwashing and wearing mask, according to a study by John Hopkin's University, may also help in slowing down the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for causing the deadly disease.

"More testing resources are urgently needed to identify the true burden of Covid-19 in long-term care facilities so that we can be more successful in curbing infection and mortality in one of the disease's major hot spots," said study senior author Morgan Katz from the JHU.

Researchers performed universal testing among all 893 men and women, at 11 long-term care centres in Maryland, USA. Initially, only people who showed symptoms were being

tested by the local health departments. It is found that among 893 people, 354 people tested Covid-19 positive, while only 153 were found positive when tested based on their symptoms. Almost 40 per cent of the total people tested positive during universal testing.

Universal screening, therefore, led to arise in Covid-19 cases among residents in the United States' long-term care facilities by 231 per cent. Of those who tested positive, about 281 people were asymptomatic.

"These results underscore the importance of universal testing, as symptom-based approaches may miss a substantial number of cases in long-term care facilities," said study lead author Benjamin Bigelow.

"Unrecognised asymptomatic cases among residents can severely hinder preventive strategies and increase the risk of the virus dangerously spreading," Bigelow added.

Universal testing may reduce virus spread: Study

Recovery rate climbs to 63.24 per cent

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday said that with the number of Covid-19 patients recovering to 5,92,031, the recovery rate has climbed up to 63.24 per cent.

The actual case load of Covid-19 is only 3,19,840 active cases. "They are all under medical supervision. The norms and standards for Home Isolation along with use of oxymeters have helped to keep a check on the asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic patients without putting pressure on the hospital infrastructure," said a statement from the Union Health Ministry here.

The surge in recovered cases is driven by aggressive testing, timely diagnosis

The surge in recovered cases is driven by aggressive testing, timely diagnosis and effective management of the patients either through supervised home isolation or under active medical attention in the hospitals.

The gap between recovered and active cases has been consistently growing. It stands at 2,72,191 today.

The number of recovered cases outweighs the active cases by a factor of 1.85.

Medical infrastructure in India to treat COVID-19 patients includes 1,378 Dedicated Covid Hospitals (DCH), 3,077 Dedicated Covid Health Centres (DCHC), and 10,351 Covid Care Centres (CCC). They have a total of 21,738 ventilators, 46,487 ICU beds, and 1,65,361 Oxygen beds to treat Covid-19 patients.

The Central Government has distributed 230.98 lakhs N95 masks, 123.56 lakhs PPEs and 11,660 ventilators to States/UTs/Central institutions to ensure effective clinical management of Covid-19.

EC Ashok Lavasa gets new assignment at ADB

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa has been appointed as vice president for Private Sector Operations and Public-Private Partnerships at the Asian Development Bank. The ADB statement said he will succeed Diwakar Gupta, whose term will end on August 31. ADB appoints a vice-president for a term of three years, which can be extended by another two years.

Lavasa would be only the second election commissioner to step down from the poll panel before completion of his term after chief election commissioner Nagendra Singh, who was appointed a judge in the International Court of Justice at The Hague in 1973. Lavasa, a retired 1980 batch IAS officer of Haryana cadre, was

appointed as an Election Commissioner in January 2018.

Sources said the government had recommended a few nominees to the ADB, including Lavasa's name. Since election commissioners serve for a term of six years or till they reach the age of 65, Lavasa, who was appointed to the post in January 2018 and was born in October 1957 still has over two years of his term left at the Election Commission and was on track to become the chief election commissioner next April, when the current CEC, Sunil Arora retires. As per the provisions of the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991, an EC or the CEC can tender his or her resignation addressed to the President.

Lavasa had made headlines

during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections when he gave a dissenting note to the Election Commission of India (ECI) giving a clean chit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former BJP president Amit Shah on charges of violating the Model Code of Conduct.

Soon after the elections, three members of the Lavasa family including his wife came under the scanner of the Income Tax Department for alleged non-declaration of income and disproportionate assets.

In September 2019, a notice was sent to Lavasa's wife Novel S Lavasa for alleged discrepancies in income tax filings. In November, the Enforcement Directorate started an investigation against a company in which Lavasa's son Abir was a director, for alleged violation of foreign exchange laws. The Lavasa family members have, however,

denied the allegations.

The ADB on Wednesday, said that Lavasa has a long and distinguished career in the Indian civil service.

"Lavasa led the Indian delegation in the climate change negotiations for the Paris Agreement and was instrumental in finalizing India's nationally determined contributions, which included a major role of the private sector. At both policy and project levels, he made significant contributions to the inclusion of the private sector in many development programs in India for different sectors such as energy, agriculture, finance, and infrastructure. As Joint Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, he worked closely with many ADB projects that had private sector components," the ADB said.

Check black marketing of Covid medicines: Parl Panel

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A parliamentary panel on Wednesday suggested top government officials to check black marketing of coronavirus medicines, consider capping their prices and promote locally made and easily available cheaper medicines, sources said.

Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, Joint Secretary in Health Ministry Lav Agarwal and other officials briefed the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs chaired by Congress leader Anand Sharma on the management of the Covid-19 pandemic and phased unlocking and resumption of economic activities.

During the meeting, the committee members expressed concern about black marketing of drugs such as Remdesivir

and Tocilizumab, the sources said, adding that they also suggested capping the price of these drugs.

Cutting across party lines, the MPs advocated for promoting locally made and easily available medicines, saying the pharmaceutical lobby was trying to suppress the cheaper drugs by pushing for expensive options, the sources said. The members were also briefed by officials on lockdown and its effectiveness in checking the spread of the virus in the country. Sources said Home Secretary Bhalla made a presentation on the overall handling of the situation by the government.

The MPs suggested a national database of migrant labour be created as it will help in improving their social security and they should be given direct cash benefit and rations.



Suggestions were also given for schools to prescribe a fixed time for online classes and ensure counselling of students in these tough times, the sources said.

Appreciating the handling of COVID-19 crisis in the

national capital by the Centre, some members were of the opinion that similar efforts are required in other big metro cities such as Mumbai and Chennai. There was also a suggestion for a new law to deal with infectious disease.

61 dead, over 45L people affected in Assam floods

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 45.40 lakh people and 33.96 lakh animals (big and small) including poultry in 26 of the 33 districts in Assam are affected by the devastating floods. The flood situation continues to deteriorate with the number of deaths going up to 61. Over 95 per cent of the Kaziranga National Park, a world heritage site, has been inundated and 66 wild animals including two rhinos have died and 170 animals were rescued. This is the third rhino death in the park - the largest habitat of one-horned rhinos in the world - this monsoon. Most of the rivers in the state are in spate. According to the India Meteorological

Department, Assam has received 22 percent excess rainfall so far. The state has received 796 mm rainfall as against the normal of 652 mm so far.

Many roads, bridges, culverts and other infrastructure have been damaged in floods and landslides across the state. The worst hit districts in the state are Hojai, Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Biswanath, Sonitpur, Udalguri, Darrang, Baksa, Nalbari, BARPETA, Chirang, Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar, Dhubri, Goalpara, Kamrup, Nagaon, Golaghat, Jorhat, Majuli, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Karbi Anglong.

According to the Assam state disaster management authority (ASDMA), 4,627 vil-



lages are under flood waters and standing crops in 1.28 lakh hectares have been ruined.

More than 44,000 have been moved to state relief camps. As per daily situation report of

ASDMA, over 45.40 lakh people, 33.96 lakh animals in 26 of the 33 districts in Assam are

affected by the devastating floods. The death tolls has reached to 61. The State Government has set up 426 relief camps in which more than 1.18 lakh people have taken shelter so far.

In a widely-shared video tweeted by BJP MLA Mrinal Saikia from Khumtai, is seen wading through waist-deep water to help rescue people and livestock marooned because of floods.

P Sivakumar, Director, Kaziranga National Park said that as many as, 66 animals have died with 23 deaths (two rhinos, five wild boars, a swamp deer, 14 hog deer, and a porcupine) due to drowning and 12 (all hog deer) after they were hit by speeding vehicles

and 170 animals were rescued. A total of 45 animals (all hog deer) have been injured - 44 due to floods and one due to a vehicle hit. Over 80 percent Kaziranga Park has been inundated and 153 of the total 223 forest camps inside are inundated, of which 14 of which have been vacated. Water from the swollen Brahmaputra river and its tributaries has entered the Kaziranga Park, which has forced tigers and other animals to flee to human habitats and highlands for survival.

There were reports of more tigers being sighted when they were trying to escape floodwaters. One of the tigers was spotted in Karbi Anglong district and while another was seen near the National

Highway 37. Each year, the monsoon floods inundate the National Park, located on the edge of the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspots of Golaghat and Nagaon district, forcing a large number of the wild animals to leave the park and head towards the nearby hills in Karbi Anglong district by crossing National Highway-37 that passes near the park's boundary.

According to a paper published by the Assam government in 2015, soil erosion has claimed over 3,800 sq km of farmland since 1954 - around half the size of Sikkim. Approximately 8,000 hectares of land was being eroded every year.

Digital reliance

Raising funds in the midst of a pandemic is no joke. Mukesh Ambani should be applauded but is his nervousness justified?



On the day Reliance Industries held its first virtual annual general meeting, India's largest and most valuable private enterprise announced that search giant Google has invested \$4.5 billion into Reliance's Jio platforms, the conglomerate's digital arm. This raises the amount that India's richest man, Mukesh Ambani, has raised for Reliance Jio to close to \$20 billion, an impressive feat in the best of times. But given that the world is suffering a healthcare meltdown, thanks to the Coronavirus pandemic, this is an extraordinary

feat. In all, Google plans to pump \$10 billion over the next five to seven years in the Indian market to help accelerate the adoption of digital technologies. A flurry of deals made in recent times has given the much-needed financial backing to Ambani's ambition to morph Reliance from an energy company to an e-commerce giant. Almost all the funds have been raised by American technology firms and financial institutions. Both Google and Facebook are part of the firm, much like its parent Reliance Industries. Jio is trying to become completely vertically integrated. It is doing it all — from creating 5G infrastructure at home to manufacturing smartphones for users, the creation of software services like Jio Meet as well as expanding Reliance's huge media play by owning a host of entertainment and news channels. The biggest single positive here is that Mukesh Ambani, like his father Dhirubhai Ambani before him, is a believer in India and the capabilities of this nation. He plans to build capacity within the country rather than import it. This was something made vitally important to every single Indian after the fire-breathing Chinese Dragon singed us last month. We can argue *ad nauseam* about how China might have lost the Indian market for a couple of generations but nothing speaks like action. While he might not look like it, Mukesh Ambani is a man of action. And for all this, he must be applauded.

However, and there's always a however, the way Reliance has garnered its funds and the fact that it is on the verge of becoming a monopolistic venture in telecommunications and technology services with only a couple of rivals — one of which is almost bankrupt — it does raise some concern. It remains to be seen how Ambani will deploy the funds raised in the Indian market. Will he buy out rivals in the e-commerce and groceries space? Or will every Indian have to move from one Reliance store to the next, albeit in the guise of other brands, thanks to Reliance retail owning the rights of several multinational brands in India? Or is there another way of looking at it? Should India nurture and raise national champions like Reliance Industries? The old guard of Indian companies could not scale enough or be scaled in different areas. As for Reliance, the pivot towards Jio and telecom has been a long time coming. The family feud meant that Mukesh Ambani had to wait for a decade and for his brother to mess up to get back into this space. He is not wasting any time now and his ambitions have scaled up from the time he launched Reliance Infocomm. With a clear roadmap for the future, his execution capabilities and striking a string of deals, Mukesh Ambani has proved just how an extremely competitive industry like telecom can yield striking returns. He is also securing the future for the Ambani clan for another half a century and possibly doing more to secure India's digital future away from the Chinese than any other individual.

Trouble in Chabahar

Iran drops India from Chabahar port rail project as China seals a new economic and security deal worth \$400 billion



India's traditional relationship with Iran is finally being stretched by our strategic closeness to the US and is pushing that nation directly into the arms of China. And this might cost us a project that we had heavily invested in, the Chabahar port. For now, the Iranian Government has decided to drop India as a partner for the construction of a rail line from Chabahar port to Zahedan, along the border with Afghanistan, and go on its own. It will use its own engineers and not consult Indian expertise either. This, it claims, is because of India's

tardy initiative and not moving any funds although an agreement was signed four years ago. India has been stalling under the shadow of US sanctions, which seek to penalise countries doing business with Iran. According to reports, Iran, which wants to complete the line by March 2022, will use \$400 million from the Iranian National Development Fund. And despite a pandemic-hit economy, it is going in for massive spends simply because China has signed a 25-year economic and security partnership with it worth \$400 billion. This entails Chinese entry in banking, telecommunications, ports, railways and other infrastructure projects. It fulfils China's neo-imperialist desires, colonising another economy in the process, and keeps its domestic industries running with cheaper Iranian oil for the next 25 years. India, by comparison, has stopped importing Iranian crude oil under US pressure. The agreement also proposes military cooperation, which could make China a key player in regional geopolitics and counter the US.

India has been completely caught off guard by this deal even as it tried various rounds of negotiations with the US to spare it from sanctions for conducting certain businesses with Iran. Though India got exemption for the Chabahar port and the rail link, equipment suppliers feared a hitback and slowed down progress. Besides, Iran was upset by India's decision to completely stop energy imports, quite a big basket of its earnings. Now China has assured it of its oil market, picking up supplies for 25 long years, taking away Iran's worries. Bilateral ties with Iran nosedived further with the naked display of majoritarian politics during the Delhi riots in February with its Foreign Minister Javad Zarif strongly condemning them. Now there is talk of a greater Chinese stake, the deal merely an access card to Chabahar's duty free zone, an oil refinery and the port itself. In fact, though Iran has denied it, there is speculation that it could lease out the entire port to its new benefactor. That would be a big blow to India, which had hoped to build an alternate trade route from Chabahar to Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan. But now with the Chinese reclaiming the vacuum, it will strengthen the China-Pakistan axis around the coast. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Gwadar port will strengthen that conduit. Iran says it has not abandoned India, but clearly it has decided to go with the biggest Asian power and the US' arch enemy on a need-based formula. We may think that we forced China's hand by retaliating in Galwan but all it did was ensure strategic calm when world opinion would have isolated it further had it escalated its aggression. As the only country whose growth projections are not negative post-pandemic, it can afford to buy out vulnerable nations. It has already invested in banks in Brazil. India may be its economic bulwark but China is quickly encircling it by winning over our old allies and neighbours. It is no less beligerent, just that it has now launched an economic warfare with India.

Save the common spirit

The Gurkhas cannot and should not be sacrificed at the altar of partisan politics or the smallness of spirit that besets present times because of Indo-Nepalese differences



BHOPINDER SINGH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had invoked a "special relationship", based on shared culture, language and religion, with Nepal during his first official visit to Kathmandu in 2014. He had said, "This is the land of Sita and Janak; Nepal-India relations are as old as the Himalayas and the Ganga." Given his proclivity for abbreviations, Modi had coined HIT (Highways, I-Ways and Transways) as the transformational formula to strengthen age-old ties between the two nations. Much water has flown down the rivers Kosi, Gandaki and Karnali (the three big rivers that flow from Nepal to India) and Nepal has instead vested its trust in the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to usher in the much-needed transformation.

Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's speech in New Delhi in 2018 was less flowery and presciently loaded. Repeatedly, he stressed on a "balanced outlook" in external relations, an unmistakable euphemism to "correct" the pro-India tilt. Nepal had just emerged from the perceived wounds of India's braggadocio during the 2015 earthquake relief operations and the supposed interferences in the framing of a new Constitution. Agitation over this issue had led to a crippling "blockade." In an age of social media, the hurt felt by a proud nation, which has never been ruled by outsiders, was palpable. Murmurs of India's "big brotherly" attitude being unacceptable gained credence in the streets of Nepal.

Oli had alluded to that overarching trust deficit and sinking sentiment. "Good neighbourliness demands harmonious co-existence forever. And trust is the key cementing factor. It derives its strength from the observance of such fundamental principles as equality, justice, mutual respect and benefit as well as non-interference," said Oli. He added that for impact, "it is natural to expect similar assurance from India." Clearly, the healing process never kicked off and today, ties between India and Nepal have reached an unprecedented low due to border violence, cartographical disputes and trust eroding measures like Nepal's decision to ban the Indian media.

Undoubtedly, there are layered complexities of missteps that were taken by both sides in equal measure. Both nations were driven by their own domestic political considerations, short-termism and geo-political churns that widened the faultlines, which always existed but never flared up to this extent. The crests and troughs of bilateral relations were always handled politically, without any unnecessary attribution to the societal-ethnicity of the people involved. Today, that venerated "Gurkha" stands to be dangerously demonised as collateral damage. The delinking of "politics" and "people" has not been the strength of the current dispensation. Deliberate contextualisation and binarisation of circumstances



may still yield electoral gratification but this will come at the cost of alienating almost all neighbouring countries, well beyond Pakistan and China.

The intermingling and intermeshing of the Indo-Nepalese people are not just historical, cultural, spiritual, religious or even transactional; it is unparalleled in terms of the faith, trust and reverence that is afforded on the "Gurkha" in the Indian consciousness. Nearly 40 dedicated Gurkha Regiment battalions with approximately 40,000 Indian and Nepali Gurkha soldiers defend India's sovereignty. Another one lakh veterans reside in Nepal and the annals of Indian Army's valour testify to the raw gallantry of the likes of Lt Col Dhan Singh Thapa, Param Vir Chakra (PVC), among others, who ironically fought the Chinese in the same area around the Pangong Lake.

His citation read, "Major Thapa got out of his trench and killed several enemies in hand-to-hand fighting before he was finally overpowered by Chinese soldiers." The proud Gurkha had stared death in the eye and returned. Indeed, he was born in Dharamshala as many other Gurkhas in the region of Darjeeling Hills or Dehradun but he was as synonymously a Gurkha and an Indian as Mahavir Chakra (MVC) awardees like Tika Bahadur

“THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP HAS TO MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT NO UNTOWARD OR OVER-EXCITABLE TAIN IS IMPLIED ON THE LOYALTY, FIDELITY AND CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE OF NEPAL. GOVERNMENTAL OR IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES HAVE TO BE HANDLED SEPARATELY”

Thapa, Pati Ram Gurung or a Prem Bahadur Gurung.

This unparalleled tradition and saga of sacrifice for India is reciprocated in a similar spirit by all those who chose to identify themselves as Gurkhas. In a deeply moving sight, a 11-year-old girl shouted the Gurkha war-cry on her father's cremation "Tiger 9 GR Ko! Ho Ki Hoina?" (Col MN Rai, the Tiger of 9 Gurkha Regiment, he was or wasn't he?) and it was responded by a resounding "Ho Ho Ho" (he was, he was, he was). The daughter and the nation mourned his loss and yet another name got etched to the list of the illustrious Gurkha glories. The inexplicable bond of the Indo-Nepalese reality underwrote that sacred spirit.

The "Gurkha" cannot and should not be sacrificed at the altar of partisan politics or the smallness of spirit that besets the times that be. Sadly, the oversimplistic narrative of the day can easily affix the slant of "anti-national" on anyone owing to their ethnicities or religion as the basest instincts are easily aroused, tolerated and stoked by the powers-that-be.

Equally, the Nepalese dispensation cannot forget history and independent India's contributions or the essential implications that are imminent in choosing a China over India as its "bargaining tool." The people-to-people connect with

some other neighbouring countries has already been ruptured and irreversibly damaged with the context of politico-religiosity. This has done an extreme disservice to some of our own, who axiomatically got associated as "anti-nationals" owing to their co-religiosity. Ironically, such an ethnic pejoration onto the identity of the "Gurkha" would be a unique failure. This despite the supposed commonalities of the two realms.

Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw identified himself as a proud Gurkha as does the current Chief of Defence Staff or the Chief of Indian Army Staff prior to him. In a reciprocal dignity, the chiefs of both armies also bestow Honorary "Generalship" of their Armies, mutually. The national leadership has to make a concerted effort to ensure that no untoward or over-excitement is implied on the loyalty, fidelity and character of the people of Nepal. Governmental or ideological differences have to be handled separately without galvanising societal emotions as it did with other neighbouring countries. India must always protect its sovereign interests firmly. It must also recognise the dignity of the "other", especially one who has bled for India unflinchingly.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands)

SOUNDBITE

India's global strategy is in tatters. We are losing power and respect everywhere and the Government of India has no idea what to do.



Congress leader —Rahul Gandhi

Covid is not going away anytime soon, so it's imperative that we adjust our expectations of what's considered 'normal' to include these basic but crucial precautions.



Actor —Anil Kapoor

I'm not interested right now in talking to China. We made a great trade deal. But as soon as the deal was done, the ink wasn't even dry and they hit us with the plague.



US President —Donald Trump

My favourite batting partner is Mahi bhai (MS Dhoni) but it's rare that I get a chance to bat with him. If he's (Dhoni) out there batting with you, things remain sorted.



Cricketer —Rishabh Pant

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rediscover agri economy

Sir — It should not have taken a pandemic for this nation to rediscover that we are essentially an agrarian economy. Decades of *ad hoc* and knee-jerk policies on agro production, storage capacity, distribution and exports were translating into excess grain reserves since 1995. The pity of it all, grains were wasted in shoddy warehouse facilities. Further, an unimaginative distribution and pricing set-up denied their reach to the deserving poor.

On April 1, 2020, stocks in the central pool stood at 73.85 MT, the highest ever, against a reserve requirement of just 21.04 MT. This should help feed the common man for months now. Pulled up by COVID-19, we are sure to sustain a new-found respect for this foundational sector of our economy. Reserve levels will be scaled up. More modern and efficient storage capacities and attendant infrastructure and employment-centric initiatives will be on the cards. Significantly, procurement during this harvest season was prompt and harvesting was imaginatively done by States despite the non-availability of labour. Bureaucracy

Pilot's revolt should pave way for Congress 2.0

This refers to the editorial, "Pilot sacked" (July 15). The revolt of Sachin Pilot, who was dismissed from every office he held in Rajasthan, is a golden opportunity for the rejuvenation of a secular front against the ruling BJP. This should include immediate holding of long overdue internal elections for a new Congress president outside the Gandhi fold, followed by a radical overhaul of the party. Alternatively, he could float a regional party, which along with other breakaway factions of the Congress, namely, the Trinamool Congress, the Nationalist Congress Party and YRS Congress could merge into a Congress 2.0. This grouping, covering a third of the country's electorate, would embolden more capable Congressmen to join the ranks and render the Gandhi-led Congress 1.0 version obsolete.

Thankfully, Pilot has chosen not to follow the footsteps of Jyotiraditya Scindia to join the BJP. Had this been the case, it would have earned Congress leader Rahul Gandhi more sympathy and would have come to boost his image as a champion of the secular ideology



that he certainly does not deserve. Moreover, even from Pilot's personal standpoint, the grass is not greener on the other side. Rajasthan is a BJP bastion and he must have realised that there are a host of well-entrenched leaders already ahead of him in the queue.

SB Bhalerao Mumbai

must ensure that this singular efficiency in decision-making and in owning up to a problem becomes the new norm to give a fillip to rural stakeholders.

Once the thrust reverts to the agro sector, the economy must shift to the rural epicentre, buttressed by auxiliary industries such as food processing. Post the pandemic, reverse migration of a

huge number of non-resident Indians is imminent and an expanded rural economy alone can accommodate the surge. The pandemic has given us a sharp cue for the dispersal of wealth and consumption into rural heartlands as an enduring policy of inclusive development.

R Narayanan Navi Mumbai

Absurd claim

Sir — Nepal Prime Minister KP Oli has thrown yet another bouncer by claiming that "real Aayodhya" is in Nepal and not in India. He also claimed that India had created a "fake Aayodhya."

Of late, Oli has been in the news for all the wrong reasons.

He issued a "new" map of Nepal, claiming Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiadhura as its territory. Oli's communist Government in Nepal is also playing into the hands of China, which has reportedly taken away 33 hectares of land from it. But all of this has not bothered Oli, who is also facing growing discontent back home for "junking India" and "joining China." One just hopes that temporary developments and flash-points do not hamper the unique relations both nations share.

KV Seetharamaiah Hassan

Mutual benefit

Sir — The Google initiative to pump ₹75,000 crore for digital India initiative will benefit India in the long-term. For Google, too, this is an effort to tap the huge opportunity in a country whose mass market has only just begun to go online. This step will also fill the void created by the banning of Chinese applications.

Sudhir Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Balance ecology and economy

The rapid clearances of projects in order to promote industries are proving to be a death knell for the environment



KOTA SRIRAJ

The Coronavirus pandemic has not only killed lakhs of people worldwide, it has sickened the global economy, too, as nations have been forced to shut down their industries and businesses in order to stem the spread of the contagion. India, with its 9,39,192 Coronavirus cases and 24,327 casualties is no exception to this need to hunker down. And the country, which had begun to open up in a phased manner after an extended, hard lockdown, is being forced to impose brief shutdowns again. Naturally, this COVID-19 chokehold over the economy has put developmental projects, industry, trade and business in a coma and impacted thousands of lives and livelihoods.

The worst affected of the lot have been the migrant workers of the nation, who are rightly considered the silent contributors to development. The labour community, who at the best of times is neither appreciated enough nor remunerated fairly, continued to suffer even more badly during the COVID-19 lockdown. This was tragically epitomised by the horrid accident in Aurangabad where unemployed, exhausted and broke labourers walking back home were mowed down by a train after they went off to sleep on the tracks. The incident had sparked off a nationwide outrage and sense of grief for the sufferings of the workers in the informal economy.

Now, with the country slowly opening up, despite the Coronavirus cases skyrocketing, the very same labourers are being coaxed to come back from their villages and get the wheels of the economy moving again. That brings us to the fact that no matter what happens, even during a pandemic, an economy cannot be stopped in its tracks, it has to keep ticking. The economy is given precedence over everything, and this includes the environment, which is the proverbial poor cousin.

But in this bid to restart the economy, India is probably committing the same mistake all over again by making trade, business and industry a priority and putting the environment and ecological concerns on the back-burner. Unfortunately, this lopsided agenda of promoting economic development at the cost of the environment has heightened the risk of more pandemics such as the COVID-19 occurring frequently in future. In a stark but positive contrast, this aspect has been understood by the western world whose nations are quickly scrambling to cover their ecological deficiencies and environmental weak spots by ensuring that their economic development projects have a robust environmental compassion built in.

So, given these circumstances, it is natural to expect the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to get into an overdrive and release a slew of measures that would herald the safeguarding of the environment in the current, COVID-19-stressed conditions. But this is not the case. Curiously, the Minister in charge for MoEFCC also happens to be in charge of the portfolio for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises. In any other environmentally-conscious nation, this would have been perceived as a conflict of interest. But not in India. This anomaly notwithstanding, the MoEFCC recently went on a project clearance spree in 11 States.

These rapid clearances of projects in order to promote industries are proving to be a death knell for the environment. The MoEFCC, for instance, cleared a railway line in Telangana that cuts through 168 hectares of a prime forest, which also happens to be a tiger reserve. In this case, the Government could have considered an elevated track to spare the trees but was obviously not done. The Etalin Hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh's Dibang Valley is yet another example of sheer indifference towards the environment. The project entails the diversion of 1,150 hectares of forest land that will cause the felling of a whopping 2,70,000 trees.

This kind of ruin of nature cannot be justified at all, no matter what the gains are. Numerous representations from environmental activists and scientists have been able to stall the final approval of the project, but it is surprising how the project was conceived in the first place, given the scale of environmental destruction. In the midst of baffling examples such as these is yet another instance of environmental neglect. This is the proposed hydel project in Uttarakhand that involves compromising 768 acres of forest land.

The Government must realise that the environment cannot be pawned off for industrial gains. Repeated announcements of projects that threaten the environment will keep inviting representations from the environmental and scientific community to roll back these projects. Parallely, the nation will slowly but surely understand the apathy of the Government towards the environment and this will be the end of the trust people have in the Government. This kind of knee-jerk conception and approval of projects with utter disregard for the environment is detrimental to national interests and cannot be allowed to proliferate.

As a first step to stem this, the Government must ensure that the environment and heavy industries ministries are not represented by the same person. This will ensure that there is no conflict of interest and decisions taken in one Ministry will not result in collateral damage for the other. The current trying times are a great opportunity for India to reaffirm its commitment towards the environment and this must be shown through actions rather than words. This can be done only by effectively balancing the ecology with the economy.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

TILL NOW WE HAVE REMAINED UNDER THE BELIEF THAT RAM, THE MAN SITA MARRIED, WAS AN INDIAN... HE WAS NOT, HE WAS A NEPALI.
 —NEPAL PRIME MINISTER
 KP SHARMA OLI



EVEN IN INDIA LEFT PARTIES PLAYED WITH PEOPLE'S FAITH. THE COMMUNISTS IN NEPAL WILL BE REJECTED BY THE MASSES LIKE THEY HAVE BEEN HERE.
 —BJP NATIONAL SPOKESPERSON
 BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI

Beware of an injured Xi

If Jinping is able to overcome the domestic challenges he faces now, he would emerge a dictator. India, therefore, has to be prepared for a probability of re-occurrence of aggression on its borders



ANIL GUPTA

President Xi Jinping's ambition to make China an undisputed global superpower has changed the entire geo-political dynamics. The phenomenal rise of Xi has made China more aggressive. He has emerged as the most powerful leader of China after Mao Zedong. Born in a politically-influential family in 1953, he witnessed the Mao era closely and saw the ruthless face of Zedong when his father was purged and jailed during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution. Though his father was rehabilitated after the death of Mao, these events left a long-lasting impression on his mind which got further hardened during Xi's initial struggle within the Communist Party which he joined in 1974. He spent decades working his way up the party and Government ranks but his consolidation of power since becoming General Secretary, the head of the party, in 2012 has been unprecedented. In 2013, he also became the President of the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC), thus assuming charge of all the three most-coveted posts in the party and Government. He represents the new generation of Chinese because he is the first General Secretary born after the establishment of the PRC. Xi today is the President of PRC without term limits. Incidentally, he now has 12 posts that give him control and oversight over most areas of Government, the economy and military. Xi, therefore, is the most authoritarian world leader today, who is ruthless with any form of opposition to him at home and visualises himself as a potential supreme leader of the world.

It goes to the credit of Xi that during his tenure China has grown economically and militarily. China surpassed Japan to become the second-largest economy in the world and global manufacturing hub. He effected a large-scale purge in the military brass to end corruption in the People's Liberation Army (PLA). This was followed by structural reforms to make PLA a lean and modern fighting force with emphasis on mastering the three domains of cyber world, space and information.

Xi proved to be a leader who can rise to challenges. But his bitter experience during the Cultural Revolution has made him an authoritarian man who does not trust anyone. He abhors challenge to his authority or to his "Chinese Dream" of national rejuvenation. Thus, he has crushed dissent in Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet. In pursuance of his Middle Kingdom ambition, he has refused to accept international laws and treaties and persisted with expansionist designs in the South China Sea (SCS), East China Sea (ECS) while continuing with salami-slicing in the neighbourhood to include India, Nepal and Bhutan. His ambition to be a global leader has led to a no holds barred conflict with the sole superpower, the US. Xi is convinced that the main rival of China is the US and all others are mere pushovers and that has determined his behaviour and actions as far as the disputes in the SCS, the Sino-India border and disputes with South Korea, Japan and Taiwan are concerned.

All was going well for Xi till the outbreak of the Coronavirus. The ongoing trade war with the US was also tilted in his favour till the pandemic spread across the world with its roots in China. All of a sudden Xi was being attacked globally as well as domestically. The strong Chinese economy began to show signs of crumbling. The demand for closing factories in China and relocating them grew louder by the day. India was being considered a probable alternative. The US seized the opportunity and led the global offensive against China, accusing Xi of deliberately delaying the information regarding the outbreak. The global economy was in the doldrums with nations resorting to prolonged lockdowns and most countries blaming China for the contagion.

Xi's dream of the 21st century belonging to China began to crumble gradually. His plan of end-

ECONOMIC STRANGULATION OF CHINA SHOULD CONTINUE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ENCOURAGING FRIENDLY NATIONS TO DO THE SAME. ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT, APART FROM CONSOLIDATING CHINESE ISOLATION DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, INDIA SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER DENOUNCING BEIJING'S ONE NATION POLICY AND LEVERAGE NUMEROUS FAULT LINES IN CHINA BY EXPOSING ITS HIGH-HANDEDNESS IN GRABBING THE TERRITORIES IN ITS PERIPHERY. FREE TIBET MOVEMENT SHOULD BE GIVEN AN IMPETUS IN INDIA. THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS IN HONG KONG AND TAIWAN NEED STRONGER INDIAN SUPPORT



ing poverty in China by 2020 suffered the biggest setback and it emerged as his toughest year. Xi's unchallenged status at home came under threat and in order to divert attention he began to pursue an aggressive policy to portray Chinese supremacy. He let loose his "wolf warrior" diplomats to counter the global diplomatic and political onslaught. Simultaneously, he began to flex muscles in the SCS and ECS. He started the process of gaining complete control over Hong Kong, denouncing the "One Nation Two Systems" promise. The regime change in Taiwan, too, annoyed Xi. He began to behave like a medieval king eager to extend frontiers and win glory.

Challenging India in the trans-Himalayan icy battlefield was meant to teach New Delhi a lesson for challenging the Chinese ownership of Aksai Chin. China was convinced that New Delhi would not challenge its occupation of Aksai Chin till the Indian Home Minister roared in the Parliament that his reference to Ladakh included Gilgit-Baltistan and Aksai Chin. It rattled Beijing more than Pakistan because it could afford to lose neither of the two.

Despite China's denial, the world community noted with concern the sinking of Vietnamese fishing boats in the SCS, the unilateral decision to name new Chinese districts in the area, sanctions against Australia, browbeating of Japan in the ECS, unilateral actions in Hong Kong, Ladakh incursions, manipulation of Nepal, claims on the Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary in Eastern Bhutan and on the Siberian town of Vladivostok.

Buoied by the passive response of other nations, Xi ventured to provoke India at Galwan Heights expecting meek submission. But the brawl at those icy heights on the night of June 15 not only took the Chinese by surprise but also put the fear of God in its soldiers about the fighting prowess of Indian soldiers. The Chinese plan to teach India a lesson not only backfired but the Galwan face-off proved to be a turning point, which may well turn out to be a reason for renewed vengeance. The global community acknowledged India standing up to the bully and paying him back in the same coin. India followed it up with an econom-

ic offensive as well. The changed scenario had a ripple effect. China's victims realised that the dragon could be held off.

ASEAN nations for the first time spoke in unison, asking China to follow international laws on maritime boundaries. Japan reacted offensively by deploying near the disputed islands, Bhutan vehemently asserted its claim over Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary and refused to be cowed down, Russia agreed to fast track arms supplies to India, the US moved three aircraft carriers in the SCS, Australia refused to take Chinese students and broke trade ties with it.

The Chinese economy, too, suffered a big blow, putting greater pressure on Xi. Following the Indian ban of 59 Chinese apps, cancellation of contracts signed with Chinese companies in the telecom, construction and MSME sectors and the growing demand for boycott of Chinese goods, other nations, too, began to ban Chinese technology firms. Chinese giant Huawei has been the biggest sufferer. Similarly, the dream project of Xi, the Belt Road Initiative (BRI), has come under severe strain with many countries either abandoning various projects or demanding a review of their loan agreements.

The list of Xi's woes is growing by the day. China had become an economic superpower by the time Xi took power but his critics now blame him for leading the country to ruin due to his aggressive, expansionist policies and ambition.

After aggressive posturing following the Galwan face-off, China has now agreed to a negotiated settlement on the border so that he doesn't lose the war against the international community as well. India and China agreed that differences should not become disputes after a telephonic discussion between the Indian National Security Advisor and the Chinese Foreign Minister.

Though China has agreed to a phased disengagement and de-escalation, there is a big trust deficit between the two armies now. The overwhelming opinion in India is that disengagement is not enough in order to end tensions on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). They advocate no de-escalation until full return of status quo. While Xi would fight his own battle for survival, we have to ensure that it is not yet another

Chinese trap.

History tells us that China is untrustworthy. Be it 1962, Sumdromg Chu, Depsang or Doklam. This time, too, we are not yet sure if the Chinese move is a tactical retreat in order to achieve its bigger strategic aim. Hence, India should not be lulled into complacency. History tells us that our political leadership has failed to understand the insurance provided to a nation's growth economically and diplomatically by strong security forces. Hence, payment of annual premium to ensure that the insurance does not lapse is mandatory. The nation has to be prepared to ward off physical threats to its borders and also those in the cyber world, space and the information highways.

India must not let its guard down on the borders along the Line of Control (LoC) and the LAC. At the same time all actions taken to supplement the armoury of the three services should not be halted but put on fast track to ensure that if the dragon dares to threaten us again, it is taught a lesson forever. If needed, we should be prepared to stay put even during the harsh winters, for which logistics and catering preparations have to begin forthwith.

Economic strangulation of China should continue while at the same time encouraging friendly nations to do the same. On the diplomatic front, apart from consolidating Chinese isolation due to the pandemic, India should also consider denouncing Beijing's One Nation Policy and leverage numerous fault lines in China by exposing its high-handedness in grabbing the territories in its periphery. Free Tibet movement should be given an impetus in India. The democratic movements in Hong Kong and Taiwan need stronger Indian support.

If Xi is able to overcome the domestic challenges he faces now, he would emerge a dictator. India, therefore, has to be prepared for a probability of reoccurrence of Chinese aggression on its borders. We have to emerge as China's equal. Beijing will try its level best to lull us into complacency, it would be suicidal if we fall into China's trap again.

(The author is a Jammu-based veteran, political commentator and security analyst)

Minimally invasive surgery best in Corona era

Such procedures improve short-term outcomes in heart patients and are associated with a faster recovery in comparison with the traditional approach



KM CHERIA

The nation has been in lockdown mode for more than four months now and has only just started opening up. Hospitals, research and development (R&D) institutions are trying their best to bring out a vaccine for the Coronavirus. In fact, human trials for the vaccine have begun in India. We have seen many reports that have said that there has been a decline in the number of people opting for surgeries, especially low

and medium-risk patients.

A lot of patients, who had surgeries scheduled, have postponed them and are avoiding hospital visits for routine checkups as they fear being exposed to the Coronavirus. There have been reports of people losing their lives due to a heart attack or stroke. Even though they had prior symptoms of heart disease, they did not venture out due to the fear of COVID-19.

It is extremely important for cardiac patients and people with heart conditions to take care of their health in such testing times, especially as there are a lot of restrictions on access to various facilities.

Exercising, maintaining a proper diet and taking the prescribed cardiac medication or anti-diabetes medicine are all very important for

patients, since these are the co-morbid conditions which make the COVID-19 infection serious as the cardiac/diabetes patients are already immuno-compromised. With that said, it is also impossible for high-risk patients with severe heart conditions to not opt for surgeries. When it is absolutely essential depending on the conditions, patients might have to undergo surgery.

The need to safeguard themselves and their patients has prompted most surgeons to develop their own protocols to tide over the pandemic situation. The decision for surgical care should be based on the doctor's own surgical and clinical judgment and assessment of resource availability. Patients should get the surgical care based on practice of evidence-based medicine. A non-operative line of

management is advised when it is clinically appropriate for patients, specially looking at risk and benefits of surgery.

Heart surgeries are arduous and long procedures that take a toll on patients physically and mentally. Open-heart surgeries are back-breaking expensive and procedures last for days. Since the surgical team has to be careful not to get infection, all the precautionary measures that are being practised are also the most rigorous for the surgical team. Apart from that, in the COVID-19 era, there is a dire need for minimum contact which is only possible through minimally-invasive surgical techniques.

Minimally invasive surgery improves short-term outcomes in patients and it is associated with a faster recovery in comparison with the traditional

approach. If a patient needs valve replacement, then a trans catheter aortic valve replacement is an alternative, but the long-lasting results of these valves are still questionable. There is a certain amount of industry drive to make these procedures popular without really knowing the long-term results. I am sure that there are cardiologists who will object to this contention. But this remark is only because of the fact that I am one of the few surgeons in this country who has been replacing valves (single, double or triple since 1975) and hence I have experienced the long-term results of conventional valve replacement.

Currently these valves are highly expensive in India, going up to ₹22.5 lakh, owing to which this technology is not available for common Indians. Even the cost of convention-

al valve replacement, that is between ₹2.5 to ₹3 lakh, is not affordable for the common man. The solution for this dilemma is indigenisation. Some hospitals in the country have been in the forefront of bringing about indigenisation in Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) along with the National Aeronautical Laboratory and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, using Nitinol stents. The valve material used is bovine jugular veins which is after all a waste. This could be a classic example of "waste to wealth, but unfortunately, there has been no support from any Central Government agencies such as the Department of Biotechnology, the Department of Science and Technology or any regulatory bodies.

Children with congenital heart

disease or structural heart disease undergo multiple heart surgeries in their lifetime. Of course, closing a hole in the heart through the Transcatheter route is available. Most of these patients who have these "corrections" can go home within 24 hours.

This reduces their risk of catching infection, which is vital in the COVID-19 era. This also means more beds will be available for elective patients who need such therapy, which does not need long-term hospitalisation. It is not the technology alone but the logistics, the patient's comfort and affordability of the procedure that are also important.

(The writer is a Padma Sri awardee and cardiothoracic surgeon credited with India's first bypass. He is Chairman and CEO of Frontier Lifeline Hospital)

623 more test +ve in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

For the second day in succession, more than 600 persons in Kerala were diagnosed with Covid-19. "On Wednesday 623 persons were tested positive for Covid-19. Out of this, 432 persons infected the coronavirus through social contacts. Expatriates accounted for 96 cases while 76 were those from other parts of the country," said Pinarayi Vijayan, chief minister of Kerala in his daily press briefing.

Vijayan disclosed that 602 persons afflicted with Covid-19 were hospitalised on Wednesday. "As on Wednesday, there are 4,880 persons undergoing treatment in various hospitals. The State has till now diagnosed 9,513 persons with

Covid," said the Chief Minister.

As the situation has turned grave and dangerous in Kerala, the Government has changed the catchword against coronavirus from the present "Break The Chain" to "Caution as Precious as Life", according to Vijayan.

The CM said 1.86 lakh persons were under observation in the State while 2.6 lakh samples have been tested. "The Government is actively considering the possibility of increasing the number of testing facilities and setting up First Line Covid Treatment Centres across the State," said Vijayan.

Thiruvananthapuram topped the list of districts with the highest number of patients-157. Situation in other parts of the State were no different.

Kerala Catholic priest wants to marry his rape victim

Kochi: Kerala Catholic priest Robin Vadakkumchery, 52, sentenced to 20 years in jail in three different cases of rape and abuse of a minor, has moved the Kerala High Court seeking to marry the victim and take care of the child born to her.

Expressing similar wish, the victim has filed an affidavit in the court.

However, the prosecution expressed doubts over it and said it could be a ploy to get relaxation. The court has sought a police report and posted the case for July 24.

Vadakkumchery, dismissed from priesthood by the Vatican, was serving as a parish vicar near Kannur and was the manager of the Church-backed school, where the victim, a Class 11 student, was studying. IANS

Gold smuggling scam turns murky as Minister Jaleel's claims proved wrong

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

It looks the noose is tightening around the Kerala Government led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan as the gold smuggling scam busted by Customs officials is assuming alarming size and spilling out new details.

While M Sivsankar, the former principal secretary to the Chief Minister who was summoned by the Customs officials on Tuesday evening was questioned for a marathon nine hours and let off by Wednesday morning informing him that he may have to present himself at the Kochi office of the Department if need arises, the day also saw Customs officials raiding the offices of Kerala State IT Infrastructure Ltd at the capital city where Swapna Suresh was employed as liaison officer by the IT Department headed by Sivsankar.

At the same time, the façade of denials by Higher Education Minister K T Jaleel about his telephonic conversation with Swapna Suresh, one of the kingpins of the gold smuggling racket was demolished by a section of

the media on Wednesday.

Though the minister, a former leader of the banned SIMI had claimed on Tuesday that he spoke to Swapna on May 27 at the instance of the UAE Consul General, details of call records aired by Janam News prove that he was having telephonic contacts with the controversial woman as early as April.

Though the Customs Department is yet to make any official statement about the arrests, seizure and questioning of the suspects, information trickling out of the Thiruvananthapuram office of the department confirm that Sivsankar had told the officials that he had close relationship with Swapna Suresh and he might have intervened once or twice to help her personally.

He was allowed to go home on the condition that he should make available himself for further grilling as and when needed. The Customs officials also got enough information that substantiates the close proximity Sivsankar had with Swapna, Sarith and Sandeep.

TN shows slight fall in number of active patients

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

The Covid-19 situation in Tamil Nadu is a mixture of hope and despair as on Wednesday. While a total of 4,496 persons were diagnosed with Covid-19 on Wednesday (less than Tuesday's 4,526), the number of active cases in the State too came down on Wednesday. The medical bulletin issued by Tamil Nadu Government said there were 47,340 active covid patients in the State on Wednesday. This is less than Tuesday's numbers-47,912.

The day also saw 5,000 persons coming out of hospitals, fully cured of the pandemic. This took the total number of persons in the State who were cured of the disease to 1.02 lakh.

The death toll continued to be in the higher side as 68 persons succumbed to the coronavirus on Wednesday. Out of this, 64 persons had pre-existing morbidity (chronic diseases). The total number of persons tested positive for covid-19 till date in the State reached 1.51 lakh by Wednesday.

Coming to the negative news, Chennai reported an increase in the number of persons tested positive on Wednesday.

MLA's 'murder': Mamata writes to Prez against BJP narrative

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day after a BJP delegation met President Ram Nath Kovind seeking his attention to what they called a TMC-sponsored "cold blooded murder" of Debendranath Roy, a saffron MLA from Hemtabad in North Bengal, CM Mamata Banerjee wrote a letter to the first citizen blaming the BJP for "distorting" a "suspected suicide" for "political gains".

The letter handed over to the President by senior TMC MP Derek O'Brien also dropped hints of a possible bank scam with the unnatural death of the BJP Legislator.

Banerjee wrote, "...This is in the context of your meeting with a delegation of BJP who might have appraised you with some distorted fact." The letter further said that the dead MLA's body was "found on a hanging condition from a tin shed/verandah in front of a mobile shop which he used to visit to meet the local people. On receipt of post mortem and on primary investigation, West Bengal Police has reported that it is a case of suspected suicide and could be related to some local money transfer activities".

The note found in the pocket of the deceased leader referred to two names --- out of whom one had been arrested --- who were "allegedly found to be related to such money transfer activities in the locality." Banerjee wrote adding "I am sorry to say that it does not appear to be a political case being projected by BJP." Roy died an unnatural death reportedly in the wee hours of Monday by hanging from a bar outside a shop about a mile away from his house. The BJP instantly picked up the issue calling it a cold-blooded murder and called a North Bengal bandh on Tuesday.

Palghar 'sadhus' lynching: No bail for 25 accused

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A Dahanu court on Wednesday rejected the bail applications of 25 accused in the much-discussed Palghar lynching incident in which two Sadhus and one driver were killed by a mob of villagers on April 16.

Accepting the contention of the Prosecution in the case that there were "multiple evidences" in the case against the accused, Additional Sessions Judge at the Dahanu Sessions Court in Palghar district D. H. Keluskar rejected the bail applications of the 25 accused on technical grounds.

Earlier, opposing the bail plea, Special Public Prosecutor Satish Maneshinde had told the court that the Prosecution had gathered "multiple evidences" against the accused. The evidence, he said, included: mobile Call Data Records and other technical evidence.

Among other things, the SPP had told the court that the examination of mobile phones of the accused revealed that they were present at the crime spot when the incident took place.

It may be recalled that on the night of April 16, three persons were lynched by a 200-strong mob of villagers near Kasa town in Maharashtra's Palghar district on suspicion that they were thieves.

The villagers first hurled stones at the van, prompting the driver to stop the vehicle. Later, they pulled three persons out of the vehicle and beat them to death in Gadchinchale village on Dhadhi-Khanwel road, with sticks and rods.

The deceased ---identified as Chikne Maharaj Kalpavrukshagiri (70), Sushilgiri Maharaj (35) and driver Nilesh Telgade (30) were travelling to Surat. Of them one was the driver, while two are residents of Kandivli in north Mumbai. The place

where the incident took place is approximately 120 km from Mumbai.

After the incident, three Kasa police had registered three FIRs in connection with the lynching and assault on policemen. All the accused had been arrested a day after the ghastly crime.

In the first FIR, the police had charged 110 accused with murder under IPC Section 302. In the second FIR, the 110 accused were booked under IPC Section 307 (attempt to murder) and 353 (detering government servant from performing his duty) for assaulting cops and damaging their vehicle.

Subsequently, the Crime Investigation Department (CID) sleuths of the Maharashtra police, who took over the investigations into the case, arrested 25 more persons taking the total number of the accused in the case to 135.

Maha CM seeks realignment of Akola-Khandwa Rail route

Proposed route will impact tiger habitat: State Govt

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Concerned by the fact the proposed Railway gauge conversion of the Akola-Khandwa line would have an "irreversible impact" on the endangered species and their habitat, the Maharashtra Government has urged the Railway Ministry to withdraw the proposal and consider alternate alignment outside the Melghat Tiger.

In a letter shot off to Railway Minister Piyush Goyal, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray expressed serious reservations about the proposal involving the gauge conversion of the Akola-Khandwa line proposed by the South-Central Railway which passes through the

"core critical Tiger Habitat of Melghat Tiger Reserve" in Maharashtra.

The proposal involves construction of tunnels by cutting and blasting rocks using heavy machinery and explosives. It also involves realignment away from the existing track to ease sharp curves on 23.48 km out of a total length of 38 km "passing through the core area of the Tiger Reserve". "This amounts to realignment and not just the gauge conversion along the existing railway track," he said.

"Considering that the long-term irreversible impacts of the gauge conversion on endangered species like the Tiger and their habitat, it would be appropriate to focus

on alternative alignments which would not only ensure much required space for the wild life but also bring railway connectivity and greater economic development to hitherto unconnected villages located in Jalgaon-Jamed and Sangrampur talukas and benefitting almost 100 villages in the vicinity of the alternative alignment," the chief minister wrote in his letter.

The chief minister went on to urge the minister to "withdraw" the proposal and consider alternative alignment of the railway line outside the Melghat Tiger Reserve "in the interest of wildlife conservation in general and protection of the tiger habitat in particular". In this context Uddhav said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had himself said that the "the conservation of tigers is not a choice but an imperative".

FROM PAGE 1

GANDHI'S PILOT SACHIN HOME

Ramesh Meena, who were sacked along with Pilot from the State Cabinet after their rebellion against Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.

Earlier, in separate statements to media channels Sachin said that there was no truth in the rumours of him joining the BJP. He said that he had worked very hard to defeat the saffron party in the Assembly elections that saw Congress return to power. He said that he is yet to take a decision on his future course of action.

Pilot also told a news agency that Ashok Gehlot and his loyalists ganged up on him after Rahul Gandhi stepped down as party president.

Sources said Rahul Gandhi has conveyed a message to Pilot that he is a member of the party and doors of the party are always open for him. Rahul's intervention comes a day after Rajasthan Congress Legislature Party passed a resolution for the sacking of Sachin Pilot from the posts of the State party president and Deputy Chief Minister for allegedly attempting to topple the Ashok Gehlot Government.

Differences between Gehlot and Pilot augmented after the then Deputy CM was served with a notice last week over his alleged bid to bring down the Government which Pilot claimed that it was only meant to humiliate him.

One of the key issues raised by the Pilot camp was that neither Sonia Gandhi nor Rahul Gandhi had reached out to Pilot to sort out the issue even as Surjewala claimed that the Congress top brass was ready to hear him out.

After silencing Gehlot, the grand old party appeared to make attempts to get Pilot back on board and said that if he has any grievances he should come back to Jaipur and resolve the crisis.

Congress spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala said that now Sachin has said that he is not joining the BJP and if this was indeed the case, he should first shun the hospitality of the BJP Government in Haryana.

Sachin and his loyalist MLAs have camped at a hotel in Manesar.

"We have seen Sachin Pilot's statement that he won't join the BJP. I would like to tell him that if you don't want that, then immediately come out of the security cover of ML Khattar's Haryana Government, stop all conversations with them (BJP) and come back to your home in Jaipur," Surjewala said.

Surjewala's fresh attempt came just a day after he announced the sacking of Sachin Pilot from the posts of Deputy CM and president of Rajasthan Congress.

The Congress has been making efforts to somehow bring Sachin Pilot back in its fold and claimed that several senior leaders have reached out to the Tonk MLA.

TRUMP'S U-TURN ON VISA POLICY, INDIANS RELIEVED

country that stood up and fought back against this racist and xenophobic rule," said Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley.

"Taking online classes shouldn't force international students out of our country," Congressman Mikie Sherrill said in a tweet.

In its July 6 notice, the ICE had said all student visa holders, whose university curricula were only offered online, "must depart the coun-

try or take other measures, such as transferring to a school with in-person instruction to remain in lawful status".

"If not, they may face immigration consequences, including but not limited to the initiation of removal proceedings," it had said.

In their lawsuit, the 17 states and the District of Columbia said for many international students, remote learning in the countries and communities they come from would impede their studies or be simply impossible.

The lawsuit alleged that the new rule imposes a significant economic harm by precluding thousands of international students from coming to and residing in the US and finding employment in fields such as science, technology, biotechnology, healthcare, business and finance, and education, and contributing to the overall economy.

In a separate filing, companies like Google, Facebook and Microsoft, along with the US Chamber of Commerce and other IT advocacy groups, asserted that the July 6 ICE directive will disrupt their recruiting plans, making it impossible to bring on board international students that businesses, including the amici, had planned to hire, and disturb the recruiting process on which the firms have relied on to identify and train their future employees.

The July 6 directive will make it impossible for a large number of international students to participate in the CPT and OPT programmes. The US will "nonsensically be sending...these graduates away to work for our global competitors and compete against us...instead of capitalising on the investment in their education here in the US," they said.

JHARKHAND CONG ALLEGES BJP TRYING TO LURE MLAS

to attack BJP. Shiv Sena, BJP's friend turned foe today alleged that the Central power is working to destabilise (the state) Governments of its opponents.

Meanwhile, a Congress leader said that BJP is eyeing newly elected Congress legislators as they knew that it is difficult to break old party leaders. Sources said that there are half a dozen Congress legislators who are elected for the first time and the BJP is eyeing these MLAs.

However, the Opposition BJP has countered the allegations made by Congress. State BJP president Deepak Prakash said, "The Congress State president's allegation is baseless. The Congress is not able to save its house. If the Congress chief has any proof of BJP luring Congress legislators then they should declare the names of Congress legislators who are being lured by BJP."

The BJP president claimed that the Hemant Soren Government has failed on all fronts. He said, "The State Government has miserably handled the corona crisis. Law and order situation in the State is poor. The Congress by making such baseless allegations is trying to divert the attention of people from poor governance."

RESPECT PEACE PROTOCOLS AT BORDERS: INDIA TO CHINA

depth areas besides withdrawal of heavy weapons to peace time areas. Both the armies had deployed additional troops in thousands during the eight-week stand-off at four sites thereby adding to tension on the border.

Incidentally, during the third round of talks on June 30, the two commanders agreed on an "expeditious, phased and step wise" de-escalation as a "priority" to end the stand-off.

Officials said the main focus of the latest round was on finalising a framework for a "time-bound and verifiable" disengagement process from all the friction points like Pangong Tso and Depsang and pulling back large numbers of troops and weapons.

The Indian delegation also conveyed concerns over China's "new claim lines" in the region, and insisted that Beijing must adhere to earlier framework on carrying out patrolling in the areas, sources said.

On ground situation, they said the first phase of the disengagement process from the friction points was more or less complete. The Chinese army has already pulled back troops from Gogra, Hot Springs and Galwan Valley. It also significantly thinned down its presence in the ridgeline of Finger Four in the Pangong Tso area in the last one week as demanded by India.

In line with a mutually agreed decision, the two sides created a minimum buffer zone of three km in most of the friction points where they were locked in a stand-off.

The disengagement of troops began on July 6, a day after a nearly two-hour telephonic conversation between National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on ways to bring down tension in the area.

The first round of the Corps Commanders was held on June 6 during which both sides finalised an agreement to disengage gradually from all the stand-off points beginning with Galwan Valley.

However, the situation deteriorated following the Galwan Valley clashes on June 15 as the two sides significantly bolstered their deployments in most areas along the LAC. The second round of talks took place on June 22 while the third on June 30.

6,700 PERSONNEL OF CRPF, BSF COVID +VE, 36 DIE

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) that secures vital installations airports, seaports and land ports besides other Government buildings and transport infrastructure has reported 1,306 coronavirus cases. Of the 1,306 cases, 417 are active and 880 have recovered and nine personnel have succumbed to the deadly viral infection.

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), the lead agency for the Line of Actual Control with China, has reported 707 cases of infection including 356 active cases and 348 cured patients besides three casualties.

The Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), the designated border guarding force for the frontiers with Nepal and Bhutan has also reported 329 cases of Covid-19 with 179 active cases and 148 recovered besides at least two casualties. The number of coronavirus infection cases in the SSB ranks has doubled in the last 10 days and the number of active cases has spiralled up six fold during the period.

The paramilitary forces have added 2,000 new cases of Covid-19 during the last 10 days and the number of active patients jumped from about 2,000 to 3,000. The ITBP was the first paramilitary to set up a quarantine centre here to isolate evacuees from Wuhan China in February and beyond. The ITBP is also managing the biggest Covid care centre in the country with 10,000 beds at Chattarpur here.

Respond to plea against final year exams by Sept: HC to Centre, UGC

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Wednesday asked the Centre, University Grants Commission (UGC) and Delhi University to reply to a plea challenging the guidelines making it mandatory for colleges to conduct final year examinations by September-end in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Justice Jayant Nath, who conducted the hearing through video conferencing, asked them to submit their responses within two weeks and listed the matter for further hearing on August 4, lawyer for the petitioner said.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta represented the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The plea, by DU student Kabir Sachdeva, challenged the UGC's July 6 guidelines making it mandatory for colleges to conduct final year exams by September-end via offline,

online or a blended method.

Advocate Manik Dogra, representing Sachdeva, also challenged an office memorandum of July 6, passed by the Ministry of Human Resources and Development, Department of Higher Education, which provided instructions for conducting the exams along with standard operating procedures for conducting the exams.

"In times of a global pandemic the respondent no. 1 (HRD Ministry) and 2 (UGC) have placed irrational weightage on academic evaluation and completely neglected the importance of lives of thousands of students," said the plea, filed through advocates Dhruv Pandey and Randeep Sachdeva.

"The UGC has also acted in contravention and beyond powers conferred upon them under the University Grants Commission Act, 1956," it added. It also sought to direct the authorities to promote final

year students on the basis of average of the marks obtained in previous years and internal assessment in the present year.

On July 6, the University Grants Commission (UGC) had issued revised exam guidelines mandating to hold final examinations in colleges and universities by the end of September stating that the academic credibility, career opportunities and future progress of students were linked to exams.

The plea claimed that the guidelines demonstrate non-application of mind and colourable exercise of power and set an illegitimate expectation for the public to follow putting a large sect of the population at a significant threat amid pandemic.

It alleged that the Union HRD Ministry and University Grants Commission are acting in gross violation of the fundamental rights of the students. PTI

7,975 affected, 233 die in Maharashtra

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The total number of Covid-19 infections crossed 7,000 mark in Maharashtra on Wednesday, as the State recorded 7,975 new positive cases while 233 more people succumbed to the pandemic.

With 7,975 fresh infections and 233 fatalities, the total number of positive cases in the cases jumped to 2,75,640, while the total number of deaths inched closer to 11,000 as the figure touched 10,928.

Of the total deaths reported to Wednesday, Mumbai alone accounted for 62 deaths,

which took the total number of deaths in the metropolis from 5,405 to 5,467, while the total number of Covid-19 cases rose by 1,374 to touch 96,474.

In addition to 62 deaths recorded in Mumbai, there were 49 deaths in Thane, 48 deaths in Pune, 14 in Jalgaon, 13 in Nashik, 10 in Solapur, 6 in Palghar, 5 each in Raigad, Kolhapur and Aurangabad, 4 in Latur, 3 each in Dhule and Jalna, 2 in Sangli, 1 each in Satara, Ratnagiri, Nanded and Amravati.

With 67360 infected cases and 1818 deaths, Thane continued to be the second worst

hit district in Maharashtra.

Pune, which has emerged as the third worst affected district in terms of spread of the pandemic, has recorded 44202 infections and 1,200 deaths till now. In a related development, the total number of patients discharged from various hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year touched 1,52,613. The recovery rate in the state stood at 55.37 per cent.

The mortality rate in the state is 3.96 per cent. The state health authorities pegged the number of "active cases" in the state at 1,11,801.

Will act against those cheating Covid-19 patients with fake plasma samples: Maha Govt

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Taking serious cognisance of complaints about some miscreants cheating the needy Covid-19 patients after plasma, Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said on Wednesday that the State Government would initiate stern action against those fleeing the people by making false claims of having tested positive for Covid-19 and promising donation of

plasma samples for treatment.

Deshmukh said: "Many infected people are getting cured by the plasma donated by the cured patients...It being the case that only the cured patients can donate plasma, some people are taking advantage of the situation to make false claims through affidavits that they had tested positive Covid-19 to make plasma donations." "Though no one has come forward to complain formally about lakhs of rupees col-

lected from them by making false claims of having tested positive for Coronavirus and promising plasma samples, I have heard such things are happening. If the people come forward and lodge complaints with the police, we will take serious cognisance of the complaints and act sternly against the miscreants. We will allow miscreants cheating the Covid-19 patients who genuinely need plasma samples from the cured patients," the Minister said.

No plans to speak to Xi, says Trump

Washington: US President Donald Trump has indicated that he has no plan to speak with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, amid a war of words between the two countries on a range of issues and tit-for-tat sanctions on lawmakers and senior officials.

"No, I haven't spoken to him," Trump said in response to a reporter's question at a White House press conference on Tuesday.

"I have no plan to speak to him," the president said while expressing his anger over China's inability to prevent the spread of the coronavirus out of the country, from where it originated.

"Make no mistake, we hold China fully responsible for concealing the virus and unleashing it upon the world.

(They) could have stopped it, they should have stopped," Trump said as he also lashed out at WHO for siding with China on this issue.

"They were really a puppet of China," he said. Trump spoke to reporters after ending special privileges and economic treatment for Hong Kong and rescinding the territory's exception to bans on the importing of sensitive technologies.

He also signed into law bipartisan legislation that allows the US government to sanction individuals and entities known to be involved in interfering in Hong Kong's freedom. Beijing has condemned Washington's recent bid to reject its claims in the South China Sea as illegal and has retaliated against US visa restrictions on Chinese officials

in Xinjiang by banning senior senators and representatives.

At his presser, Trump also slammed former vice president Joe Biden, who is his Democratic Party challenger for being "soft" on China.

The China issue has become a leading election year topic as Trump and Biden each attempt to paint the other as weak in the face of aggressive moves from Beijing.

"By contrast, my administration acted very early to ban travel from China, from Europe, saving all of these lives. I want every citizen to know that we are using the full power of the federal government to fight that China virus and keep our people safe. Through Operation Warp Speed, we will deliver a vaccine in record-breaking time," he said. **PTI**

Will definitely hit back with sanctions if Trump implements new Hong Kong Act: China

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Wednesday warned the US that it will "definitely hit back" with sanctions if Washington goes ahead with the implementation of President Donald Trump's 'Hong Kong Autonomy Act' to end the preferential treatment to the former British colony.

President Trump has signed an executive order to end the preferential economic treatment for Hong Kong after China introduced a controversial national security law in the Asian trading hub to curb autonomy and democratic freedoms.

Reacting to Trump's announcement of signing the 'Hong Kong Autonomy Act', Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said the US should not implement it.

"We urge the US side to correct its mistake, not to implement

the so-called 'Hong Kong Autonomy Act' and immediately stop meddling in Hong Kong affairs and China's internal affairs in any way," she told a media briefing here.

"This act smears our law on safeguarding national security in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). If the US insists on going on the wrong path, China will definitely hit back," she said.

The US attempt to obstruct China's national security legislation for the HKSAR will be to no avail and China will make necessary responses to protect its legitimate interests and impose sanctions on relevant US personnel and entities, she said.

"This US move has grossly interfered in China's internal affairs and seriously violated international law, as well as the basic norms governing international relations," she said.

China's aggressive actions against India give insight into how CPC thinking these days: US NSA

Washington: China's "very aggressive" actions against India, including the brutal attack on Indian soldiers in eastern Ladakh, and its moves in the South China Sea and Hong Kong give a "good insight" into how the ruling Communist Party of China is thinking these days, US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien has said.

The Indian and Chinese Armies were locked in a standoff in multiple locations in eastern Ladakh since May 5. The tension escalated in the Galwan Valley on June 15 in which 20 Indian Army personnel were killed during a violent face-off with Chinese soldiers.

"The Chinese have been very aggressive with India," O'Brien said on Tuesday alleging that during the recent clash they beat some of the Indians so badly they were disfigured and could not be identified.

"This is a dispute between India and China, but China has shown itself for what it was. Chinese troops ambushed the Indians. They beat 20 Indians to death. They beat them so badly with clubs with nails in them and wrapped with concertina -- barbed wire," O'Brien told Fox News Radio in an interview. He was responding to a question on the

recent Chinese aggressive behaviour against India in eastern Ladakh.

Responding to a question on US-India bilateral relations, he said, India is a democracy and is a great friend of the United States.

Prime Minister Narendra "Modi and President (Donald) Trump have a special relationship," O'Brien said.

"In fact, it was the last foreign trip that I took with the president before the COVID crisis hit, was to India, and we had a great reception of the Indian people there. We have a lot in common with them, we speak English, we're democracies. We've got a growing, very strong relationship with India," O'Brien said.

"But China's action towards India, just like its actions in the South China Sea, just like what it's doing in Hong Kong, just like the bullying intimidation of Taiwan, really gives you a good insight into how the Communist Party of China is thinking these days," he said.

China claims almost all of the 1.3 million square mile South China Sea as its sovereign territory. China has been building military bases on artificial islands in the region also claimed by Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. **PTI**

Trump ends preferential economic treatment for HK

Washington: US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order to end the preferential economic treatment for Hong Kong after China imposed a controversial national security law in the Asian trading hub to curb autonomy and democratic freedoms.

The Trump administration has been openly critical of Beijing's sweeping national security law aimed at limiting Hong Kong's autonomy and curb political dissent against the ruling Chinese Communist Party.

Trump said he also signed legislation to sanction Chinese officials responsible for cracking down on political dissent in Hong Kong. "Today, I signed legislation and an executive order to hold China accountable for its oppressive actions against the people of Hong Kong,"

Trump said at a White House press conference on Tuesday.

The president also said he signed an executive order ending US preferential treatment for Hong Kong, a former British territory handed over to China in 1997. "Hong Kong will now be treated the same as mainland China. No special privileges, no special economic treatment and no export of sensitive technologies. In addition to that, as you know, we are placing massive tariffs and have placed very large tariffs on China.

"First time this has ever happened to China, billions of dollars have been paid to the US, of which I have given quite a bit to the farmers and ranchers of our country because they were targeted, and that has been going on for three years," he said. **PTI**

Banning TikTok takes big espionage tool away from China: US NSA

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

China will lose "a big tool" of espionage and surveillance if America and some western European countries ban Chinese apps like TikTok as done by India, US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien has said.

India last month banned 59 Chinese apps, including TikTok and UC Browser, saying they were prejudicial to the sovereignty, integrity and security of the country.

O'Brien told Fox News Radio in an interview that the "Trump administration was 'very seriously taking a look' at TikTok, WeChat and some other apps coming out of China.

8-year-old Pak girl dies after being gangraped

PTI ■ LAHORE

An eight-year-old Pakistani girl died in a hospital on Wednesday after she was gangraped by two men in a village in Punjab province, sparking outrage among the locals who demanded public hanging of the rapists.

According to police, the girl, the daughter of a rickshaw driver, was playing outside her house on Monday at Buttar Dograan-Chawinda village in Sialkot district, some 130 kms from Lahore when two suspects gave her some intoxicant in juice and took her to a deserted place.

They gang-raped her and

tortured her.

The suspects fled when some locals reached there after hearing the child's screams. The girl was shifted to a hospital in Sialkot in a critical condition where she died on Wednesday due to excessive bleeding, police said.

The family and local residents held a demonstration and blocked a road to protest against the incident and police apathy. They demanded that the culprits be arrested and hanged publicly.

They ended the protest after the district police chief Mustansar Feroze told them that the accused have been arrested.

Russia lifts mandatory quarantine for arrivals

Moscow:

Russian authorities have lifted mandatory two-week self-quarantine for those arriving as part of easing coronavirus restrictions.

Starting Wednesday, both Russian and international travelers will have to either provide coronavirus test results at the border or take a test within three days of arrival in Russia.

Self-quarantine will remain mandatory for those who remain positive for the virus or whose health deteriorates upon arrival.

It's one of several steps in an effort to reopen the country after health officials started reporting a slowdown in infections. Last month, authorities allowed travel abroad for the purpose of work, studying, medical treatment or taking care of relatives. They also let foreigners with work permits or those seeking medical treatment or taking care of family members into the country.

Last week, Deputy Prime Minister Tat'yana Golikova said Russia may resume international flights starting Wednesday, adding that the final decision would depend on the outcome of negotiations with other countries.

On Tuesday night, Belarus Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko announced reopening of the border with Russia and resuming transport ties between the two countries in the coming days. **AP**

Biden announces \$2 trillion climate plan, vows to rejoin Paris deal

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden has unveiled a USD 2 trillion proposal to boost investment in clean energy and combat the global warming as he pledged to rejoin the historic Paris agreement on climate change if elected in the November elections.

US President Donald Trump in 2017 withdrew the United States, the world's No 2 emitter of greenhouse gases behind China, from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement that brought countries together to mitigate global warming, saying it was too costly.

Biden has said he will return the US to a leadership role on climate change, assertively re-entering the United States in future climate negotiations to advance the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

"We're going to reverse Trump's rollbacks of 100 public health and environmental rules -- and then forge a path to greater ambition. We're going to get back into the Paris Agreement -- and back into the business of leading the world," Biden said in a major policy address on climate change, which he said poses a serious threat to the mankind.

GLOBE TROTTER

TOURISM BOOST WITH DISNEYLAND REOPENING
Paris: The French tourist industry received a further boost on Wednesday with the partial reopening of Disneyland Paris and the opening up of the top floor of the Eiffel Tower. Disneyland Paris, Europe's most frequented theme park resort, is partially re-opening to the public, four months after it closed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

SINGAPORE REPORTS 249 NEW VIRUS CASES,
Singapore: Singapore on Wednesday recorded 249 new coronavirus infections, including 16 community and five imported cases, taking the total tally to 46,878, the Health Ministry said.

JOHN REPORTS \$5.2 MN HAUL IN SENATE BID
Denver: Former Colorado Gov John Hickenlooper's Senate campaign reports a \$5.2 million fundraising haul over the past three months, calling it a record for any Senate candidate in state history.

FLASH FLOOD KILLS 16 IN INDONESIA, 23 MISSING
Jakarta: A flash flood in Indonesia's South Sulawesi province left at least 16 people dead and 23 are still missing, an official said on Wednesday. "The latest update from National Search and Rescue Agency 16 people dead and 23 are looking for 23 people," National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Raditya Jati said.

2020 will mark 'inflection point' in India-UK healthcare collaboration: Indian diplomat

London: The year 2020 will witness an "inflection point" in the UK-India healthcare collaboration as the Covid-19 pandemic has brought collaboration in medicine to the centre stage, outgoing Consul General of India in Birmingham Dr Aman Puri has said.

In an interview to PTI on the eve of his departure from the West Midlands region of England, Puri reflected on the recently-launched West

Midlands India Partnership (WMIP) to boost India-UK investment flows and flagged the healthcare sector as a particular focus of bilateral ties amid the coronavirus pandemic. "My sense is that 2020 will witness an inflection point in the UK-India healthcare collaboration. Covid-19 has brought healthcare centre stage, and the need for collaborations has been realised by all stakeholders more than ever before," said Puri. **PTI**

Coronavirus resurgence forces countries to reimpose restrictions

Promachonas (Greece): Countries around the world are reimposing lockdowns and implementing new health checks at their borders in an effort to curb a resurgence of the coronavirus before it spins even further out of control.

Starting Wednesday, all travellers arriving in Greece from a land border with Bulgaria were required to carry negative coronavirus test results issued in the previous 72 hours and translated

into English. The new rules, which follow an increase in tourism-related Covid-19 cases, triggered an immediate drop in arrivals compared to recent days. Residents of Australia's second-largest city, Melbourne, were warned on Wednesday to comply with lockdown regulations or face tougher restrictions.

Melbourne's 5 million people and part of the city's semi-rural surroundings are a week into a new, six-week lockdown

to contain a new outbreak there.

"The time for warnings, the time for cutting people slack, is over," Victoria state Premier Daniel Andrews said. "Where we are is in a very serious and deadly position."

The developments come with more than 13 million cases of coronavirus cases confirmed worldwide, and with over 578,000 deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. **AP**

Markets eke out gains in volatile trade; RIL selloff weighs

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Sensex and Nifty surrendered most of the day's gains to end marginally higher on Wednesday, pressured by a fag-end selloff in heavy-weight Reliance Industries.

During the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex rallied 777 points, driven by positive sentiment across global markets on hopes of a COVID-19 vaccine. The index, however, made a U-turn in the last hour of trade and settled just 18.75 points, or 0.05 per cent, higher at 36,051.81. On similar lines, the NSE Nifty closed 10.85 points, or 0.10 per cent, up at 10,618.20, after soaring 220 points during the session.

Reliance Industries was the biggest drag on the Sensex, skidding 3.71 per cent after scaling its life-time high of ₹1,978.50 (intra-day) as investors rushed to book profits amid a slew of announcements at its annual general meeting. RIL Chairman Mukesh Ambani said Google will invest ₹33,737 crore to buy 7.7 per cent stake in Jio Platforms, completing RIL's capital-raising target for the digital arm. Ambani also announced Jio is developing a homegrown 5G telecom solution, but added that his group's

planned stake sale in oil-to-chemical business to Saudi Aramco has not progressed as per the original timelines due to the COVID-19 crisis. Bharti Airtel, ONGC, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finance and SBI were also among the laggards, shedding up to 4.24 per cent. On the other hand, Infosys rallied 6.16 per cent ahead of its quarterly earnings. HCL Tech, TCS, Tech Mahindra, Axis Bank and HUL too ended with smart gains. According to traders, during majority of the session, domestic investors were enthused by hopes of a COVID-19 vaccine as two contenders began human trials in India and one US-based candidate successfully completed the initial phase of

human trials.

However, the fag-end selloff in RIL halted the rally; they said. "The stock price of Reliance has witnessed a decline towards the end of the AGM since most of the news was already priced in and there were not many surprises," said Nirali Shah, Senior Research Analyst, Samco Securities. Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd, added, "We're seeing a tussle between the bulls and bears for the last couple of sessions and we feel it would be healthy if the market witnesses some correction after the recent surge. However, the resilience of global markets would help the index to limit the downside."

Railways increase focus on freight business through BDU initiatives

New Delhi: At the behest of Railway Board each zonal Railway has set up Business Development Units to focus on increasing the share of Freight traffic through Railways.

In this regard Divisional Railway Managers, Firozpur and Moradabad and their team of officers held separate meetings via video conferencing with Freight customers dealing with commodities like foodgrain, fertilizer, cement, sugar, food processing, yarn & textiles, paper and FMCG supply chain. Most of these industries are located in the Northern region of the country and are serviced by Firozpur and Moradabad Divisions of Northern Railway.

Sanitisers soaps, not medicaments; to attract 18% GST

ANS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing debate over goods and services tax (GST) rate on hand sanitisers, the government on Wednesday clarified alcohol-based hand sanitisers will continue to be levied at the standard rate of 18 per cent as the product is a disinfectant like soaps and not a medicament.

With the Consumer Affairs Ministry having classified hand sanitisers as essential commodities in wake of Covid-19 pandemic, there had been a demand from certain sections of the industry, particularly liquor and sugar sectors, to classify sanitisers in the medicament category attracting lower 12 per cent duty.

"It is stated that hand sanitisers attract GST at the rate of 18 per cent. Sanitisers are disinfectants like soaps, anti-bacterial liquids, Dettol etc, all of which attract duty at the standard rate of 18 per cent under the GST regime," a Finance Ministry statement said.

"It is further clarified that inputs for manufacture of

hand sanitisers are chemicals, packing material, input services, which also attracts a GST rate of 18 per cent. Reducing the GST rate on sanitisers and other similar items would lead to an inverted duty structure and put the domestic manufacturers at disadvantage vis-a-vis importers," the statement added.

Earlier, the Goa bench of the GST Authority for Advance Ruling (AAR) also held that the alcohol-based hygiene products will attract 18 per cent GST. It added that its classification as an essential commodity cannot be a criteria for exemption from GST.

The order came on a petition from Springfields (India) Distilleries over classification of the hand sanitiser and the applicable rate of GST.

The clarity has also come in wave of reports of large-scale tax evasion reported by the Central Economic Intelligence Bureau with certain new manufacturers of sanitisers paying 12 per cent GST due to the wrong classification instead of the actual 18 per cent.

Honda Cars India launches fifth-generation City

New iteration will be sold alongside the previous generation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Photo Caption: Mr. Gaku Nakanishi, President & CEO, Honda Cars India and Mr. Rajesh Goel, Sr. Vice President & Director, Marketing & Sales, Honda Cars India Ltd, on the launch of All-New 5th Generation Honda City

The Japanese carmaker Honda today launched the newest version of their best-selling sedan the Honda City. The fifth generation of the popular sedan had seen its launch delayed by over three months thanks to the Coronavirus lockdown but with production resuming at Honda's factory at Surajpur near Greater Noida, Honda has gone ahead with the launch. The new iteration of the car features several improvements, and is significantly longer and wider than the previous model, however the previous model will continue to be sold in the Indian market for the time being. Speaking to The Pioneer, Gaku Nakanishi, President and CEO, Honda Cars India said that this was because the carmaker felt that the new car was 'step above' the earlier model as well as the rest of

the competition. The fifth generation Honda City will be available in both Diesel and Petrol engines with the latter featuring a CVT automatic transmission option as well. Prices for the new car range from Rs 10.89 lakh to Rs 14.64 lakh and are available in three trim levels.

However with the negative sentiment in the Indian economy after the virulent spread of the Coronavirus, Nakanishi did not expect sales to fully recover until the first quarter of 2021, "Only in January to March, 2021 will we actually start to see sales showing an increase on a

year to year basis." Honda has been impacted by the lockdown situation as well, even though many of their dealerships are now open, several have had to be shut after some states have introduced a renewed lockdown. Their factory at Surajpur has also suffered with last weekend's lockdown announcement in Uttar Pradesh catching them by surprise, however Nakanishi said that the carmaker was working with the local administration to ensure that the parts hub can continue functioning and that Honda Cars usually shut for the weekend any which way.

Trend Slazer

Ranveer's views beat Selena Gomez'

Actor **RANVEER SINGH** has beaten the likes of **Selena Gomez**, currently at 961 million, to become the fastest growing world icon on GIPHY, for animated images, or GIFs.

The actor's channel has aggregated 1.1 billion views, making him join the list of global power icons like Sir Paul McCartney, Madonna, Taylor Swift and Arianna Grande.

A source said, "Ranveer is now a huge showman with eclectic fashion choices. He has a total social media reach of 56 million across platforms! In Bollywood, he is among the top three highest followed Instagram accounts. He has fan clubs of 4.5 million worldwide."



'I wish to commend Raho Safe for their efforts towards ensuring safety and wellness. I resonate with

the brand's ideology of access to good hygiene and sanitation being a universal right. I'm thrilled to come on board as their brand ambassador. Hand sanitisers and face masks are important both during and after the pandemic.'

—**Jacqueline Fernandez**

Actor **VAANI KAPOOR** feels good about resuming work after a break as she starts shooting her next film, *Bell-Bottom*, opposite **Akshay Kumar**. The film will be shot in Scotland.



Vaani said, "I honestly am just happy with work resuming after a long break. One will of course have to be extra cautious and keep all preventive measures in mind but it feels exciting to embark on a new journey!"

Vaani had completed the shooting of her next *Shamsher*, in which she is paired opposite Ranbir Kapoor before the pandemic began.

My life has been a protest: Viola

Actor **VIOLA DAVIS** says all her actions in life have always been acts of protest.

In an interview, Davis shared that her protests did not begin with the surge in racial justice activism this year.

"I feel like my entire life has been a protest. My production company is my protest. Me not wearing a wig at the Oscars in 2012 was my protest. It is a part of my voice, just like introducing myself to you and saying, 'Hello, my name is Viola Davis,'" she said.



With growing acceptability, popularity of microbreweries and evolving consumer preferences, the Indian beer market has all growth triggers in place for exceeding the projected rate

For alcohol, had any of us thought that there would be a falling graph, ever? The global data suggests that due to the ongoing pandemic, the beer market has seen a shift in consumer preferences towards low and non-alcoholic variants as well as craft beer. Well, who had thought this would change.

The report titled, *India Beer Market — Industry Size, Share, Drivers, Trends, Analysis and Forecasts (2019-24)*, released by Niir Project Consultancy Services, provides a comprehensive analysis on the Indian beer market.

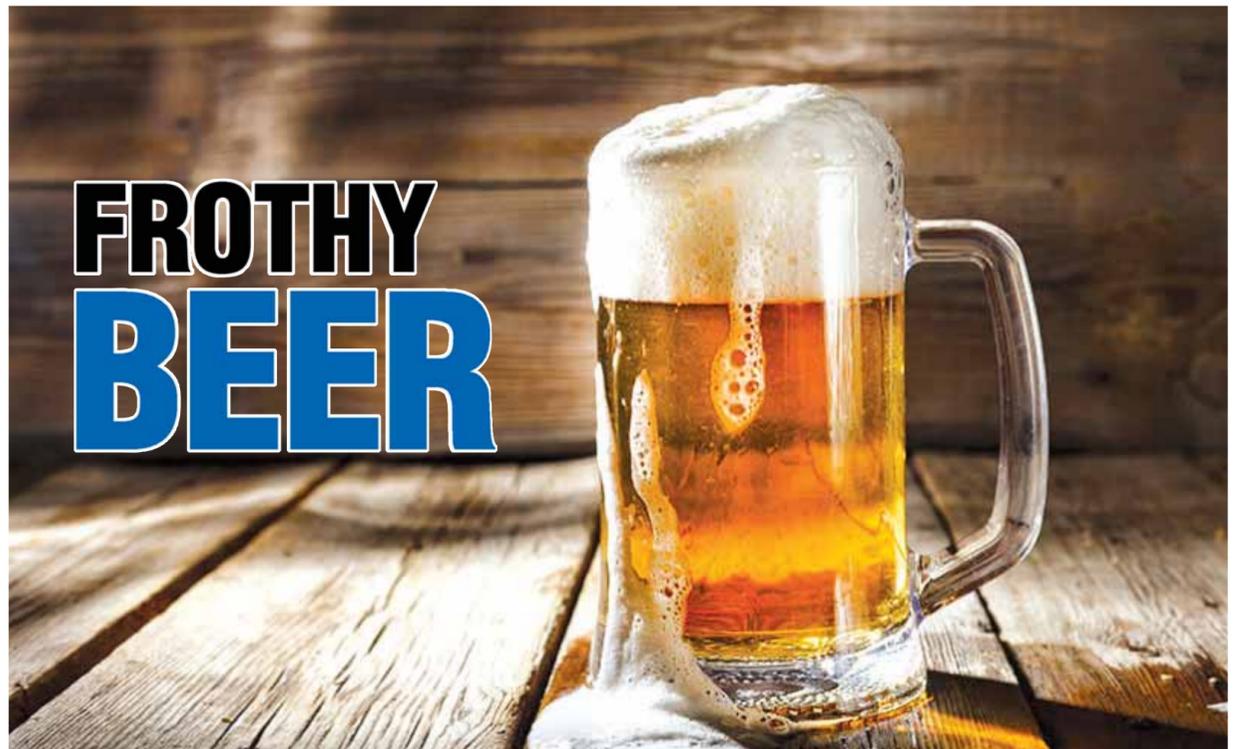
As per the data, India has one of the lowest consumption levels of beer in Asia. Currently, India consumes about two per cent of the total world volumes and has the potential to match the world leader, China, thus opening a vast pool of opportunities for the brewing companies. However, changing dynamics of Indian preferences, favourable demographics, growing awareness and acceptability of alcohol, rising per capita income and evolving cultural attitude are some of the key factors, which are likely to contribute to sales.

NO MORE HARD CHOICES

Looking at the manufacturing process of beer, from malting till the end of process at bottling, the beer segment in India is categorised either by fermentation process (ale & lager) or by alcohol's volume (mild & strong). The Indian industry is majorly dominated by strong beer but new flavourful mild beer are finding their feet on the ground. While strong beer has alcohol content of not less than five per cent, mild beer contains not more than five per cent of alcohol. Even though beer is being increasingly accepted as a social drink and the urban youth in particular favours it as the preferred alcoholic beverage, the Indian market has been highly dominated by hard liquor. However, consumers are now looking for choices away from whisky.

RISING ACCEPTABILITY & HOME DELIVERIES

It is not just the male populace that is enamoured by beer but women equal-



ly enjoy the beverage today. One of the drivers for the beer industry is the rising online alcohol-delivery. A sudden spurt of such portals not only indicates the rising acceptability of alcohol in the country but also the much evolving consumer base. The consumers, who were unable to go to a liquor store earlier, especially women, now purchase their preferred drinks and are in a sweet spot with home deliveries.

However, the industry still faces moral restrictions due to great religious influences. It is still considered to be a forbidden, taboo drink in some parts of the society, detrimental for Indian culture. Drinking alcohol is culturally not accepted in most parts of the country.

CRAFT BEER, THE NEW RAGE

The Indian beer market has also been experiencing the trend of microbreweries and exclusive beer spots. The emergence of such outlets has contributed to an increased awareness and easy availability of beer in Indian markets. Today, craft beer is a rage in the industry and is booming. The market is swamped with a number of craft beer with new and innovative flavours. Beer consumers are nowadays shifting their preferences from regular mainstream bottled beer to artisanal brews, new fresh flavours and unique local ingredients. A large number of microbreweries are also selling their bottled craft beer. The surge in craft beer sales is intended to drive the beer industry sales to the bub-



ble top!

THE ZERO BEER

One of the recent trends to hit the industry is emergence of zero per cent beer. Since the consumer profile for beer industry in India is evolving, so is the preference meter and hence the emergence of new varieties. Consumers are now increasingly opting for drinks that are low on sugar, carbs and hence, calories. In view of an increasing demand for such drinks, a lot of brewers have come

up with their versions of zero per cent beer to tap the demand from this segment. Players have been branching out into concepts such as non-alcohol brand extensions and surrogate advertising and alignment with sport.

A RECESSION-PROOF BEVERAGE

The report also scrutinises the Indian beer industry with the help of SWOT Analysis, elucidating the strengths of the industry in being recession-proof in view of the fact that alco-

hol consumption generally remains unfazed by the economic downturn. Also, the growing Indian population serves as a ready customer base for the beer industry. According to the United Nations, India is poised to overtake China as the world's most populous nation around 2027. Such population growth puts the industry in a comfortable spot. Indian demographics are bound to benefit the industry in the long term with large number of people under drinkable age. With rising urbanisation, escalating disposable income and growing affluent class, there are enormous opportunities for the players to tap into. It is estimated that the urban population in India will rise to 38 per cent of the total population by 2025.

CHALLENGES IN GROWTH

However, the industry faces challenges in the form of ban on direct advertising and derisory state of market infrastructure. The industry is also highly taxed, regulated and struggles with multiplicity of taxes. With global bigwigs like Carlsberg, Anheuser-Busch and Heineken entering the country, the competitive landscape of the domestic beer market has changed considerably. However, given the above growth triggers of beer — acceptability, popularity of microbreweries and craft beer and evolving consumer preferences — the industry is expected to reach consumption levels of 3,584 million litres or 459 million cases by 2024.



COVID AS HER MUSE

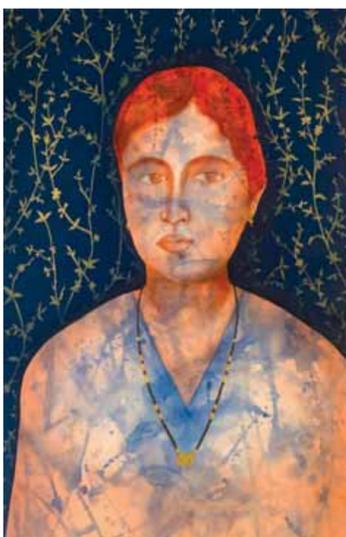
Artist **GUNJAN TYAGI**'s new paintings have been inspired by the feelings of isolation, confusion, boredom and the ongoing pandemic. By **TEAM VIVA**

While the world experiences strife through isolation, boredom, panic and uncertainty, yet, for those, who pick up a paint brush or pen in response to the disease, their role as a change-maker in society becomes very important. It has been rightly said that art and creativity in the time of a pandemic is more crucial than ever! Going by the references and examples of art from the time of the great Plague, poet Richard Kenney said that the Plague had changed the imagination of the West. It changed every culture that is passed through. Well, that's what a creative piece of artwork does. For future generations, it stands as an evidence that this happened.

Marking 2020 in history, Delhi-based artist Gunjan Tyagi creates three paintings on COVID-19 that aim to reflect the current relationship between humans and nature, and their battle with the Coronavirus pandemic.

The first, *Prerequisite*, as she explains, finds meaning in the touch of a human — which has currently gone missing. The work is a spin on Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam*. Talking about how she made it, she earlier recalled about how she recently made New York her home and that she found the city's energy and vibrance "truly stimulating." However, after a pandemic at hand, she added, "I found myself confined to my studio. I started re-focussing my energies on painting. But, true to contemporary anxieties, we see that both god and humans are wearing hand gloves!"

The painting showcases two gloved hands



not being to able to touch each other. She says, "The creation of Adam is one of the most powerful, intimate and awe-inspiring pieces of art. Touch being the most significant act here,

which is untouched. Yet, it portrays that the spark exists, even though we can't see it, just like the instant which signifies the birth of humankind. The same powerful spiritual image has another meaning in these complex times — when the human touch and smiles on faces have gone missing. We are surrounded by fear, anxiety and depression. We are living in a time when all we really want is that touch, that spark to relive, to say the unsaid things, to rejoice and to cherish the moments of what we have lost and what we have."

The second painting, titled, *Quarantined*, is inspired by perhaps what is now the 'word of the year'. The painting showcases a girl who keeps her hair braid in front of her face rather than at the back.

She explains, "This very small work was done in the beginning of the pandemic situation. This was the response of the news and information we were surrounded with. It reminded me how boredom feels and one has that empty mind which they use in useless things at such times. People swamped on social media, YouTube, Tik Tok (which is now banned in India) and were busy doing stupid things. Things which have little happiness, things which make others laugh and keep everyone engaged."

The third, *Gaze*, is a portrait of a friend. She says, "I am trying to create a strange gaze on her face which is on society and its system, currently," questioning and trying to come to terms with the uncertainty around.

'Want to change mindsets'

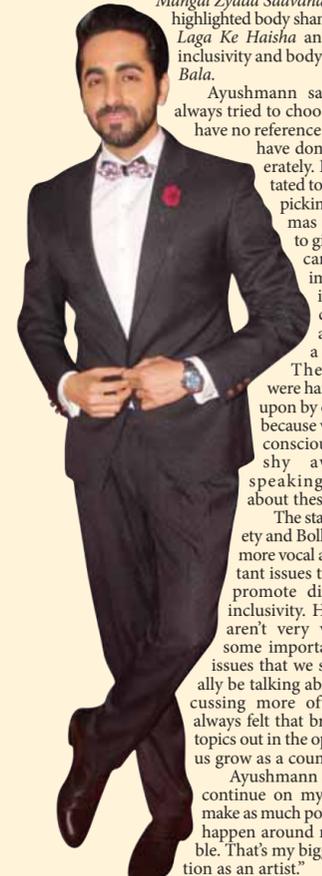
Actor **Ayushmann Khurrana** has emerged as a thought-leader with his thought-provoking scripts that are based on topics which are considered a taboo. With eight back to back hits with such scripts, the actor aims to entertain audience with message-based films that have no reference point in Bollywood.

His brand equity today stands for backing the best quirky content that is being made by the industry. He played a sperm donor in his debut film *Vicky Donor*, someone with erectile dysfunction in *Shubh Mangal Saavdhaan*, dove into India's fragmented and sensitive caste politics in *Article 15*, and a gay character in *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhaan*. He even highlighted body shaming in *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* and promoted inclusivity and body positivity in *Bala*.

Ayushmann says, "I have always tried to choose films that have no reference points and I have done this deliberately. I have gravitated towards hand-picking social dramas in my quest to give films that can hopefully impact change in mindset, communities and of course attitude. These topics were hardly touched upon by our industry because we generally, consciously like to shy away from speaking publicly about these issues."

The star wants society and Bollywood to be more vocal about important issues that can help promote diversity and inclusivity. He says, "We aren't very vocal about some important and real issues that we should actually be talking about and discussing more often. I have always felt that bringing such topics out in the open will help us grow as a country."

Ayushmann adds, "I will continue on my journey to make as much positive change happen around me as possible. That's my biggest motivation as an artist."



ADVANTAGE CHELSEA

Giroud helps Frank's side edge out Norwich & inch closer to top-four finish

AFP ■ LONDON

Frank Lampard admitted Chelsea are struggling with nerves as they chase a place in the Champions League next season after Olivier Giroud scored the only goal in a 1-0 win over already relegated Norwich at Stamford Bridge on Tuesday.

Victory opens up a four-point lead for third-placed Chelsea over Leicester and Manchester United, who both have a game in hand later this week.

But Lampard knows there is still plenty of work to do with a trip to champions Liverpool and sixth-placed Wolves visiting Stamford Bridge on the last day of the season to come in Chelsea's final two league games of the season.

"I want more but that can wait. Where we are at as a team and our position in the table, three points is everything," said Lampard.

"If we want to really move on then it can be better. It's not easy, there is a nervy feeling there for understandable reasons."

Lampard made five changes from the battering at Bramall



Chelsea's Olivier Giroud celebrates after scoring goal Chelsea/Twitter

Lane with Giroud among those restored to the starting line-up.

Chelsea have already significantly bolstered their frontline for next season with the signings of Timo Werner and Hakim Ziyech.

But Giroud has more than justified the decision to also extend his contract by a year during football's shutdown as Chelsea's most potent striker since the restart.

"He's a big character for us and scoring important goals," added Lampard.

Giroud saw a number of

chances come and go in the first half as an attempted lob over Tim Krul fell gently into the Dutch keeper's arms before he sliced well over the bar when unmarked inside the area.

Christian Pulisic forced Krul into his best save of the first-half with a powerful drive that was just too close to the former Newcastle stopper.

Just as Norwich looked set to hold out until the break Giroud shrugged off Timm Klose to connect with Pulisic's cross for his fifth goal in eight

"The game was OK but results are critical. We could have won by more, we could have been a bit better with our quality"

— FRANK LAMPARD

games. "I missed some I don't miss usually," said Giroud. "I lost a bit of confidence but my desire to score was bigger, so I just tried to stay focused and on the cross of Christian I anticipated this header."

Norwich's long-awaited fate of a return to the Championship was confirmed in a 4-0 thrashing at the hands of West Ham on Saturday.

There was more defiance from the Canaries in defence, but they failed to score for the seventh time in their last eight games to slump to a ninth straight defeat.

Daniel Farke's men failed to even test Chelsea goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga or a defence that has been under the microscope for conceding 49 goals already in the league this season with a shot on target.

PL transfer window to run for 10 weeks

LONDON: Premier League clubs have agreed a 10-week summer transfer window, which will open on July 27.

Subject to the approval of football's world governing body FIFA, the window will open the day after the 2019/20 league season finishes and end on October 5, the date UEFA had recommended for the closure of registration periods across Europe.

The Premier League said that following consultation with the English Football

League, a domestic-only window will also be added from October 5 and close on October 16.

Transfers between Premier League clubs will not be able to occur during this period, but top-flight sides can trade with EFL clubs and loan or sign players permanently.

The EFL confirmed its window would open on the same day as the Premier League's but clubs would have an extra two weeks for domestic-only business. AFP

5 subs rule extended by 1 year

ZURICH: An interim rule allowing football teams to use five substitutes per match during the schedule congestion caused by the coronavirus pandemic was extended on Wednesday through next season.

Football's law-making panel, said the option of using two extra replacements would continue in the 2020-21 season and for national team competitions into next August, when the Tokyo Olympic tournaments end. AP



Atalanta's Mario Pasalic celebrates after scoring a goal against Brescia AP

Great entertainers

Pasalic nets hat-trick as free-scoring Atalanta thump Brescia to go second

AFP ■ BERGAMO

games to the maximum."

Mario Pasalic scored a hat-trick as Atalanta brushed aside struggling local rivals Brescia 6-2 to move second in Serie A on Tuesday.

Gian Piero Gasperini's side extended their unbeaten league run to 13 games to move six points behind leaders Juventus who visit eighth-placed Sassuolo on Wednesday.

Inter Milan and Lazio are two points behind Atalanta before they play against SPAL and Udinese respectively later this week.

Gasperini's side have scored 93 league goals so far this season — 26 more than eight-time reigning champions Juventus.

"We don't do it to humiliate the opponent, but we try to play our game," said Gasperini.

"Already last year we were the best attack in the league, this year we have surpassed ourselves, scoring many goals with many different players."

"Playing in the Champions League has helped us and made us grow," added Gasperini, whose side will play Paris Saint-Germain in the last eight next month.

"We are preparing for Paris Saint-Germain, but also want to fight to the end in Serie A."

"I think the best way to be ready for August 12 will be to play these last five league

Atalanta's top scorer Luis Muriel, with 17 league goals this season, watched from the stands but his absence was not felt with Croatian Pasalic opening the scoring within two minutes at the Gewiss Stadium connecting with a Ruslan Malinovskyi cross.

Brescia hit back minutes later with Ernesto Torregrossa pouncing on Atalanta defender Mattia Caldara's poor clearance.

But the hosts got back into their stride and were four-goals up after half an hour with Marten De Roon, Malinovskyi and a Duvan Zapata header within a five-minute spell.

The punishment continued in the second half with Malinovskyi again setting up Pasalic to beat Lorenzo Andreancci in the Brescia goal after 55 minutes.

The Croatian added a third three minutes later sending in Ebrima Colley's cross for his ninth goal this season, five of them against Brescia, having scored a brace in the away leg last November.

"It's the best moment of my career," said Pasalic after his maiden hat-trick.

"There are still five games left and we can do even better. Nikolas Spalek pulled a goal back for Brescia who move closer to Serie B next season."

Rashford to receive doctorate for campaigning

MANCHESTER: Manchester United forward Marcus Rashford is set to become the youngest recipient of an honorary doctorate from the University of Manchester for his campaign to help needy children.

Rashford earned widespread praise after the England forward successfully campaigned for school food vouchers to be provided over the summer holidays in Britain, revealing that he had relied on



such support as a boy. The 22-year-old will join club greats Alex Ferguson and

Bobby Charlton in receiving the honorary doctorate.

"It's a proud day for myself and my family. When you look at the great names that have been awarded this doctorate in the past, it's humbling," Rashford said.

"We still have a long way to go in the fight to combat child poverty in this country but receiving recognition from your city means we're heading in the right direction... that means a lot." Agencies



Real Madrid vs Villarreal Live from 12:30am IST FACEBOOK

Madrid get chance to clinch league title

AP ■ MADRID

The Spanish league trophy will be sitting by the field at the Alfredo Di Stefano Stadium on Thursday, with Real Madrid a win away from lifting it for the first time in three years.

Madrid will have its first chance to clinch the title when it hosts Villarreal at home following a long season that was in jeopardy because of the coronavirus pandemic.

It enters the second-to-last round with a four-point lead over Barcelona, which faces Osasuna at the Camp Nou at the same time.

Madrid needs two points from its last two matches to secure its 34th league title — and first since 2017. It can also lift the trophy with a loss if Barcelona fails to defeat Osasuna.

It would be Madrid's first league title since Cristiano Ronaldo left to join Juventus two seasons ago, and the first since coach Zinedine Zidane returned from a short break.

Barcelona won the last two league titles and was at the top this season when the coronavirus pandemic struck, but Madrid has been perfect since the break, winning nine straight. "When we returned from the confinement after being

stuck at home for almost three months, I could see that the players wanted to achieve something big," Zidane said on Wednesday.

"I could see it during the training sessions, I could see it in how they were practising."

Madrid had lost three of its last four matches before the league was halted in March.

Barcelona seemed in control but endured an up-and-down run after the break, drawing three matches and losing its advantage at the top.

Coch Quisque Setien, under pressure because of the team's results and lackluster performances, knows his club faces a tough task trying to overcome Madrid's advantage.

Barcelona has won eight of the last 11 league titles, with Madrid lifting the trophy in 2017 and 2012.

Madrid will face a Villarreal team that is sitting fifth in the standings and fighting for a Europa League berth.

It had one of the best runs following the coronavirus break, winning six of its nine matches.

"It will be one of our most difficult matches," Zidane said. "It's a very tough rival, a very good team."

Barcelona's opponent, Osasuna, is in 11th place.

4 games/day confirmed for 2022 World Cup

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 2022 World Cup will have four games every day in a 12-day group stage and matches later in the tournament that go into extra time will extend past midnight in Qatar.

FIFA released the schedule for the first World Cup to be played in November and December on Wednesday, with

kickoff times at 1 pm (1000 GMT), 4 pm (1300 GMT), 7 pm (1600 GMT) and 10 pm (1900 GMT).

Host Qatar will open the Middle East's first World Cup in the 60,000-capacity Al Bayt Stadium at 1 pm on

November 21. The final start at 6 pm on December 18 at the 80,000-capacity Lusail Stadium.

Eight venues in close proximity to Doha will be used at the tournament, which will be played in 28 days rather than the 32 days used at the last World Cup in Russia to minimize the disruption to

the European season. Teams and fans will not need to fly around Qatar because stadiums are within a 30-mile radius.

Both semifinals — like some games in the previous rounds — will kick off at 10 pm and will spill over into the next day if there is extra time, or even just long injury and VAR delays in regular time.

India's home series vs Eng set to be postponed

NEW DELHI: The Indian cricket team's six-match limited-overs home series against England scheduled in September is all set to be postponed along with New Zealand's visit of the country next month due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The BCCI is yet to make any formal announcement in this regard but it is expected that it will happen soon.

"England were supposed to play six games (three ODIs and three T20Is) during late September. Obviously in the current circumstances England won't be travelling to India," a senior BCCI official said.

India's Future Tours and Program (FTP) calendar will be among the main topics of discussion during the BCCI Apex Council meeting on Friday.

"But I guess a formal announcement will happen once the FTP issue is discussed as it's part of the agenda during Friday's Apex Council meeting. New Zealand A had a tour of India scheduled in August and even that's also unlikely to go ahead," the official said.

According to reports in the British media, the white ball tour may now happen in September, next year.

No July 19 resumption of hockey camps as Bengaluru goes into lockdown

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The national camps for Indian men's and women's hockey teams will not resume as planned on July 19 at Bengaluru SAI Centre with the rising Covid-19 case count forcing the city into a complete seven-day lockdown.

The grave situation in the southern metropolis has left the Sports Authority of India (SAI) with no choice but to defer its plans.

Enjoying a break at their respective native places after being confined to their rooms at the SAI Centre for two months due to the nationwide lockdown, the players

had been expected to return to base by July 19.

A SAI source in Bengaluru, however, confirmed to PTI that there is no way the national camps can resume on the earlier earmarked date under the current circumstances.

"We didn't get any such instruction till now about resumption of hockey camps. On June 18, we were just being asked to allow the players to leave for their homes but no intimation has been given to us on resumption of camps," the source said.

"Frankly speaking, it is impossible to resume camps now because

Bengaluru is under complete lockdown till July 22. The cases are increasing everyday and there is a possibility that the lockdown would be extended till the end of this month."

Although the SAI headquarters here is yet to take a formal decision on the matter, Hockey India's de-recognition by the Sports Ministry, along with 53 other National Sports Federations (NSFs), as per the Delhi High Court's order, has made the situation complex.

"We can't make any comment on national camps or anything as we are de-recognised by the ministry now," a HI official said.

Big Bash to start amid India tour

MELBOURNE: The 10th season of the Big Bash League (BBL) will coincide with the much-anticipated India's tour of Australia, the host board announced on Wednesday unveiling a 61-match schedule for the country's premier T20 event.

According to the schedule released by Cricket Australia (CA), the BBL will begin on December 3 with a clash between Strikers and Renegades at the Adelaide Oval, shortly after the end of day one of the opening Test between India and Australia in Brisbane. The final has



been set for February 6 next year. The 59-game Women's BBL will be played from October 17

until November 29.

"While the Covid-19 pandemic may yet force alterations to the summer of cricket, today's announcement confirms the commitment to a full 61-game schedule, including the return of the five-team finals format," the CA said.

As per the schedule, the BBL will run for eight nights before taking a five-day break for Australia's day-night Test with India to be held from Dec 11-15 at Adelaide Oval. PTI

Root returns for Old Trafford Test

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Fresh from becoming a father of two, Joe Root will be reinstated as England captain on Thursday with his team in very familiar territory.

With Root absent so he could be with his wife for the birth of their second child, England lost the first Test against the West Indies last week in what was the first international cricket match since the sport's shutdown.

With the series against the West Indies being only three Tests, England had to bounce back immediately and Root's return is clearly a positive.

The captain will take the place of Joe Denly, who made 18 and 29 in his two innings at the Rose Bowl and was fighting

with Zak Crawley to keep his spot for the second Test at Old Trafford. Crawley had England's highest single score with 76 in the second innings.

There is likely to be a change in the bowling attack, too, with Stuart Broad pushing for a recall after being dropped for the first Test — and then speaking publicly about his disappointment during the match.

Root said any decision would be taken after he took a look at the Old Trafford pitch again later Wednesday.

There has been rain in Manchester and Root

described the wicket as having a "nice brownish colour."

Continuity has been key for England when it comes to selection in recent years, which may prove a blessing for Jos Buttler. The wicketkeeper-batsman — a limited-overs specialist — has a Test average of 23.22 since the start of 2019, and only one century in 75 innings, but is set to keep his place.

The West Indies are holders of the Wisden Trophy after beating England in a home series last year,

so will retain it with a draw in the first of back-to-back Tests in Manchester.

And they are looking to seal a first Test series victory in England in 32 years. Not since 1992-93 — when the likes of Brian Lara, Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose were in their pomp — have the West Indies won an overseas Test series consisting of more than two matches against major opposition.

"I haven't mentioned anything about history to the guys," West Indies captain Jason Holder said.

"It's hard for us to get caught up in the peripheral stuff. Winning the first Test match is just one piece of the puzzle. We've got two other games to play and we don't get ahead of ourselves."

Extended preparations played key part in win: Simmons

MANCHESTER: Windies coach Phil Simmons believes that the extended preparations after early arrival due to Covid-19 protocols have actually played a key part in his side's four-wicket win in the first Test. West Indies, who arrived in England on June 9 and trained in a bio-secure environment after that, beat the home side by four wickets on the final day of the first Test.

"I think that has been the biggest influence on the performance. The fact that we've been here for that period of time, we've had quality bowling in the nets because we've had nearly 11 seamers here, you can't put a price on that," he said on the eve of the second Test.

"I don't like to go back into my (playing) days, but we would come to England and play something like three or four proper warm-up games before the first Test, and we would also have

three-day or four-day games in between the Test matches. So I think that period of training goes a long way to how we performed in that first Test."

While praising the resolve of his players in the first Test, he warned the West Indies cricketers to guard against complacency.

"For me it was a great win because I think that it signified a lot of hard work being done by the players over the last four or five weeks. It was a top-class Test match, with good cricket played by both teams, and even coming down to the last hour, it could have gone either way. "But you guard against complacency by just trying to do the same things you did before the first Test. Right now that Test match is history. We've got to be thinking about what we do from Thursday to Monday," the 57-year-old former all-rounder said. PTI

SINGLES

BENFICA KEEP SLIM TITLE HOPES ALIVE

LISBON: Benfica kept their slim hopes of winning the Portuguese title alive as a first-half goal from midfielder Chiquinho and a late second from Haris Seferovic gave them a hard-fought 2-0 home win over Vitoria de Guimaraes. The victory leaves Benfica on 71 points after 32 games, five behind leaders Porto. Having beaten Benfica twice this season, Porto will secure 29th league title if they can manage at least a draw with Sporting.

MORTAZA RECOVERS FROM COVID-19

DHAKA: Former Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Mortaza has recovered from Covid-19 after treatment at home for the dreaded virus since June 20. Mortaza announced the negative result of his test on his Facebook page. His wife Sumona Haque is yet to recover from the disease. Two other players — Nafees Iqbal and Nazmul Islam — have also recovered after undergoing treatment at home.

TAMIM, MAHMUDULLAH TURN DOWN CPL OFFERS

DHAKA: Bangladesh ODI captain Tamim Iqbal and T20I skipper Mahmudullah Riyad on Wednesday confirmed they have opted against taking part in this year's CPL. Citing concerns related to coronavirus pandemic, Mahmudullah turned down the offer to feature in the league. While Tamim declined the offer to remain available for Dhaka Premier League, in case it resumes in August.

AKINFENWA INVITED TO LIVERPOOL TITLE PARADE

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said he has invited Adebayo Akinfenwa to their Premier League title parade shortly after sending the forward a congratulatory message for sealing promotion to the Championship. After Wanderers beat Oxford United in the League One playoff final to secure their place in the English second-tier for the first time, Akinfenwa had joked that Klopp could "hit me up on WhatsApp". The German manager had responded with a video message and said that Akinfenwa would also be part of their title celebration when it happens.

DAKAR YOUTH OLYMPICS POSTPONED TO 2026

LAUSANNE: The International Olympic Committee has postponed the 2022 Dakar Youth Olympics for four years due to the coronavirus pandemic. IOC President Thomas Bach said the delay was discussed two days ago in a telephone conversation with Senegal President Macky Sall. The Youth Summer Games would be the first Olympics organized in Africa.

6 PEOPLE RETURNED COVID-19 POSITIVE: CSA

JOHANNESBURG: Cricket South Africa (CSA) on Wednesday said six people have returned positive for the dreaded coronavirus but none of them are cricketers following approximately 50 tests conducted ahead of the 3TeamCricket match on Saturday. CSA however did not reveal who were the six positive people from among those tested for the dreaded disease.

PCB LOOK TO START DOMESTIC SEASON IN OCT

KARACHI: The Pakistan Cricket Board is planning to start its delayed domestic cricket season from early October at select venues across the country. "The idea is to have a reduced domestic season at less venues to limit the travel and moving about off players, coaches and officials," a source said. He said a final decision on the domestic cricket schedule would be taken in early September so there is time for preparations.

HUMPY, HARIKA ADVANCE TO LAST EIGHT

CHENNAI: India's Koneru Humpy and D Harika advanced to the quarterfinals of the fourth and final leg of Women Speed Chess Championships on Wednesday. Agencies