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SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL
LEARNING IS KEY

Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

*Late City Vol. 30 Issue 320
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 18, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



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Punish terror sponsor nations: PM

At BRICS summit, Modi also calls for reforms in UNSC, IMF, WTO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Advocating a tough stance against terrorism, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday urged the international community to call out nations backing this scourge and they must be "brought to book." He also favoured reforms in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Modi made these observations during his address at the Brazil-Russia-China-South Africa (BRICS) conclave. The virtual event was attended by heads of Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa.

President Vladimir Putin hosted the high-powered conclave. Besides Modi and Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro attended the meeting. The 12th summit's theme was "Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth."

Incidentally, this was the second time Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping were coming face to face albeit virtually since the stand-offs started between the two nations in Eastern Ladakh in May.

During the first meeting at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on November 10, Modi in a veiled reference to China's expansionist policy said, "India believes that to improve connectivity it is important to



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses members during the BRICS summit, via video conferencing, in New Delhi, on Tuesday

respect the other's sovereignty and territorial integrity." Prime Minister Imran Khan was also present at that event.

Modi said, "Terrorism is the biggest problem facing the world today. We have to ensure that the countries that support and assist the terrorists are held accountable, and this problem is tackled in an organised manner."

The Prime Minister was apparently underlining the role of Pakistan in fanning cross-border terrorism in India and China's support to it.

He congratulated Russia for the finalisation of the BRICS counter-terrorism strategy under its leadership and promised that India will take forward the matter during its leadership next year.

With the world battling coronavirus pandemic, the Prime Minister highlighted India's contribution to the

international community during the crisis.

Modi said due to the strength of India's pharmaceutical sector, India was able to provide medicines to over 150 countries during lockdown. He assured the BRICS nations that India's coronavirus vaccine production and delivery ability will help mankind in the same way.

As India will be taking over the chairmanship of the BRICS in 2021, Modi announced that his country will promote digital health and traditional medicine among BRICS countries.

The summit held against the backdrop of the 75th anniversary of the UN, the leaders discussed intra-BRICS cooperation and key issues in the global context, including the reform of the multilateral system, measures to mitigate the impact of the ongoing

Covid-19 pandemic, cooperation in counter terrorism, trade, health, energy and people to people exchanges.

Modi highlighted his Government's flagship Atmanirbhar Bharat or Self-Reliant India campaign on the BRICS platform. The Prime Minister said the campaign will instill a comprehensive reform process, which can help India become a strong contributor to the global value chains in the post-Covid era.

"We have started a comprehensive reform process under the 'Self-reliant India' campaign. The campaign is based on the belief that a self-reliant and resilient India post-Covid can be a force multiplier for the global economy and make a strong contribution to the global value chains," Modi said.

He also called for urgent reforms in the United Nations

to ensure that the organisation remains relevant. Being a founding nation of the United Nations, India has always upheld its values of multilateralism, "but the organisation has not kept up with the changing times," he said. The Prime Minister also stressed the need to reform UN Security Council as well as organisations like IMF and WTO.

The Prime Minister also highlighted reform initiatives undertaken by his government under the 'self-reliant India' campaign.

"We have started a comprehensive reform process under the 'Self-reliant India' campaign. The campaign is based on the belief that a self-reliant and resilient India post-Covid can be a force multiplier for the global economy and make a strong contribution to the global value chains," the PM said.

Delhi plans to shut down markets to contain Covid

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In view of alarming surge in coronavirus cases in the national Capital, the Delhi Government on Tuesday sent a proposal to the Centre seeking power to shut down markets which may emerge as Covid hotspots.

In another proposal sent to the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G), the Government sought to permit only 50 people to attend wedding functions now against the earlier limit of 200 people.

Addressing the media, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said, "Following the Central Government's guidelines and considering the marriage season, the Delhi Government earlier allowed 200 guests at the marriage functions. Earlier, this number was 50 but considering the recent spike in the number of corona cases, the Delhi Government has decided to withdraw this relaxation. I have sent the proposal to the L-G for his approval."

The CM said, "We witnessed massive crowds in some of the popular markets of Delhi before Diwali. In these markets, no social distancing was followed and due to this situation, the number of Covid-19 cases has surged significantly in the Capital. In the last order passed by the Central Government, it was noted that permission to impose local lockdowns in the State should be taken from the Centre. We have requested the Centre to permit shutting

Seeks Centre's permission, suggests 50 people cap on wedding functions

down markets if necessary." Kejriwal thanked the Centre for providing 750 additional ICU beds for Covid patients in Delhi. He appealed to the people of Delhi to wear masks and follow social distancing norms to protect themselves from Covid.

Continued on Page 2

Centre unhappy at laxity in SOP implementation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan on Tuesday at a Press briefing expressed disappointment over laxity in the implementation of the Central SOPs in Delhi despite the national Capital having more than 4,000 containment zones.

He noted that now, an active case search and house to house surveillance need to be stepped up in Delhi.

The Centre's intervention follows emergence of "unprecedented situation" in Delhi, which, experts said, could worsen in coming weeks with Covid-19 cases rising to 500 cases per million population.

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People coming from Delhi to Noida to be randomly tested

Noida: People coming from Delhi to Noida will be randomly tested for Covid-19 from Wednesday, the administration of Gautam Buddha Nagar, adjoining Delhi, in Uttar Pradesh said.

DIP IN CASES, INDIA RECORDS 29,163

New Delhi: The number of new coronavirus infections reported in a day ropped below 30,000 after four months, taking India's COVID-19 caseload to 88.74 lakh, while the number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 82,90,370 according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday.

SPUTNIK V COULD BE PRODUCED IN INDIA

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday suggested that Russia's Sputnik V vaccine against Covid-19 could be produced in China and India, which are members of the five-nation BRICS bloc.

Lakshmi Vilas Bank withdrawal capped

₹25,000 withdrawal limit till Dec 16, Govt announces LVB merger with DBS India

PTI ■ MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

The Government on Tuesday imposed a 30-day moratorium on Lakshmi Vilas Bank, restricting cash withdrawals at ₹25,000 per depositor, and simultaneously announced a scheme to merge the cash-strapped lender with DBS India.

Singapore's DBS will infuse ₹2,500 crore into DBS Bank India for the proposed merger with cash-strapped Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB).

The step was taken on the advice of the Reserve Bank in view of the private sector banks

deteriorating financial health.

The Reserve Bank also superseded the board of LVB and appointed TN Manoharan, former non-executive chairman of Canara Bank, as its administrator for 30 days.

The RBI placed in the public domain a draft scheme of amalgamation of LVB with DBS Bank India Ltd (DBIL).

DBS Bank India, in a statement, said the proposed amalgamation will provide stability and better prospects to LVB's depositors, customers and employees.

"To support the amalgamation, DBS will inject ₹2,500

crore (SGD 463 million) into DBIL if the scheme is approved. This will be fully funded from DBS' existing resources," it said.

LVB is the second private sector bank after Yes Bank which has run into rough weather during this year.

In March, capital-starved Yes Bank was placed under a moratorium. The government rescued it by asking state-run SBI to infuse ₹7,250 crore and take 45 per cent stake in the bank.

The Department of Financial Services, in a gazette notification, said LVB "shall not, without the permission in writing of the Reserve Bank of India, make, in the aggregate, payment to a depositor of a

sum exceeding ₹25,000 lying to his credit, in any savings, current or any other deposit account" during the moratorium period up to December 16, 2020.

However, the bank can make payment in excess of ₹25,000 to meet unforeseen expenses in connection with medical treatment of a depositor or any dependent person, or towards the cost of higher education of the person/dependants.

Besides, the Central bank can permit the bank to disburse more than ₹25,000 for payment towards obligatory expenses in connection with marriage or other ceremonies or any other unavoidable emergency.

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CAPSULE

PAEDOPHILE JE HELD, USED TO SELL VIDEOS

New Delhi: The CBI has arrested a junior engineer of UP's irrigation department for sexual exploitation of children for last 10 years and selling videos and photographs of his nefarious acts on dark web to other paedophiles across the globe, officials said on Tuesday.

FREE SMARTPHONES IN ODISHA NAXAL HOTBED

Bhubaneswar: Striving to transform the Naxal hotbed in the "cut-off area" of Odisha's Malkangiri district into one of the developed places of the State, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday said smartphones will be provided free of cost to all households in the region.

BENCHMARKS SCALE ALL TIME HIGH

Mumbai: Equity indices rallied to all-time highs on Tuesday, driven by banking, finance and metal stocks, as encouraging data from another Covid-19 vaccine trial bolstered investor sentiment. After touching its lifetime peak of 44,161.16 during the session, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 314.73 points higher at its new closing record of 43,952.71.

3 DIE AFTER DRINKING SPURIOUS LIQUOR

Firozabad: Three men died in Uttar Pradesh's Firozabad district on Tuesday allegedly after consuming spurious liquor.

Cong clears air, distances itself from 'Gupkar'

Party raps Shah for misleading statements

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Tuesday distanced itself from Gupkar alliance after Home Minister Amit Shah sought clarification from Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi about their stand on the agenda put forth by a conglomeration of leaders from the Kashmir valley.

In a series of tweets Shah termed Gupkar "gang" as an unholy alliance and said Sonia and Rahul must clarify their stand clear to people of India.

Hitting out at Shah, Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said, "To spread lies, fraud and creating new illusions have become the way of the Modi Government. It's a shame that Home Minister Amit Shah is keeping aside the responsibility of the national security and is making false, misleading and mischievous statements on Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh... Congress party is not a part of Gupkar alliance."

Shah alleged that the "Gupkar Gang is going global" and wants foreign forces to intervene in Jammu & Kashmir.

Continued on Page 2

It's not a gang, but legitimate alliance: Omar, Mehbooba slam Amit Shah

PNS ■ JAMMU

Union Home Minister Amit Shah's tweet labeling People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) as "Gupkar Gang" triggered a fresh war of words between him and two former Chief Ministers of Jammu & Kashmir, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti, in the virtual world on Tuesday.

Reacting sharply, Omar tweeted, "We are not a 'gang' Amit Shah ji, we are a legitimate political alliance having fought & continuing to fight elections, much to your disappointment."

Continued on Page 2

Rain, wind help clean up Delhi's air to moderate

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Sporadic rain and stronger winds improved the air quality significantly in the national Capital to the "moderate" category on Tuesday.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board's mobile application SAMEER, the city recorded an air quality index of 168, which falls in the "moderate" category, much better than Monday's AQI of 221, which falls in the "poor" category.

However, Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor, SAFAR, said the improvement will be short-lived and the AQI is likely to slip back into the "poor" category on Thursday.

The city's 24-hour average AQI was 435 on Sunday and 414 on Saturday. An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

"Surface winds are west-southwesterly and energetic, very favourable for pollutant dispersion. Rainfall along with stronger winds under the influence of western disturbance helped clean the build-up of pollution in the Indo-Gangetic Plain," it said.

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UP junior engineer in CBI net for sexual abuse of children

New Delhi: The CBI has arrested a junior engineer of Uttar Pradesh irrigation department for alleged sexual exploitation of children for last 10 years and selling videos and photographs of his nefarious acts on dark web to other paedophiles across the globe, officials said Tuesday.

He is alleged to have victimised about 50 children in the age group of 5-16 years in the districts of Chitrakoot, Banda and Hamirpur, they said.

The junior engineer is understood to have given details of his activities during preliminary questioning by CBI investigators.

He is believed to have told that he was silently operating in the adjoining districts of Hamirpur, Banda and Chitrakoot for last 10 years preying upon poor children between 5-16 years of age, the officials said. He used to buy their silence using cash

He is alleged to have victimised about 50 children in the age group of 5-16 years in the districts of Chitrakoot, Banda and Hamirpur

and gifts of electronic gadgets such as mobile phones, they said.

The modus operandi adopted by the accused helped

him to keep away from the radar of investigating agencies.

The newly set up special CBI unit handling online child sexual abuse has started tracking and apprehending paedophiles operating on the internet and busted his alleged activities after trailing him for days, the officials said.

The junior engineer, a resident of Chitrakoot district, was arrested from Banda by the

special unit of the CBI specialising in Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention/ Investigation (OCSAE) in one such operation.

"Apart from the physical abuse of these children, the accused also allegedly recorded their acts using their mobile phones, laptops and other electronic devices. It was further alleged that these photographs and video films containing child sexual abuse mate-

rial were published and transmitted by the accused using the internet," CBI spokesperson RK Gaur said.

He was produced before a court which sent him to one day of judicial custody. "Searches were conducted at the residence of accused which led to recovery of cash of Rs. Eight lakh (approximately), mobile phones, laptops, web-camera and other electronic storage devices including pen drives,

memory cards and several sex toys," Gaur said.

It is alleged that he was selling, circulating and sharing child sexual abuse material with other paedophiles globally using dark web and cloud services having servers abroad, the officials said.

Dark web are internet websites, pages and material which are specially encrypted and remain hidden from search engines. "The

scrutiny of the emails of the accused has revealed that he was allegedly in constant touch with several individuals (both Indian and foreign nationals) for the purpose of sharing child sexual abuse material. The accused has allegedly created and shared huge quantity of child sexual abusive material, over the years, through the internet using various social media platforms and websites over dark web." **PTI**

Free smartphones for all households in Odisha's Naxal hotbed: Naveen

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha CM also urged Left-wing extremists to shun violence and become a part of developmental activities in the region. Promising to usher in development and transformation in Odisha's Malkangiri district, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday said smartphones will be provided free of cost to all households in the region. He also called upon Left-wing extremists (LWE) to shun violence, return to the mainstream and become part of developmental activities in the region.

"The 'cut-off area' of Malkangiri always remains in my heart, and I will try my best to make it one of the developed areas in the state," Patnaik said. Malkangiri constitutes 52 revenue villages, now renamed as "Swabhiman Anchal" after the chief minister inaugurated the Gurupriya bridge connecting the region with the mainland. The region is surrounded by sea on three sides and shares a border with Andhra Pradesh.

household will improve connectivity in the region and help students with their studies. The CM also added that four mobile phone towers have already been installed in the area, while another three with 4G network will be operational soon.

"A package of Rs 100 crore under SETU (Socio-Economic Transformation and Upliftment) programme for development of the area was announced in July 2018 during inauguration of the Gurupriya bridge. The amount has been increased to Rs 250 crore now," Patnaik said.

Work for 3311 KV sub-stations will be completed soon, the CM said adding, a total of Rs 100 crore will be spent for construction of concrete roads in all the villages and seven bridges in the area. A mega water supply pipe project at the cost of Rs 20 crore has also been initiated, while work for 250 tube wells is complete, the CM said. An amount of Rs 32 crore will be spent for 43 lift irrigation projects and 419 cluster deep borewells, which will provide irrigation to 1,700 hectares of land, Patnaik added. **PTI**

People coming from Delhi to Noida to be randomly tested for Covid from today

New Delhi: People coming from Delhi to Noida will be randomly tested for Covid-19 from Wednesday, the administration of Gautam Buddh Nagar, adjoining the national Capital, in Uttar

Pradesh said.

The decision for random sampling came during an online meeting of senior administration and health department officials with District Magistrate Suhas LY on Tuesday amid a spike in Covid-19 cases in Delhi.

There will be no restriction on the free movement of people between Noida and Delhi, Suhas told PTI.

"In view of the rising cases of coronavirus in Delhi, the district magistrate has directed officials to form teams that would be deployed at Noida-Delhi borders at DND and Chilla to randomly check people coming from the national capital for the infection," he said.

The district magistrate said the recent rise in cases in Gautam Buddh Nagar because of which the strategy to fight the pandemic is being "re-tuned".

"This rise has been due to cross-border infection from areas like Delhi and others. So, a random sampling of such people will be done and all institutions (here) will be issued advisory to look out for symptomatic people, track them early and provide them with whatever treatment is required," Suhas told reporters.

He said there was an increased cross-border movement of people during the recent days of festivals, hence the coming few days are going to be "crucial" and the health department has also been directed to make adequate preparations in hospitals. He also appealed to the people to follow all Covid-19 protocols like wearing masks or covers, practising social distancing in public places and avoiding casual approach against the infection. The random sampling will be done by a rapid antigen-based test, the DM said.

Gautam Buddh Nagar has recorded 20,566 cases of Covid-19 including 73 deaths, with 1,236 active cases, according to official data on Tuesday.

However, Delhi has recorded over one lakh new coronavirus cases and around 1,200 deaths between November 1 and November 16 while nearly 94,000 patients recovered during the same period, according to official data.

Downward Covid trend continues in Maha, 68 die, 2,840 test +ve

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The downward Covid-19 trend continued in Maharashtra on Tuesday, as the State recorded 68 new deaths and 2,840 fresh infections.

With 68 fresh deaths, the Covid-19 toll crossed 46,000 mark in Maharashtra and touched a figure of 46102.

Similarly, with fresh infections, the total infections

jumped from 17,47,242 on Sunday to 17,52,509 on Tuesday.

As 5123 more people were discharged from various hospitals the number of people discharged from the hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year went up to 16,23,503. The recovery rate in the state rose marginally from to 92.45 per cent on Sunday to 92.64 per cent on

Tuesday.

Of the 68 deaths reported, Mumbai accounted for a maximum of 14 deaths, while there 11 deaths in Pune, 7 in Thane, 6 in Solapur, 4 in Beed, 3 each in Nashik, Sangli, Aurangabad and Jalna, 2 each in Jalgaon, Satara, Kolhapur, Sindhudurg and Chandrapur and one death 1 each in Palghar, Latur, Osmanabad and Nagpur. With 14 deaths, the Covid-

19 toll in Mumbai climbed from 10,585 to 10,599 while the infected cases rose by a relatively low 544 cases to trigger a jump in the total infections in the metropolis from 2,70,116 to 2,70,660.

Meanwhile, the number of "active cases" total cases rose from 84,918 on Sunday to 81,925 on Tuesday. The fatality rate in the state stood at 2.63 per cent.

Pune district, which continued to be the worst-affected city-district in Maharashtra, saw the total number of cases increase from 3,41,877 on Sunday to 3,42,547, while the total number of deaths in Pune increased from 7156 on Sunday to 7176.

Thane district remained in the third spot -- after Pune and Mumbai -- after the total number of infections rose from

2,31,239 on Sunday to 2,31,813 on Tuesday, while the pandemic toll climbed from 5389 on Sunday to 5401 on Tuesday.

Currently, 7,91,120 people are in home quarantine while 5367 people are in institutional quarantine.

In a related development, out of 98,47,120 samples sent to laboratories, 17,52,509 have tested positive (17.8 per cent) for COVID-19 until Tuesday.

Delhi plans to shut down markets to contain Covid

From Page 1

Kejriwal said, "the Central Government, Delhi Government, AIIMS, ICMR, DRDO and all the agencies are working together to tackle the corona situation of the Capital. But we would not be able to combat the situation without the help of the citizens. It is very important for every citizen to follow the safety guidelines. I appeal to all the citizens of Delhi to always wear a mask and maintain social distancing."

On Monday, Health Minister Satyendar Jain had said there was no chance of re-imposition of lockdown in the national Capital since the third wave of the coronavirus has peaked out in the city.

Jain had also said the virus cannot be contained through lockdown and that people should protect themselves by wearing face masks. Delhi has witnessed a spurt in coronavirus cases since October 28 when the daily rise breached the 5,000-mark for the first time and it crossed the 8,000-mark on Wednesday.

On Thursday, 104 coronavirus-related deaths, the highest in over five months, were recorded in the city. On Monday, Delhi recorded 3,797 fresh Covid-19 cases, taking the infection tally in the national Capital to over 4.89 lakh, even as 99 new fatalities pushed the toll to 7,713. These relatively low numbers of fresh cases came out of the 29,871 tests conducted on Sunday.

It's not a gang, but legitimate alliance: Omar, Mehbooba...

From Page 1

Following in the footsteps of Omar, PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti also posted a series of tweets targeting BJP top brass. She wrote, "The BJP's stale tactic of dividing India by projecting themselves as saviours and political opponents as internal and imagined enemies is far too predictable now."

In a separate statement, the National Conference also rejected the allegations made by the Home Minister as a bout of frustration on account of PAGDs participation in the DDC elections.

Fueling the debate, Omar tweeted, "Only in J&K can leaders be detained & called anti-national for participating in elections & supporting the democratic process. The truth is all those who oppose the ideology of the BJP are labelled 'corrupt & anti-national'."

"I can understand the frustration behind this attack by the Hon'ble Home Minister. He had been briefed that the People's Alliance was preparing

to boycott elections. This would have allowed the BJP & newly formed King's party a free run in J&K. We didn't oblige them."

On the other hand, Mehbooba Mufti also commented on her twitter handle by claiming, "Love jihad, tukde tukde and now Gupkar Gang dominates the political discourse instead of (issues) like rising unemployment and inflation," she said.

The PDP chief also wondered whether fighting elections in an alliance is also anti-national now. "BJP can stitch as many alliances in its hunger for power but somehow we are undermining national interest by putting up a united front," she said.

"Old habits die hard. Earlier BJP's narrative was that the tukde tukde gang threatened India's sovereignty and they are now using 'Gupkar Gang' euphemism to project us as anti-nationals. Irony died a million deaths since it's BJP itself that violates the Constitution day in and day out," she tweeted.

Cong clears...

From Page 1

The conglomerate of regional and national political parties in Jammu & Kashmir was formed defending the restoration of the Article 370, scrapped last year.

"Congress and the Gupkar Gang want to take J&K back to the era of terror and turmoil. They want to take away rights of Dalits, women and tribals that we have ensured by removing Article 370. This is why they're being rejected by the people everywhere," he said. Shah said Jammu & Kashmir has been, is and will always remain an integral part of India and the people of the country will no longer tolerate an unholy 'global gathbandhan' against India's national interest.

"Either the Gupkar Gang swims along with the national mood or else the people will sink it," he said.

The Home Minister also questioned Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi whether they support the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD). "The Gupkar Gang also insists India's Tricolour. Do Sonia Ji and Rahul Ji support such moves of the Gupkar Gang? They should make their stand crystal clear to

the people of India," he said.

Hours after Shah's tweets, Surjewala in the statement in Hindi said, "Congress party is not a part of Gupkar alliance. Hitting out at the BJP Government at the Centre, the Congress leader said, "To spread lies, fraud and creating new illusions have become the way of the Modi Government. It's a shame that Home Minister Amit Shah is keeping aside the responsibility of the national security and is making false, misleading and mischievous statements on Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh.

Surjewala in the statement in Hindi said, "Congress party is not a part of Gupkar alliance or People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration."

While asserting that the Congress is fighting the DDC elections in Jammu & Kashmir he said, "The Indian National Congress favours democratic elections in Jammu & Kashmir and for this purpose the Congress is contesting the District Development Council elections... in a democratic manner."

Welcoming Shah's statements on the Gupkar alliance, BJP leader and Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told a Press conference that his remarks are appropriate as

emissions have significantly reduced, a significant impact is not expected. Stubble burning share in PM2.5 in Delhi's air is almost negligible and estimated at a marginal three per cent for today," SAFAR said. It, however, said the significant AQI improvement will be short-lived.

Rain, wind help clean up Delhi's air to moderate

From Page 1

It also said effective stubble fire counts with sufficient potential estimated from SAFAR-multi-satellite products are significantly reduced to around 98.

"Boundary layer wind direction is North-westerly. However, since the fire-related

emissions have significantly reduced, a significant impact is not expected. Stubble burning share in PM2.5 in Delhi's air is almost negligible and estimated at a marginal three per cent for today," SAFAR said. It, however, said the significant AQI improvement will be short-lived.

PDP's Mehbooba Mufti had made it clear that she will not raise the national flag until the separate flag of Jammu & Kashmir is restored.

Prasad also claimed that NC leader Farooq Abdullah had once stated that he will seek China's support for the restoration of special status of Jammu & Kashmir. On August 4 last year, a day before abrogation of Article 370 was announced, political parties in Kashmir, except the BJP, met at Abdullah's residence on Gupkar Road in Srinagar. They had also issued a joint statement defending Article 370. The constituents of the conglomerate besides the NC and the PDP also include the CPI(M), the Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference and the Awami National Conference.

The Congress recently announced that it will have a seat-sharing arrangement with the PAGD for the forthcoming elections to District Development Councils in Jammu & Kashmir. Abdullah is the PAGD's chairperson and PDP chief Mehbooba is vice-chairperson. Veteran CPI(M) leader MY Tarigami is the alliance's convener while People's Conference leader Sajjad Gani Lone is its spokesperson.

Lakshmi Vilas Bank withdrawl capped

From Page 1

The amount disbursed during the emergency situation shall not exceed the sum of ₹5 lakh or the actual balance lying to the credit of the account of such depositor, whichever is less, the notification said.

Also, if a depositor maintains more than one account in the same capacity and in the same right, the total amount payable from all the accounts together cannot exceed ₹25,000.

RBI said the financial position of LVB has undergone a steady decline, with the bank incurring continuous losses over the last three years, eroding its net-worth.

In the absence of any viable strategic plan, declining advances and mounting non-performing assets (NPAs), the losses are expected to continue, it said, adding the bank has not been able to raise adequate capital to address issues around its negative net-worth and continuing losses.

Further, it is experiencing continuous withdrawal of deposits and low levels of liquidity. It has also experienced serious governance issues in recent times.

The bank was placed under the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework in September 2019 amid soaring NPAs. Shareholders of LVB had in September ousted seven directors, including its MD

and CEO, and auditors at the bank's AGM.

The truncated board sought to assuage investors stating that the bank's liquidity situation was comfortable and assured the depositors that their monies were safe.

The bank's troubles started after it shifted its focus to lend to large businesses from SMEs. Its loans of nearly Rs 720 crore to the investment arms of Malvinder Singh and Shivinder Singh, former promoters of pharma major Ranbaxy and Fortis Healthcare, against fixed deposits (FDs) of Rs 794 crore made with the bank in late 2016 and early 2017, also turned the bank turtle.

LVB had sought the RBI's nod to amalgamate itself with Indiabulls Housing Finance and Indiabulls Commercial Credit in May 2019 to meet its capital requirements.

However, the deal could not get regulatory approval because of the RBI's aversion to let realty-focused entities into commercial banking.

On June 15, 2020, the bank had signed a preliminary, non-binding letter of intent with Clix Group for a possible merger.

LVB posted a net loss of Rs 836.04 crore in the year to March 2020. The bank had recorded a net loss of Rs 396.99 crore during the second quarter ended September of this fiscal, up from Rs 357.17 crore in the same quarter a year ago.

Centre unhappy...

From Page 1

The Covid-19 number is likely to increase, said Bhushan as he noted that Delhi was testing very less in June at around 5,776 tests per day.

Niti Aayog member Dr VK Paul, who was also present at the media briefing, said the Ministry is ensuring that 16 people are being traced for every positive case in Delhi.

"We are attempting to increase the number of ICU beds in Delhi to over 6,000, against 3,500 right now. That will put us in a safe zone," he said adding that house to house surveys will also be conducted in containment zones.

"This will also be undertaken in other vulnerable areas. Total 7,000-8,000 teams will be put on this," he added.

Increasing ICU beds to over

6,000, doubling coronavirus testing capacity to 1 to 1.2 lakh per day and augmenting homecare support as well as health care staff are among a slew of measures the Centre may implement in the national Capital in view of sharp surge in cases.

A decision has also been taken to increase house-to-house surveillance of active cases in containment zones and other vulnerable pockets for which 7,000-8,000 teams will be put on this exercise, a hike from the existing 3,000 teams that are currently involved, said Bhushan on Tuesday.

The Health Ministry also said that besides increased ICU beds, more RT-PCR testing and quarantine contacts are some of the efforts they are taking to ensure the situation in Delhi is contained.

Bhushan added, "Since the month of October, the number

of cases is at a record high. Though fewer cases have been detected in the last 48 hours, but we cannot come to a conclusion now, right now?"

But the Health Ministry is preparing for a more serious situation in Delhi, should it arise, said the Ministry.

Paul said: "If cases go up, we will ramp up our capacity to monitor people in home isolation to 40,000 at any given time. We have kept a plan along with the Delhi government ready."

The Ministry of Home Affairs on Monday had constituted multi-disciplinary teams to visit all private hospitals in Delhi to check the status of compliance issued by the health ministry for testing and treating Covid-19 patients and also to contain the spread of the infections in the Capital. The teams will start their visit immediately and submit their report within two days.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Mr. Sumit Sharma S/o Satyavir Sharma & Mr. Anil Sharma S/o O.P. Sharma is no longer part of Carlo.in (Searchglass Automotives Pvt. Ltd.) directly or indirectly and is not authorized to transact any business on the company's behalf. It is further notified that they have fraudulently used the company resources and data alongwith Jinsy Simon Varghese D/o Simon Varghese.

It has come to the notice of the management of Searchglass Automotives Pvt. Ltd., that a company namely JAS Dream Cars have used our registered address 310, Bhanot Corner, Pamposh Enclave, Greater Kailash 1, New Delhi 110048 fraudulently and used it for their business operation. The Company is contemplating legal action (FIR) against JAS Dream Cars and their partners namely Sumit Sharma and Jinsy Simon Varghese along with Anil Sharma as witness for unscrupulousity and fraudulently using the address of our registered office without any consent and knowledge.

कार्यालय नगर पालिका निगम, भोपाल

यांत्रिक विभाग (मुख्यालय) गोविंदपुरा (बी.एच.ई.एल)

निविदा आमंत्रण घोषणा-पत्र

क्र. 01/यां.वि./2020 भोपाल, दिनांक 16.11.2020

निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु दो लिफाफा पद्धति के अनुसार म.प्र. लोक निर्माण विभाग में केन्द्रीकृत व्यवस्था के अंतर्गत पंजीकृत टेकेदार परसेन्टेज मोहर बंद निविदाये निर्धारित प्रपत्र पर ऑनलाईन आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।

क्र.	ऑनलाईन निविदा क्र.	कार्य का नाम	अनुमानित राशि	घरोहर राशि	प्रपत्र राशि	कार्य हेतु निर्धारित एस.ओ.आर.	कार्य की अवधि
01	2020_UAD_110402_2	CONSTRUCTION OF COMMERCIAL SHOPPING COMPLEX AT MANGALWARA WARD NO 20 ZONE NO 04 (Second Call)	3,55,47,468/-	3,55,47,5/-	15,000/-	MPUADD Buildings and Electric Works isssr 2012 and non sor item	12 Month

1. निविदा प्रपत्र की निर्धारित राशि एवं घरोहर राशि एवं अन्य आवश्यक दस्तावेज ऑनलाईन प्रस्तुत करने होंगे एवं अन्य सम्पत् विस्तृत जानकारी www.mptenders.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती हैं।

2. विद्युतीकरण से संबंधित कार्यों के लिए स्वयं के पास ए क्लास का विद्युत टेकेदारी पंजीयन या ए क्लास विद्युत टेकेदारी पंजीयन धारक के साथ ज्वाइंटवेचर होना अनिवार्य है।

3. किसी भी निविदा को स्वीकार अथवा अस्वीकार करने का अधिकार विभाग के पास सुरक्षित होगा।

अधीक्षक यंत्री (सिविल)
नगर निगम भोपाल

नि.क्र.1227/020/021

'Ensure workers get benefits of schemes within 72 hrs of applications'

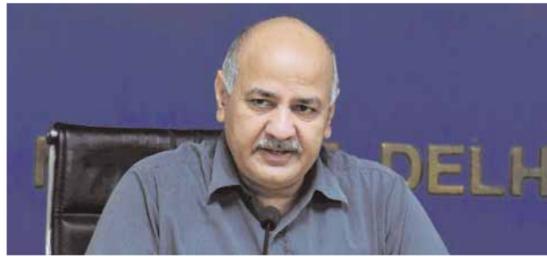
STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia directed the labour officials to ensure the city workers receive the benefits of various labour welfare schemes within 72 hours of their application.

The Deputy Chief Minister said, "The Delhi Government has made comprehensive plans to help the labourers, especially during the trying times of Corona crisis. We

know a labourer only applies if he/she is needy and so the Government has directed that the amount from welfare schemes such as for their child's education, medical, disability, marriage, or maternity reasons should reach the workers' bank account within 72 hours."

During the inspection at the eastern and north-eastern sub-labour commissioner's office at Shahdara, he inquired about the



process and status of various office functions including registration and verification of workers as well as cases regarding availing benefits from various welfare schemes.

Sisodia also asked the officials to speed up their application processing timeline by improving on their internal procedures, especially during Covid crisis to ensure the workers are able to avail the benefits in time. The deputy CM also inquired about the execution

of the applications received in the office, and checked the records of pending applications and pending files.

Sisodia further said that the execution of all files should be done on a 'first-come, first-serve basis'. He said, "If there are cases wherein a few select files are forwarded or favoured, and the rest of the files are stopped in the system, strict action will be taken against the officers engaging in such activ-

ities." He directed officials to put up clear and visible notice boards outside the office to inform the workers about the benefits of registration and schemes so that the workers do not have to rely on brokers to get their information, or work done.

Sisodia also emphasised the involvement of brokers, and cyber cafes for availing registration certificates completely unnecessary.

Executive held for 'fraudulent' transfer of ₹7 cr

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

The Gurugram Police has arrested an account executive of a private firm for his alleged role in a scam in which ₹7 crore were fraudulently transferred from a company to the account of his father, friends and family, the police said on Tuesday.

The arrested accused has been identified as Ran Vijay Singh (33) a native of Bihar who was currently residing at Najafgarh in Delhi.

The accused was arrested following an investigation by the crime branch unit of Sector-31, on Monday from Bajghera Chowk in Gurugram.

According to the police, on November 10, a complaint was filed by Tarun Kumar, the account manager of the company located in New Palam Vihar in Gurugram.

Kumar had alleged in his complaint that Ran Vijay Singh had joined the firm in July 2008 as an account executive.

"Singh was the authorised person for all transactions in the company's bank accounts. During his job, he had committed a huge fraud in the company's transactions. During an audit conducted by the company, it came to fore that Singh fraudulently transferred about 07 crores of the company to the bank accounts of his father, friends and family fraudulently," Kumar had told the police.

During interrogation the accused has admitted fraudulently transferring Rs 5 crore from the company's account to the bank accounts of his father, his family and his friends, the police said.

"The police will seek the custody of the accused for further questioning. Further probe is underway.

The case was registered under relevant sections of the IPC at Bajghera police station.

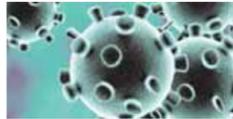
Cong slams Govt for failing to combat Covid outbreak

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress president Chaudhary Anil Kumar hit out at the Delhi Government for its alleged failure in handling the coronavirus outbreak in the national capital, saying that the rise in the number of Covid-19 cases shows that Delhi Chief Minister and his Ministers have been making false claims of being prepared to tackle the pandemic.

"The Delhi Government had reduced Covid testing by 40 per cent after 14 November and the people of Delhi are paying a heavy price for the arbitrary methods and inefficiency of the Arvind Government. The Government has totally failed not only in checking the Covid spread but also in pollution control and a deadly cocktail of these two are taking a heavy toll on people's lives and health in the Capital," he said.

Addressing the media,



Kumar said that four people are dying every hour in Delhi and in November alone up to now, 1200 people had died of Covid-19 with the total tally jumping to 7,713 deaths. He said that between 1 and 16 November, 2020 there has been a 63 per cent increase in the Covid death rate, which could have been easily prevented, had the Arvind Government listened to the suggestions and advice by the Delhi Congress, instead of acting in a hasty and whimsical manner.

The Congress leader further said that Chief Minister Arvind should come out of his petty political mindset to address the Covid crisis on a war footing to save the lives and health of the people, who are being made to pay a heavy price for the unplanned and

unprepared Covid-19 lock and unlock process, which had not only ruined the health, but also the wealth of the people of Delhi.

"There is total confusion within the ministers as CM today said that he sent a proposal to the Union Home Ministry seeking power to impose lockdown while his Health Minister had said yesterday that there will be no lockdown," he said.

Kumar suggested that the Arvind Government should make immediate arrangements to increase testing to two lakh per day, mostly RT-PCR, and the testing fee should be reduced from the present Rs 2400 to an affordable level by the common people. He said that Covid-19 pandemic guidelines like social distancing, wearing of masks should be strictly implemented in public transport and public places and if needed, school buses should be pressed into service as public transport.

2 Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Special Cell of Delhi Police has arrested suspected Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorists from Sarai Kale Khan area in southeast Delhi. The duo was apprehended by police on Monday night. Police said that the duo was also planning to cross border and go to Pakistan for training.

They have been identified as Abdul Latif Mir (22), a resident of Doru village in Baramulla district and Mohammad Ashraf Khatana (20), a resident of Hat Mulla village in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district.

According to Sanjeev Kumar Yadav, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Special Cell, On November 16, specific inputs were received that Abdul and Asraf would come near Sarai Kale Khan and then go to Nizamuddin Area and would stay for a short period in Delhi for their onward journey to Uttar Pradesh (UP) for the purpose of training.

"Acting on the specific



inputs, a trap was laid were nabbed in the late hours. During interrogation, it was revealed that both the terrorists follows "Deobandi" faction of the community and their role model is MolanaMasoodAzar, Leader of JeM.

"Abdul has a face-book account in the name of Mir Latif and has displayed the picture of MaulanaMasood Azhar in his display Picture. He used to listen MaulanaMasood on Social Media and wanted to join them for the freedom of J&K and to spread Islam all over the world," said the DCP.

"Abdul used to listen the news of brutality with the Muslim all over the world on



news channels and the lectures delivered in Deobandi by ArsalMadani, Maulana Mufti Faizul Wahid Sahab and in J&K by Mufti MuzafarHussain, Nazir Ahmad SahaKashmi. From the lectures delivered by these the above, he found the inspiration for the Jihad and gradually, he developed a jihadi mentality and radicalized to the point that he is even ready to take extreme measures for the so called "Freedom of Kashmir," said the DCP.

"Abdul along with his associate Ashraf had tried to cross over to POK for training along with a few other radicalized youth but could not succeed. About four months ago, he came in contact with one Aftab

Malik through Facebook Messenger, a resident of Lahore, Pakistan, who asked him about his WhatsApp number and connected there to ask him about the profile picture of Maulana Masood Azharon his facebook profile," said the DCP.

"Abdul told that he worships the JeM leader and according to him he has done a lot for the freedom of Kashmir and is continuously fighting against the Indian security forces. He requested Aftab to give him a chance to join the Maulana Masood and the Jihad. Aftab offered him to come to Pakistan to join Maulana Masood," said the DCP.

"But after failing to cross the border, the duo came in contact with PAK based JeM operatives through Aftab Malik, who could help them in crossing the border. They were directed to come to Delhi where they would meet one person (name withheld) who would help them for a short stay in Uttar Pradesh for imparting basic training and arrange their crossover to Pakistan," said the DCP.

Hindu Rao's 20 ICU beds reserved for Covid patients

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In view of the increasing number of Corona cases, North Delhi Mayor Jai Prakash on Tuesday inspected the facilities at Hindu Rao Hospital and said that 20 beds in 'Intensive Care Unit' (ICU) are reserved for patients infected with coronavirus.

Mayor said that 20 ICU beds have been arranged separately for the corona patients at Hind Rao Hospital.

"The number of beds will be further increased if needed. The Corporation is always ready to serve the citizens but the Delhi Government should also extend help by paying due towards the corporation," he said.

The Centre on Sunday announced a slew of steps including making available 300 additional ICU

beds, double the number of daily PCR tests and a house-to-house survey in the entire national Capital.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also said some of the hospitals under the municipal corporations of Delhi will be converted into dedicated Covid hospitals. Doctors and paramedics of paramilitary forces will be flown in to be deployed in the national Capital to deal with the shortage of manpower.

Meanwhile, the mayor also launched a green initiative - "Geela Kuda Lao Khad Le Jao" in Karol Bagh Zone on Tuesday with an aim to reduce pollution and segregation of waste at source. He said that more such compost plants will come in near future in North DMC areas. "Efforts are being made through

door to door campaigns and meetings with RWAs of the areas for segregating waste at home. The manure generated by this compost plant would be given to the RWAs of model wards. For every 5 kg of biodegradable green waste, 1 kg compost manure would be provided.

Deputy Commissioner of Karol Zone Himanshu Gupta said that out of total 13 wards in this zone, four are model wards in which segregation work has been started and 16 compost pits have been prepared. "All efforts are being made to segregate the waste at home itself. The wet waste will come directly to the compost pits and this plant while the dry waste will go to Bhalaswa landfill site," he added.



Overseas work visa holders stage a peaceful protest demonstration demanding to be allowed to return to New Zealand at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Tuesday. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

18-year-old, his friend stabbed in Azadpur area

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 18-year-old man and his friend were allegedly stabbed by a group of men in northwest Delhi's Azadpur area. Police said that they have arrested two accused while manhunt has been initiated to nab the remaining culprits.

Police said that the injured identified as Shivam and Mohit (17), are both residents of Azadpur. "They are undergoing treatment at a city hospital and are stated to be stable," said police.

The incident took place on Sunday morning, a day after Diwali, and it was captured on a CCTV camera. In the CCTV footage, a man can be seen being targeted by a group in a

busy lane. He is beaten up, stabbed and later dragged to a narrow bylane. When his friend tries to save him, he is also stabbed, even as passers-by watched the incident.

According to Vijayanta Arya, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Northwest district, based on the CCTV footage, two of the accused -- Suraj Kumar (24) and Somprakash (23) -- have been arrested, while efforts are being made to nab their associates.

"Two victims were targeted over a petty altercation that took place on Diwali over a particular seat in a park. Following the quarrel, the accused had threatened Shivam and Mohit of dire conse-

quences," said the DCP.

"Subsequently, on Sunday morning, the accused along with their accomplices attacked Shivam and Mohit with knives on railway road in Azadpur area. Both the injured were taken to Babu Jagjivan Ram Memorial Hospital. Shivam, who sustained multiple stab injuries in his stomach and thigh, was later referred to a trauma centre where he underwent an operation," said the DCP.

"Police have registered a case under sections 307 (attempt to murder) and 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) of the Indian Penal Code. The weapon of offence has also been recovered," said the DCP.

STUBBLE BURNING Atishi blames Punjab, Haryana for air pollution

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and MLA Atishi on Tuesday said that the people of Delhi are unable to breathe in clean air due to stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana and appealed to the 'Air Quality Commission' (AQC) as well as the Supreme Court to take the suo-moto cognizance of the matter and file cases of criminal negligence against the Chief Ministers of both the States who have put entire North India in a public health emergency.

The people of Delhi and NCR have been suffering for the last 1.5 months from pollution due to the criminal neg-



ligence of chief ministers of Punjab and Haryana. Due to the Corona pandemic, the situation further worsened this time because this is a disease that affects the lungs. The mild symptoms of Corona turned into moderate due to pollution, and moderate symptoms turned into severe symptoms,

and people with severe symptoms are fighting for their lives today. All of this is because of stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana, which is why it is difficult for the people of Delhi to breathe. If that is the case, how are the people of Delhi getting clean air for the last two days?"

As per the data of the

Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), it shows that starting from 15th to 17th October, up till 1st November, the daily cases of stubble burning in Punjab alone stood at 5000, she said, adding that after the stubble burning cases touched the peak, they still remained at around 2000-3000 cases daily.

"If you see the data of the last two days, the stubble burning cases have gone down from 2500 to 350 and 125 on 14th and 15th November respectively. We can see a huge difference in the air quality of entire North India and also Delhi NCR due to a reduced number of farm fires," she added.

BJP falsely accusing Govt of not allowing Chhath celebration: AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Aam Aadmi Party leader Durgesh Pathak on Tuesday said the BJP ruled-Central Government has issued guidelines to stop the celebration of Chhath puja but the same party is accusing the Kejriwal Government of not allowing the celebration in Delhi.

Pathak said that the AAP demands the BJP to get permission from Home Minister Amit Shah to celebrate Chhath Puja and the Aam Aadmi Party will ensure the celebration in Delhi. Senior leader and MLA Sanjeev Jha said that the party does not want any kind of politics on the matters of faith and BJP leaders should also avoid

doing such politics.

AAP senior leader Sanjay Bhagat said that earlier in Delhi there were only 72 places where the celebration of Chhath puja used to take place but after the AAP government was formed, we increased the number of Chhath Ghats to 1200.

Pathak said, "The celebration of Chhath Puja is a very important festival for the people of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. In Delhi, there are lakhs of people who originally reside from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. People from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar travel to various states for work but they never leave their culture and festivals. The guidelines issued by the Central government's Home Ministry have imposed several restrictions on the celebration of Chhath Puja and this is why in Delhi and in many other states Chhath Puja will not take place

in public."

"It is unfortunate and shameful that BJP at one side is stopping the celebration of Chhath Puja and on the other side, politicising the issue.

Woman held for selling illicit liquor

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a 65-year-old woman for allegedly selling illicit liquor in southeast Delhi's Sarita Vihar area. Police said a total of 246 quarter bottles of illicit liquor were recovered from her possession. The accused has been identified as Sunari Devi, a resident of Rajasthani Camp in Sarita Vihar area.

According to R P Meena, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Southeast district, around 4.45 pm on Sunday, a police patrol team reached near Janta Flats, Sarita Vihar, where they gave specific inputs that a woman was in possession of illicit liquor in Rajasthani Camp.

"Acting on the inputs, the woman, who was sitting in front of her jhuggi with a plastic bag, was apprehended. During interrogation, the accused disclosed that she bought the liquor from an unknown person in Suraj Kund, Faridabad. She has been arrested under the same offence earlier as well," said the DCP.

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THINK DIGITAL, BE DIGITAL

2ND PHASE OF MALABAR DRILL BEGINS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After successfully completing the first phase of the high-profile Malabar series of naval exercises in early November, the navies of India, the US, Australia and Japan on Tuesday began the second phase of the exercise in the northern Arabian Sea.

Raising the profile of the exercise, the USA deployed aircraft carriers besides a number of frontline warships, submarines and maritime reconnaissance aircraft.

The highlight of the four-day exercise is participation of Indian Navy's Vikramaditya carrier battle group and the Nimitz strike group of the US Navy. The USS Nimitz is the world's largest warship.

The first phase of the Malabar exercise took place in

the Bay of Bengal from November 3 to 6 and featured a number of complex drills including anti-submarine and anti-air warfare operations.

The Australian Navy has deployed its HMAS Ballarat, an Anzac-class frigate while the Japanese Navy has sent its leading destroyer JS Murasame for the exercise.

The mega exercise is taking place at a time India and China are locked in an over six-month-long bitter border standoff in eastern Ladakh. This exercise is involving coordinated operations of increasing complexity among the navies of the four countries which are part of the Quad or Quadrilateral Coalition, officials said.

"The two carriers, along with other ships, submarines and aircraft of the participating navies, would be engaged in



Aircraft carriers and warships participate in the second phase of Malabar naval exercise, a joint exercise comprising of India, US, Japan and Australia, in the Northern Arabian Sea on Tuesday. AP

high-intensity naval operations over four days," the Indian Navy said on Monday.

A carrier battle group or carrier strike group is a mega naval fleet comprising an aircraft carrier, accompanied by a large number of destroyers, frigates and other ships.

The Navy said the exercise

will include cross-deck flying operations and advanced air defence exercises by MIG 29K fighters of Vikramaditya and F-18 fighters and E2C Hawkeye from Nimitz.

Apart from Vikramaditya and its fighter and helicopter air-wings, the Indian Navy is also deploying destroyers

Kolkata and Chennai, stealth frigate Talwar and fleet support ship Deepak in the exercise. The Indian contingent is being led by Rear Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet.

Last month, India announced that Australia will be part of the Malabar exercise

which effectively made it a drill by all four member nations of the Quad which is primarily focusing on containing China's military expansionism in the Indo-Pacific region.

China has been suspicious about the purpose of the Malabar exercise as it feels that the annual war game is an effort to contain its influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

The invitation by India to the Australian Navy for the exercise came two weeks after foreign ministers of the 'Quad' member nations held extensive talks in Tokyo with a focus on enhancing their cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. The Malabar exercise started in 1992 as a bilateral drill between the Indian Navy and the US Navy in the Indian Ocean. Japan became a permanent member of the exercise in 2015.

FARMERS' PROTESTS

10 Central trade unions support nationwide strike on Nov 26

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a move to back farmers' protests, ten Central trade unions on Tuesday announced their support to nationwide general strike on November 26. The meeting of the Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions (CTUs) and Sectoral Independent Federations and Associations was held virtually on November 16, 2020.

Unions expressed satisfaction over the tremendous response being received from workers and the people at large throughout the country to the ongoing campaign for the countrywide general strike on November 26, 2020, a joint forum statement said.

The forum consists of Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), All India United Trade Union Centre (AIUTUC), Trade Union Co-ordination Centre (TUCC), Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICTU), Labour Progressive Federation (LPF) and United Trade Union Congress (UTUC).

The preparatory campaign for the general strike against "the anti-people, anti-worker, anti-national and destructive policies of the BJP Government led by Modi, has been going on with great enthusiasm all over the country," the statement said. Joint conventions, posters, leaflets jointly as well as independently by the Central trade unions and their affiliated trade unions are being held at state, district and local levels as well as at the sectoral level.

The strike notices have been served, it said adding that in addition to workers, people from all walks of life and all sections of the society, viz, students, youth, women, peasants have been coming forward extending their whole-hearted support to the call of general strike on November 26. The meeting welcomed the whole-hearted sup-

The forum consists of Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), All India United Trade Union Centre (AIUTUC), Trade Union Co-ordination Centre (TUCC), Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICTU), Labour Progressive Federation (LPF) and United Trade Union Congress (UTUC)

port extended by the united platform of the peasants' organisations, the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC), to the general strike by the workers.

"It is heartening that the peasants, who are already in the midst of struggle against the draconian farm laws passed by the Modi govt, support the workers fighting against the anti-worker measures of this Government," it added.

The Joint Platform and Sectoral Federations and Associations, which has been extending active solidarity and support to the struggles of the peasantry and agricultural workers from the very beginning, has reiterated its active support to the countrywide protest actions and march to Delhi on 26-27 November 2020 announced by the AIKSCC.

The charter of demands of the general strike by CTUs and federations and associations includes the demand to scrap the draconian farm laws. Along with the demands directly related to the workers, the trade unions have also been campaigning on this demand, it added.

Meanwhile, the All India Power Engineers Federation (AIPFE) has also stated that power engineers across the country will protest on November 26 against the privatisation policies of the Central Government. The AIPFE is demanding to scrap of Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and standard bidding document (SBD) for the privatisation of electricity.

India successfully test-fires Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India on Tuesday successfully test-fired the Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile (QRSAM) system at an integrated test range in Chandipur off the Odisha coast, the defence ministry said. It said the missile "accurately and successfully" neutralised an airborne target. It was the second successful test firing of the missile in the last five days.

"The flight test, second in the series, was conducted today at around 1542 hours from the integrated test range, Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha. "The test was carried out once again, against the high-performance jet unmanned aerial target called Banshee, which simulates an aircraft," the ministry said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO scientists on the successful test-firing of the missile.

"Congratulations to @DRDO_India for two back to back successful test trials of Quick Reaction Surface to Air

Missile. First launch test on 13th Nov proved the Radar and Missile capabilities with direct hit. Today's test demonstrated the warhead performance on proximity detection," he tweeted.

The successful test-firing of the QRSAM, having a range of around 30 km, paves the way for its commercial production, officials said. "The flight test was conducted in the deployment configuration of the weapon system comprising of the launcher, fully automated command and control system, surveillance system and multi-function radars," the ministry said.

"The QRSAM weapon system, which can operate on the move, consists of all indigenously developed subsystems. All objectives of the test were fully met. The launch was carried out in the presence of the users from Indian Army," it said.

In the last two months, India has test-fired a number of missiles, including a new version of the surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile BrahMos, and an anti-radiation missile named Rudram-1.

COVID-19 Effect of polls, festivals yet to be seen: Health Ministry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid declining Covid-19 cases in the past few days, the Government on Tuesday warned people not to be complacent as "effects of polls, Durga Puja, Diwali may be seen in coming weeks".

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan told media persons that it was essential that people strictly follow all the precautionary measures like not visiting crowded places, taking extra care of vulnerable sections of the society and maintaining "6-feet" distance.

"As part of Covid-19 appropriate behaviour, citizens must ensure that if they are experiencing any symptoms, then they must get tested. Don't hesitate, get yourself tested," he said.

"We believe that effects of recent elections (in Bihar and elsewhere), Durga Puja, Diwali and other festivals are still to be played out in full. We have to keep watching new cases very carefully," he said cautioning people against letting their guard down despite "very low per million cases" in India.

In the last two days, India's



Covid-19 daily case count dropped to an average of 30,000, Government data released on Tuesday showed after 4-week average of 48,000 daily cases.

"We are not reading too much into this (drop)," Bhushan said, adding weekly trends better reflected the pandemic's progress. However, a steady case surge has been observed in West Bengal since Durga Puja, in Kerala since Onam and in Delhi for the past fortnight ahead of Diwali.

The Union Health

Ministry also noted India's increased capacity to conduct Covid-19 tests on a daily basis. Evaluating India's testing capabilities as compared to other nations, the Secretary said, "in terms of Covid-19 tests conducted daily we are above nations like the United States, United Kingdom and Russia."

Also, India's positivity rate is declining continuously and its death rate is low as compared to the rest of the world, said the official. India's Deaths per Million Population is also

amongst lowest in world; stands at 94 deaths per million population, he added.

About the progress of vaccines, VK Paul, NITI Aayog member added that the one of the Serum Institute is in the third phase. Meanwhile, at least five vaccines are under trial in India, out of which two are in the third phase, he added.

As per the Ministry data, 75.14 per cent of the new cases are being reported from 10 states and UTs. Delhi, which saw a surge in new cases over the last few days, reported only 3,797 new cases yesterday, followed by West Bengal which reported 3,012 new cases. Kerala recorded 2,710 new cases.

In terms of new fatalities, the data suggests 78.40 per cent of the 449 new deaths are concentrated in ten states and UTs. More than a fifth, 22.76 per cent of the new fatalities reported are from Delhi which reported 99 deaths. Maharashtra reported 60 fatalities, followed by West Bengal (53).

The total recovered cases stand at 82,90,370. With this, the recovery rate has improved to 93.42 per cent, the Ministry added.

Measles outbreak likely to occur in 2021 as many children miss vaccination

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A major measles outbreak is likely to occur during 2021 as many children have missed out on measles vaccination amid Covid-19 pandemic, researchers have raised concerns.

They have suggested "three pillars" of action — helping countries vaccinate their children through catch-up and campaigns; countries need to prepare for expected outbreaks and maintaining measles and rubella elimination targets provided by WHO's new Measles Rubella Strategic Framework 2021-2030 in alignment with the Immunization Agenda 2030 — to address the concerning situation.

In their article published in the Lancet, the researchers including lead author Professor Kim Mulholland, from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute and Chair of the WHO's SAGE Working Group on measles and rubella vaccines, said many children have missed out on measles vaccination this year, making future measles outbreaks inevitable.

Professor Mulholland said while 2020 had been a quiet



year for measles, in part due to travel reductions and national Covid-19 control measures, the economic impacts would lead to many cases of childhood malnutrition.

The study mentioned that the WHO estimates that by the end of October 2020, delayed vaccination campaigns in 26 countries have led to 94 million children missing scheduled measles vaccine doses.

"The inadequate vaccination that led to the 2019 measles outbreaks has still not been adequately addressed, and the situation is now exacerbated by service disruptions during the Covid-19 pandemic so that high-risk, unimmunised children are clustered together in

unreached communities," Professor Mulholland added.

Just a few days ago, Henrietta Fore, UNICEF Executive Director had noted that before there was a coronavirus crisis, the world was grappling with a measles crisis, and it has not gone away.

"While health systems are strained by the Covid-19 pandemic, we must not allow our fight against one deadly disease to come at the expense of our fight against another. This means ensuring we have the resources to continue immunisation campaigns for all vaccine-preventable diseases, even as we address the growing Covid-19 pandemic," Fore said.

CRPF deploys doctors, paramedical staff to counter fresh surge in cases in Delhi-NCR

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has deployed 20 doctors and six dozen paramedical staff for ramping up medical facilities to counter the fresh surge in Covid-19 cases in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR).

"As intimated by MHA, in view of rising number of Covid positive cases in Delhi and NCR, it has been decided to operationalise additional number of beds/ICU beds in Covid Care Centres at Chattarpur (being run by ITBP) and Delhi Cantt. (being run by AFMS)," reads an internal order of the CRPF.

Accordingly, MHA (Ministry of Home Affairs) has desired to detail 20 Medical Officers and 60 paramedical staff from CRPF and they were asked to report in Delhi by Monday (November 16), officials said.

After consideration of pros and cons, competent authority in the CRPF has approved deployment of medical officers and paramedical staff from various formations of the paramilitary, they said.

Apart from those detailed

in the Covid Care Centres in the national capital, 14 doctors have been kept in reserve and 10 paramedical staff have been kept on standby to augment any further exigency in Delhi

CRPF headquarters has further directed its units not to grant leave to the medical officers and paramedical staff kept in reserve without the approval of the Medical Directorate of the paramilitary force

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The Union Home Ministry has further instructed that those

who are not entitled to air travel may be allowed to travel by air so that they can reach Delhi in time by the earliest flight.

For smooth deployment of the medical officers and paramedical staff, the Sector Inspector Generals and Heads of Offices were directed to relieve the identified personnel by Monday so that they can report in Delhi on the designated time.

The CRPF headquarters has further directed its units not to grant leave to the medical officers and paramedical staff kept in reserve without the approval of the Medical Directorate of the paramilitary force.

The move comes after the Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a high level meeting on Sunday with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and officials of the Central government and Delhi administration to contain the spike in the numbers of those getting infected with Covid-19 here.

The ITBP-run Sardar Patel Covid Care Centre at Chattarpur has 10,000 beds capacity and the other one at Delhi Cantt. has provision for 1,000 beds, including 250 ICU beds.

FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE
(Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education)
Post: New Forest, Dehradun - 248006, Uttarakhand

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
NIT No. 34-185 & 186/2020-21/Head/Engineering Cell/Civil

The Head, Engineering Cell, FRI, Dehradun invites on behalf of Director, FRI Dehradun online item rate bids from approved and eligible contractors of CPWD, MES, Railways, P&T, State PWD & other Govt. and Semi-Govt. Department including local bodies etc.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Estimated cost Rs.	Earnest Money Rs.	Tender fee including GST Rs.	Time of completion	Last date and time of online submission of the bid
1.	Repairing of plaster, doors, windows, CGS roofing over Atal Tinkering lab K.V. FRI (Tender Id No. 2020_ICFRE_597293_1)	3,33,200/-	6,700/-	590/-	30 days	03.12.2020 up-to 3.00 PM
2.	Repairing, renovation and distemping work of 26 Nos. flats or 26 Nos. rooms of Visiting Scientist Hostel at FRI (Tender Id No. 2020_ICFRE_597308_1)	21,02,337/-	42,100/-	590/-	60 days	03.12.2020 up-to 3.00 PM

The tender forms and other details can be obtained from the website <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> and www.fri.res.in.

Head, Engineering Cell
Facilities & Services Division
Forest Research Institute

No discussion on Bihar polls debacle in CWC meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The special committee of the Congress to assist party chief Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday avoided any discussion on Bihar poll debacle as also trenchant criticism of the party's functioning by senior leader Kapil Sibal. These issues will now be taken up at the CWC meeting scheduled later this month.

AICC sources said this was a routine meeting for party's administrative issues through video conferencing. The special panel of the Congress was formed in August to assist Sonia Gandhi on organisational and operational matters. Ahmed Patel, KC Venugopal, AK Antony, Ambika Soni,

Mukul Wasnik, Randeep Surjewala are its members.

"This was a scheduled meeting and nothing to do with the Kapil Sibal controversial remarks. And not much was discussed due to the absence of senior party leader and member of the group Ahmed Patel. The only agenda was the signature campaign. Some members made a brief critical reference to Sibal's comments and said that the party chief should take note of it is frequent comments against the party on public fora. It was decided that such issues to be taken up in the CWC," said the AICC sources.

On the administrative part, the party discussed setting up committees and create certain

posts in all the states and units to review the party's ground situation. All these points will be briefed to the party chief for her opinion and action thereafter," said the sources. The Bihar poll debacle has once again brought up a public blow-out among its top leaders after Kapil Sibal's open criticism of the party leadership. Sibal had called for "experienced minds, experienced hands and those who understand political realities" to revive the organisation. He also said the "time for introspection is over".

Rebutting Sibal, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday said that there was "no need" for his colleague to mention "internal issues" in the media. In a series of tweets,

Gehlot also said that after every electoral loss, the party had shown "undivided and firm belief in the party leadership" and had emerged stronger from each crisis. Sibal was one of the 23 Congress leaders behind the "dissent letter" that caused an all-out clash within the party in August but changed little except for key letter-writers being shunted out. The letter had suggested sweeping changes after the Congress lost power in Madhya Pradesh after a revolt by Jyotiraditya Scindia and barely saved its Rajasthan government after a rebellion.

Earlier in the day senior party leader Salman Khurshid took a dig at such party colleagues calling them "doubting

Thomas'es" who suffer periodic "pangs of anxiety". In a Facebook post that started with an Urdu couplet of Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, former union minister Khurshid, who is among the leaders considered close to the Gandhi family, said if the mood of the electorate is resistant to the liberal values the party has espoused and cherished, it should be prepared for a long struggle rather than look for short cuts to get back into power. Noting that everyone in the party is perplexed and pained by the continuing misfortunes of the Congress that some have chosen to describe as "our misadventures", Khurshid said there is something called faith, not necessarily blind, in destiny.

India should again become global knowledge superpower: VP

Agartala: Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Tuesday said that the new National Education Policy (NEP) aimed to make India a global knowledge superpower and underlined the need for the country to again become a 'Vishwa Guru' in education.

He said that the NEP draws inspiration from the ancient Indian education system which

focused on developing holistic and well-rounded personalities and thus seeks to make Indian education holistic, multi-disciplinary, and practical.

"The ancient education system always taught us to live in harmony with nature and respect all beings and non-beings. Our education was practical, wholesome, and complementary to life," Naidu said while virtually addressing the 13th convocation of National Institute of Technology (NIT), Agartala.

Calling upon higher education institutions and universities to make India a thriving hub of knowledge and innovation, the Vice President advised them to take up cutting-edge research in various fields, establish synergy with

industries and other similar institutions, and turn campuses into exciting centres of creativity and research.

Recalling the advice of former President APJ Abdul Kalam to the youth to dream big, he asked the students to set goals and then strive hard to achieve them.

"You will succeed if you work with dedication, discipline and sincerity without wavering from your chosen path. Students, researchers and academicians, therefore, cannot afford to remain in a world of status quo. They have to constantly learn, update themselves, and innovate every day."

The Vice President also urged the corporate sector to identify key research projects in

various sectors and fund them under the CSR initiatives.

"Enhancing public and private investments in research is of vital importance for creating a knowledge-driven society."

With about 65 per cent of the country's population comprising youth, the Vice-President called for fully channeling their energies and creating the right ecosystem for promoting entrepreneurship among them.

Naidu asked all students to spend some time in villages to understand the challenges faced by rural India. Terming agriculture as 'our basic culture', he called for making farming a viable and profitable activity.

Agartala NIT's Chairman of Board of Governors Dr Subhash Chandra Sati, Director Prof HK Sharma and others participated in the virtual event.

In the convocation 24 PhD scholars, 181 MTEch and 14 MBA students, 24 MSc and 20 MCA passouts were among 857 students who received their degrees. Gold medals were given to 25 students for meritorious achievements. IANS

Rita Bahuguna's granddaughter dies of firecracker burn

IANS ■ PRAYAGRAJ (UTTAR PRADESH)

Six-year-old granddaughter of BJP MP Rita Bahuguna Joshi succumbed to burn injuries on Tuesday morning.

Kiya had sustained 60 per cent burn injuries while bursting crackers on the roof of her house on Monday evening.

She was admitted to a private hospital for treatment and the family was making arrangements to shift her to Delhi for advanced treatment in an air ambulance on Tuesday.

Kiya was the only daughter of the MP's son Mayank Joshi and his wife Richa Joshi.

2021 Assembly polls: BJP divides Bengal into 5 organisational zones

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

With an eye on the 2021 Assembly elections the BJP has divided Bengal into five organisational divisions to be supervised by as many central leaders.

According to sources these five divisions are North Bengal, Barh Bengal comprising Purulia, Bankura and Birbhum, Kolkata and surrounding areas, Hooghly and West Midnapore and Krishnagar-Nadia and surrounding regions.

These regions would be supervised by Garish Dwivedi, Vinod Sonkar, D Gautam, Sunil Deodhar and Vinod Tawade in

that order, party sources said adding these leaders in consultation with the local leadership would hold organizational meetings to prepare a preliminary list of party candidates by November 20, whereafter the report would be sent to BJP national president JP Nadda and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The Home Minister who came to Bengal on a two-day trip early this month is likely to make a second visit of the State around November 30 apparently to discuss the organizational matters, inside sources said.

Meanwhile, Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh on Tuesday

mounted a fresh attack on the Trinamool Congress Government for failing to do anything for the minorities allowing All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) to find base in the State.

What the TMC leadership dismissed as the BJP's ploy to divide the Muslims votes through disinformation campaign, Ghosh said "though the Trinamool has extracted votes from the Muslims by promising them sky they have done nothing for them which is why the minorities of this State are a disgruntled lot and are looking for an alternative."

Ghosh said a search for an

alternative by the Muslim voters has provided the AIMIM a toehold in Bengal. "The AIMIM is getting toehold in this State because the Muslim voters who had reposed faith in the Trinamool Congress are now leaning towards that party as they have felt cheated," he said.

The State BJP president also said that the elections would have to be held by the central forces as no one had any faith in the State police. "The Bengal Police is a servant of the TMC and so the elections will have to be conducted by the CRPE," he said.

Reacting to Ghosh's statements senior Bengal Minister

Firhad Hakim said that it was his ploy to divide the Muslim votes in the State. "By saying this the BJP is trying to divide votes in Bengal... this is why we have already said that AIMIM is an ally of the BJP... The voters from both the minority and majority communities in Bengal are conscious enough about the present political circumstances and hence they will take the right decision and one is sure that BJP will not be favoured by any of them."

Incidentally Bengal Chief Minister had in a circuitous reference of the AIMIM said last year that some radical organizations with terror links were trying to

make inroads in Bengal but would fail to win any seat in this State.

After winning five seats in Bihar the AIMIM leadership has declared that they would contest from Bengal where they have presence in more than 30 seats.

"Now that our organization has become stronger why should not find election in Bengal... of course we will," AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi had said soon after the Bihar poll results.

In a separate development the Left and the Congress were meeting on Tuesday evening to decide on the seat-sharing and other conditions of their alliance, sources said.

CBI grills BSF officer on cow smuggling

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

In a major development a senior BSF official facing charges of cow-smuggling was questioned for several hours by the Central Bureau of Investigation.

Cows worth several thousand crores were smuggled out to Bangladesh in 2016-17 when Satish Kumar a senior commanding of the BSF posted here, sources said.

The CBI had earlier raided Kumar's residence at Salt Lake. According to sources Kumar who appeared at the Nizam Palace of the central agency was asked as to whether other influential persons were involved in the racket or not. He was reportedly avoiding certain questions, sources said.

Mumbai cops bust child kidnapping gang, rescues 4 months old from TN

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Juhu police on Tuesday claimed to have busted a major inter-State kidnapping and human traffic racket, with the rescue of a 4-month-old infant from Telangana state and arrest of three persons who had sold the kid for Rs 4 lakh.

Acting on a complaint lodged by a resident from a poor family living at Juhu in north-west Mumbai on November 11 that his four-month-old male child had been

taken away by some unidentified abductors, Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh had formed a special team, led by Senior Police Inspector Pandharinath Wahval, to crack the case.

In the absence of any evidence or witnesses, the police team used tech-intel ad and police informers to crack the kidnapping case.

During the course of investigation, the police learnt that after

abducting the infant, the miscreants had 'sold' the child for Rs 4 lakh to some persons in Telangana.

While one of the accused was arrested Andheri (west), another person was taken into custody from Bongir in Nalgonda district. The third one was arrested from Saroornagar near Hyderabad.

"We have arrested three persons. We have rescued the child and handed him over his parents," Additional Commissioner of Police (West) Sandeep Karnik said.

Andhra registers 1,395 new Covid cases, tally 8.56 lakh

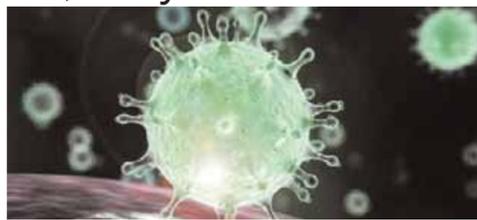
Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh has registered 1,395 new Covid-19 infections, increasing the state's tally to 8.56 lakh, even as 2,293 more recoveries outnumbered infections on Tuesday.

Krishna district accounted for the highest number of cases in the past 24 hours, 260, followed by West Godavari (247), East Godavari (214), Guntur (199), Chittoor (137) and Visakhapatnam (75).

Among other places, Anantapur (58), Kadapa (52), Srikakulam (37), Vizianagaram (35), Nellore (32), Prakasam (31) and Kurnool (18).

With the new additions, Kurnool's tally is inching closer to the 60,000-mark.

East Godavari continues to



shoulder the highest number of cases at 1.2 lakh.

Meanwhile, nine more patients succumbed to the virus in the past 24 hours, taking the state's death toll to 6,890. Chittoor continues to be the district with the highest number of Covid deaths at 812.

However, the southern state is consistently recording an impressive number of recoveries every day.

On Monday, 2,293 more patients recovered from the disease to increase the total number of recoveries to 8.32 lakh.

Of the 8.56 lakh cases, active cases currently stand at 16,985. In the past 24 hours, Covid-19 tests fell to 66,778 samples. The state has so far conducted over 92.6 lakh tests.

IANS

Karnataka to set up development board for Lingayat community

Bengaluru: Karnataka would soon set up a development board for the betterment of Veerashaiva-Lingayat community in the southern State, an official said on Tuesday.

"Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa directed state chief secretary T.M. Vijay Bhaskar to constitute a Karnataka Veerashaiva-Lingayat Development Board for the socio-economic improvement of the dominant community in the state," a Social Welfare department official told IANS here.

The decision to set up the board came three days after Yediyurappa on Saturday directed the department to

form a Maratha Development Authority with Rs 50-crore corpus for the welfare of Marathas living in the state.

The dominant Lingayat community is estimate to account for 16 per cent of the state's 7-crore population.

Incidentally, Yediyurappa is considered the tallest Lingayat leader in the state though the community is considered economically and socially backward.

"Veerashaiva-Lingayats form a large community in the state, many of whom are economically, socially and educationally backward," Yediyurappa said in a note to Chief Secretary TM Vijay

Bhaskar. "The board will work for the overall development of the community," said the Chief Minister.

Several Lingayat legislators of the ruling BJP, opposition Congress and JD-S urged Yediyurappa to set up the board for the Lingayat sect, whose members are more than other communities across the state.

Congress lawmaker M.B. Patil and JD-S senior legislator Basaraj Horatti also urged the Chief Minister to make 16 per cent reservation in government jobs and educational institutions for the Lingayats, as Maharashtra has done for Marathas in the neighbouring state.

IANS

Migratory birds begin to arrive at Aligarh's Shekha Jheel

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Migratory foreign birds have begun arriving on Shekha lake in Aligarh from Siberia, eastern Europe, China and the Philippines for dating.

After dating, they return to their respective countries with their new born in February.

The Forest department has found after its survey on Shekha lake that this year 5600 foreign birds have already arrived and 43 rare species of Migratory birds have already been identified by forest department. Though these

migratory foreign birds are busy in dating but they have no security at all from hunters and stray dogs. In this connection, District Forest Officer told, "survey on Shekha lake was under taken through binocular system. Till moment we have calculated that 56,00 foreign birds have arrived on Shekha lake which belongs to 147 species. Among them 43 are rare species of Migratory birds. These migratory birds have been provided complete security and required environment for their dating in a free atmosphere."

Priyanka questions Yogi on Mission Shakti

Lucknow: Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday questioned the women empowerment programme 'Mission Shakti' launched by the Yogi Adityanath Government.

In a tweet, Priyanka asked the Chief Minister to explain how successful 'Mission Shakti' has been in UP.

"From the reports of crime against women UP, it is clear that women are not safe in the state.

A number of women have ended their lives because no one has responded to their problems," she said.

Priyanka also listed about ten incidents of crime against women in UP.

Priyanka has been regularly lashing out at the growing incidents of crime against women in the state and has been criticizing the Yogi Adityanath government on the issue.

IANS

Rare surgery at JNMC

Aligarh: A baby girl from Khurja, Uttar Pradesh with a very rare case of cyanotic congenital heart disease now has a brighter future thanks to help from a dedicated team of cardiothoracic surgeons of the Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College (JNMC), Aligarh Muslim University (AMU).

Kanika, was born five months ago with cyanotic congenital heart disease, a rare cardiovascular problem.

Bail plea of Kerala CM's former Secretary Sivasankar rejected

Kochi: A court here on Tuesday refused to grant bail to IAS officer and Kerala Chief Minister's former Principal Secretary, M. Sivasankar.

Sivasankar was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate on October 29 in the gold smuggling case and is being questioned by the financial probe agency.

His judicial custody ends on November 26 and prior to that, reports indicate he will be continue to be questioned by the various national probe agencies.

Heated arguments had taken place at the Principal Sessions Court with counsel for Sivasankar arguing that he was being pressurised to name high-flying ruling front political leaders, but the prosecution denied the claim.

The prosecution, however, cited several pieces of evidence against

Sivasankar and it was these the court relied on to dismiss his bail plea.

The ED even contended that Swapna Suresh, the prime accused in the gold smuggling and Life Mission cases, was being used by Sivasankar who knew everything what was happening.

The Customs had arrested P.S. Sarith, a former employee of the UAE Consulate here, on July 5 for allegedly smuggling gold in a diplomatic baggage destined for the Consulate. Swapna, who was also an ex-employee of the Consulate, and her associate Sandip Nair were also arrested by the National Investigation Agency from Bengaluru.

Vijayan removed Sivasankar as his Principal Secretary and then as IT Secretary after it surfaced that Swapna and Sivasankar were allegedly close friends.

IANS

Maha Cong collects 60L farmers' signatures against Central farm laws

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

As part of the ongoing agitation against the Central farm laws, the Maharashtra Congress has collected signatures of a staggering 60 lakh farmers to demand repeal of the "anti-farmer" Central farm laws.

A petition carrying 60 lakh signatures was handed over by Revenue minister and State Congress President Balasaheb Thorat to the Congress in-charge for Maharashtra HK Patil. "No other party has ever carried out such a massive campaign and collected such a large number of signatures," a state party statement said.

"Today, we handed over the signatures of 60 lakh farmers in the state to Shri HK Patil ji who will

hand over the petition to Congress president Sonia Gandhi," Thorat said. These signatures - along with a statement signed by farmers across the country -- will be handed over by the Congress to President Ramnath Kovind in New Delhi on November 19.

"These 60 lakh signatures show the huge opposition of the farmers to this law. Maharashtra's fight against agricultural laws has become a role model for the country," Patil said

Speaking at a function organised at Tilak Bhavan here, Thorat said: "During the recent weeks, we carried out agitations against the new agriculture laws. We organised a virtual rally of Maharashtra farmers - which was attended by 50 lakh farmers."

"It is not a small task to sub-

mit a petition with 60 lakh signatures. It is a historic campaign. These unjust laws should be repealed. Maharashtra has always been a guiding state for the rest of the Country. We intend to protect the interests of farmers by enacting a better agricultural law than Punjab," Thorat said.

Thorat said that under the leadership of late Indira Gandhi, a green revolution took place in the country and the agricultural sector was transformed. "But the present BJP government has continuously worked to weaken the farmers and the agricultural systems of the country," he said.

Apart from Thorat and Patil, prominent among those present at the function organised at Tilak Bhavan were Energy minister Dr. Nitin Raut, Medical Education

Minister Amit Deshmukh, Mumbai Guardian Minister Aslam Shaikh, Mumbai Congress President Eknath Gaikwad, Former Minister Naseem Khan, Former MP Hussain Dalwai and State party working President Muzaffar Hussain.

It may recalled that on September 30, the Maharashtra government had stayed the notification issued by it in August to implement the three ordinances issued by the Centre that had preceded the farm Bills which have now been enacted and set up a Cabinet sub-committee to study implementation or otherwise of the "anti-farmer" central farm laws which have evoked vociferous protests from farmers across the country.

The ruling Congress and NCP,

which are two constituents of the MVA government in Maharashtra, have come out in the open about their opposition to the farm laws, while the Shiv Sena is also very much with the two of its ruling partners in the state in its reservations in implementing the three farm laws in the state.

Talking to media persons earlier on Tuesday, Thorat said that the state government would soon come out a law that would nullify the adverse impact of the three newly passed laws -- the Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion & Facilitation) Act, 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment & Protection) Assurance and Farm Service Act, 2020, and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020 -- would have on the farmers in the state.

Scrap NEET for medical colleges in TN, for PG courses too: Stalin

IANS ■ CHENNAI

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) President MK Stalin on Tuesday demanded scrapping of NEET for medical college admissions as the Centre had allowed for separate entrance tests in its 11 such institutions in Tamil Nadu.

Similarly, in medical colleges in Tamil Nadu, admissions for postgraduate courses should not be made based on National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) scores,

he said.

Stalin urged Chief Minister K Palaniswami to write to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on this subject so that admissions to postgraduate medical courses could be made and 69 per cent reservation quota implemented for the same.

The Leader of the Opposition in the Tamil Nadu Assembly also urged Palaniswami to hold counselling for admissions to special medical courses for government doctors with 50 per cent reservation.

Maha pays homage to Balasaheb Thackeray on his death anniversary

Mumbai: Top leaders from various political parties and commoners paid homage to the founder-patriarch of Shiv Sena, the late Balasaheb Thackeray on his eighth death anniversary here on Tuesday.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray led the state along with his wife Rashmi Thackeray, son and Minister Aditya Thackeray besides ministers, leaders of other parties, and paid floral tributes at the late leader's memorial at Shivaji Park.

In a message, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said: "A heartfelt tribute to Balasaheb Thackeray whose leadership,

eloquence and contributions will rule forever in the hearts of the Marathis."

Nationalist Congress Party President Sharad Pawar said the late Balasaheb Thackeray's work as "an effective orator, cartoonist and political commentator" are of special significance and political activists are reminded of his ever-vigilant attitude.

Similarly, Congress leader and Minister Ashok Chavan paid homage to the memory of Bal Thackeray.

The Bharatiya Janata Party's Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis saluted the late leader who remained com-

mitted to his thoughts and speeches while Prasad Lad described him as the "Hindu Hriday Samrat, Nationalist, enlightening leader."

The Maharashtra Navnirman Sena spokesperson Sandeep Deshpande questioned why despite coming to power since one year, the Maha Vikas Aghadi government has failed to construct a memorial to Balasaheb Thackeray at the site near the Shivaji Park.

Scores of Shiv Sainiks and followers converged at the Shivaji Park and offered their tributes to the late leader who passed away at the age of 86 on November 17, 2012.

IANS



Tourists visit the historic Taj Mahal shrouded in smog in Agra on Tuesday

Nitish hemmed in

BJP's surprise picks for two deputy CMs are intrinsic to its goal of widening its social base and winning a verdict on its own in Bihar



After its own stupendous showing and the decimation of its alliance partner in the Bihar Assembly elections, there were questions galore about whether the BJP would have its own Chief Minister or continue with its nominee and Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar. The latter himself was believed to have offered to give up his position, considering his party was undeserving of the chair. But the BJP held on to Nitish, partly because it wanted to claim high moral ground, that of not dumping a regional ally in distress. It certainly didn't want to appear power-hungry or absolutist. And partly because his hold on Extremely Backward Castes

(EBCs) and Mahadalits is still intact and the BJP needs the façade of an inclusive rainbow to best its performance and become the single largest party convincingly next time, the last tag having been proudly claimed by the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) in this bout. Besides, so long as the RJD is focussed on belittling Nitish, it would be able to quietly go about its own gameplan. That doesn't mean it has allowed Nitish a free run but has cleverly encircled him with its chosen few and even removed its once deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi, who had a comfortable equation with the former. In fact, Nitish has his hands tied up badly with the BJP naming not one but two Deputy Chief Ministers — Tarkishore Prasad and Renu Devi. By moving Sushil Modi, who has in no small way contributed to the party's growth in the State over the years, to Delhi for a Central assignment, the BJP is clearly resetting the entire template of the State. The Assembly verdict has been a close call and it certainly doesn't want past baggage but is keen to start out on a clean slate, the sole aim being taking down the RJD and forming a Government on its own. Sushil Modi is too strong a leader with opinions that perhaps would not be conducive for the growth of lesser-known but more efficacious leaders. And from the looks of RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav's popularity, his youth following, his dalliance with a resurgent Left and his prioritising economic justice for all Biharis instead of bartering away caste privileges, the challenges are quite big. Both Prasad and Devi are low key leaders, who have risen from the ranks and have worked the grassroots, the kind favoured by the BJP's top duo of Narendra Modi and Amit Shah to do their bidding, and can expand the party's network without drawing unnecessary attention. Tejashwi reaped the benefit of being an underdog in this election but now that all lenses are trained on him, the BJP wants to lie low. Prasad is not even a mass leader but has moorings in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). He has been instrumental in the party doing well in the Muslim-dominated Seemanchal region, perceived to be a RJD stronghold. Some say that he has some appeal among bordering districts with West Bengal and may be deployed for the Assembly polls there. Renu Devi has obviously been a concession to the women voters of Bihar, who swung the verdict in the BJP's favour. Besides, Prasad belongs to Other Backward Castes (OBC) while Devi is EBC, a fact that will help the BJP claim representative caste credentials on its own than rely on JD(U) in the future. The announcements should come as no surprise, considering that they are in line with the Modi-Shah duo's earlier chief ministerial choices in Haryana, Maharashtra and Gujarat. Manohar Lal Khattar, Devendra Fadnavis and Vijay Rupani were chosen above popular State leaders simply because the central leadership wanted a continuity of command and strategy. Besides, some BJP insiders believe that if an election has been won in the name of Modi, he should make the final call.

The BJP is not happy with statistics, something that it bases its strategies on. Mathematically, the RJD increased its vote share to 23 per cent compared to the BJP's 19 per cent while contesting lesser seats than last time. Its galloping support among non-Yadav voters, particularly its rainbow coalition that split the upper caste vote, and its messianic appeal among the classless poor have given furrowed brows to the BJP. So the Hindu vote in Bihar, too, is not as cohesive as the party would want it to be. Hence the choice of two earthy faces as Nitish's deputies, who, given their consistency in winning successive elections, have proven that they have their ears to the ground. Most importantly, the BJP wants to tell its rank and file that the organisation is not status quoist and that it not only rewards gritty performers with posts but also grooms them into leadership positions. This also helps it posit itself vis-à-vis the dynastically privileged Tejashwi or even Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader Chirag Paswan. The BJP further realises that it needs the likes of Prasad and Devi to hold its own against the Left parties, which not only guarded their votebanks but came together with the RJD-led alliance to trounce the BJP-JD(U) in Bhojpur and Magadh regions bordering Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. Tejashwi's co-option of the Left may be the glue for a larger anti-BJP alliance. And though it is allowing Nitish the top post in the last days of his political career, the BJP is making sure that governance is at its bidding. Five years are too short for a turnaround and the BJP certainly doesn't want to waste any seeding efforts. As for Nitish, apart from being a seventh time Chief Minister for the record books, there are no expectations of *sushashan* anymore. He will at best be a visage of respectability as the BJP pulls all the strings. Nitish is seemingly powerful and actually powerless. Perhaps this is his worst political compromise yet. For it is not just about survival. It is about never being able to prove himself worth it.

Vaccine on the cards

With several firms announcing good news on a COVID-19 vaccine, have we turned a corner on the pandemic?



There has been a lot of good news on the search for a vaccine to combat COVID-19, the pandemic that ripped the year to shreds. With news from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna stating that their vaccines have 90 and 94.5 percent efficacy respectively even as the final stages of trials begin, hope now seems a possibility. The Russians have claimed their Sputnik-V vaccine confers an efficacy of 92 per cent but those claims are being taken with a pinch of salt. Elsewhere, several other vaccine-candidates are reaching the final stages of their development, including India's COVAX-IN, developed by Bharat Biotech. It appears that by early

2021 at least one if not more vaccines would have been released in the market.

That said, we must temper our enthusiasm slightly as most vaccines so far require incredibly super-cold chain transportation requirements. The Pfizer vaccine needs temperatures below -80 degrees centigrade to be stable, the Moderna one, a very cold but slightly more reasonable -20C. It will be difficult to manage such a cold chain vaccine delivery system, particularly in a country the size of India, but one could assume that harder vaccines will be developed which India's existing cold chain infrastructure developed for fish, meat and vegetables will be able to manage. However, even if such a vaccine is developed relatively soon, one should beware that it might take several months to inoculate most Indians living in large metropolitan areas even if we take advantage of producing companies like the Serum Institute. Safely manufacturing and deploying over a billion doses of the vaccine, even if global suppliers help with patents and manufacturing, could take years. But getting the vaccine out there as soon as possible will, according to some virologists, dramatically speed up the herd immunity process. It is not surprising that stock exchanges across the world have been on the upswing as have reports from bodies looking at economic growth. After almost a whole year of doom and gloom, even a bit of positive news is enough to set the markets rocking. And make no mistake, all these reports are very positive. Yet, we would have to be cautious until we get the nitty-gritties of how exactly the vaccine will be administered.

Hold on to Chushul

Any agreement with China, which is about a piecemeal disengagement, is unacceptable. Surrendering one's trumpcard is a monumental folly



ASHOK K MEHTA

A disengagement deal on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, whose ingredients have been leaked, is being considered by the Government. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar mentioned it in mid-October as a confidential Chinese proposal and Army Chief Gen Naravane recently likened it to a work in progress. It apparently involves vacating the strategic Chushul heights on Kailash range — a critical bargaining leverage superbly created by the Special Frontier Force (SFF), which must not be frittered away in a piecemeal limited disengagement for Chinese withdrawal from the Fingers area.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is speaking the obvious: "We need a strong military to deter aggression." We have one but it can checkmate Pakistan, not China. Prime Minister Narendra Modi knows that due to economic recession, the modernisation of armed forces will be grounded. So he is boosting soldiers' morale by celebrating Diwali with them, riding the Arjun tank and acclaiming his Government's record in defence reforms. But defence allocation under his watch has been the lowest as a percentage of GDP, which has been declining since his Government came to power. Singh should be informed that *shastra puja* (worshipping weapons) alone will not add to deterrence.

If a limited disengagement and not a full and complete disengagement and de-escalation is implemented, it will be at an extraordinary strategic cost. China has been insisting that Chushul heights be vacated as part of a partial disengagement limited to north and south bank of Pangong lake. Colossal confusion prevails about the exact contours of the withdrawal as to whether it will be across all intrusion points in East Ladakh or just the Pangong Lake region. The strategic heights gained by SFF must not be vacated as these are on the Indian side of the LAC and were in our possession in 1962. An infantry brigade fought on these heights but withdrew prematurely, first to Chushul and then in panic to Leh. India must not repeat the Himalayan blunder for painting political success after a pounding from the opposition for loss of ter-



ritory. China has already pushed India into a corner by imposing unequal terms during the initial disengagement, which separated troops from friction points culminating in the Galwan clash.

The Indian Army was forced back from positions it held earlier in Galwan, Hot Springs and Gogra; buffer zones were created on the Indian side of the LAC even as the People's Liberation Army (PLA) failed to faithfully disengage from all the flashpoints. The Chinese have refused to discuss Depsang, where it has intruded 18 km and blocked Indian patrols. On its part, the PLA has managed to creep forward towards its 1959 claim line and annexed territory. In the proposed disengagement plan, China wants vacation of Kailash range for withdrawal from the Fingers area.

What is incentivising India to de-induct from the commanding heights overlooking the PLA Moldo garrison and from where, on a clear day, one can see the Aksai Chin road that China has illegally constructed? It could be the difficulty of supporting a Brigade on and along these heights in the harsh winter to follow where temperature is already minus 30 degrees centigrade and will go down to minus 40 degrees centigrade. The snow will be different from what the soldiers are used to in Siachen, which has been made

habitable and defensible over nearly four decades of occupation. If sustenance of troops is the compulsion, a smaller force can be kept and turned over as is being done on Saltoro Ridge in Siachen. Withdrawal from Kailash range should never be part of any limited Chinese proposal on disengagement.

The Chushul heights are a countervailing advantage in forcing withdrawal from Depsang and becoming the pivot of any tradeoff in an overall disengagement and de-escalation agreement, which is return of status quo ante, April 2020. PLA is occupying Black Top post close to the Mukhpari post on Kailash range. Chinese soldiers are conscripts, who normally do not man posts at an altitude of 17,000 feet. The Chinese are facing a greater degree of difficulty in their occupation of heights in areas near the Kailash range. The three-step withdrawal plan limited to both banks of Pangong Lake area reportedly consists of the following:

(a) Removal of heavy weapons from both banks of the lake (b) Full vacation by PLA from North Bank in Fingers area, back to the original Finger 8. The Indian Army similarly will pull back to its permanent location at Dhan Singh Post near Finger 3. Area between Fingers 4 and 8 will be converted to buffer zone (another buffer zone on Indian side).

THE STRATEGIC HEIGHTS GAINED BY SFF MUST NOT BE VACATED AS THESE ARE ON THE INDIAN SIDE OF THE LAC AND WERE IN OUR POSSESSION IN 1962. INDIA MUST NOT REPEAT THE HIMALAYAN BLUNDER FOR SCORING POLITICAL SUCCESS

SOUNDBITE

The ancient education system always taught us to live in harmony with nature and respect all beings and non-beings. Our education was complementary to life.

Vice-President
—M Venkaiah Naidu



The Open Acreage Licensing Policy is a market-friendly policy which is driving self-reliance in the energy sector.

Union Minister
—Dharmendra Pradhan



I am honoured to be the British Fashion Council's Ambassador for Positive Change while I'm living and working in London over the next year.

Actor
—Priyanka Chopra



Being Serena is very close to my heart. It captured my life during some of the most unforgettable and challenging moments in a really honest way.

Grand Slam champion
—Serena Williams



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Release Kerala scribe

Sir — Kerala-based journalist Siddique Kappan has been denied interim bail by the Supreme Court (SC). Arrested on October 5, he was on his way to meet the Hathras rape-murder victim's family when he was confronted by the Uttar Pradesh (UP) Police. After denying relief to Kappan, the SC issued a notice to the UP Government and sought a response on the plea seeking his release.

The apex court was hearing a plea filed by the Kerala Union of Working Journalists (KUWJ) challenging Kappan's arrest. Arguing for the journalist, senior advocate Kapil Sibal said that the FIR does not disclose any offence committed by him. And while a plea for interim bail had been filed, other journalists were not allowed to meet him in jail.

The brutal torture and gangrape of the Dalit girl had got national attention. The victim succumbed to her injuries a few days after the incident and was cremated in the dead of night by the police. Her family was not allowed any access to her body and the UP Government and police were widely criticised for violation of human rights and

Republican Party must return to its roots

I watched a recent interview of former US President Barack Obama, remembered what was and then looked forward to what could be with the new US presidency. One minor story amused me. Some days after the completion of his term, when he had more time to himself, Obama was reading while being driven somewhere when his car stopped at a red light. For almost all of the last decade, there had been no red lights in the path of his cavalcade. Obama was back to living the life of a normal citizen, although realistically speaking, he was still in a privileged position.

Most ex-Presidents have continued to live a public life and kept working in roles and organisations that helped to better the global image of the US. The job of presidency is really for life and it is uncertain how Donald Trump will enrich public life after his retirement, apart from supporting the golfing community, especially those playing at his clubs. What many people fear, especially probably Republicans although they might not admit it, is that he will have a significant role and



control of the Republican Party, its nature and direction. Its members need to lick their wounds and start to look at how they can return to their true nature and ignore the worst of their voices. Accept the 2020 decision, look to work with the other side, especially with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic as so many are dying, and rebuild a healthy social and economic environment.

Dennis Fitzgerald
Melbourne, Australia

creative expression. His acting career spanned over six decades and he starred in over 300 films. *Apur Sansar*, *Abhijan Charulata*, *Aparichito*, *Ashani Sanket* and *Dekha* are among the works that have made movie buffs idolise him.

At one level, he breathed life into characters struggling to cope with the perennial conflict between personal urges and social mores. At another level, he played the roles of characters in quest of opportunities to realise their potential in an independent India. He had that indefinable edge that made him a great actor. His was a screen presence people could relate to, love and admire. He had a great zest for life and retirement was the last thing on his mind. In West Bengal, Chatterjee and Uttam Kumar shared all the popularity between them. It is a sad part of history that he is not in the frames made by Ritwik Ghatak, even though he acted in films made by acclaimed directors like Mrinal Sen, Tapan Sinha and Ajoy Kar. He will be missed.

David Milton
Maruthancode

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

due legal processes.

Her death triggered protests across India. Kappan, along with a few other journalists, was on his way to meet the family when he was arrested. He must be given bail immediately. For he was just doing his duty as a journalist, gathering facts, and had not even filed a biased report. The voice of the media should not be stifled like this in a democracy.

And it is a crying shame that none of the other journalists in the national media is coming out in support of Kappan. Why are they so afraid?

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

A legendary actor

Sir — The legendary Soumitra Chatterjee was a man of many

parts. He was a screen actor, a theatre doyen, a playwright, a poet, a literary figure, a painter, an intellectual and a cultural icon. Eulogised as Satyajit Ray's protégé and alter ego, he enriched the cultural life of West Bengal and India. Ray brought out the best in Chatterjee. But it may be worthwhile to say that Chatterjee brought out the best in Ray, being the perfect vehicle for the latter's

FIRST COLUMN

Govt needs to drive the change

People will remember a Government only when it brings about changes which leave a long-term impact on public life



SHSHANK SAURAV

Recently, a video of Union Minister Nitin Gadkari surfaced on social media in which he was seen criticising the National Highways Authority of India (NHA) officials for inordinate delays in project execution. Things have come to such a pass that people who supported the NDA Government in the past are also raising dissenting voices over efficiency issues. Infrastructure development is the key to economic development and the Government, too, has acknowledged this fact in various statements. However, as per a recent report issued by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI), the cost overrun in delayed projects is over ₹4.29 lakh crore (20.85 per cent of the original cost). Cost overruns are not only a colossal waste of public money, they also result in potential opportunity cost for all stakeholders in the form of delayed availability of assets for public use. To put things in perspective, as on December 2013, one-third of the infrastructure projects of PSUs were delayed and cost overruns were 19.7 per cent of the original budget. It is the same under the NDA Government and most of these projects were delayed due to the time taken in getting regulatory approvals. Even the Government is aware of the problem and a June 2019 report by KPMG highlights all these issues and remedial measures which are largely related to project management. India's "Ease of Doing Business" ranking is improving consistently but at the same time Government undertakings are struggling to get necessary approvals for implementation of projects.

It is necessary to set quantifiable and measurable goals to evaluate the performance of any individual or department. The Government prepares the "Output Outcome Framework Report", which is part of the Budget document but it is not discussed in detail in the media and the focus is always on tax rates, exemptions and so on. This report talks about financial outlays on various schemes and their expected outputs/outcomes. This document includes the phrase, "targets not amenable," at various places, which means that people preparing the Budget were not sure what they wanted to achieve out of the expenditure. Governments across the world are facing an unprecedented revenue crisis and, therefore, it is necessary to take a look at the measures taken by the Centre in this direction. In the previous year, the Government introduced the "Sabka Vishwas" scheme to settle indirect tax cases and boost falling revenues. As per the Finance Ministry, approximately ₹3.6 lakh crore was locked up in disputes and the Government received applications worth approximately ₹89,800 crore under the said scheme. Though the Government claimed to realise ₹39,000 crore from the scheme, it actually received only about ₹15,000 crore because the rest of the amount was already pre-deposited by assessee. In a nutshell, this scheme was not a success despite desperate calls made by the Government to prevent its failure.

This year the Government introduced the "Vivad se Vishwas Scheme" to unplug the courts and realise the Income Tax revenue locked in litigation. As per Annexure 5 of the Receipt Budget of 2020, ₹8.02 lakh crore of Income Tax demand was under dispute as on March 31, 2019. As per a statement given in Parliament by the Minister of State for Finance, Anurag Thakur, the Government was able to realise merely ₹9,538 crore till September 8. This is despite the fact that the CBDT Chairman had specifically instructed the officials to close all the declarations filed in this scheme within the stipulated period. He set August 31 as the upper time limit for closing all the matters.

Given the current status, this well-intended scheme is also bound to fail because of the indifferent attitude of tax officials. The intent of the scheme was to achieve the twin objectives of tax collection as well as litigation minimisation, but it appears that none of them are going to be achieved. Just to cite an example, declarations filed by the assessee are not considered valid even if the Income Tax Department is at fault in matters relating to service of documents to the assessee. S/he is statutorily eligible to avail the benefit of the scheme. If things are not moving even after giving representation to higher authorities, including the Revenue Secretary and the CBDT Chairman, then it is easy to guess the level of effort required to correct the mess which we are in. The citizens will not get benefit from a noble intention unless that is implemented in the true spirit by our bureaucracy.

The ruling party should consider the fact that winning an election with the help of social engineering is one thing but bringing capable administrators into the Government is altogether different. People will remember a Government only when it brings changes which create a long-term impact.

(The writer is a Chartered Accountant)

I INFORMED THE GOA POWER MINISTER THAT I WILL BE DEBATING WITH HIM ON THE TOPIC OF KEJRIWAL POWER MODEL VS GOA ELECTRICITY MODEL.

—AAP MLA
RAGHAV CHADHA

POINT COUNTERPOINT



I DON'T HAVE AN ISSUE DEBATING WITH THOSE WHO UNDERSTAND THE POWER PROBLEMS OF DELHI AND GOA. NOT SOMEONE UNRELATED TO IT.

—GOA POWER MINISTER
NILESH CABRAL

Unshackle the CBI

It is time to nullify the general consent-giving power of the States to the investigation agency for probing Central Government organisations on their turfs



J GOIKRISHNAN

India's premier investigation agency, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), is now passing through the worst crisis it has ever faced in all the years of its existence. In the past, the agency has often faced allegations (especially when handling politically-sensitive cases against Opposition or rival party leaders), of working at the behest of its political masters at the helm of affairs at the Centre. To the extent that it has often been called a "caged parrot" by the judiciary and the media. However, now the woes of India's premier investigation agency seem to have multiplied with eight non-BJP ruled States banning its entry into their territory. The CBI is the Central Government's anti-corruption agency and its main activity is to check corruption or illegal activities in Central Government departments, Central Government PSUs, banks and so on. However, the major problem with the CBI is that it is governed by an archaic law called the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946 (DSPE Act). This law has a curious provision that allows State Governments to withdraw the "general consent" to it. In such a case, the CBI needs directions from the High Court or the Supreme Court on probes related to the State investigating agencies.

As a result of this provision, the CBI has been blocked by Punjab, Kerala, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Mizoram. This is the first time in the history of the agency that so many States have banned it from their turfs. As a result, the CBI has had to approach courts in order to be able to conduct raids and investigations in these States. This restriction even stops the CBI from conducting investigations at Central Government offices in these States. Probes into complaints of petty bribery in Central Government organisations in these States are subject to permissions of the local governments. Needless to say, this is a big hurdle in the working of the CBI.

When in 2018, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) left the BJP-headed NDA, the Andhra Pradesh Government used this special provision in the DSPE Act and blocked the CBI from entering the State, sensing political vendetta. It was only in mid-2019 that the position changed after the BJP-friendly YSR Congress regime came to power. Similarly, during the probe in the Saradha scam, when the CBI summoned the Kolkata Police Commissioner, the West Bengal Government ruled by the Trinamool Congress (TMC) also did the same and refused its permission. Anyway, in the end, the State could not block the probe in the Saradha Scam, as the investigation was handed over to the CBI by the Supreme Court. The agency also got support from the Supreme Court in arresting the Kolkata Police Commissioner, which had earlier been prevented by the State administration.

Now, it faces the same situation with the eight States and will have to knock on the door of the courts just to be able to do its duty. So what is the remedy of this peculiar situation? The answer is simple: The archaic DSPE Act will have to be amended by the Central Government. The amendment, if it ever passes muster in Parliament, will empower the CBI to register or probe any case related to the Central Government in any part of the country without requiring the

“EVER SINCE THE DILUTION OF THE PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION ACT IN 2018, THE CBI HAS BEEN FACING A BIG HANDICAP. SECTION 13(1)(D), WHICH GAVE THE AGENCY ITS POWERS, WAS SCRAPPED. THE 2018 AMENDMENT OF THE ACT PUT TOO MANY RESTRICTIONS ON THE CBI EVEN FOR A BASIC PROBE. AS PER THE NEW RULES, THE CBI HAS TO GET A SANCTION FOR STARTING AN INVESTIGATION AGAINST OFFICERS UNDER SUSPICION. THIS MEANS GETTING A SANCTION FROM THE SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE SAME ORGANISATION WHERE CORRUPT PRACTICES HAVE BEEN SPOTTED”



general consent of the States. The CBI should have been empowered long ago. Particularly after 2013, when the Gauhati High Court first questioned the validity of the agency. Even though the next day the CBI was saved by a stay order issued by the apex court, this incident should have been an eye-opener for the Central Government to either amend the DSPE Act or bring about a new Act empowering the CBI.

But for the past seven years nothing happened to ameliorate the situation and the CBI's administrative Ministry, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), which is under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has not yet taken a call to settle this vexed issue.

Ever since the dilution of the Prevention of Corruption Act in 2018, the CBI has been facing a big handicap. Section 13(1)(d), which gave the agency its powers, was scrapped. The 2018 amendment of the Act put too many restrictions on the CBI even for a basic probe. As per the new rules, the CBI has to get a sanction for starting an investigation against officers under suspicion. This means getting a sanction from the senior officers of the same organisation where corrupt practices have been spotted. Will a senior officer, particularly one who is in cahoots with corrupt officers, give sanction to probe his/her junior? Plus, even if the senior officer is honest, the moment the CBI applies for sanction to probe graft in the organisation, others will come to know of it, corrupt officers will cover

their tracks and the trail will go cold.

When these amendments were brought about, the Government said in Parliament that they were needed to protect officers. These changes were mooted by the UPA Government in 2012, when it was facing the heat of a huge anti-corruption wave in the country. It is intriguing why the BJP Government, despite being in power for many years, has carried forward the Congress-led UPA's policy which diluted the powers of the CBI.

The amendments have opened a Pandora's Box as many accused people and companies, facing trial or appeal in corruption cases, have approached High Courts around the country arguing that they should also get the benefit of the now diluted Prevention of Corruption Act of 2018.

The CBI and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) are appealing in the Delhi High Court against the 2G case trial court's verdict, which surprisingly acquitted all accused persons and companies. From October 5 onwards, a daily hearing is being held on the appeal and for the last 30 days, all the accused are arguing that they have filed a case in another Bench seeking the favours of the provisions of the new Prevention of Corruption Act, though they were charged under the old Act. This has affected ongoing trials too.

Though the law is very clear on this aspect that the charges are based on the laws that were prevalent at the time of the commission of the crime, this amendment has delayed many cases

across India. The CBI was once slammed by the Supreme Court for dragging its feet in the Jain Hawala case. In the 1997 judgment in the case filed by journalist Vineet Narain, the court laid down guidelines to ensure independence and autonomy of the CBI and ordered that the agency be placed under the supervision of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and be freed from executive control or interference. But we have seen the spirit of this landmark judgment sabotaged in the infamous tussle between the CBI Director Alok Verma and Special Director Rakesh Asthana in 2018.

Even though the Supreme Court has given many judgments on sanction for prosecution, all Governments have been eager to protect senior officers from the Joint Secretary level and above in corruption cases. And the dilution of the Act in 2018 completely sabotaged the spirit of many landmark judgments on Sanction for Prosecution of high level officers.

Laws are an evolving process and it is time for the Central Government to bring appropriate amendments in the archaic DSPE Act of 1946. It is time to nullify the general consent-giving power of the States to the CBI for probing Central Government organisations on their turfs. The Central Government must also analyse what it achieved by diluting the Prevention of Corruption Act in 2018 and its impact on the prosecution of corrupt people.

(The writer is Special Correspondent of The Pioneer)

As COVID cases rise, the next 15 days are crucial

An urgent action plan is mandatory while integrative and coordinated efforts from all stakeholders are required to respond to a looming threat



RAJINDER K DHAMIYA

actually in line with my prediction of multiple waves of COVID-19 happening in India, in these columns in June. This also reflects our understanding of different peaks occurring in various parts of India at different times.

This has been the trend across the globe with the pandemic behaving in a similar way, be it in America where the cases rose sharply in one State and then moved across gradients to affect another State. Many countries in Europe, too, have experienced a similar phenomenon of multiple waves of the pandemic at different times.

It is not just the number of new cases that is worrying. The more devastating factor is the number of daily deaths, almost one hundred in the last week itself in Delhi. So far, the national as well as Delhi's COVID-19 case fatality rate has been reported to be one of the lowest in the world with an improving recovery rate. However, since the cases are surging, the number of daily deaths is bound to rise, too, owing to the fragile healthcare system, which is buckling under the pressure of the rising infections.

It was expected that cases will go up with the double whammy of crowds during the festival season along with the increased infectivity of the Coronavirus due to the surge of influenza-like illnesses in the winter months. However, the air pollution has made matters worse.

Pollution not only hampers the capacity of our lungs to clear the Coronavirus infection but particulate matter or pollutants can also facilitate its transmission by acting as a vehicle for large droplets which tend to stay suspended longer and lower down in the environment. These can infect more people.

There is enough evidence now that there is a direct relation between high PM2.5 levels and increased infectivity of the Coronavirus as shown in studies from China, the UK and Italy during this pandemic. It is also pertinent to know that the new positive cases being reported as of now are the reflection of exposure and infections which occurred in the previous weeks. There is a lag between exposure and clinical symptoms due to the incubation period of the viral infection, which is anything between two to 14 days for the

SARSCoV2 virus. Therefore, the new positive cases represent the infections occurring five to seven days preceding the reports.

Similarly there is a lag between exposure, clinical symptoms and the need for ICU admissions and assisted ventilation and fatalities in severe cases of COVID-19. This period is usually 10 to 14 days.

It is important to understand this lag period as the number of deaths being reported today is reflective of infections occurring at least two weeks ago, since deaths lag behind infections by weeks.

This is an important implication as the number of new positive cases is bound to increase tremendously in the coming two weeks post-Diwali due to compounded effects of over crowding, air pollution, bursting of crackers and the cold weather. It is quite predictable that the coming two weeks will be crucial, both in terms of new positive cases, the number of fatalities and the unfolding of a serious situation. Therefore, an urgent action plan is mandatory and integrative and coordinated efforts from all stakeholders are required to respond to this looming scenario.

First, containment and mitigation measures, which slow down the spread, are the only options in the face of the unrelenting infection phase, while augmentation of infrastructure in terms of ICU beds and trained manpower in critical care, are crucial to prevent deaths. Provision of ICU beds is not the solution unless we have enough trained manpower to manage the severe COVID-19 patients and run these critical care facilities.

Moreover the fundamentals of containment and mitigation remain the same, including sanitising, masking and distancing. We all know the drill but it is crucial to enforce behavioural changes like in the case of driving laws.

Second, since the positivity rate in Delhi (15 per cent) is too high, which is more than three times than the national average, there is no other option but to scale up testing to contain the spread of the infection. This needs to be brought below five per cent consistently to ensure adequate testing is being done.

There has been more of the rapid antigen testing in Delhi and fewer RT-PCR tests, a formula which

needs to be reversed. Ideally all the tests should be RT-PCR tests, which are more sensitive and would pick up more cases. Moreover anyone who undergoes the test should remain in quarantine till they get the results to limit transmission of the infection.

There needs to be a two-stage house-to-house cluster sero surveillance, as is being done in countries with robust healthcare systems. This ensures identification of people with symptoms of COVID-19. The RT-PCR testing for them confirms active infection and measures the quantum of past infection through antibody testing.

This strategy would not only mitigate cases but also help policymakers plan a public health response in the coming months. We need to act aggressively and quickly to save lives and avoid preventable deaths. The time to act proactively is now to save each and every life in the coming weeks. The fact remains that the virus is here to stay and the vaccine is still miles away.

(The writer is Head of Neurology Department, Lady Hardinge Medical College and SSK Hospital)



FOREIGN EYE



CREATE JOBS, NOT ANXIETY

COVID exposes the key Government role in maintaining the total level of spending in the economy at a level that keeps the country as close to full employment as possible. In the UK there will be an estimated million under-25s looking for work soon. Rishi Sunak's kickstart job creation scheme is too small and reliant on private firms to help. Time is running out to act and ensure that a generation is not sacrificed on the altar of ideology.

(The Guardian editorial)

IF TRUMP DOES NOT COOPERATE WITH TRANSITION PROCESS

More 'may die' of Covid: Biden

Washington: President-elect Joe Biden has warned that many more Americans "may die" if incumbent President Donald Trump does not cooperate with the transition process and hamper the incoming administration's ability to tackle the deadly coronavirus pandemic.

According to media projections, Democrat Biden has won the November 3 presidential election. Biden has 306 votes in the electoral college, surpassing the 270 threshold needed to win.

However, Trump, a Republican, has not conceded and instead alleged election fraud without presenting any significant evidence. The Trump campaign has also mounted legal fights in a number of battleground states where he lost.

"More people may die if we don't coordinate," Biden said in his home state of Delaware on Monday, responding to a question on President Trump refusing to concede the election and

the outgoing administration not co-operating in the transition process.

The US Government agency that launches transition process — the General Services Administration (GSA), headed by a Trump appointee — has yet to recognise Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris as winners.

The Trump-appointed administrator of the General Services Administration has so far refused to take the legally necessary step to begin the transition process, which would give Biden's team a budget, intelligence briefings and access to federal agencies.

"A vaccine is important. It's of little use until you're vaccinated. So, how do we get the vaccine, how do we get over 300 million Americans vaccinated? What's the game plan? It's a huge, huge, huge undertaking to get it done, prioritise those greatest in need and working our way through, and also

cooperate with the World Health Organisation and the rest of the world in dealing with this," he said.

"So they (Trump administration) say they have this 'Warp Speed' programme that not only deal with getting vaccines, but also how to distribute this.

The number of COVID-19 infections in the US has reached new heights in recent days, surpassing 160,000 cases in one day for the first time since the outbreak began. More than 247,000 people have died in the US do the disease.

Dr Anthony Fauci, the top US infectious diseases expert, has warned that the country faces "a very challenging and ominous situation" as it approaches winter.

Calling nationwide vaccine distribution a "huge undertaking", Biden said that if his team had to wait until 20 January - his presidential inauguration - until they could begin work on the

distribution programme, they would be behind by "over a month, month and a half".

Biden said coordination is important "now, or as rapidly as we can get that done," and said that "it would make it a lot easier if the President were to participate."

"I am hopeful that the President will be mildly more enlightened before we get to January 20," he said.

"The idea the President is still playing golf and not doing anything about it is beyond my comprehension," Biden said.

Biden also criticised Trump for failing to work with Congress to negotiate a measure to aid businesses and unemployed Americans as the pandemic rages heading into the winter.

Biden was also asked about his thoughts on Trump's tweet over the weekend where he first seemed to acknowledge that Biden had won the election. However, soon after Trump

said he would not concede, and that he had won.

He called Trump's refusal to acknowledge he lost the election, despite calls to do so from both sides, "totally irresponsible".

"I interpret that as Trumping-ism, no change in his modus operandi. And I think the pressure will continue to build," he said.

The President-elect said that he is having a lot of meetings with world leaders on the telephone and he can get into negotiating with them about things that are going to be done. They are calling with some degree of enthusiasm everyone from a holy father to prime ministers across the globe.

"So we are moving along knowing what the outcome will be and ... but I find this more embarrassing for the country than debilitating for my ability to get started," Biden said. **PTI**

Certain elements inside Pak military had links to al-Qaeda: Obama on Osama raid

Joe Biden advised against Laden raid

Washington: Barack Obama has said that he had ruled out involving Pakistan in the raid on Osama bin Laden's hideout because it was an "open secret" that certain elements inside Pakistan's military, and especially its intelligence services, maintained links to the Taliban and perhaps even al-Qaeda, sometimes using them as strategic assets against Afghanistan and India.

Giving a blow-by-blow account of the Abbottabad raid by American commandos that killed the world's most wanted terrorist on May 2, 2011 in his latest book "A Promised Land", the former US president said that the top secret operation was opposed by the then defence secretary Robert Gates and his former vice president Joe Biden, who is now the President-elect.

In the book that hit the stands globally on Tuesday, America's first Black president described the various options of killing bin Laden once it became increasingly clear that the elusive al Qaeda chief was living in a safe hideout on the outskirts of a Pakistani military cantonment in Abbottabad.

"Based on what I'd heard,

I decided we had enough information to begin developing options for an attack on the compound. While the CIA team continued to work on identifying the Pacer, I asked Tom Donilon and John Brennan to explore what a raid would look like," Obama writes in his memoir.

The need for secrecy added to the challenge; if even the slightest hint of our lead on bin Laden leaked, we knew our opportunity would be lost. As a result, only a handful of people across the entire federal government were read into the planning phase of the operation, he said.

"We had one other constraint: Whatever option we chose could not involve the Pakistanis," he wrote.

"Although Pakistan's government cooperated with us on a host of counterterrorism operations and provided a vital supply path for our forces in Afghanistan, it was an open secret that certain elements inside the country's military, and especially its intelligence

services, maintained links to the Taliban and perhaps even al-Qaeda, sometimes using them as strategic assets to ensure that the Afghan government remained weak and unable to align itself with Pakistan's number one rival, India," Obama revealed.

Despite all the risks involved, Obama and his national security team opted for the second option, but not before multiple rounds of discussions and intensive planning.

"Joe (Biden) also weighed in against the raid, arguing that given the enormous consequences of failure, I should defer any decision until the intelligence community was more certain that bin Laden was in the compound.

"As had been true in every major decision I'd made as president, I appreciated Joe's willingness to buck the prevailing mood and ask tough questions, often in the interest of giving me the space I needed for my own internal deliberations," Obama wrote. **PTI**

Australia, Japan to bolster defence ties amid China's rise

Tokyo: Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison is in Japan to hold talks with his Japanese counterpart, Yoshihide Suga, to bolster defence ties between the two US allies to counter China's growing assertiveness in the Asia-Pacific region amid a transition in American leadership.

The two countries are close to concluding a Reciprocal Access Agreement, a legal framework to allow their troops to visit each other's countries and conduct training and joint operations.

Morrison and Suga are to hold talks later Tuesday and may conclude the deal. They are also expected to discuss the coronavirus and the economy, Japanese officials said.

If signed, it will be Japan's first such agreement since the 1960 status of forces agreement with the United States, which set bases for about 50,000 American troops to operate in and around Japan under the Japan-US security pact.

Japan is committed to maintain and deepen its 60-year-old alliance with the US as the cornerstone of Japanese diplomacy and security, but has in recent years sought to complement its regional defence by stepping up cooperation with others, especially Australia, amid China's growing maritime activity that has spread from the East and South China seas and beyond.



Pro-democracy protesters take cover with inflatable ducks and umbrellas as police fire water cannons during an anti-Govt rally near the Parliament in Bangkok on Tuesday

NATO chief warns of high price if troops leave Afghan

Brussels: NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg warned on Tuesday that the military organisation could pay a heavy price for leaving Afghanistan too early, after a US Official said President Donald Trump is expected to withdraw a significant number of American troops from Afghanistan in the coming weeks.

"We now face a difficult decision. We have been in Afghanistan for almost 20 years, and no NATO ally wants to stay any longer than necessary. But at the same time, the price for leaving too soon or in an uncoordinated way could be very high," Stoltenberg said

in a statement.

He said the conflict-ravaged country "risks becoming once again a platform for international terrorists to plan and organize attacks on our homelands. And ISIS (Islamic State) could rebuild in Afghanistan the terror caliphate it lost in Syria and Iraq."

The US decision comes just days after Trump installed a new slate of loyalists in top Pentagon positions who share his frustration with the continued troop presence in the war zones. The expected plans would leave 2,500 troops in Afghanistan after mid-January. **AP**

Yemen: Clashes between Govt, separatists kill 50

Sanaa: Fierce fighting in southern Yemen between Emirati-backed separatists and the country's internationally recognised government killed nearly 50 fighters this week on both sides, security officials said on Tuesday.

The flare-up of clashes in the province of Abyan was the latest blow to a cease-fire agreement brokered by Saudi Arabia late in 2019 with the goal of closing the rift between the two sides. The sides are allies in a US-backed, Saudi-led coalition fighting against the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels since 2015.

At least 47 fighters were

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is publically notified that the Plot No. D-46, Sector-55, Noida (U.P.), has been allotted in the name of K.S. Goomer S/o Late S. Ishar Singh R/o C-3433-C, MIG Flats, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058, has sold the said plot, on the basis of GPA to the following persons:-
A GPA was executed in favour of Sham Lal Sharma S/o Shri P.N. Sharma R/o 36/11, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008, on 09.10.1991 at Sub Registrar Noida, vide Book No. IV Volume No. 1561 on pages 118 at Document No. 4305 on 1991 and Additional Book No. IV Volume No. 1593, on pages 165-170 Dt. 09.10.1991. That the agreement to sell was not registered. The said property is going to be transferred in favour of Sham Lal Sharma S/o Shri P.N. Sharma & Sh. Rohit Sharma S/o Sham Lal Sharma both R/o 36/11, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008, Now, if any one has/have any objection he/she may submit his/her, objection in the Residential Plot Department of Noida authority along-with sufficient proofs within 30 days of the publication of this notice. **Sd/-**

Ethiopia's PM vows 'final and crucial' offensive in Tigray
Nairobi: Ethiopia's prime minister says "the final and crucial" military operation will launch in the coming days against the Government of the country's rebellious northern Tigray region.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in a social media post on Tuesday said a three-day deadline given to the Tigray region's leaders and special forces "has expired today."

Abiy, last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, continues to reject international pleas for dialogue and de-escalation in the two-week conflict in the Horn of Africa that has spilled into neighboring Eritrea and sent more than 25,000 frightened Ethiopian refugees pouring into Sudan. Alarmed African neighbors including Uganda and Kenya are calling for a peaceful resolution, but Abiy's Government regards the Tigray regional Government as illegal after it defiantly held a local election in September. **AP**

Hate crimes in US reach highest level in more than a decade

Washington: Hate crimes in the U.S. rose to the highest level in more than a decade as federal officials also recorded the highest number of hate-motivated killings since the FBI began collecting that data in the early 1990s, according to an FBI report released Monday.

There were 51 hate crime murders in 2019, which includes 22 people who were killed in a shooting that targeted Mexicans at a Walmart in the border city of El Paso, Texas, the report said.

The suspect in that August 2019 shooting, which left two dozen other people injured, was charged with both state and federal crimes in what authorities said was an attempt to scare Hispanics into leaving the United States.

There were 7,314 hate crimes last year, up from 7,120 the year before — and approaching the 7,783 of 2008.

The FBI's annual report defines hate crimes as those motivated by bias based on a person's race, religion or sexual orientation, among other categories. **AP**

Thai lawmakers debate demands for constitutional amendments

Bangkok: Thailand's political battleground shifted on Tuesday from the streets to the country's Parliament, where lawmakers are considering proposals to amend the constitution, one of the core demands of the nation's student-led pro-democracy movement.

Seven draft constitutional amendments are scheduled to be voted on in a two-day joint session of the House and Senate. Constitutional changes require a joint vote of those two bodies. Any that are passed will have to go through second and third readings at least a month after this week's vote.

UN official warns of humanitarian disaster if Afghan peace talks fail

Kabul: The UN's top official for refugees said on Tuesday that if the Afghan peace process collapses and violence continues, there will be a humanitarian disaster as thousands of displaced people struggle to survive the pandemic amid the harsh winter.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi told The Associated Press at the end of a four-day visit to Afghanistan that if the fighting continues, there will be more internal displacement.

"If this peace effort collapses then we could see a big humanitarian disaster in the country that is for sure, I hope it won't," he said.

Violence and chaos have increased in Afghanistan in recent months even as government negotiators and the Taliban are meeting in Qatar to find an end to decades of relentless war. The two sides have made little progress.

"I think we need to be ready for everything here, we need to be ready for more humanitarian issues," Grandi said. **AP**

Yemen: Clashes between Govt, separatists kill 50

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At least 47 fighters were

WESTERN RAILWAY WORK OF FERERE ROB
Divisional Railway Manager (WA), Western Railway, 6th floor, Engg. Deptt., Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400 008. Invites E-Tender Notice No. BCT/20-21/271 dtd. 16-11-2020 **Work and location:** Charni Road - Grant Road - Strengthening of return wall of approaches etc. and raising of approaches of Road Over Bridge at km 3/9-10 (Ferere ROB) **Approx. cost of work in ₹:** 5,63,44,376.67 **EMD ₹:** 4,31,700.00 **Date & Time of submission:** On 08-12-2020 till 15:00 hrs. **Date & Time of opening:** On 08-12-2020 at 15:30 hrs. Regarding more details about above tenders please visit www.ireps.gov.in Manual offers will not be considered. **0440**
Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)

SpaceX capsule with four astronauts reaches space station
Cape Canaveral: SpaceX's newly launched capsule with four astronauts arrived Monday at the International Space Station, their new home until spring.

The Dragon capsule pulled up and docked late Monday night, following a 27-hour, completely automated flight from NASA's Kennedy Space Center. The linkup occurred 262 miles (422 kilometers) above Idaho.

"Oh, what a good voice to hear," space station astronaut Kate Rubins called out when the Dragon's commander, Mike Hopkins, first made radio contact. "We can't wait to have you on board," she added after the two spacecraft were latched together.

This is the second astronaut mission for SpaceX. But it's the first time Elon Musk's company delivered a crew for a full half-year station stay. The two-pilot test flight earlier this year lasted two months.

The three Americans and one Japanese astronaut will remain at the orbiting lab until their replacements arrive on another Dragon in April. **AP**

Search for missing/kidnapped

General Public is hereby informed that one girl **Namely: Aarti, D/o: Suresh Ram, R/o: Room No. 5, House of Ranbir, near Swam Jayanti Vihar, Village Tikri, Khurd, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since **04.11.2020** at 05:00 am. from her house, from the area of P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi. In this regard a case vide **FIR No. 589/20 dated 04.11.2020** has been lodged at P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi. The description of the missing/kidnapped girl are as under: **Age:** 16 years, **Sex:** Female, **Height:** 4'9", **Face:** Round, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Medium, **Hair:** Black & long, **Wearing:** Red colour suit and black colour lagging. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-mail Id - cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 **SHO**
Fax No.: 011-24368639 **P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi**
DP/596/ON/2020 **Ph.:** 011- 27787592, 7065036324

Search for missing

General public is hereby informed that a girl (depicted in the photo), **Namely: Poonam D/o Som Pal R/o Gali No. 4, Mukandpur Part-2nd, Delhi** has been missing since 05.11.2020 from her house. In this regard a case vide **FIR No. 646/20 u/s 363 IPC** dated 06.11.2020 has been registered at Police Station Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-
Age: 12 Years, **Height:** 4', **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Red Colour Suit and black colour payjama and white colour shoe in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing girl, may inform SHO, Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi at E-mail Id - cic@cbi.gov.in or Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

Phone: **SHO**
011-24368638, 24368641 **P.S. Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi**
Fax No. 011-24368639 **Outer North Distt., Delhi**
DP/603/ON/2020 **Ph. No. 011-27811933, 7065036328**

Search for missing girl

General public is hereby informed that one girl **Namely: Priti Kumari, D/o Satish Yadav, R/o House No. 229/28K, Gali No. 21, Railway Colony, Mandawali, Delhi.** Age 16 yrs., height 5'4", Wheatish complexion, medium built, **identification bent mark on forehead and slightly stammers** wearing pink colour suite silver colour plazzo and black colour chappal in feet is missing since 26.10.2020 from her house.

In this regard a case **FIR No. 448/2020 Dt. 27.10.2020 U/s 363 IPC** has been registered at **PS Mandawali Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this missing girl may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in **S.H.O.,**
Fax: 011-23011334 **PS Mandawali, Delhi.**
Ph.: 011-23014046
011-23015218
DP/245/ED/2020 **Ph.:** 011-22720808, 22720030

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

E-TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No.: CLW/DKAE/AMC/555/2020-22. E-tenders are invited for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work: **Sl. No.:** [01]. **Tender No.:** CLW/DKAE/AMC/555/2020-22. **Name of the work:** Comprehensive AMC of six (06) nos. of Water filter cum Purifier of Aqua Guard Dr. Magna HD RO UV with Aqua Guard Iron Iron Remover and other accessories of M/s. Eureka Forbes Ltd. make at ELAAU/CLW, Dankuni for the period of 2 (two) years. **Tender value (Rupees):** 62,400.00 (Rupees sixty two thousand four hundred) only, including GST. **Cost of tender document (Rupees):** 1,000.00 (Rupees one thousand only). **Earnest money (Rupees):** 1,300.00 (Rupees one thousand three hundred only). **Period of completion:** 24 (twenty four) months. **NOTE:** (i) Complete details can be seen in the Railways website www.ireps.gov.in (ii) Contact Number: 9163340419. (iii) Date of closing of tender submission is 05.12.2020 at 11:00 hrs. **ADK-161** AWM, ELAAU/CLW, Dankuni **Like us on:** www.facebook.com/clwrailways

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CIN: L01122DL1990PLC042207
Regd Address: RZ-1484/28, Ground Floor, Tughlakabad Ext. New Delhi-110019
Email: sheel102@gmail.com, Web: www.scagrotech.com Ph: 9654056648

EXTRACT FROM THE STANDALONE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULT FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 30.09.2020 (Rs. in Lakhs)

S. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended 30.09.2020	For the Half Year Ended 30.09.2020	Corresponding 3 Months Ended 30.09.2019
1	Total Income From operation	19.39	49.83	18.00
2	Total Expenses	18.29	47.35	16.06
3	Net profit/(loss) for the period (before tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	1.10	2.48	1.94
4	Net profit/(loss) for the period (before tax, after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	1.10	2.48	1.94
5	Net profit/(loss) for the period after tax and Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items	1.10	2.48	1.94
6	Total comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising profit/loss) for the period (after tax) and other comprehensive (after tax)	1.10	2.48	1.94
7	Paid up equity Share capital (face value of Rs 10/- each)	599.50	599.50	599.50
8	Earning per share (of Rs 10/-Each)	-	-	-
BASIC and Diluted Earning per share (in Rs)				

1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly financial results filed with Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI LODR 2015. The full format of the Financial result are available on the Stock Exchange website (www.bseindia.com) and on the Company website (www.scagrotech.com)
2. The result of the Quarter ended on 30th September 2020 were received by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on 14th November 2020. **By Order of The Board FOR SC AGROTECH LTD.** **Sd/-**
(Nitin Maheshwari)
Place: New Delhi
Date: 14.11.2020
Executive Director (Din: 03459767)

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Namely: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: approx. 48 years, Height: 5' 6", Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Thin, Wearing: Black colour T-Shirt and lower, who was found at Footpath in front of Gate Town Hall, Near DMS Milk Booth, Chandi Chowk, Delhi.** In this regard a case **DD No. 77A Dated 10.11.2020** has been registered at **P.S. Kotwali, Delhi.**

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

Sd/- SHO
P.S. Kotwali, Delhi
Tel.: 011-23977100
DP/723/N/2020(UIDB)

Benchmarks scale new highs on vaccine boost

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Equity indices rallied to all-time highs on Tuesday, driven by banking, finance and metal stocks, as encouraging data from another Covid-19 vaccine trial bolstered investor sentiment.
A recovering rupee added to the buying momentum, traders said. After touching its lifetime peak of 44,161.16 during the session, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 314.73 points or 0.72 per cent higher at its new closing record of 43,952.71.
Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty touched a fresh intra-day high of 12,934.05. It finally finished 93.95 points or 0.74 per cent up at its lifetime peak of 12,874.20.
Tata Steel was the top gainer among the Sensex constituents, surging 6.24 per cent, followed by SBI, HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finance, Axis Bank, L&T, Maruti, IndusInd Bank and HDFC.

On the other hand, NTPC, HCL Tech, ONGC, Infosys, ITC, PowerGrid and Hindustan Unilever were among the major laggards, dropping up to 2.69 per cent.
Wall Street vaulted to lifetime highs in the overnight session after US-based biotechnology giant Moderna said its COVID-19 vaccine candidate was found to be 94.5 per cent effective in Phase 3 trials.
The announcement came just a week after Pfizer and BioNTech said their COVID-19 vaccine was more than 90 per cent effective in preventing COVID-19, based on preliminary data. "The market hit the all-time high, factoring yesterday's trading holiday, led by banking stocks and investors rejoicing about the news of another vaccine to end the pandemic. This week, global markets started well, however today, it experienced mixed sentiments owing to increase in virus cases and tighter restrictions in the western world.

₹ rises by 16 paise to 74.46 against \$
PTI ■ MUMBAI
The rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 16 paise to settle at 74.46 against the US dollar as positive news on coronavirus vaccine boosted appeal for riskier assets.
Besides, a weak dollar overseas also supported the local unit.
At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened strong at 74.43 against the US dollar and later touched a high of 74.38 in day trade.
The local unit finally closed at 74.46 against the US dollar, registering a gain of 16 paise over its previous close. On Friday, the rupee had settled at 74.62 against the US dollar. Forex market was closed on Monday on account of Balipratipada.

BANK, FINANCE STOCKS LEAD RALLY

Gold rises marginally, silver gains ₹451
New Delhi: Gold prices rose marginally by ₹3 to ₹50,114 per 10 gram in the national capital on Tuesday amid choppy trade and rupee depreciation, according to HDFC Securities. The precious metal had closed at ₹50,111 per 10 gram in the previous trade. Silver prices jumped ₹451 to ₹62,023 per kilogram from ₹61,572 per kilogram in the last trade. Spot gold prices for 24 carat in Delhi were trading marginally up by ₹3 on choppy global gold prices and rupee depreciation. The spot rupee was trading around 12 paise weaker against the dollar for the day. HDFC Securities Senior Analyst (Commodities) Tapan Patel said.

PM pitches India as investment destination for urbanisation, mobility

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday pitched India as the most attractive investment destination for those looking to invest in urbanisation, mobility, innovation and sustainable solutions.
Speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum, he said India and some African nations will witness the biggest wave of urbanisation over the next two decades.
The post pandemic world has to be rebuilt around people and cities will have to be made more liveable, he said adding post-Covid restart will not be possible without a reset of mindset, process and practices.
Modi said his government will deliver 10 million affordable houses before the 2022 deadline.
As much as Rs 2 lakh crore is being invested in 100 smart cities, he said adding that of



this, projects worth Rs 1.4 lakh crore have been completed or are nearing completion.
"If you are looking to invest in urbanisation, India has exciting opportunities for you. If you are looking to invest in mobility, India has exciting opportunities for you. If you are looking at investing in sustainable solutions, India has exciting opportunities for you," he said.
These opportunities, he said, come along with a vibrant democracy, business-friendly environment and a big market.
"India is well on its way for urban transformation," he said.

States pay 38 bps more to borrow in latest round, highest in 6 weeks

PTI ■ MUMBAI
The States have paid the highest price for their debt at the latest round of market borrowing on Tuesday where in the cost of debt has gone up by 38 basis points (bps) to 6.65 per cent, according to a report.
At Tuesday's auction of state development loans (SDLs), nine States raised ₹8,716 crore, taking overall borrowings to ₹4.72 lakh crore or 93 per cent of the target, by 28 States and two Union Territories since April 7, Care Ratings said in a note after the auctions.
The entire notified amount was raised at the auction.
At ₹4.72 lakh crore of market borrowings, these States have raised 49 per cent more than the borrowings in the same period last fiscal when they had raised ₹3.16 lakh crore. According to the bor-

rowing calendar, the states have borrowed ₹5.07 lakh crore in the first three quarters.
With this, the states have already borrowed 93 per cent of the targeted debt, with the average weekly borrowing being ₹14,328 crore, ranging between ₹5,200 crore and ₹32,560 crore.
According to Madan Sabnavis, the chief economist at the rating agency, cost of borrowing rose this week with the weighted average cost coming in at 6.65 per cent, which is 38 bps higher than last week and is the highest in the last six auctions.
The increase in yields at today's auction can in part be attributed to the expectations of additional supply of government securities following the Centre's latest stimulus package which can lead to higher market borrowings, Sabnavis said. Although weighted aver-

age cost has declined after the RBI introduced OMOs in SDLs last month, the extent of decline has narrowed from 30 bps on October 13 to 15 bps today, he said.
But this is still very low considering that Kerala had in April paid 9.96 per cent for its first borrowing.
The RBI has so far purchased SDLs of ₹20,000 crore via OMOs through two auctions held in late October and early November. The spread between the 10-year state debt and G-Secs this week stood at 67 bps. Nearly 50 per cent of the SDLs on Tuesday and 40 per cent of issuances so far carry a tenure of 10 years.
States have been resorting to higher market borrowings to meet the shortfalls in their finances consequent to the sharp fall in revenues due to the pandemic and the resultant lockdowns.

Sugar production rises sharply to 14.1 lakh tonne till November 15

SIANS ■ NEW DELHI
Sugar production rose sharply in the ongoing sugar season 2020-21 which started from October 1, as more than 270 sugar mills were in operation till November 15. The sugar mills operating in the current season produced 14.1 lakh tonne sugar till November 15, 2020, as against 4.84 lakh tonne during the same period last year, as per the official data released by the India Sugar Mills Association (ISMA), an apex industry body. Therefore, sugar production in the one-and-a-half months of the current sugar season 2020-21 increased by more than 191% from last year.
As compared to 127 sugar mills crushing sugarcane last year on November 15, 2019, 274 sugar mills were crushing

sugarcane on November 15 this year, said ISMA in a statement. In UP, 76 sugar mills have started their crushing operations for the current season and produced 3.85 lakh ton sugar by November 15, 2020. During the same period last year, 78 mills were in operation and had produced 2.93 lakh tons till November 15. Unlike in 2019, owing to good rainfall and sufficient water availability in reservoirs in Maharashtra and Karnataka, as also better cane availability due to higher cane acreage and improved yield per hectare, crushing season commenced well in time during the last week of October 2020. In Maha, 117 sugar mills started crushing operations on Nov 15, 2020 while last year's season commenced late in the fourth week of November 2019 due to drought.

Second quarter was the best earnings season in many years

SIANS ■ NEW DELHI
The September quarter's (2QFY21) corporate earnings season was a blockbuster with big beats and upgrades across sectors.
According to a report by Motilal Oswal Institutional Equities, with an upgrade (more than 5 per cent) to downgrade ratio (less than 5 per cent) of 4:1, this has by far been the best earnings season in many years.
"As many as 63 per cent of the companies in our coverage universe beat 2QFY21 estimates, while 18 per cent reported below estimate results.
This has resulted in the first material earnings upgrade for Nifty EPS estimates in many years," the report said.

IN BRIEF

MAHINDRA LOGISTICS SETS UP ITS LARGEST WAREHOUSE
Chennai: Mahindra Logistics Ltd, a service provider in supply chain management, has set up a "Built-to-Suit" warehousing capacity in neighbouring Kancheepuram district, the company said on Tuesday. The 3.50 lakh square foot warehousing capacity would allow Mahindra Logistics Ltd to provide "flexible and scalable" fulfillment and integrated distribution solutions. "We are happy to unveil this Built-to-Suit facility, our largest in Tamil Nadu. This space will cater to two of our key clients in e-commerce and auto-engineering industries", Mahindra Logistics Ltd MD, Rampraven Swaminathan said in a company statement. The facility situated in Kancheepuram district is focused on integrated solutions to an e-commerce player and a German auto-component supplier.

SEBI DIRECTS BSE TO REVIEW IPF CORPUS ANNUALLY
New Delhi: To enhance the effectiveness of investor protection fund (IPF), Sebi has directed BSE to conduct annual review to ascertain the adequacy of the IPF corpus and disclose the corpus as well as policy on processing of investors' claim on its website. The exchange received a letter on November 13, 2020 from Sebi whereby the regulator has informed that in order to increase the effectiveness of IPF of bourses, it has comprehensively reviewed the existing framework in consultation with the stock exchanges, BSE said in a statement on Tuesday. Based on the review, the regulator has decided to revamp the grievance redressal mechanism at exchanges with respect to clients of defaulting trading members.

NITI AAYOG PROPOSES SETTING UP OVERSIGHT BODY FOR AI
New Delhi: Government think-tank Niti Aayog has proposed setting up an oversight body which will play an enabling role regarding technical, legal, policy and societal aspects of artificial intelligence (AI). In its draft "Working Document: Enforcement Mechanisms for Responsible AI for All", Niti Aayog said the oversight body must have industry representatives as well as experts from legal, humanities and social science fields. "A flexible risk-based approach must be adopted. In this regard, the National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence proposes an Oversight Body.

With crude over \$44/b, patience running out for OMCs to hold fuel price hike

New Delhi: The news of a successful vaccine against coronavirus has brought fresh energy in the oil markets with global crude oil prices crossing \$ 44 a barrel mark.
While an increase in crude prices has been welcomed across major global oil pro-

ducers, at home oil marketing companies are looking at this firming up with concern. The concern now is that at this level of crude and higher product prices, it would be difficult to keep the retail price of petrol and diesel steady for any time longer.
SIANS

Covid-triggered 'Work from home' Norm spikes housing demand in city suburbs

PTI ■ BENGALURU
Covid-19-triggered 'work from home' norm has increased residential demand in suburbs in Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Delhi-NCR and Pune, according to real estate platform NoBroker.Com. Areas that were not previously considered by working professionals are now experiencing greater demand, it said, citing latest data. Potential homebuyers were earlier researching best localities to buy a house near their workplace. But data from the platform shows how it has all changed since the onset of the pandemic. Earlier, proximity to workplace took the topmost spot among homebuyers' considerations. But ever since the Covid-19 outbreak triggered the new normal and work from home became the norm, the demand in areas other than the ones located near IT hubs has been increasing," it said in a statement. In Bangalore, localities such as Whitefield, Marathahalli, HSR Layout, and Electronic city which were sought-after in pre-Covid times.

SBI set to offer ₹5,000 crore loan to Adani coal project in Australia: Report

SIANS ■ NEW DELHI
The State Bank of India is set to offer a ₹5,000-crore loan to Adani Enterprises Ltd's Australian mining company, now renamed Bravus Mining & Resources, as per media reports.
As per media reports, the loan agreement between SBI and Adani Group is nearly done and a ratification is expected from the bank's executive committee soon.
This could mark the resurgence of an earlier controversy. SBI and Adani had entered into a memorandum of understanding in 2014 for a \$1-billion loan. The loan was not executed after it became a political controversy.

Opposition parties had questioned the loan agreement at a time when the mining project was mired in controversy.
The Opposition had pointed out that five leading global banks - Citibank, Deutsche Bank, Royal Bank of Scotland, HSBC and Barclays - had declined to fund the project citing a decline in coal mining in Australia.
SBI had then walked back on the loan agreement stating that it was only an MoU and no money had been lent to the company.
Media reports quoted sources as saying that six years later, there is a better understanding on the future of the project.

"Much water has flowed in the last 5-6 years. The concerns raised in 2014 are no longer there."
"Most of the local regulatory approvals are in place and the company is expected to start producing coal from 2021 onward," said a source close to the development, the reports said.
Financial Times had earlier reported that the Adani Group's total outstanding debt came to more than \$30 billion as of November 11, according to data from Dealogic, including \$7.8 billion worth of bonds and \$22.3 billion in loans. High debt is nothing new among Indian conglomerates but the Adani Group's rapid expansion has raised concern.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Priya**, D/o Ram Bachan, R/o H. No. A-36-37, Shahbad Dairy, Delhi, Age: 15 years, Height: 5'1", Face: Round, Complexion: Fair, Built: Thin, Wearing: White colour Kurta and Blue colour Jeans and Black colour chappie in her feet has been missing/ kidnapped from her home since **07.11.2020 at 9.00 pm**. In this regard a case **FIR No. 567, u/s 363 IPC** dated **07.11.2020** has been registered at **P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi**.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this girl please inform undersigned.
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in
Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639
SHO PS Shahbad Dairy, Delhi Ph. : 27821047/7065036322
DP/605/ON/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING BOY



General public is hereby informed that one boy namely **Sumant @ Chintu S/o Subhash Chandra R/o House No. 1470, Gali No. 9B, Swatantra Nagar, Narela, Delhi**. Age: 22 yrs, Height: 5'4", complexion shallow, face long. Wearing White T-shirt, brown colour jeans and red chappie in feet is missing since **25.10.2020** from his house from the area of **PS Narela, Delhi**.

In this regard a **DD No. 73-A** dated: **31.10.2020** has been lodged at **PS Narela Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the boy, but no clue has come to light so far.
Any person having any information or clue about this boy may kindly inform to the following.
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in
Fax: 011-23011334
Ph.: 011-23014046
011-23015218 Ph.: 011-27280435, 7065036323
S.H.O., P.S. Narela, Delhi
DP/593/ON/20

Lost & Found

I **Sumit Gaur S/o Late Suresh Kumar Gaur R/o III-F/1/18 Nehru Nagar Ghaziabad**, have lost original property document i.e. **GPA registered as Document Bahi No. IV, Jild No 559** at page No.71 to 72 in Serial No 295 on dated **30.01.1988** registered in the Office of the Sub-Registrar, **GHAZIABAD** executed by **Lakshat Singh S/o Hukum Singh** in favour of **Anil Kumar Bhatnagar S/o Late Shri Girish Chandra**. Finders may contact at above address.
Sumit Gaur

DELHI JAL BOARD
GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SDW)XII
STP SEC-25 ROHINI DELHI-110065

"STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygien"
Shot Prow NIT. 12 (2020-21)

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money (EMD)	Date of release of tender in E-procurement Solution	Last date/time for receipt of tender through e-procurement Solution
1.	Improvement of treated effluent parameters with enhanced treatment using PAC Dosing at STP Sector-25 Rohini.	Lump Sum	70,000/-	17/11/2020 2020_DJB_196738_1	28/11/2020 at 12.05 PM.

NIT along with all terms & conditions is available on eb site <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt No. J.S.V. 229/2020-21
Executive Engineer (SDW)XII

PUBLIC NOTICE
ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi-110005

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Vikesh Pal, H No Wz 4 Phase 3, Om Vihar, Uttam Nagar, Delhi, D K Mohan Garden A/c:- LBNOD00004967934/ LBNOD0000512925	Flat No. C1502, 14th Floor Savya Ville De, Rajnagar Extension, Ghaziabad, UP	13-Oct-2020, Rs.36,84,849/- Rs.3,74,216/-	31/01/2020

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.
Date : November 18, 2020
Place: Delhi NCR
Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

NORTHERN RAILWAY
1st corrigendum to the Tender Notice No. 476-Acs-Design & Drawing-ROBs/RUBs-CSB Dated 17.11.2020

Name of work:- "Design and Drawing of test piles, foundation (open/piles), substructure & super structure (PSC/Steel) in connection with construction of 07 nos. Road over Bridges on Jind-Panipat, Jind-Sonepat, Rohtak-Panipat and Delhi-Ambala section of Northern Railway".
Due to administrative reasons, Tender for the above sited work, which was scheduled to be opened on 19.11.2020 has been cancelled. Fresh tender shall be notified later on.
No. 476-Acs-Design & Drawing-ROBs/RUBs-CSB Dated : 17.11.2020 2568/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

UNITED TEXTILES LIMITED
Registered Office 7th K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar
CIN: L17115HR1993PLC032092
STATEMENT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND HALF YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2020

(Rs. In Lakhs, except per Share data)

Sr. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended		Half Year Ended		Year ended	
		30.9.2020	30.6.2020	30.9.2019	30.9.2020	30.9.2019	31.3.2020
I	Revenue from operations	271.83	124.98	187.91	396.81	361.91	892.73
II	Other income	0.39	0.38	0.36	0.77	0.71	2.59
III	Total Revenue (I+II)	272.22	125.36	188.27	397.58	362.62	895.31
IV	Expenses						
(a)	Cost of materials consumed	168.31	24.49	127.30	192.80	226.47	683.04
(b)	Changes in inventories of finished goods, work-in-progress and stock-in-trade	28.21	61.88	(17.66)	90.09	(5.67)	(67.06)
(c)	Employee benefits expense	7.68	3.84	7.93	11.52	12.99	29.32
(d)	Finance Costs	5.55	4.72	6.46	10.27	13.82	29.91
(e)	Depreciation and amortization expense	11.39	12.59	6.12	23.98	11.55	25.20
(f)	Other expenses	48.89	17.68	55.87	66.57	98.79	193.53
	Total Expenses (IV)	270.04	125.20	186.02	395.24	357.95	893.94
V	Profit/(Loss) before exceptional items and tax (III-V)	2.18	0.17	2.25	2.35	4.67	1.37
VI	Exceptional items	-	-	-	-	-	-
VII	Profit/(Loss) after exceptional items but before tax (V+VI)	2.18	0.17	2.25	2.35	4.67	1.37
VIII	Tax expense						
(I)	Current Tax	0.78	0.79	0.44	1.57	1.01	-
(II)	Deferred Tax	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total Tax expense	0.78	0.79	0.44	1.57	1.01	-
IX	Profit/(Loss) for the period from continuing operations (VII-VIII)	1.40	(0.62)	1.81	0.78	3.66	1.37
X	Discontinued operations:						
XI	Profit/(Loss) from discontinued operations	-	-	-	-	-	-
XII	Tax expense of discontinued operations	-	-	-	-	-	-
XIII	Profit/(Loss) for the period (VII-VIII)	1.40	(0.62)	1.81	0.78	3.66	1.37
XIV	Other comprehensive income (OCI):						
A.	Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss						
(i)	Re-measurement gain (losses) on defined benefit plans	0.85	0.85	0.05	1.70	0.22	3.41
	Income tax effect on above	-	-	(0.02)	-	(0.06)	-
(ii)	Equity Instruments through Other Comprehensive Income (Gain on Fair Valuation of Long Term Investment)	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Income tax effect on above	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total other comprehensive income (X)	0.85	0.85	0.04	1.70	0.17	3.41
XV	Total Comprehensive Income (Comprising Profit/(Loss) and other (Comprehensive Income for the period) (IX+X)	2.25	0.24	1.85	2.49	3.83	4.78
	(Comprising Profit/(Loss) and OCI for the year)						
	Total Comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Attributable to Non-controlling interest	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total Comprehensive income for the year Attributable to Owners of the Parent	-	-	-	-	-	-
(ii)	Non-controlling interest	-	-	-	-	-	-
XVI	Paid-up equity share capital (* 10 per share)	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00
XVII	Reserve/Other Equity	-	-	-	-	-	743.62
XVIII	Earning per equity share/for continuing operations:						
(1)	Basic	0.05	(0.021)	0.06	0.03	0.12	0.05
(2)	Diluted	0.05	(0.021)	0.06	0.03	0.12	0.05
XIX	Earning per equity share (for discontinuing operations):						
(1)	Basic	-	-	-	-	-	-
(2)	Diluted	-	-	-	-	-	-
XX	Earning per equity share:						
(1)	Basic	0.05	(0.021)	0.06	0.03	0.12	0.05
(2)	Diluted	0.05	(0.021)	0.06	0.03	0.12	0.05

Notes:
1. The unaudited results were placed before and reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting held on 11th November, 2020 and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on the same date. The Statutory auditors have carried out limited review of these financial results.
2. There are no separate reportable segments as per the Indian Accounting Standard (Ind AS-108) on segment reporting.
3. The figures have been regrouped/rearranged wherever considered necessary to facilitate comparison.

For UNITED TEXTILES LIMITED
(AMIT KUMAR AGGARWAL)
Director
DIN No: 09709171

Place: Hisar
Dated: 11th November, 2020

SKILLFULLY YOURS

Compounding social-emotional learning skills with academic development forms a high-quality learning experience and surrounding which empowers students to be more effective contributors in their classrooms, says RAJESH KUMAR SINGH



Social and emotional abilities are considered as a relevant index to reckon how well an individual can align to his or her surroundings, adjust to modifications and, eventually, how successful she or he will be in life. Most children have school as their place where deficiencies in their abilities can be addressed before they take up the role of being active zone members of the society. As a matter of fact, core development characteristics such as conscience, emotional stability, sociability and agreement can be as or more vital than cognitive intelligence in deciding future employment. In accordance to the competencies with regard to the life outcomes it can be difficult for educators to work out efficacious methods to structure, teach and assess the social emotional skills.

Compounding these skills with academic development forms a high-quality learning experience and surrounding which further empowers students to be more effective contributors in their classrooms today and among their peers and professional life

tomorrow. Teachers and administrators at schools now have a high emphasis for social emotional learning skills. The educating faculty is specifically eager to render expert, training and support necessary for efficaciously implementing this new programme, to provide the students with holistic development. The new curriculum will promise improved students social behavior, learning and development. Given the recent assistance that Social Emotional Learning has received in the education community, it may just be a matter of time before it turns out to be a general teaching practice, widely adopted.

Developing an emphasis on this programme in schools will be grounds to an effective and supportive area for students to openly share their creative ideas, ask out questions without any shame and learn academic concepts while structuring lifelong abilities. The general uplifting of social emotional learning will require a step by step alteration in pedagogy. In the due process, the system can shape out a

An open mind with an active sense of self awareness, aids the students to develop their emotions, acknowledge their strengths along with a frame of mind working towards creativity

holistic education system to bring up socially responsible citizens, who are highly equipped to work in a group and create a better world. How social-emotional learning

Skills aids students in their holistic development: **Self-awareness:** An open mind with an active sense of self awareness, aids the students to develop their emotions, acknowledge their strengths along with a frame of mind working towards creativity. Therefore an individual can assess one's limitations and positives. **Self-management:** Today managing yourself is vital. All students must have the general cognition for managing their personal traits like emotions, life goals, manage stress and control impulses. **Social awareness:** It is critical at times to view things from other people's perspective, displaying empathy, and appreciating diversity of culture. **Relationship skills:** All students need to have active skills for communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution. This aids students to constitute a healthy and pleasing relationships, and to act in accordance with social norms. **Responsible decision-making:** It provides the students with the

learning of how to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations and settings. Although the vast majority of education department will agree that Social Emotional Learning is important, but it has for long remained on the sidelines. In the past educationists have focused on academics, as opposed to the development of the whole child. All schools currently are mostly multicultural and multilingual with students belonging to diverse social and economic backgrounds. Educators and community agencies need to render students with contrasting motivation for engaging in learning, behaving positively, and performing academically. Social and emotional learning will work as a ground or a foundation for safe and positive learning, eventually deepening the students' noesis to succeed in school, professionally, and in general life. The writer is Educationist and Chairman of Kunwar Educational Foundation

QUOTE OF THE DAY

If we want to survive this economic collapse, new mandatory school subjects should be eCommerce, Chinese, spirituality and aesthetics.

— Robin Sacredfire

New high for VIT

The Engineering and Technology subject areas (General engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Chemical Engineering) of Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) are ranked among the top eight Universities in India and among the Top 501-600 universities in the world in the recently released World University Rankings by Subject 2021 by the Times Higher Education (THE), UK. The Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) Computer Science is ranked one among the top four Universities in India in the THE World University Ranking by Subject 2021. VIT Computer Science has been ranked in the band of 301-400 universities of the world in the ranking. The weightings for subject rankings (in Computer Science and Engineering and Technology) are teaching (learning environment)-30%, research (volume, income and reputation) — 30%, citations (research influence) — 27.5 %, International outlook (staff, students and research) — 7.5% per cent and industry income (innovation) — 5%. The Times Higher Education (THE) Ranking uses 13 calibrated performance indicators to provide the most comprehensive and balanced comparisons, and all data are independently audited by professional services firm. THE World University Rankings, an international ranking agency lists the top universities globally.

Memorial quiz

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Sweden India Nobel Memorial Quiz (SINMQ), one of India's most prestigious and eagerly awaited quiz contests for college students organised by the Embassy of Sweden in New Delhi along with the Consulate General of Sweden in Mumbai, is back in an all-new, digital avatar designed for the new normal. Registrations for participation are open on www.swedenindia.com for the quiz which goes live on November 20, 2020. semi-finals and finals of the SINMQ will be held on December 7 and December 9, respectively. The first prize winner will take home a prize of 100 000 INR! In 2020, when most educational institutions are closed due to COVID and students are studying from home, the competition is between individuals as against the norm of three-member college team since 2008. Over and above the winner, top 100 students will also win exciting prizes, including exclusive merchandise. Certificates will also be provided to the finalists. The quiz is powered by Quizworks and curated by quizmaster Raj Dam, and will test the students' knowledge on Alfred Nobel, the Nobel Prize and Nobel Laureates. There would also be general questions around Swedish Innovations, industries, history, society and culture. The SINMQ is conducted since 2008 as a part of the Sweden India Nobel Memorial Week, which is in 13th year.

More than just a placement hub

MBA is not just meant for giving industry training to learners but it is also about equipping students with the knowledge that is necessary for taking the sector beyond, by presenting innovative solutions to the perennial problems, says DR RAMAKRISHNAN RAMAN

Ranking agencies rank B-schools based on several parameters, but students who aspire to pursue an MBA still look at placement opportunities provided by the B-school as one of the most important parameters while they decide to select a B-school — to pursue their Master of Business Administration (MBA). This being the case, should B-schools become placement hubs and focus and trumpet about placement statistics? Should B-School focus on churning out people who are 'just coolies' of the corporate world? Shouldn't the B-School shape the mindset of students to become *Atma Nirbhar* or entrepreneurs? These are some questions that must be pondered.

Indian B-schools must think out of the box to be able to face the Industry 4.0 revolution. Being employable is an inherent requirement of an MBA graduate. The selection process, the pedagogy and syllabi must ensure students are industry-ready and also learn the way industry works. But in doing so, blindly joining the rat race model will be detrimental for B-schools. MBA is not just meant for giving industry training to learners but it is also about equipping students with the knowledge that is necessary for



taking the industry beyond, by presenting innovative solutions to the perennial problems. B-schools must ensure that the MBA programme helps students to continuously learn and apply the learning for bringing a change in the organisation, in society, and the nation at large. In order to achieve this, B-schools must focus on imparting knowledge related to innovation and skills that can help them take the entrepreneurial journey. Structured courses on design thinking and problem solving must become mandatory subjects in the MBA curriculum. In short, the MBA curriculum must

not only focus on creating coolies for the corporate world but also give exposure to the emerging aspects of the management discipline and must kindle the fire in the graduates to be job creators and not job seekers. B-schools have a humongous task in making the aspirants realise that the MBA programme is for making them hone their leadership abilities, learn team building skills, learn negotiation skills, learn the art and science of problem solving and critical thinking, and several other skills and knowledge needed to lead the industry. Hence, they must understand that B-schools must not be looked as a power house

for placement. There is a need to change the mindset of students and make them understand this aspect and it's a tall order claim. They must ensure that the desire to become entrepreneurs is seeded into the minds of students. The opportunities that are available for an entrepreneur, the lucrative career along with the chance to create a bright financial stability, must be shared and showcased to them. B Schools must focus on launching programs which focus on Innovation & Entrepreneurship and must also make it clear that no placement is given to the students at the end of the programme. Students who join such programmes must be encouraged to kick-start their start-up and must be given all the support needed to do so. The programme must have subjects like design thinking, problem solving, global mega trends, etc along with management disciplines like financial management, organisational behaviour, marketing management and others. The writer is Director — Symbiosis Institute of Business Management — Pune & Dean — Faculty of Management — Symbiosis International (Deemed University).

For a bright career

The LED design sector has both job and self-employment opportunities. There are many electronic companies which offer placement in this field, says NK MOHAPATRA

LED lighting plays a pivotal role in uplifting the look of your home or workspace. Whether it's about giving a modern look to the interior design or contemporary look to the exterior design, lighting has become a significant component when you think of decorating your house, shop or office. Novelty in the LED lighting industry are emerging every day to meet the contemporary decorating needs of the masses. Now who is behind the concept of designing smart lighting systems that complements your space? They are LED light designers who have the perfect knowledge to design decorative LED lights and give a sophisticated look to any defined space. As the LED lighting industry is changing rapidly, new career opportunities are coming up for students who are keen to make a career in this emerging field. Generally, courses related to LED lighting are not included in any college curriculum. However, there are some institutes offering short-term courses related to this. But, after doing this course, you can start a career as an LED engineer or designer in LED



manufacturing and designing companies. Those who want to learn the lighting design essentials can undergo two to three months of certification course. Given the skill gap and the need of the lighting industry, Electronics Sector Skills Council of India formed under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and National Skill Development Corporation offers a short-term course in this field via its different training partners. The candidate should have B.Tech or BE or Diploma in Electrical, Electronics, Optical or Mechanical Engineering for doing such short-term courses.

Career Opportunities: This sector has both job and self-employment opportunities. There are many renowned electronic companies in the country, where one can easily get job in this field. In the field of LED lighting, skilled freshers can get jobs on a package of ₹2.5 lakhs per annum. Further, your salary depends upon the company's policy and your performance. **Entrepreneurship opportunities:** In addition to jobs in the field of LED lighting, there are also good opportunities for entrepreneurship. After engineering end of the youth are coming into this field and starting their business in LED lighting. Due to the Self-Reliant India campaign and the Startup India campaign of the Government of India, youth are getting attracted towards it in every state of the country. Youth can also avail startup business loans from the bank to start their business. Low-cost traders can start the business of making lamp components. For starting a new business, at least required ₹4 to ₹5 lakhs initially. The writer is CEO — Electronics Sector Skills Council of India

Pratham Test Prep students shine

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Anushka Chaturvedi, a student of Pratham Test Prep, scored an All India Rank 3 in the recently declared results of the Delhi University's Joint Admission test (DU-JAT). Around 18,000 students from all over the country in pursuit of admission to undergraduate management programmes at DU had appeared for the computer-based admission test. Out of the total students appearing for the test, Anushka will get admission to the prestigious institution Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies (Delhi University) under BMS. This test being the only medium to get admission to top colleges in DU for management programmes,

makes it one of its kind special. "The level of the exam this year was between moderate to difficult. Harmandeep Singh Sahni, who secured the rank 1 under the PwD category, is also eligible for admission to Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies. As expected, history repeated itself, when four out of the top 10 ranks were obtained by our students. The other bright minds who secured the rankings among the top 10 list include Sarthak Bindal (AIR 4) and Anirudh Gupta (AIR 7). Manan Jain who secured AIR 11 is among the total 60 out of the top 100 students in the DU-JAT entrance exam who have made us proud with their diligent efforts," said Ankit Kapoor, Managing Director, Pratham Test Prep.

Stories to help children adapt to new normal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After restricted outing for more than nine months, along with the adults, kids are also moving towards a new normal, adapting to the new routine, new ways of studying, socialising, playing, and keeping themselves occupied. In an attempt to make the transformations fun and easy, the Children's Books division of Navneet Education Limited has launched two new books, titled, *Till We Hug Again* and *Mylo Discovers The Real Superheroes*, under the *Mylo The Mongoose* series.

Commenting on the launch of the new books, Shailendra Gala, Managing Director, Navneet Education, said: "We at Navneet have undertaken various projects to ease the transition to the new normal. Addition of new books to the Mylo series is one of the several efforts to help children accept the sudden changes in their lives. It is known that picture books help children learn faster and we used the same technique to teach them the norms of new normal." Commenting on the launch of the new books, Priety Gosalia, Publication Head, Children's books,

Navneet Education, said, "Navneet is known for providing top-notch, engaging, content for children. We have received an exceptionally good response for our other books in the series. With the current scenario, where the lockdown is affecting everyone, we believe it is also our responsibility to help children deal with the difficult situation better, with curated content. We hope to receive a similar, heart-warming response, on our new books." Mylo Series are picture story-books about social-emotional issues that can help kids think deeply about feelings and social issues.

Top honours for Amrita

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Four scientists of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham have been featured in the ranking of top 2 per cent scientists in the world in their respective fields published by Stanford University of the US. Dr Maneesha Ramesh, Dr Shanti Nair, Dr R Jayakumar and Dr. Madhav Dutta figure in the ranking in recognition of the quality of their research. Dr Maneesha Ramesh, from Amrita Center for Wireless Networks &

Applications, Amrita School of Engineering (Amritapuri Campus), has been recognised as among the world's top scientists in the field of networking, telecommunications, artificial intelligence and image processing. Dr Shanti Nair and Dr R Jayakumar, both from the Center for Nanosciences & Molecular Medicine, Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences (Kochi campus), figure in the Stanford list for their work in the areas of polymers, nanoscience and nanotechnology.



The silver lining of the present pandemic is that it has given immense opportunities for the banking, financial services and insurance sector to bring about a change in the way that it functions today, says ANKIT SHYAMSUKHA

FUEL YOUR PROGRESS

Post the great recession in 2018, the Indian banking industry witnessed unprecedented growth until about a couple of months before the COVID-19 outbreak. As the entire economy has come to a halt, an intimidating slowdown has now been making the entire scenario worse. However, the silver lining of this crisis is that the unprecedented times have given the immense opportunity for the Banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) sector to bring about a fundamental change in the way that it functions.

The time is just apt for players in the BFSI space to reinvent themselves and test newer business models that are more digitally-driven. By leveraging advanced technologies and digitising their existing set of offerings, they can alter their age-old processes with newer, more optimised workflows.

Considered a pivotal sector that can further accelerate the growth of the country, the manpower requirement in the BFSI industry has also risen to fuel that progress.

The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has reported that the projected human resource requirement between 2008 and 2022 is estimated to reach over 4.2 million. Now, let us explore the various aspects of the BFSI industry, its career prospects, and the kind of skills required to fulfill the skill requirements for job roles within.

INSURANCE OFFICER

An Insurance Agent develops relationships with potential customers to sell them insurance. Insurance Agents describe and explain different types of insurance and coverages to customers, offering recommendations on which policy to choose. Insurance Agents may work in different areas including auto, home, life, or health insurance coverage.

PERSONAL BANKER

Personal bankers work in retail banking branches and assist customers with various banking or financial needs. Such needs may include opening checking and savings accounts, obtaining mort-

The time is just apt for players in the BFSI space to reinvent themselves and test newer business models that are more digitally-driven

gage and auto loans, and investing in banking products-certificates of deposit (CDs), money markets, and other commercial banking products. They may also help the customer with retirement planning. While investment bankers work mostly with institutional investors, personal bankers work primarily with everyday people.

FINANCE ANALYST

Not just in terms of technology, we are moving to a world where financial services are advancing at the speed of light. Here, the demand for a financial analyst will grow further, setting to be one of the most highly demanded jobs in the financial industry. The job entails researching macroeconomic and micro-economic scenarios, gathering financial information along with company fundamentals, to craft dynamic growth plans. Here, dexterity over the economic variances of the world and analytical insights are required.

STOCKBROKERS

They are registered specialists

associated with brokerage firms or are independent brokers. Independent brokers are responsible for buying and selling stocks and other similar securities for retail as well as institutional patrons. The job is usually carried out in exchange for a set fee or commission.

REMUNERATION

The salary package for freshers in the industry is expected to have ₹10,000 to ₹12,000 per month. A seasoned professional can also earn lots of incentives, like a seven-30 per cent share in sales depending on the level of a task accomplished.

SKILLS REQUIRED

The most required specific skills are proficiency in sales, stock market knowledge, mathematical aptitude, mutual fund awareness, and knowledge about banking operations. Other soft skills like good communication skills and confidence also add value to your curriculum vitae.

The writer is CEO, ICA Edu Skills

‘It’s time for teachers to upskill themselves’

Broadening teachers’ skills is not just about assisting them with change; it is also about continually updating their professional knowledge about teaching practices, says RISHABH KHANNA

The traditional teacher training programmes and course work have failed to prepare teachers for the 21st century. Left with no choice, our teachers are dependent on on-the-job learning. The absence of skills or gap between education and demands of a teacher’s job profile continues to be a big obstacle facing a teacher’s career. This is the major reason why teaching has become the last career choice. From being inaccessible to inadequate and outdated, teacher education continues to be a popular topic of debate among academicians and curriculum experts.

If teachers want to get high paying jobs, explore career opportunities and get international qualifications and certifications, upgrading their skills is the key.

The changes in the demand for skills from students continues to have profound implications for the competencies which teachers need to acquire to effectively teach these skills to their students. We are not living in an era when teaching a fixed syllabus of content was at the centre of education. Today, the jobs are changing and so are the expectations from teachers. Teachers are expected to follow differentiated pedagogical practices. Unlike the curriculum centered education approach, today, focus is on learner.

We can say that the kind of education needed and taught today requires teachers to constantly advance their professional knowledge and skills. Teachers need to stay updated with the advancements in different fields, skills in demand, future of work and potential careers for students. They are required to be agents of innovation because innovation is critically important for generating new sources of growth through improved productivity and efficiency.

In order to be most effective, learning environments should ensure that learning is social and often collaborative; be highly attuned to students’ motivations; make learning central and encourage engagement; be acutely sensitive to individual differences, and promote connections across activities and subjects, both in and out



Rishabh Khanna
Cognitive scientist & founder of Suraasa

of school. A 21st Century teaching professional is expected to have passion, strive to improve, be ethical, value professionalism, aim for high standards, have enquiring nature, a quest for learning and be adaptive and resilient. They need to have people management skills, facilitative skills, technological skills, pedagogical skills, reflective skill and thinking dispositions, communication skills, innovation skills and social and emotional intelligence.

Online learning was already on the rise even if we don’t take the pandemic effect into account and it is expected to popularise more among learners. The pandemic has triggered the behavioural change. Upskilling the teachers is of utmost importance to guide them on best practices when it comes to online teaching methods.

The issue of upskilling teachers is both complex and multi-dimensional. A central foundation for improving teaching is a deep understanding of advancements in learning and its prospects. How children learn has transformed greatly over the past years, however, it has not had a profound impact on teacher practice as majority of teachers continue to interpret new ideas through established beliefs.

In an increasingly connected world, world class organisations are looking for a new breed of professionals with a Global Mindset. The 21st Century leadership requires managers who can see things differently and make the right decisions in a global context.

To operate effectively internationally requires new set of competencies including global intelligence and intercultural competence. Together these two competencies prepare managers with the ability to appreciate the differences and similarities between cultures and what these mean for business globally.

Gone are the days when a successful leader or manager could do well in his/her

career with good analytical and communication skills. In the globalized world of today, though communication and analytical skills are important there is much more critical intelligence that is essential for thriving.

A recent report from the World Economic Forum identifies the following as required in a post-Covid era. These include Contextual Intelligence, Ethical and Moral Intelligence, Emotional and Social Intelligence, Digital Intelligence, Generative/Innovative Intelligence and Transformative Intelligence.

Each of these need to be enhanced, through a continuous exposure to what is happening around the globe.

MINDIT

Managers and leaders need to be constantly aware of things that happen around the world in the backdrop of these critical competencies. This would help them to prioritize and take relevant decisions. They also need to be aware of cultural subtleties and nuances to successfully do business in a global context.

A recent research by Harvard University identified Global Intelligence as a key leadership skill for the 21st century manager. This has been validated by another study conducted at the Cornell

University, where three groups of individuals were given the famous Duncker candle problem. One group was people who had a single country experience and exposure, the second group had a two-country exposure and the third group was exposed to multi-country experiences.

The results were astounding, the ones who had the multi-country exposure had a much greater percentage of success in solving the cognitive problem in comparison to the other two groups. Corporations across the world are

looking for multi-talented, multi-faceted individuals who bring diverse competencies as above to solve challenging problems in a VUCA world, represented by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. These competencies along with global awareness have become the need of the hour and future oriented business schools conscientiously embed international experiences as part of the curriculum.

This is not just about visiting different places. It goes much beyond towards an immersive experience which encompasses dimensions of politics, economics, business and culture of these different countries. Participants going through such

an experience are aware and more open to global challenges and gradually evolve into globally relevant professionals.

Fast forward into their careers, when they are exposed to perplexing global challenges, the unique experiences in diverse global environments, enhances their cognitive skills and helps them to connect the dots from divergent perspectives.

This unique ability to see problems from a global bird’s eye view can be a game changer for the successful manager of the future.

The writer is Professor Christopher Abraham, CEO & Head, Dubai Campus, S P Jain school of Global Management



The University of Sheffield is offering two international LLM scholarships worth £4,000 towards tuition fees for two outstanding students.

Eligibility: You must be an overseas student for fee purposes; have an academic offer from us to study the full-time LLM (includes Sheffield LLM, LLM Corporate and Commercial Law and LLM International Law and Global Justice pathways); have an application number

Scholarship applications will be considered together with your application for admission. Successful applicants will be notified before the end of July 2021.

How to apply: You must complete the International LLM Scholarship application form, including a 2,000 word essay. Essay topic ‘Law alone cannot address all social problems’. Discuss.

Application deadline: The last date to apply is June 11, 2021.

The University of Saskatchewan invites applications for International Baccalaureate (IB) Excellence Awards for the academic session 2021/2022. **Award:** To provide an

award amount of \$20,000 to all selected students.

Eligibility: Undergraduate degree in all the subjects offered by the university. Applicant must meet the following criteria: International students (non-Canadian citizens paying differential tuition) completing a full IB diploma entering any direct-entry college at the U of S will be considered for an IB Excellence Award.

Recipients are eligible to receive the International Baccalaureate Excellence Awards in addition to a Guaranteed Entrance Scholarship.

Indian students can apply.

Students must also submit the necessary supporting documents such as: Academic transcript; Copy of passport

Admission requirements: For taking admission, candidates must check all the entry requirements of the university.

English language requirements: If English is not your first language, then you will need to show that your English language skills are at a high enough level to succeed in your studies.

How to Apply: By applying online for undergraduate admission, students will be eligible for consideration.

Application deadline: The last date to apply is February 15, 2021.

VIDEO MAKING/EDITING AT FAST BRIDGE: INNOVATION CONSULTING

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹25,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/6098271
Deadline: November 26, 2020

ONLINE TEACHING (PYTHON) AT TEKIE

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹12,000-₹15,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/6098274
Deadline: November 26, 2020

CONTENT WRITING AT EDUCATION10X

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹10,000-₹20,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/6098270
Deadline: November 26, 2020

FINANCIAL ANALYST AT FINLENDER

Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹6,000-₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/6098278
Application deadline: November 26, 2020

HR AT PAISSO

Location: Panchkula, Chandigarh, Mohali
Stipend: ₹8,000-₹12,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/6098280
Application deadline: November 25, 2020

OPERATIONS AT SHIKSHA EVAM KALYAN SAMITI

Location: Ranchi, Sahebganj
Stipend: ₹12,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/6098281
Application deadline: November 25, 2020

DIGITAL MARKETING AT AFFINITY WEB MEDIA

Location: Bhubaneswar
Stipend: ₹10,000-₹20,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/6098282
Application deadline: November 22, 2020

STUDY ABROAD

‘Students resilient in face of COVID-19 disruptions’

A survey finds that students are eager to return to the way things were prior to the present global pandemic

In a survey conducted by the IC3 Institute, 83 per cent of Indian and Nepalese high school students surveyed reported that they remain optimistic about the future despite the current challenges being faced by the post-secondary education system as well as industries due to COVID-19.

The survey focused on 2,252 high school students from India and Nepal, with 80 per cent of the population surveyed comprising of Indian students. The survey asked key questions about the impact of COVID-19 on students’ current and future plans; the decisions students are making about their higher education options; how prepared they feel for the future world of work; and whether schools are enabling students to develop key 21st-century skills.

Despite current geo-political conflicts as well as perceptions of a less-welcoming stance towards international students, the US still remains a top choice for students as a desti-

nation for higher education, with two-thirds of all students selecting it as a top destination (75 per cent), followed by the U.K. (67 per cent), Canada (64 per cent), Australia (41 per cent), and Singapore (32 per cent).

As students prepare for the world of work, the survey finds that while parents continue to play a role in decision-making, media is also a key influencer. In addition, students are more motivated by their passion for and interest in a career and their sense of fulfillment rather than by salary alone.

Dr. Rajika Bhandari, president-CEO of the IC3 Institute, said: “At a time when India has just released its first new National Education Policy in 34 years that emphasises the school-to-work transition and the importance of aligning academics with career and vocational training, the findings offer a window into whether the large number of Indian and Nepalese youth are prepared for their educational and professional futures, especially when both college and careers have been disrupted by COVID-19.”



IN BRIEF

RESKILL TO STAY RELEVANT, SAYS WEF REPORT

By 2030, half of South Asian youth will not be able to find jobs due to lack of skills as per a report by UNICEF. An estimated 54 per cent of South Asian youth leave school without the necessary skills to get a decent job in the next decade. Recently, the World Economic Forum (WEF) published the Future of Jobs Report 2020 and some shocking statistics were revealed. In the next five years, automation and a new division of labour between machines and humans will disrupt 85 million jobs around the world.

Working remotely is here to stay for

the foreseeable future and workers will be expected to change careers and pick up new skills consistently to adapt to new labour trends. In fact, 94% of business leaders report that they expect employees to pick up new skills on the job. The report also states that an estimate of 97 million jobs may emerge from these new labour trends, roles like data analysts, process automation specialists, IoT specialists, robotics engineers, strategic advisors will emerge while roles like relationship managers, door to door sales, accounting and bookkeeping will be obsolete.

LAUNCH OF HIGH-SPEED LONG-RANGE ETRANCE NEO

The IIT Hyderabad-incubated start-up PURE EV is going to launch Etrance Neo, its high-speed long-range model, on December 1, 2020. The new model offers a higher pickup and longer range combined with modern aerodynamics.

The Etrance Neo offers

a pick-up speed of 0 to 40 kmph in five seconds. Its 2,500 Wh-patented battery offers the vehicle a range performance of 120 KM for a single charge in eco-mode. The scooter chassis is designed for higher speeds at par with the conventional ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) two-wheelers.

Highlighting the unique features of Etrance Neo, Rohit Vadera, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer, PUREV start-up, said: “The new model has better aerodynamic features for additional improvements in powertrain efficiency. The vehicle has faster pickup and longer range.”

SRM MCHRC AT THE FOREFRONT OF COVID BATTLE

The facemask is a life mask, says Pro Vice Chancellor (Medical) Lt Col Dr A Ravi Kumar of SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre (SRM MCHRC), Kattankulathur. Speaking to press personnel at a meet organised at SRM MCHRC, he emphasised on the importance of staying and following safety measures in order to prevent the second wave of COVID 19.

SRM MCHRC is now in the process of conducting the third phase of the COVAXIN shot which will be administered to nearly

1500 volunteers. The first phase human trials at SRM MCHRC began in July with 30 volunteers.

Present for the press meet were SRM MCHRC’s Pro VC (Medical) Lt. Col. Dr A Ravi Kumar, Dean (Medical) Dr A Sundaram, Medical Superintendent Dr K. Thangaraj, Dr R Balamurugan, Deputy Medical Superintendent and Director (Communication) R Nandakumar.

“The third phase will see the efficiency of the vaccine. The result will be known only by February,” the Pro VC tells you.

Earned right to be in Test squad: Pucovski

Carey hoping to reclaim T20 spot against India

PTI ■ MELBOURNE



Australian batsman Will Pucovski celebrates after scoring double hundred for his state team Victoria during Sheffield Shield. CA/Twitter

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Fast-rising Australian batsman Will Pucovski feels he has "earned the right" to be in the red-ball squad for the series against India and is better prepared to make his Test debut compared to a couple of seasons ago.

Pucovski, who was named in a 17-member extended Australian

Test squad for the four-match series against India, is coming off back-to-back double hundreds in the Sheffield Shield.

Despite missing the opening two rounds of the competition, he has scored 495 runs so far this season in three innings and is currently the tournament's highest run-scorer.

"This time it feels like I've earned the right to be here, and

I'm pretty pumped to take the challenge on of playing India if I do get the chance," Pucovski said on SEN Radio.

The 22-year-old was first named in the Test squad for the 2019 Sri Lanka series but stepped away from the game, citing mental health concerns.

It is the first time since then that Pucovski has earned a Test squad call-up.

Paine, Labuschagne, others airlifted to NSW

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Cricket Australia on Tuesday airlifted players, including Test skipper Tim Paine and star batsman Marnus Labuschagne, to New South Wales from Adelaide in an attempt to save the series against India as a coronavirus outbreak in South Australia threatened the upcoming summer.

As Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania closed their borders to South Australia on Monday, the country's cricket board brought players from Australia's white-ball, Test match and Australia A squads into Sydney from

Adelaide to ensure that the upcoming fixtures of the 300 million dollars season remain unaffected.

"CA has taken a proactive approach and mobilised a number of people across the country over the past 24 hours to shore up our men's domestic and international schedules," CA's interim chief executive Nick Hockley was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

"I would like to thank the players and staff for their understanding regarding the changes to their travel schedules and for their commitment to ensuring the summer of cricket is a huge success."

Besides Paine and

Labuschagne, the list of players relocated include their colleagues Matthew Wade, Travis Head and Cameron Green among others.

Despite the spike in Covid cases and developments related to it, CA maintained that the Adelaide Oval will host the first Test of the summer against India from December 17.

Hockley added, "CA will continue to monitor the situation in South Australia and the resulting border restrictions around the country."

"As ever, we will remain agile in addressing the challenges presented by the pandemic and remain more confident than ever of hosting a safe and successful summer across all formats."

"I feel like I'm in a much better place to take the opportunity if it presents itself now, than I may have been a couple of years ago."

"I was 20 a couple of years ago and I'm 22 now. I've played 15 or 20 more first-class games, and I've put a stack of work in off-field to make sure my life and my cricket is in a really good place," he added.

Very few young Australian cricketers have generated the

kind of buzz that Pucovski has managed. His sensational form in the Sheffield Shield has led several Australian greats to call for his selection in the team.

Talking about what has changed since the last call up, Pucovski said: "Probably the difference in feeling is you're excited, but you're ready to do a job this time."

"Whereas last time, not that I wasn't ready, but I was probably

just so excited to get picked for Australia that I didn't think too much about the job at hand," he added.

Pucovski's inclusion has set up a competition with fellow opener Joe Burns, who is feeling the heat after a disastrous start to the first-class summer.

But head coach Justin Langer and skipper Tim Paine both have hinted at persisting with the experienced Burns.

Williamson, Boult rested for WI T20s

AFP ■ AUCKLAND

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson and pace spearhead Trent Boult will miss the upcoming T20 series against the West Indies to concentrate on Test matches, selectors said on Tuesday.

However, the Black Caps have added an exciting element to the 13-man T20 squad in the form of South African-born debutant Devon Conway, the stand-out domestic batsman in recent seasons.

Coach Gary Stead said Williamson and Boult were sitting out the three T20s — beginning in Auckland in November 27 — to keep them fresh for the two Tests against the West Indies in December.

"We've had to make a decision on Kane and Trent to prioritise the Test matches, given how important they are to our red-ball team and the fact they both played such big

roles in the recent IPL while also managing injuries," he said.

Stead said the New Zealanders focused on the five-day format because they were a realistic prospect of making the World Test Championship final after posting an upset 2-0 series win over India earlier this year.

He was looking forward to seeing Conway on the international stage, predicting the 29-year-old would "soak up" the experience.

The left-hander, who became eligible to play for New Zealand in August, replaces fellow power hitter Colin Munro, who is playing in Australia's Big Bash League.

Fast bowler Kyle Jamieson is the only other new cap in the T20 squad, while the Test side is the same one that faced India in February.

Virat and Co undergo Test match simulation during training

PTI ■ SYDNEY

The limited-overs competition awaits them first but Indian players, led by captain Virat Kohli, seemed focussed on next month's Tests against Australia as they practised in simulated long-format match conditions complete with pacers using red and pink balls here on Tuesday.

All the top batsmen and bowlers, who are in all the three squads, were seen taking part in the practice session.

The likes of senior pacer Mohammed Shami and youngster Mohammad Siraj were seen bowling to Kohli in a video posted on Twitter by the captain himself.

"Love Test cricket sessions," the tweet from Kohli read.

The star batsman will feature in just the opening day-night Test, starting December 17 in Adelaide, before flying back to India for the birth of his first child.



from traditional net sessions.

Given that the players were kept busy by the IPL for the last two months, the white-ball training has taken a back-seat.

Opener KL Rahul facing the pink ball was an indicator that he is in line to be picked for the first Test.

In another video, posted by the BCCI, Shami was seen bowling in tandem with youngster Siraj.

The 30-year-old Shami, who took 20 wickets from 14 matches for Kings XI Punjab in the IPL, is a part of all the three squads.

India will rely heavily on him

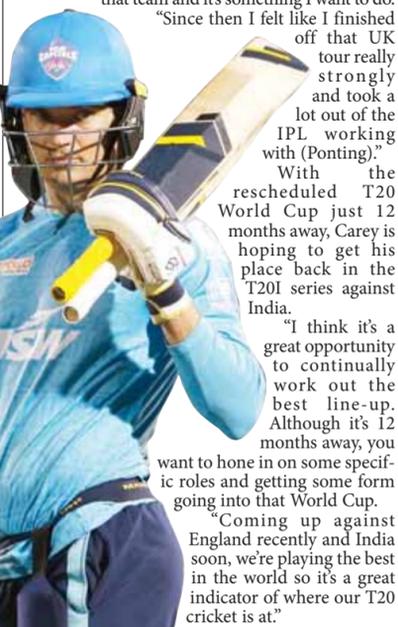
during the four-match Test series starting with the day-night pink ball game in Adelaide.

Siraj, who is only in the Test squad, followed his senior teammate and was seen sending down a few deliveries as other senior players watched him bowl.

The 26-year-old, who has played one ODI and three T20Is, took 11 wickets from nine matches for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the recent IPL.

"The master and his apprentice. When @MdShami11 and Siraj bowled in tandem at #TeamIndia's nets. Fast and accurate!," the BCCI tweet read.

On Monday, the star-studded batting lineup was seen gearing up for the lively Australian pitches with the traditional tennis ball training after competing on the slow UAE tracks during the IPL.



work out the best line-up. Although it's 12 months away, you want to hone in on some specific roles and getting some form going into that World Cup.

"Coming up against England recently and India soon, we're playing the best in the world so it's a great indicator of where our T20 cricket is at."

Eng tour of Pakistan set to be postponed

PTI ■ KARACHI

England's much-awaited tour of Pakistan for a short T20 series early next year is set to be postponed to October due to unavailability of top players and matters related to costs.

According to media reports the tour, which was tentatively scheduled for January-February, is expected to be moved to October before the T20 World Cup in India.

"The problem arising is that early next year England will be engaged in series with Sri Lanka and India and some of their T20 specialist players are also signed up for the Big Bash in Australia," a source aware of the developments said.

"The other problem is the costs involved in England touring Pakistan."

"As it is just a three-match series with Karachi the likely

venue, the costs of flying the English team by a chartered flight after holding a training camp in Dubai does not make it cost effective for the England board," he said.

He said both the boards had discussed the more viable option of shifting the series to October as that would allow the full England T20 team to stop over in Pakistan for the short series before flying to India," the source said.

England has not played in the country since 2005 due to security reasons and when the Pakistan and English boards confirmed they were considering a short tour, it gave a big boost to Pakistan cricket.

"Even the PCB didn't want a 'C' team from England playing early next year as it is a big series and a breakthrough for Pakistan cricket."

Pakistan is also due to host South Africa early next year for two Tests and three T20Is.

BCCI announce MPL Sports as Team India kit sponsor

NEW DELHI: The BCCI on Tuesday formally announced MPL Sports

apparel and accessories as the official kit sponsor and merchandise partner of both the national men's and women's sides as well as the U-19 team, replacing Nike.

The deal was cleared by the Board's apex council on November 2. Nike had a five-year deal during which they paid ₹370 crore from 2016 to 2020.

As per the newly-inked strategic partnership, MPL Sports, the sports merchandise brand from Mobile Premier League — an e-sports platform has entered into a three-year agreement from November 2020 to December 2023.

MPL Sports' association with the BCCI begins with India's tour of Australia, which will see Team India sporting the new jerseys. PTI

CSA member council appoints interim board

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

Cricket South Africa's member council on Tuesday made a U-turn and appointed the nine-member interim board ahead of the much-anticipated England series, just days after rejecting it citing technicalities in terms of CSA's Memorandum of Incorporation.

"Acting President of Cricket South Africa (CSA), Ribhan Richards today confirmed that the Members' Council of CSA has appointed the Interim Board in terms of the CSA Memorandum of Incorporation (MoI), with a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities for the immediate future of CSA," the board said in a statement.

"The appointment follows a frank, honest and constructive engagement held between representatives from the Members' Council and the Interim Board. Everyone agreed on the way forward and to collaborate, strictly in accordance with the relevant legal framework."

The interim board, which was appointed by Sports Minister Nathi Mthethwa, will run the administrative body for the next three months. CSA member council's refusal to recognise the interim board had earlier thrown England's upcoming white-ball tour in jeopardy.

"The England team has reached South Africa for three T20Is, starting November 27, followed by as many ODIs from December 4 to 9.

Thiem too good for Nadal

AFP ■ LONDON

Dominic Thiem earned a crucial victory at the Nitto ATP Finals on Tuesday, as he overcame Rafael Nadal 7-6(7), 7-6(4) at The O2 in London.

In a meeting between the top two players in Group London 2020, Thiem saved two set points in a marathon 72-minute opener and held his nerve after failing to convert three consecutive match points as Nadal served at 4-5, 0/40 in the second set. With his seventh win in nine matches against Top 10 players this year, Thiem is now 2-0 in round robin play and has boosted his chances of reaching the semi-finals in London for the second straight year.

Earlier, Daniil Medvedev defeated Alexander Zverev in straight sets.

Russia's Medvedev won 6-3, 6-4 against his German opponent to join Novak Djokovic on top of the Group Tokyo 1970.

Zverev hit four double faults in his first two service games, and never found rhythm with his second serve going. Medvedev won 79 per cent of his second-serve return points (15/19) on way to his one-hour, 29-minute victory.

Medvedev is high on confidence having beaten Zverev in the Rolex Paris Masters Final a few days back.

"Confidence is the key, for sure. Winning an (ATP) Masters (1000) always helps the confidence," Medvedev said.

"I knew that I can play good. It

Hope Aus Open and possibly ATP Cup goes ahead in 2021: Djokovic

LONDON: Novak Djokovic said on Monday he hopes the Australian Open goes ahead

"for the sake of tennis," admitting the sport faces a challenging time as it gears up for the 2021 season.

The world number one is playing in the ATP Finals in London at the end of a coronavirus-truncated season but the new campaign is due to start in just seven weeks' time.

Djokovic, who beat Argentine debutant Diego Schwartzman 6-3, 6-2 in his opening match at London's O2 Arena, said he had "not noticed much of a doubt" over whether the tournaments would go ahead.

"I want to play in Australia, Australian Open," he added.

Serbian, who is an eight-

time winner of the season-opening Grand Slam and the reigning champion.

"I'm not sure about the ATP Cup and the tournaments before, because obviously you have to leave quite in advance, actually, I think two-and-a-half or three weeks prior to the first match."

"So let's see how that goes. But I'm just hoping for the sake of tennis and sake of players that we will have the Australian Open and also the possibility of the ATP Cup and a couple more tournaments at least."

The plan for Australia would reportedly involve more than 500 international tennis players arriving in Victoria and undergoing two weeks of mandatory quarantine.

The players, many of whom travel with large entourages, would be restricted to hotels but have access to tennis courts. Once they had completed quarantine and twice tested negative for Covid-19, they would be able to move freely around Victoria.

was a little bit shaky from both of us in the beginning from one (point) of view, but from the other (point) of view, I think there were some unbelievable points. To be honest, the intensity of the match was one of the most [intense] I had in my career."

Medvedev is the first Russian to compete at the ATP Finals in consecutive seasons since Nikolay Davydenko made five straight appearances from 2005 to 2009.

FIFA cancels next year's U-17 women's World Cup in India, allots it 2022 edition

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Women's Under-17 World Cup in India, which was postponed to 2021 due to Covid-19 pandemic, was on Tuesday cancelled by the world governing body FIFA and the country was handed the hosting rights of the 2022 edition.

The decision was taken by the Bureau of the FIFA Council which took stock of the current global Covid-19 pandemic and its continuing impact on football.

The FIFA cancelled both the women's U-17 World Cup and U-20 World Cup which were scheduled to be held in India and Costa Rica respectively but handed both the countries the hosting rights of the 2022 editions.

"... With the inability to further postpone these tournaments, the FIFA-Confederations Covid-19 Working Group subsequently recommended that the 2020 editions of the two women's youth tournaments be cancelled and that the hosting rights for the 2022 editions be offered to the countries that were due to host the 2020 editions," the FIFA said in a statement.

"... Following further consultation between FIFA and the respective host member associations regarding the 2022 editions of the tournaments, the Bureau of the Council has approved Costa Rica as host of the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup 2022 and India as host of the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022 respectively."

IOC won't make vaccine mandatory for Tokyo Oly

AFP ■ TOKYO

Athletes won't be required to take a coronavirus vaccine to compete at the Tokyo Olympics, IOC chief Thomas Bach said on Tuesday, adding that mandatory shots would be "going too far".

Bach, who is in Tokyo to bolster confidence in the pandemic-postponed event, said taking a vaccine would be a "free decision" for athletes and others involved in the Games.

"There are too many issues to consider. This is a question of private health," the International Olympic Committee president said, during a tour of the Olympic Village.

"It is a question also of (the) health conditions of each and every person. It's a question of availability."

However, the IOC will "appeal" to athletes and others to be vaccinated, Bach added, calling it a "sign of respect" for other competitors and the Japanese hosts.

Tokyo 2020 was put back by a year to start next July because of the coronavirus, becoming the first Olympics to be rescheduled in peacetime. Bach and Japanese organisers have sounded a confident note that the event will go ahead — buoyed by recent positive vaccine trials and a successful international gymnastics event in Tokyo this month.

Bach said the organising committee would take "all the necessary precautionary measures, so that athletes can relax and feel safe."

On Monday, he said the IOC would look to help athletes secure shots if they are available and approved.

