

WORLD 9
PAK COURT JAILS 2 MORE
AIDES OF 26/11 BRAINS**SPECIAL 11**
MAKING WORLD
GREENER**SPORT 12**
HAMSTRING IS FEELING
ABSOLUTELY FINE: ROHIT

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USUAL SUSPECTS

SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Fair distribution of Covid shots must

Last Thursday, India became the second country after the United States to reach the 9 million Covid-19 mark. This is not an achievement, although policy makers may take solace in the fact that it took 22 days for the deadly infection to travel from 8 million to 9 million. The earlier travel time for a million had at one time touched 11, 12 and 13 days.

It is hardly worth reiterating that we have by no means crossed the danger mark. As the experience of Europe clearly demonstrated, it merely takes the people a small relaxation of vigil for the pandemic to resume its rampage. This was also the case with Delhi, India's national Capital, where the pre-Diwali festivities led to all the gains of the monsoon season being wiped out. It is unknown if the foul air of the city resulting from the burning of stubble in neighbouring States played a part in the Covid-19 spike, but certainly the air people inhaled didn't help.

However, it is difficult to make generalisations about mass gatherings — usually religious festivals — acting as super-spreaders. The Onam festival in Kerala certainly pushed up the numbers of those infected in a State that once claimed to lead the way in pandemic management. Yet, curiously, the secular festival of democracy in Bihar which experienced mass political rallies and zero social distancing, didn't have any visible impact on the spread of the coronavirus.

In West Bengal, the great fear was that the week-long festivities centred on Durga Puja would create a health crisis. The fear was legitimate since the ruling party in the State often conveyed the impression that celebrations took precedence over all other considerations. However, the High Court stepped in with draconian restrictions that the people — with the exception of a small group of the reckless — by and large adhered to. This week the High Court once again stepped in by imposing restrictions on the Chhath Puja, popular among the large Bihari community in the State.

The intrusive role of the judiciary has often attracted criticism on the grounds that the judges are encroaching on the business of the executive. This is not the place to assess judicial activism, even at a time of pandemic. What is more important is that, despite the widespread fear of Covid-19, there is a growing mood of exasperation in people at the restrictions that have been in place since March this year.

Part of this impatience stems from boredom, especially among the young. However, more of it can be attributed to the growing belief that Covid-19 is not guaranteed to be a killer disease. No doubt the aged and those with respiratory ailments are most at risk but others seem to get away reasonably lightly.

Then there is the concern with the serious economic consequences of the disruption of normal life. Apart from the slowdown and job losses, there is a legitimate belief that the greater the delay in getting back to normal life, the more will be the economic sufferings. In such situations, there is inevitably a temptation to bank disproportionately on Government handouts. But there are limits on how much a Government can mitigate sufferings of every individual. However, to be fair, as the Bihar election demonstrated, the exacting

demands on the Government haven't become overwhelming. Yet, sooner or later the economic devastation will have political consequences.

No wonder all eyes, all over the world, are on the pharmaceutical companies engaged in finding a vaccine that will ward off the virus. Almost every progress, whether in Oxford or somewhere in Russia, is being closely monitored. So far the results of the tests have been very encouraging and there is an expectation that people will start receiving the miracle jabs by January 2021.

Although Indian companies have negotiated agreements with multinational pharmaceutical giants for the supply of the vaccine, it is still uncertain when adequate supplies will be available in the country. It is certain that the relief over the availability of the vaccine will be coupled with fissures over who gets to the top of the queue. This is an important matter since non-availability of a vaccine that is bound to be in short supply — at least temporarily — will create political complications for any Government, not to mention rampant allegations of nepotism and even profiteering. It is therefore imperative that along with logistical preparations — said to be already underway — there exists a defined category of who should receive the vaccine on a priority basis. Many countries such as the United Kingdom have already created a hierarchy of recipients based on objective criterion. India would do well to emulate this procedure.

Having braved the pandemic for nearly a year, the last problem the country must overcome is the fair distribution of a cure whose demand is certain to far exceed supply.

Stop backing terror, India tells Pakistan

Delhi summons
Pak envoy to
register protest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded security forces for neutralising four Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorists in Nagrota, India on Saturday summoned Pakistani envoy here to register its protest over Islamabad's continued backing of terror activities emanating from its soil.

Reiterating its demand that Pakistan must fulfil its international obligations not to allow any territory under its control to be used by terrorists, Pakistan's Charge d'Affaires Aftab Hasan Khan was told that the huge cache of arms, ammunition and explosive material indicated a detailed planning for a major attack to destabilise the peace and security in Jammu & Kashmir to derail the polls to Local District Development Councils.

Registering its protest, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the attack was prevented due to the alertness



of the Indian security forces.

"India reiterated its long-standing demand that Pakistan fulfil its international obligations and bilateral commitments not to allow any territory under its control to be used for terrorism against India in any manner. It was demanded that Pakistan desists from its policy of supporting terrorists and terror groups operating from its territory and dismantle the terror infrastructure operated by terrorist outfits to launch attacks in other countries," the MEA further said.

It also added that the Indian Government was "firmly and resolutely committed" to take all necessary measures to

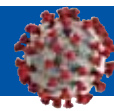
safeguard its national security in the fight against terrorism.

The MEA said the JeM is proscribed by the United Nations and several countries. The Government of India expressed its serious concerns at continued terror attacks by JeM against India. The JeM has been part of several attacks in India in the past, including the Pulwama attack in February 2019.

The four suspected Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists, who were hiding in a truck, were killed in a three-hour encounter with security forces on the Jammu-Srinagar NH near Nagrota early Thursday.

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Covid-19 IN INDIA



TOTAL

CASES: 90,92,308

DEATHS: 1,33,220

RECOVERED:

85,16,609

ACTIVE: 4,40,430



57 trainee officers test Covid +ve at Mussoorie centre

New Delhi: As many as 57 out of 428 trainee civil service officers have tested Covid positive at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) at Mussoorie in the last 24 hours, prompting authorities to close "all non-essential departments" there.

The co-curricular activities have been suspended till further order. Officers found infected have been quarantined and 162 people have been examined while the remaining staff were also investigated. Sanjeev Chopra, director of LBSNAA, said, "A total of 33 OTs (Officer Trainees) tested Covid-19 positive on Friday."

However, the Ministry of Personnel Public Grievances & Pensions said that 57 officer trainees have tested COVID positive at LBSNAA since November 20, 2020.

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Covid reinfection unlikely for six months: Study

London: A new UK study on Saturday suggests that individuals who have previously had Covid-19 are highly unlikely to contract the illness again for at least six months following their first infection.

The study, done as part of a major collaboration between the University of Oxford and Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) NHS Foundation Trust, suggests that most people are unlikely to get Covid-19 again if they have already had it in the previous six months.

"This is really good news because we can be confident that, at least in the short term, most people who get Covid-19 won't get it again," said Professor David Eyre of the University of Oxford's Nuffield Department of Population Health, one of the authors of the paper.

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AIADMK, BJP to fight Assembly elections together

ADMK's leaders
announce decision

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The ruling AIADMK in Tamil Nadu on Saturday said its alliance with the BJP will continue for the 2021 Assembly elections and exuded confidence it will win a hatrick poll next year.

AIADMK top leaders O Panneerselvam and K Palaniswami made the announcement at a Government event here, attended by Union Home Minister and BJP veteran Amit Shah. Chief Minister Palaniswami is the AIADMK Co-Coordinator while Coordinator Panneerselvam is his deputy.

"I would like to inform through this meeting that in the coming election (2021), the victorious alliance of AIADMK and BJP will continue," Panneerselvam said.

Palaniswami, who said Prime Minister Modi and Shah were working towards making the country a superpower,

asserted that "the alliance formed for the Lok Sabha polls will continue."

"Our alliance will win maximum seats and AIADMK will retain power," he said.

The AIADMK and the BJP aligned for the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, along with others, including PMK, but the combine could win only the lone Theni seat out of the 39 segments in Tamil Nadu, with the ruling party clinching it.

The top leaders' assertion comes against the backdrop of the Government's denial of permission to the BJP's Vel Yatra, aimed at exposing the DMK for "lending support" to an atheist group accused of denigrating Tamil hymn 'Kanda Sashti Kavacham', sung in praise of Lord Muruga, citing the Covid-19 pandemic.

The AIADMK had recently lashed out at its saffron ally on the matter and accused it of attempting votebank politics.

BJP State president L Murugan has been courting arrest in different towns after trying to take out the procession despite denial of permission.

Ayurveda PG doctors can now do ENT, dental, eye surgeries

Govt allows formal
training in such
procedures part of
their curriculum

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a move aimed to meet the shortage of doctors across the country, the Government has allowed the Postgraduate (PG) students of Ayurveda to perform a range of general surgery, including orthopedic, ophthalmology, ENT and dental.

The Centre has issued a gazette notification in this regard allowing Ayurvedic PG passouts to receive formal training for such procedures. The training modules for surgical procedures will be added to the curriculum of Ayurvedic studies.

The amendments in the Indian Medicine Central Council Regulations, 2016 has been carried out to introduce formal training in these procedures as part of the curriculum for postgraduate students of shalya (general surgery) and shalakyas (diseases of ear, nose, throat, ENT, eye, head, oro-dentistry) special-



sations.

Union Ayush Secretary Rajesh Kotecha explained the Ministry has specified the procedures that an Ayurveda doctor can conduct while handling a patient.

The gazette notification issued on November 19 stated that during the period of study, the PG scholar of Shalya and Shalakyas shall be practically trained to acquaint with as well as independently performing specified activities so that after completion of his/her PG degree, he/she is able to perform the procedures independently.

As per the legislation, Ayurveda practitioners can legally perform common procedures such as skin grafting,

cataract surgery, and root canal treatment.

As per the amendments, the complete list of procedures that will be taught in MS (Ayurved) Shalya tantra will include perianal abscess, breast abscess, axillary abscess, cellulitis, all types of skin grafting, ear lobe repair, excision of the simple cyst and benign tumours (lipoma, fibroma, schwannoma, etc) of non-vital organs, excision/ amputation of gangrene.

They will also be allowed to take up traumatic wound management all types of suturing, haemostatic ligatures, ligation and repair of tendon and muscles, removal of metallic and non-metallic foreign bodies from non-vital organs among many other areas.

Under MS (Ayurved) Shalakyas Tantra, the Ayurveda doctor can practice in medical areas pertaining to diseases of eyelids such as Glaucoma and trained to carry out various surgery, including cataract surgery.

The practitioners will also be eligible to conduct local Anesthesia in the eye, and varied surgeries related to nose, ear, and dental-related medical issues.

PM Modi to lay foundation of 'Har Ghar Nal' scheme in Sonbhadra

Scheme to ensure
domestic water
supply to
Vindhya villages
in two years

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Villagers of Vindhya region will no more struggle to get drinking water and rural women would be saved from their arduous march to carry water from miles away as the state government is set to provide water to over 41 lakh villagers of Mirzapur and Sonbhadra through the Har Ghar Nal Yojana.

The foundation stone of

the scheme will be laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Sonbhadra on Sunday. Under the project, the government will start drinking water supply through pipes in 1,606 villages of Mirzapur, thereby benefiting 21.87 lakh villagers of the district.

Besides, 1,389 villages of Sonbhadra will also be linked with the scheme and 19.53 lakh families of these villages will have access to water at home.

In Sonbhadra, water from lakes and rivers will be purified and supplied to houses.

An official said in Lucknow that the government would spend Rs 3,212.18 crore on the scheme in Sonbhadra.

The water collected at a dam in Mirzapur will be purified and supplied to house-

holds. The cost of the scheme is estimated at Rs 2,343.20 crore.

The official said that water supply to households would be started in villages after the project was completed in the next two years.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will attend a Gopashtami programme at Tada Fal cow shelter site in Mirzapur after attending the foundation laying function of the PM on Sunday.

There, the CM will also hand over cheques of remuneration to women who stitched school uniforms under the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Antyodaya scheme.

Yogi will also visit and offer prayers at Mata Vindhya vasini Devi temple on Sunday evening.

After CM nudge, Tourism dept focus on developing hot spots

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath advised that eco-tourism be developed and facilitated in the state, the Tourism department brass announced to develop Mirzapur, Sonbhadra, Chandauli and adjoining areas as eco-tourism hot spots.

A Tourism department communiqué released on Saturday said that a tourist bungalow would be constructed in five acres in Sonbhadra and activities like water sports, rock climbing, trekking, etc., would be started there to promote eco-tourism and provide options of adventure sports for

tourists.

"We hope to start building the tourist bungalow in the next six months and the district magistrate of Sonbhadra has discussed a detailed action plan with members of the Tourism Welfare Association. Also, bio-toilets will be constructed at various tourist spots," said tourism officer of Mirzapur division, Kirtimaan Srivastava, in Lucknow on Saturday.

"A total of Rs 281.37 lakh have been sanctioned for Way Finding Traffic Solution (WFTS) in which signboards with details of tourist spots are being set up at various places and destinations. Besides, tour operators have

also been engaged to promote film tourism," Srivastava said.

"Beautification is also being carried out at tourist spots like Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary, Sakhan Fossil Park, Vijaygarh Fort, Agori Fort, Mukha Waterfall, etc. so that they could attract tourists and find a place in the tourist map of the country," the officer said.

Earlier in September, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had announced the upgrading of airstrip to an airport in Sonbhadra.

Besides opening new vistas of development and generating employment in the region, the airport is expected to boost tourism activities.

CAPSULE

COMEDIAN BHARTI SINGH HELD IN DRUG CASE

Mumbai: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Saturday arrested comedian Bharti Singh following seizure of ganja (cannabis) from her house in suburban Andheri, an official said.



AIM TO REDUCE CARBON FOOTPRINT BY 30-35%: PM

Gandhinagar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the country was moving forward with the goal of reducing its carbon footprint by 30 to 35 per cent. He also said that efforts were on to increase the use of natural gas by four times in this decade and to double the oil refining capacity in the next five years. The Prime Minister said this while addressing the eighth convocation of Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University (PDDPU) here via video conference.

SHIVAKUMAR GETS CBI SUMMONS IN DA CASE

Bengaluru: Congress Karnataka unit president DK Shivakumar on Saturday said he has received summons from the CBI in connection with a disproportionate assets case, and he will be appearing before the investigating agency on November 25.

Purvanchal e-way may open for public from Jan 26, 2021

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh is readying to throw open the Purvanchal Expressway to the public from January 26 next year ahead of the deadline as it is going ahead full steam on its big road projects amid the COVID-19 pandemic, said Additional Chief Secretary (Home) and UP Expressway Development Authority CEO Awanish Awasthi.

The CEO on Saturday made a spot inspection of the work on the expressway. He said 64 percent of the physical work of the project had been completed and railway over bridge, flyovers and other structures would be completed within the scheduled time.

The 340-km-long expressway, whose foundation stone was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2018, would connect Lucknow with Ghazipur, Awasthi said.

The deadline for its completion was earlier set for April 2021, 30 months after the work began.

The CEO, who inspected the work in package-1 in Lucknow, said the work on rail over bridge would be completed by January next year and the toll plaza would be made operational by March 31. He said directions had been issued for expediting the import of material and equipment needed for the toll plaza. Awasthi also inspected work on packages 2 and 3.

The expressway will commence from Chandsarai in Lucknow and end at village Haideriya in Ghazipur district.

Another major project, the Bundelkhand Expressway, whose foundation stone was also laid by the PM, will be made operational by the end of 2021, Awasthi said.

This expressway was important as it would service the upcoming defence corridor in UP and help investors get a fast road link to Delhi, he said.

UP plans to invite international bids for a private-public partnership (PPP) to construct one of the country's longest expressways, the 628-km-long Ganga Expressway from Meerut to Prayagraj, at a cost of Rs 33,000 crore. Awasthi described the project as "one of the biggest challenges" for the state government given its scale.

"In Phase-2 of this project, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath wants us to take the Ganga Expressway up to Haridwar and Varanasi which will make its length over 1,000 km," he said. This network of expressways will open the entire UP to Delhi and benefit Bihar as well, Awasthi said.

"We have seen that people prefer to move by road from Delhi to Lucknow through the Agra-Lucknow Expressway than by air. There is a jump in traffic on the Agra-Lucknow Expressway after the 'unlock' happened, as people now prefer their own transport," Awasthi said.

Sunil Pandey to be new PCCF

Lucknow (PNS): Sunil Pandey, a 1984 batch Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer, will be the new principal chief conservator of forest (wild life) and head of the department.

He will replace Dr Rajiv Kumar Garg who will superannuate on December 31, 2020, according to an official spokesman. Pandey's new posting will come into effect from January 1, 2021.



सूचना

मेरे म० न० सी-401 ई.डब्ल्यू.एस.-1, गुजनी, कानपुर, के.डी.ए. की फ्री-होल्ड रजिस्ट्री जिसका न० 2176 दिनांक 13.03.2007 कहीं खो गई है। जिसका प्रयोग अवैध होगा। मीरा भटनागर

NOTICE

I, Army No. 4210361P Sep. Rohit Singh Faryal S/o Jagat Singh, Unit 15 Kumaon C/o 56, APO, hereby declared that in my service records inadvertently my brother's name Sunil Faryal. While his correct name is Sunil Singh Faryal, may be recorded in my service records.

NOTICE

I, Army No. 9424383X Hav Suraj Rai, Unit 6/11 GR C/o 56, APO, hereby declared that in my service records inadvertently the date of birth of my wife's Mrs. Teresa Rai, 24.09.1989. While her correct date of birth is 24.09.1992, may be recorded in my service records.

NOTICE

I Saddam S/o Mohammad Anwar holding Indian Passport No. L4463466 dated 20/09/2013 Issued at India having permanent residence at KOTWALI PUR, AHIRAU LA - AZAMGARH UTTAR PRADESH, presently residing at bldg. 605, road 3116, Al Dair, Bahrain will henceforth be known as (Given Name) Saddam (Surname) Mohammad Objection(S) if any, may be forwarded to Embassy of India, P.O. Box No. 26106, Bldg. 1090 Road 2619, Block 428, Al Seef, Bahrain.

PGV slams UP govt over liquor deaths

Lucknow (PNS): Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said that the Uttar Pradesh government had failed to crack down on the mafia running spurious liquor. In a tweet on Saturday, Priyanka said, "Spurious liquor has claimed lives in several places in UP including Lucknow, Firozabad, Hapur, Mathura, Prayagraj. There were deaths from hooch in Agra, Baghpat, Meerut too." She further posted, "What is the reason after all that the government has failed to take action against the mafia trading spurious liquor except some pre-tentious steps? Who is responsible?"

Deaths due to consumption of spurious liquor have shown an upward trend in the past few days across several districts, including Lucknow.

Govt cautious on Covid spurt, focuses on community surveillance, mapping

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has started taking stern steps to control the sudden spurt in novel coronavirus infection by restarting community surveillance and mapping of badly affected areas.

In districts like Gautam Buddha Nagar, Ghaziabad, Meerut etc., assembly of 200 people in wedding and other functions has been curtailed to 100 with immediate effect.

In several districts, people coming from Delhi by trains and buses are being tested randomly to detect if they have the novel coronavirus infection or not.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that in view of the second wave of COVID-19 in neighbouring states, especially Delhi, there should be complete vigilance in UP and an effective system of prevention and treatment should be maintained.

Presiding over an Unlock review meeting at his official residence here on Saturday, Yogi said that people should continuously be made aware about COVID-19 and the public address system being used in this task should be fur-

ther activated.

He said to ensure that people regularly used masks, the district magistrates, district police chiefs and chief medical officers of all the districts should hold meetings with various organisations and NGOs.

The CM also directed officials to take enforcement action against those who do not wear masks.

Meanwhile, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad said in Lucknow on Saturday that community surveillance teams like gram and mohalla nigrani samities had been alerted and static testing booths would be set up in the affected areas for random testing.

"We have asked the district officials to go for mapping of areas where maximum positive cases are being detected so that these pockets could be included in focus surveillance," he added.

The additional chief secretary announced that the government was preparing itself for the COVID-19 vaccine, expected by early next year, by setting up cold chains in districts.

"The government will provide the

vaccine to vulnerable people on a priority basis. I urge the people of the state to continue to take precautions like wearing face masks, maintaining social distance and washing hands frequently till everyone is administered the vaccine," he said.

Meanwhile, 2,326 new COVID-19 cases were reported in UP on Saturday taking the tally to 5.24 lakh.

Prasad, however, said that during November, the positivity rate in UP was just 1.6 percent.

There are 23,471 active COVID-19 cases in the state out of which 10,934 are in home isolation, 2,228 in private hospitals and the rest in government-run Covid hospitals.

The COVID-19 death toll reached 7,524 on Saturday evening with 26 deaths during the past 24 hours.

On Friday, a total of 1.73 lakh samples were tested for the infection and so far 1.78 crore samples, the highest in the country, have been tested in UP.

On Saturday, Lucknow reported 343 fresh COVID-19 cases and four deaths, Kanpur 141, Prayagraj 168, Ghaziabad 157, Gautam Buddha Nagar 137 and Meerut 155 cases.

Yogi satisfied with cow conservation

Lucknow (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed satisfaction over measures taken to protect and conserve the cows during his regime.

Speaking at a book release function at his Lucknow residence on Saturday, the Chief Minister said that his government not only succeeded in preventing cow-slaughter but effectively checked inter-state smuggling of cows.

"Cows were even being sent to other countries before I took over as the CM of UP. It was a huge challenge before me to protect the holy animal which I did

to my ability," he said Yogi said that steps taken to protect stray cows have bore fruits and now about 5.24 lakh cattle were being kept in government-run shelters while more than 8 lakh such cattle were being housed at 'Kanha Upvan' - shelters run by local bodies in UP. A day before 'Gopashtami', Yogi released a book 'Gau-Lok Ki Ore' authored by Shivani Sharma and underlined the religious and mythological importance of cows and said that 'Gopashtami' has been a tradition followed for thousands of years.

कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, निर्माण खण्ड-3, लो0नि0वि0, बाराबंकी									
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4. निविदाओं का तकनीकी मूल्यांकन प्रहरी साइटवेयर के माध्यम से किया जाना है, जिसकी विस्तृत जानकारी विड डाक्यूमेंट के साथ संलग्न निविदा सूचना में उपलब्ध है।									
(विजय केनीजिया) अधिशासी अभियन्ता निर्माण, खण्ड-3, लो०नि०वि०, बाराबंकी									
उ०ग० 157136, दिनांक-20.11.2020, विज्ञापन वेबसाइट www.up.gov.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।									



संवरेगा कल, जब घर-घर पहुंचेगा शुद्ध पेयजल

जल जीवन मिशन, उत्तर प्रदेश के अन्तर्गत विन्ध्य क्षेत्र के जनपद मीरजापुर एवं सोनभद्र में

2995 राजस्व ग्रामों की 42 लाख आबादी को लाभ पहुंचाने वाली ₹ 5,555 करोड़ की 23 ग्रामीण पाइप पेयजल परियोजनाओं का शिलान्यास नरेन्द्र मोदी प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा (वीडियो कॉन्फ्रेंसिंग के माध्यम से)

योजना एवं लाभान्वित होने वाले राजस्व ग्राम

जनपद मीरजापुर	लाभान्वित राजस्व ग्राम	जनपद सोनभद्र	लाभान्वित राजस्व ग्राम	जनपद सोनभद्र	लाभान्वित राजस्व ग्राम
महुआरी ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	306	पटवध ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	661	परासी ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	37
दाँती ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	267	बेलाही ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	233	कैवथा ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	13
महादेव ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	249	झीलो ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	166	नेवारी ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	12
घौहा ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	226	तेन्दुआही ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	88	गुस्मरा ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	9
अहूरी कलां ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	149	अमवार ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	65	पनारी ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	6
गोठौरा ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	138	नगवा ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	46	कदरा ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	6
लेदुकी ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	124	हरां ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	44	बीजपुर ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	3
तालर ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	84				
मानिकपुर ग्राम समूह पाइप पेयजल योजना	63				

गौरिसामयी उपस्थिति

आनंदीबेन पटेल

राज्यपाल, उत्तर प्रदेश

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मंत्री, जल शक्ति भारत सरकार

रमा शंकर सिंह पटेल

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राहुल प्रकाश कोल

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अनुराग सिंह

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भूपेश चौबे

विधायक, राबर्ट्सगंज

डॉ. अनिल कुमार मौर्य

विधायक, घोरावल

संजीव कुमार गोंड

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हरी राम चैरो

विधायक, दुद्धी

योगी आदित्यनाथ

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

डॉ. महेन्द्र सिंह

मंत्री, जल शक्ति एवं नमामि गंगे तथा ग्रामीण जलापूर्ति, उत्तर प्रदेश

अनुप्रिया पटेल

सांसद मीरजापुर

पकौड़ी लाल कोल

सांसद, राबर्ट्सगंज

राम शकल

सांसद, राज्यसभा

दिनांक : 22 नवम्बर, 2020 | समय : पूर्वाह्न 11:30 बजे | मुख्य कार्यक्रम स्थल : ग्राम पंचायत-करमांव, विकास खण्ड-चतरा, जनपद-सोनभद्र

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LUCKNOW UNIVERSITY CENTENARY YEAR CONVOCATION

Guv urges students to become superior

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Urging students to work to become superior as the ordinary has no value in today's world, Governor Anandiben Patel said they should follow the words of Swami Vivekanand that one should move forward with courage because success does not come in one day or one year and one should move towards a higher aim and be faithful towards one's country.

The governor was addressing the 63rd convocation of Lucknow University on Saturday. Patel also conveyed the congratulatory message of President Ram Nath Kovind for the university on completion of 100 years.

Addressing the gathering, she said all the students who have been felicitated must understand that they should reach out to the underprivileged around them and dedicate themselves to the nation. She said many of them would become former students of the university but what they have learnt from here would help them throughout their life.

The governor said it is her personal opinion that students should participate in all the areas of university management because then only they can have an insight into its working. "It will increase their responsibilities but will also give a solution at times of conflict and crisis," she said.

The governor said the new educational policy brings with it a new energy because it is a conglomeration of many things such as emphasis on regional languages, being multifaceted & innovative, and the best thing is the choice of subjects under which any students can opt for any combination of subjects. "Higher education cannot be guided by commercial aspects alone and has to include the humane aspect to it. LU has adopted many features of the NEP and secured high rankings in various surveys. The policy reminds us of Nalanda and



Toppers excited to be part of history

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The toppers who received medals on the 63rd convocation of Lucknow University on Thursday were excited about being part of its centenary year celebrations.

Shivansh Mishra, a third-year student of Political Science department who received the Chancellor's gold medal, said he was very happy to have received it during the centenary year celebrations. He said he was overwhelmed and felt as though he received the medal on the behalf of the department which also completed 100 years.

"I chose LU because of the Political Science department, which was the first one to have been established in the country, and it was my subject of interest as well," he said. Shivansh was awarded for his active participation in multifarious activities. "I have been a part of a number of NGOs and involved

Taxila which were visited by the foreign students and similarly, great academicians came from all across the country to LU and strengthened it academically. The likes of Radha Kamal Mukherjee, DN Mazumdar, Birbal Sahni and Krishna Chandra Pandey made

in activities like plantation drives and blood donation," he said. With his eyes set on civil services, he said it would help him get involved in social activities. "If I am unable to make it to civil services, I would like to do theatre because I have been doing it for the last couple of years," he said.

Tejaswini Bajpai received the Chakravarti gold medal for her overall performance, including both academic and extracurricular activities. Tejaswini is a member of NCC, has participated in Republic Day parade, done a diploma in French and has been involved in sports tournaments. She is in the fifth year of LLB. She said she felt blessed to have received the medal in the 100th year of LU. "I am thankful to my teachers and family who supported me," she added.

She said that she was aiming to get into judicial area in defence services. "I will fulfil my

immense contributions in the areas of economics, philosophy, science etc," the governor said.

She said the responsibility of a university is to create intellectually aware and socially responsible students.

"Higher educational institutions have more responsibil-

ity because they impact other institutes and in today's times, we can increase the reach of these institutes. In the current times, we are again talking of inner development which includes tradition and innovation and requires a balance between the two. Local level

responsibility is also necessary in these global times," Patel said. She said she is aware of the fact that in Covid-19 times, LU has held virtual classes, counselled students and made them aware socially through innovative methods and use of technology.

responsibility is also necessary in these global times," Patel said.

She said she is aware of the fact that in Covid-19 times, LU has held virtual classes, counselled students and made them aware socially through innovative methods and use of technology.

Citing the great names of Swami Vivekanand, Gautam Buddha, Guru Nanak, Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi who have provided inspiration for educational development in different periods of time, the governor said, "I am happy that education imparted by LU has the assimilation of the their thought process. She appreciated the various new ventures started by LU, including the efforts towards 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and making the system more transparent.

Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma referred to the digital work being done by LU and said the university would progress more in the coming times. He spoke about the glorious history and great names associated with Lucknow University.

A total of 13 publications were released by the governor, including three books of Brijesh Shukla and three of Amita Kanaujia.

Radhakamal Mukherjee Art Gallery and Museum, Happy Thinking Lab and Treehouse Replacement Art were also inaugurated through remote control by the governor. The children adopted by LU were given away books, bags and gifts.

Vice-Chancellor AK Rai spoke about the achievements of LU and strategic learning application for transformative education (SLATE) application under Digital Lucknow University, EASE (electronic access to the services of examination) portal, SIMS (student instant messaging service) for easy connectivity in view of student welfare which had been launched.

Class XI student hangs self

Lucknow (PNS): A class XI student ended his life at his rented apartment in Sushant Golf City police station area around midnight on Friday. As per reports, Rishabh Singh of Lakhimpur Kheri was staying in a flat in Gangotri Enclave

of Ansal City in the area and was a student of a private school. Around midnight, he was spotted hanging. On being informed, a team of police reached the scene rushed Rishabh to a hospital where he was declared brought dead. The police said Rishabh was hanging from the ceiling with a rope tied around his neck.

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Sonam Wangchuk
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- गो-पूजन
- सभी गो-आश्रय स्थलों पर जन-प्रतिनिधियों, प्रशासन एवं जनमानस के सहयोग से गोवंश का चिकित्सकीय परीक्षण व टीकाकरण
- मुख्यमंत्री निराश्रित/बेसहारा गोवंश सहभागिता योजना व कुपोषित बच्चों के परिवारों को दुधारू गाय उपलब्ध कराये जाने की योजना का क्रियान्वयन
- कृषक गोष्ठी का आयोजन

गोपाष्टमी समारोह

22 नवम्बर, 2020

मुख्य अतिथि

योगी आदित्यनाथ

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

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दिनांक : 22 नवम्बर, 2020 | समय : अपराह्न 1:30 बजे | स्थान : टाण्डा फॉल, गोवंश आश्रय स्थल, मीरजापुर

गोवंश संरक्षण की दिशा में उठाए गए महत्वपूर्ण कदम

- 5,145 गो-संरक्षण केन्द्रों/स्थलों में 5,25,376 गोवंश संरक्षित
- 66,257 गोवंश 'सहभागिता योजना' के अन्तर्गत पात्रों को दिए गए
- 1,178 कुपोषित बच्चों के परिवारों को कुल 1,184 गोवंश उपलब्ध कराए गए
- 98.34 लाख से अधिक गोवंश की टैगिंग
- 1,056 गो-आश्रय स्थलों पर जैविक खाद का उत्पादन

सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

Man shot mysteriously in SP MLC’s flat

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A Dalit man, who was a native of Barabanki, succumbed to gunshot injuries which he suffered under mysterious circumstances at a flat in La Place residential apartment in Hazratganj late on Friday night. The flat has been allocated to Samajwadi Party MLC from Shahjahanpur Amit Yadav. His close acquaintance,

identified as Pankaj Singh, also of Shahjahanpur, was staying in the flat for the last five years. The deceased was identified as Rakesh Rawat of Satrikh in Barabanki. He, along with his friends Vinay Yadav of Ismailganj in Ghazipur police station area, Aftab Alam and Gyanendra Kumar (both of Indiranagar), had visited the flat (No. 201) where Vinay had thrown a party on his birthday.

Aftab had bought beer cans and all the friends assembled in the flat between 8 pm and 8.30 pm on Friday. Sources said as the party progressed, all of them got stone drunk. All of a sudden, a gunshot was heard. In a CCTV footage, Rawat was seen being carried downstairs and made to sit in a car. At 1:51 am on Friday, Vinay Yadav informed the police control room that Rawat suffered gunshot while

fiddling with a pistol and was admitted to KGMU Trauma Centre. At 1:51 am, Vinay informed the police control room that Rawat tried to snatch the pistol from him and it went off and ripped through his head. A police team reached the scene and searched the flat. The police recovered a pistol, three cartridges and a magazine besides empty beer cans. Hazratganj SHO AK

Pandey said a case of murder was registered against the four accused who were also booked under SC/ST Act. The accused were later arrested. The SHO said the pistol belonged to Pankaj who brought it from another room to show it to his friends. Vinay asked Pankaj to see the pistol. Rawat tried to take the pistol from Vinay and the gun went off in the process.

Youth killed in road mishap

Lucknow (PNS): A youth, identified as Sarvesh Kumar Pandey (23) of Bahraich, was killed in a road mishap in Wazirganj police station area on Saturday morning. Reports said Pandey, along with a friend, was going to KGMU via Kaiserbagh on a bike. Around 6:15 am, the bike was hit by some unidentified vehi-

cle near Almighty Hospital. Sarvesh suffered grievous injuries and he died on the spot. Police said Sarvesh was unmarried and worked with a private company. In another incident in Sushant Golf City police station area, a 55-year-old woman ended her life at her house around 9 pm on Friday.

Reports said the woman, identified as Ramlali of Bakkas village, was hanging from the ceiling with a dupatta tied around her neck. Her brother-in-law Rakesh of Kakori said he reached the house around 9 pm and found her hanging from ceiling. Locals said the deceased was under mental duress. The police said Rakesh was also staying in the house for the last eight years.

STORES E-PROCUREMENT

TENDER NOTICE NO. S/14/20-21 Dated, 19-11-2020. (1) All tenders have been uploaded on Indian Railways-E-Procurement portal (IREPS):- www.ireps.gov.in For details & necessary guidelines for quoting against e-tender. Please visit IRE-E-Procurement portal. (2) The prospective tenderers are advised to get them registered on the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> on line. This registration is mandatory for participation in e-tendering and is free of charge. (3) Offers are to be submitted online only. Offers sent/submitted against such e-tenders through e-mail, post/fax or in person will be rejected summarily without any consideration. (4) This notice is for information during initial phase only. In future, no such notice shall be published. Vendors are requested to get registered with IREPS and visit portal www.ireps.gov.in for future tenders. (5) Please submit offers online for the following Materials: **SN.1. Tender No. 37/20/0433/OT/32/2020. Brief Description, P.L. NO & Quantity:** Slack Adjuster IRSA-600 for BGN type Wagon. As per Drg.No.RD50 Drg.No-82064-S-01 RC, Alt-12. As per Specn. RD50 Specn. No -07 ABR -92, Amdn. No-5 of Sept,2016. Qty-30 Nos. For Dibrugarh Town/WORKSHOP DEPOT, Qty- 30 Nos. For Pandu/Ghosunda, Qty- 124 Nos. For New Bongaigaon/WORKSHOP DEPOT, QTY- 100 Nos. For New Jalpaiguri/Ghosunda, PL No-38145108. **Closing/Opening date:** 16-12-2020. **SN.2. Tender No. 37/20/0553/OT/32/2020. Brief Description, P.L. NO & Quantity:** Outer Spring as per Drg. No. RD50's Drawing No. WD-830569/S/1 item 1, alt.15, as per Specn. Mat. & Spec.: IS-3195-92 with amendment No. 2 of September 2000 GR. 60 S/7 and RD50's Spec. No. WD-01-HLS-94 (Rev-3) of Jan/2009. Qty- 900 Nos. For Pandu/Ghosunda, Qty-500 Nos. For New Bongaigaon/WORKSHOP DEPOT, Qty- 560 Nos. For New Jalpaiguri/Ghosunda, PL NO- 38106127. **Closing/Opening date:** 16-12-2020. **SN.3. Tender No. 37/20/0606/OT/34/2020. Brief Description, P.L. NO & Quantity:** Adapter (Narrow Jaw) class "E" 6"x 11" as per Drg.No.RD50's Drawing No: WD -89067- S/9, Alt-8, as per Specn. Specification No: As per Drawing. Qty- 600 Nos. For Dibrugarh Town/WORKSHOP DEPOT, Qty- 1400 Nos. For Pandu/Ghosunda, Qty- 2000 Nos. For New Jalpaiguri/Ghosunda, PL No-38106401. **Closing/Opening date:** 16-12-2020. **SN.4. Tender No. 80/20/4038/OT/35/2020. Brief Description, P.L. NO & Quantity:** General Purpose Machinery Oil to IS- 4953-81 (Part-1) Re-affirmed 2004 (with Rust Preventive Characteristics test, as per IS: 1448-F-96, Method A) Grade -VG-100 with RDSO additional requirement as Slip no. issued by RDSO on August 2016. Qty- 30000 LTR. For Dibrugarh Town/WORKSHOP DEPOT, Qty- 30000 LTR. For Pandu/Ghosunda QTY- 25000 LTR. For New Bongaigaon/WORKSHOP DEPOT, Qty- 6000 LTR. For New Jalpaiguri/Ghosunda, PL No- 80014823. **Closing/Opening date:** 03-12-2020. **SN.6. Tender No. 40/20/5039/OT/37/2020. Brief Description, P.L. NO & Quantity:** Supply, Installation and commissioning of, (1) Isolation Contractor for HOG-A HOG-B, 3-Pole, KV/63kV with control voltage 440V AC, 10/20%, 50 Hz with auxiliary 4 NO + 4 NC and (11) Single phase 100VA, 750/415V control transformer with 02 nos. of fuses of IA 1.2kV in primary winding And 02 nos. fuses of 1A, 500V in secondary winding with required accessories as per RCF Specification No. EL 154, Rev.NI. Make: Ferraz/Siba/Bussman make or equivalent. Qty- 11 Set. For SSE/TL/AC/Kamakhyia . PL No- 4612N01. **Closing/Opening date:** 04-12-2020. **SN.7. Tender No. 90/20/1114/OT/38/2020. Brief Description, P.L. NO & Quantity:** Wood Based Resin Impregnated Compressed Laminates 2850 x 1220 x 12 mm. Spec. Mat.Spec: RD50-C-9407, Type 11 (Rev-3). Amendment Slip No. 03 issued in August' 2016 and Corrigendum No.1. Qty- 1000 Nos. For Dibrugarh Town/WORKSHOP DEPOT, Qty- 500 Nos. For New Bongaigaon/WORKSHOP DEPT, PL No- 93500853. **Closing/Opening date:** 07-12-2020. **SN.8. Tender No. 10/20/4549A/OT/39/2020. Brief Description, P.L. NO & Quantity:** Battery 6V, 150 AH Ni Cd storage unit to DLW pt no.17051472 and Drg.no. 10609375 Alt-A and conforming to RD50 Spec No. MP-A.51.01.02 (Rev 02) June 2009 (Amendment-1) Qty -100 Nos. For Siliguri Jn. /DIESEL DEPOT PL No- 17051472. **Closing/Opening date:** 26-11-2020. **SN.9. Tender No. 37/20/0466/OT/40/2020. Brief Description, P.L. NO & Quantity:** Air brake hose coupling for Brake Pipe Drg. No. RD50 Drawing no: SK-73547, Alt-13, Specn.Mat. Specn: as per drawing. Qty- 4800 Nos. For Pandu/Ghosunda, Qty- 9000 Nos. For New Bongaigaon/WORKSHOP DEPOT. Qty- 800 Nos. For New Jalpaiguri/Ghosunda, PL.No-38164681. **Closing/Opening date:** 14-12-2020. **SN.10. Tender No. 10203789/OT/41/2020. Brief Description, P.L. NO & Quantity:** Fan assly, Radiator cooling 52 inch dia 8-Biades, 2 speed, 220 VAC to EMD Pt No 10623109. Qty-6 Nos. For Siliguri Jn. Diesel depot (West Bengali), P.L. No- 17450391. **Closing/Opening date:** 09-12-2020. For PCMM NORTH-EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY Serving Customers With A Smile

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

As many as 343 persons tested positive for coronavirus in the city on Saturday, showing an increase in the number of cases after the recent decline. Besides, 313 patients recovered taking the recovery strength to 64,564 even as the death toll stands at 957. The new cases included 37 from Gominagar, 29 from Indiranagar, 26 from Mahanagar, 17 each from Rae Bareilly road & Alambagh, 14 from Chowk, 13 from Vikasnagar, 11 each from Ashiyana & Chintah, and 10 each from Hazratganj, Hasanganj & Madaion. There were 10 deaths in the city and four of the deceased belonged to Lucknow while the rest to Ayodhya, Prayagraj, Sitapur, Amethi and Bahraich. Four patients died at KGMU, including a 75-year-old woman from Gorakhpur, a 28-year-old man from Shahjahanpur, a 65-year-old man from Lucknow and a 28-year old man from Sitapur. Across the state, 2,326 more persons tested positive,

including 168 in Prayagraj, 157 in Meerut, taking the UP tally to 5,24,223. There were 26 deaths in the state, including three in Meerut, two in Muzaffarnagar and one each in Kanpur, Ghaziabad, Gautambuddh Nagar, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Agra, Saharanpur, Azamgarh, Bulandshahr, Etawah, Sitapur, Sonbhadra, Bahraich, Jalaun, Firozabad, Mainpuri & Baghat, taking the toll to 7,524. Besides, 2,097 patients recovered, taking the recovery figure to 4,93,228. Meanwhile, health officials have started making strategies to take care of serious patients in the wake of another spurt in coronavirus cases. A senior official said a meeting was held with KGMU authorities to discuss how to tackle the situation with the spike in cases. “We held a meeting with the team of doctors at KGMU, headed by nodal officer D Himanshu, on how the oxygen beds and isolation beds cane be increased. We also discussed sending doctors to KGMU for hands-on training

so that they are better equipped to tackle the situation in their respective hospitals,” he said. He added that the serious cases have also increased and for every 100 cases, five to ten patients are serious. “Post the festive season, we have 600 serious cases currently. However, there are sufficient beds as of now to deal with the situation,” he said. The official said the active cases have increased to 350 cases per day because of the post-festive scene and also because of increased testing. Asked about people ignoring social distancing norms during Chhath celebrations, he said cases are bound to increase if people assemble in large number without caring about Covid-19 protocols. On enforcement, he said they have always been maintaining that masks and social distancing are essential. Meanwhile, Alok Dhawan took over as director of Centre of Biomedical Research on Saturday, relinquishing his charge as IITR director. He interacted with all faculty

members and students of the centre and stressed on the need for application-oriented research and innovation for the good of public health, both for UP and nation. He also exhorted the faculty members to design programmes and align themselves with the national mission programmes of the Centre and UP government. He will be reviewing the progress of the centre next week and draw a road map for future. Dhawan said he would hold a brainstorming session with all those associated with the centre and decide on where they would like to see the institute in the next 10 to 15 years. Regarding Covid-19 research, he said he would be holding a meeting with SGPDI director RK Dhiman on Monday. “We have a functional MRI at the centre which can be used for scanning the brains of those who have recovered from Covid-19. This may give some insight into the recent reports that coronavirus affects the brain too,” he added.

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता विद्युत कार्यालया मण्डल, पुर्वान्वल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि., भेलपुर पावर हाऊस, वाराणसी। निविदा खुलने की तिथि विस्तार सम्बन्धी सूचना इस कार्यालय द्वारा आमंत्रित अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सं० – 160 / वि०काशा०म० / २३/१०/२०२० – १६० जो दिनांक ३१.११.२०२० को खोली जाती थी, कतिपय कारणों से उक्त निविदा अब दिनांक ०५.१२.२०२० को खोली जायेगी। अन्य नियम एवं शर्तें यथावत् रहेगी। अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, पत्रांक – १९९५, दिनांक – २१.११.२०२० “स्पष्टित में बिजली बचाये”

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ELECTY. 400KV SUB-STATION DIVISION U.P. POWER TRAMS, CORPORATION LIMITED HAFIZPUR, AZAMGARH Sealed Tenders are hereby invited in two parts (Containing Earnest Money, Terms & Conditions etc. In 1st Part and Rates in 2nd Part) from Experienced Supplier / Contractor in government or semi Government Department. **Tender No. 02 of 2020-2021** For Providing of One no. Light Diesel Vehicle alongwith Driver for the Use of Executive Engineer 400KV Sub-station Division, Azamgarh. Vehicle should be in good condition. Earnest Money of Rs. 2000.00 in shape of F.D.R./T.D.R./D.R. **Tender Cost : Rs. 224.00 Cash / D.D. Only (Including G.S.T.) TERMS & CONDITIONS** Earnest money will be in shape of FDR/TDR/DR duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, Electy. 400KV S/S Division, Azamgarh. Documents of Tender No. 02/2020-2021 will be accepted upto 14.00 Hrs. on 23.12.2020 and the same will be opened on dt. 23.12.2020 at 16.00. In case, the tender opening date is holiday, the date of submission and opening of tender will still extended to next working day. Undersigned has right to reject / divide any tender without assigning any reasons thereof. Conditional tenders shall not be accepted. **EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ELECTY. 400KV S/S DIVISION AZAMGARH.** No. - 1280, Date - 19.11.2020, **SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF NATION.**

दक्षिणमंडल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि० CIN:U31200UP2003SGC027460 **अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना** अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता द्वारा विद्युत वितरण मण्डल-कानपुर नगर के अन्तर्गत निम्नलिखित विवरण के अनुसार कार्य हेतु अनुमोदी व सक्षम निविदादाताओं द्वारा निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है, निविदा सम्बन्धी पूर्ण सूचना एवं ई-निविदा में यदि कोई संशोधन अथवा निविदा खुलने की तिथि में विस्तार होता है तो इसकी सूचना ई-टेंडर वेबसाइट <http://tenderup.nic.in> पर देखी जा सकती है। १. **अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सं०:** १००/वि०वि०म०का०/२०२०-२१ **विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड-प्रथम, कानपुर के अधीन सरसौल क्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत पूर्ण जमा मद में मैसर्स पृथ्वि फूड्स लिमिटेड के परस्पर से गुजर रही ३३ के०वी० विद्युत लाइन को शिफ्टिंग का कार्य। २. **अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सं०:** १०१/वि०वि०म०का०/२०२०-२१ **विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड-द्वितीय, घाटमपुर के अधीन पूर्ण जमा मद में आसार आवास योजना के अवसरो को ऊर्जाकृत करने का कार्य। ३. **अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सं०:** १०२/वि०वि०म०का०/२०२०-२१ **विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड-प्रथम, कानपुर के अन्तर्गत पूर्ण जमा मद में विद्युतीकरण का कार्य। ४. **अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सं०:** १०३/वि०वि०म०का०/२०२०-२१ **विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड-प्रथम, कानपुर के अन्तर्गत ३३/११ के०वी० विद्युत उपकेन्द्र-साद में जर्जर/क्षतिग्रस्त पुरानी बीसीजी०के० के स्थान पर नवीन बीसीजी०के० स्थापना का कार्य। **अधी० अगि० वि०वि०म०, कानपुर** १७३/वि०वि०म०का०-३ दिनांक २०-११-२०२० **स्पष्ट हिात में बिजली बचाये**

Controversial term ‘love jihad’ may not be used in bill

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Even as the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and the Uttar Pradesh government are vehemently voicing concern over what they call love jihad, the controversial term will find no mention in the draft when the contentious bill is introduced in the state Assembly during the winter-budget session of the UP Legislature. The bill against love jihad is being prepared by the Uttar Pradesh Law department and it will be called ‘Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion Bill’. The state cabinet is expected to give the green signal to the bill following which it will be moved in the forthcoming winter session of the UP Assembly. The state Law

Commission in December 2019 had submitted a draft bill, The Uttar Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 2019, to curb religious conversion by fraud and inducements. Official sources said the term ‘love jihad’ had not been used in the bill and conversions related to all religions would be covered under the new law. To be precise it will not just focus on Hindu-Muslim conversions or conversions for the specific purpose of marriage itself. Sources said that the proposed bill would be in no way an infringement of an individual citizen's right to religious freedom. Under the bill, inter religious marriages will be encouraged to go through the Special Marriage Act.

The UP Law Commission had recently said that the “limited scope legislation” for restricting inter-faith marriage between Hindu and Muslim for curbing love jihad would not stand the judicial scrutiny. UP Law Commission Chairman Justice (Retired) Aditya Nath Mittal had said that if the state government brought the legislation to curb inter-faith marriage, it would not stand in law. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on October 31, while addressing an election meeting in Jaunpur, had issued a warning against love jihad and said the government was working to bring a strict law to curb incidents of love jihad.

Sambhal DDO suspended for dereliction of duty

Lucknow (PNS): The Uttar Pradesh government suspended the district development officer (DDO) of Sambhal on charges of gross indiscipline and arbitrary behaviour while three officials were also suspended over the deaths due to spurious liquor in Prayagraj. An official communiqué released on Saturday confirmed that several charges of indiscipline, including disregarding orders of senior officials, not sending report under Integrated Grievance Redressal System (IGRS), leaving district headquarters sans permission,

were prima facie found to be true against Sambhal DDO Ram Sevak and action was initiated against him. The joint development commissioner of Bareilly division would further investigate the complaints. The state government also initiated strict action against people involved in supplying spurious liquor in Phulpur town of Prayagraj, where seven people have died while eight others are fighting for their lives in hospital. Three officials, including two of the Excise department and one police personnel, were suspended

while action was also taken against the shop owner. Additional Chief Secretary (Excise) Sanjay Bhoosreddy said on Saturday that strict criminal action was initiated against all culprits, including the government employees concerned, on the directions of CM Yogi Adityanath. “Besides, action under criminal laws and under the excise laws is being taken against all concerned, including licensee Shyam Babu Jaiswal of Amaliya village in Phulpur town of Prayagraj for Friday's tragedy,” Bhoosreddy said.

CITY BRIEFS

GOLD MEDAL Samarth Tayal, a class V student of City Montessori School, Rajajipuram Campus 1, won the gold medal at a national-level inter-school online competition, which was organised by educational institution ‘Brainbrain’. Students from almost 1,500 schools participated in this competition wherein Samarth showcased his exemplary talent.

RIN MUKTI CAMP Punjab National Bank, circle office, Lucknow (West), is organising a ‘Mega Rin Mukti Camp’ for NPA borrowers at the Ashok Marg branch on November 25. In this camp, the NPA borrowers can avail of maximum rebate in their accounts. This scheme is for a limited period only.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ **ABSENTEE NOTICE** Shri Pramod Kumar S/o Shri Basantu Singh, Designation-Trackmaintainer-IV, Permanent Address:- Village- Rasoolpur, Post: Dhanaipur, Distt.-Ghazipur (U.P.), Pin Code: 233302 working under S.S.E/ P.Way/BRE has absented from duty from 12.05.2016 without any prior information and his where about are not known due to this act, a Major penalty charge sheet (SF-5) has been sent on your permanent address and a copy was pasted on Main door at your home as per rules. Inspite of this you did not turned up for enquiry. Now a last chance is given to you through this public notice to report alongwith clarification to SSE/P.W/NCR/KGA (Enquiry officer) within a week time. Please note, if you do not turn up within the stipulated period, it will be prescribed that you are no more interested to work in Railway department & Ex party action will be taken against you under D&AR rules on your sole responsibility. 1253/20 (SP) North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ **E-Tendering Tender Notice** Office of Divisional Railway Manager North Central Railway, Prayagraj **Tender Notice No.: 5320202021 Dated: 17.11.2020** Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway/ Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E TENDERS by Two Packet System on prescribed form for the following work upto 13.30 hrs. on the tender opening date. The details of the Tender are as under:-

SN	Tender No.	Name of Work	Approx Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Date of Opening of Tender
1	156	Supplying, stacking and loading in to railway wagons /oppers / K. C. wagons etc. 100000 Cum machine crushed hard stone ballast of 65mm gauge at MANDAH depot under ADEN/ NCR/ MZP.	₹ 184647000/-	₹ 1073200/-	16.12.2020

Completion Period: 24 Months. **Eligibility Criteria for similar work:** Supply of machine crushed stone ballast / stone aggregates. **Note:** (1) Tenderers have to submit following test report along with their tender document from any reputed Govt. organization / Institutions as per list given in the tender document (Para 3.1 of Specification of Track Ballast on Page 46 & 47 of Tender Document) otherwise their tender will not be considered and summarily rejected: (i) Size Gradation Test, (ii) Abrasion Value Test, (iii) Impact Value Test, (iv) Water Absorption Test. (2) E-Tender Forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. (3) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website www.ireps.gov.in upto 13:30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. (4) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (5) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/ letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. (6) The tenderers shall submit a certificate as given in tender document as “Annexure” in standard format without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected. (7) The supplier/ contractor of goods and / or services would be subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. (8) Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (9) This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. (10) Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. (11) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (12) Tender on line can be submitted upto 13.30 hrs. on tender opening date. (13) The tender offer shall be made online through Two Packet System i.e. (i) Technical Bid (ii) Financial Bid. (14) The tenderer has to submit necessary documents in compliance of clause 10 to 18 (Part-I) of GCC July 2020 mandatorily, otherwise offer will be considered as Incomplete Offer and accordingly shall not be considered. North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRO NCR 1233/20 (A)

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ **E-Tender Notice** No.: CC-6/Leasing/SLR/VP/2020 Date: 18.11.2020 **Special facility to registered lease holders, Courier Companies as well as business man for loading/unloading of parcels in brake vans for SLR compartments at reasonable rates** **Safe Fast Economic Reliable** North Central Railway has invited open tender through leasing for carriage/transportation of parcels in SLR Compartment of following trains for reasonable Rates. Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj for and on behalf of President of India invites tender for leasing of following trains for the period of **FIVE YEARS on 22.12.2020 upto 13:00 hrs.** and same will be opened at 15:00 hrs. The tender documents can be downloaded from Railway website www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in & Government of India Portal www.ireps.gov.in and used. For which the cost of tender documents and EMD should be submitted along with tender in favour of Senior Divisional Finance Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj. Without cost of down loaded tender form as well as Earnest money, tender will not be considered. The competent authority reserves the right to reject/accept any part/all tenders, without assigning any reasons. The tender will be received and opened in the office of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj on the above mentioned date and time. Open tender for SLR Compartment will be invited for a period of Five Years. Offer(s) received below reserve price shall not be accepted irrespective of mode of lease. **Note: Eligibility criteria to lease holders for leasing tender:** (1) The annual turnover of the business of the applicant/firm/company, who applied for registration of leaseholder under the scheme, shall have the business to the following extent (Audited balance sheet & Profit Loss account of financial year 2019-20) must be attached with tender documents at the time of opening of tender and with the application for registration. (2) The leaseholder shall be liable to pay **GST & any other taxes** as imposed by the Central Government from time-to-time for transportation of goods/parcels. (3) The lease holder will have to pay ‘Development charge’ or any other charges levied by the Railway Administration on the Freight over and above the Lumpsum Leased Freight.

Tender No.	Station From	Station To	Scale	Distance (KM)	Reserve price for each SLR Compartment per tonne ₹	Available Train Number	Leasable compartments	Running of train per year (Days)
-1-	-2-	-3-	-4-	-5-	-6-	-7-	-8-	-9-
73	Prayagraj	Lokmanya Tikai Terminal	P	1348	1780.30	12294/02294 Twice in a week	FSLR	522 days
74	Kanpur	New Delhi	R	440	2071.52	12033/02033 06 days in a week	FSLR	1566 days
75	Prayagraj	New Delhi	R	634	2762.90	12417/02417 Daily	FSLR	1825 days

Note: 1. Tender forms shall be available on www.ireps.gov.in 21 days prior to date of opening of the tender. The tender notice can also be viewed on Railway's web site www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. 4. Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 5. Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Document Cost (TDC) in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. 6. Cost of tender document should be deposit under allocation Z-650 and Earnest Money should be deposited under allocation DMX. 7. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 8.Tender online can be submitted upto 13:00 hrs on 22.12.2020 9. Verified Audited balance sheet & Profit Loss Account of last financial year i.e. 2019-2020 must be attached with tender. 10. Affidavit for No Railway Duress is recoverable from the tenderer against previous contracts in original. 11. Railway Administration reserves the right to postpone/modify or to cancel any one or all the tenders without assigning any reasons or to accept any of the tenders through it may not be necessarily the lowest. 12. The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of the tender. Tender received after the date and time specified above shall not be considered. 1254/20(D) North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

Chhath puja comes to an end with 'arghya' during sunrise

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Despite all the fear over the surging of corona cases, thousands of devotees thronged various Ganga and Varuna ghats apart from leading ponds here on Saturday morning to offer 'arghya' to Surya Bhagwan (Sun God) at the time of sunrise and with this, the four-day Surya Shasthi festival, popularly known as Dalla Chhath Puja, came to an end. Elaborate security arrangements have been made at various ghats and ponds. Several traffic restrictions were imposed especially in central city area of Dashaswamedh, southern part of Assi and Bhaissur in the northern part near Rajghat. A large number of devotees did not obey the COVID-19 guidelines and celebrated the festival without wearing masks. Due to rush at different ghats, social distancing could also not be



Arghya being offered during sunrise at Bhaissur ghat (Rajghat) in Varanasi on Saturday **Pioneer**

followed though after a long gap the number of COVID-19 cases had crossed three figures mark in the district just a day ago.

Right from wee hours the devotees started thronging various ghats of Ganga and

Varuna to secure space at the stairs. The ghats like Dashaswamedh, Rajendra Prasad, Ahliyabai, Man Mandir, Assi, Sheetla, Scindia, Panchganga, Nagva, Bhainsasur, Rajghat, Narad, Kedar, Hanuman, Ravidas and

Tulsi Ghat witnessed gathering of huge number of devotees. Rush was also seen at different ghats of Ramnagar including Shastri and Balua ghats. Besides, rush of devotees was also seen at Shastri and other ghats of river Varuna. Rush of devotees was also seen at various kunds and ponds.

Even after 5 am the vrati women started taking bath and carrying 'dauras' (baskets made of bamboo sticks) of 'prasad' they stood for almost an hour to wait for sunrise. As soon as the sunrise was seen, the women started offering arghya. The family members also did the same and sought the blessings of the vratis. At that time, the ghats were echoed with songs of Chhathi Maiya. Thousands of vratis in view of heavy rush at ghats and ponds preferred to celebrate the festivals at their homes.

65 COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 65 new COVID-19 patients have been detected in the district on Saturday, increasing the total number of cases to 18,356. There was no casualty reported during the day and the death toll remained at 293. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 84 and out of them 79 have been recovered from home isolation while five from the hospitals, increasing the number to 14,542 and 2,856 respectively. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 17,398, leaving 665 active cases. The recovery rate is 94.78 per cent, while the mortality rate is 1.59 per cent.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh has informed that in the first



COVID-19 tests of passengers being done at a station in Varanasi **Pioneer**

report of the day, 41 positive patients were found out of 3,674 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 3,88,656 and the results of 6,041 are awaited. Out of them, 3,70,304 were negative while 18,332 positive.

The total number of samples collected was 4,09,086. Earlier, a female aged 72 from Karaundi succumbed to COVID-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU). With the addition of five new red

zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,440 including 193 red zones. Three green zones have been converted into red zones again. There are 2,247 green zones with seven new ones.

Under the ongoing mass/group antigen tests, the passengers were tested at both Varanasi Junction (Cantt.) and Manduadih railway station but all the 250 and 220 tests were found negative there respectively. Besides, all the 427 tests at Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura, 242 at Government Women's Hospital, 117 at CHC Shivpur, 135 at Swami Vivekanand Government Hospital, Bhelupur, 185 at LBS Hospital, Ramnagar and 260 at SSH BHU were also found negative.

One shot dead in Bada Lalpur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

One was shot dead in Bada Lalpur under the Pandeypur-Lalpur police station on Saturday. The police sent the body for the post-mortem examination and lodged an FIR against his nephew in this connection but failed in nabbing him.

According to information, the deceased identified as Shahid Iqbal was at home near a mosque in Lalpur. He was eating apples with his brother Mushtaq in the morning and in the meantime, his nephew Jugnu reached there. The deceased also offered apples to him and went to see off his guests. It was said that when he was going to see off



Police investigating murder site at Bada Lalpur in Varanasi on Saturday **Pioneer**

his guests, Jugnu reached to him and opened fire targeting him. Shahid died on spot and the killer managed to escape

from the scene.

On getting information, the police reached the site and took a stock of first hand

information about the daring incident.

The SSP Amit Pathak also reached the site and asked his subordinates to apprehend the killer at the earliest.

It was said that the killer is the son of the elder brother of the deceased. There was an old dispute between the deceased and his brother. The matter was settled and everything had become normal between both families. The police claimed that the old enmity was the cause behind the killing. The police sent the body for autopsy and also launched drive to nab the murderer but failed in reaching out to him till the news last came in.

IOCL ED launches PDC campaign

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In order to promote Digital India, a cashless transaction drive was launched by Executive Director (ED) and UP State Head of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) Dr Uttiya Bhattacharya. He inaugurated 5 kg free trade cylinders point of sale (FTL POS) and launched pre-delivery check (PDC) campaign at Harsh Gas, Mehmooaganj on Saturday. When Bhattacharya reached there, he was accorded warm welcome by the team led by DGM (LPG-Sales), Prayagraj Area Office. The programme was attended by other IOCL officers, LPG distributors of Varanasi and near-by districts. The function began with the demonstration of PDC of refill cylinder by Field Officer Piyush Kumar Singh. Speaking on the occasion, Bhattacharya emphasised that in smart cities like Varanasi, it is important that customer should book and pay digitally and in order to promote that, IOCL has given various options for booking and payment digitally like (Indian Oil One App, cx.indianoil.in, Paytm, Amazon, Whatsapp, etc.). He further emphasised on the importance of pre-delivery checks before refill delivery.



IOCL ED Uttiya Bhattacharya inaugurating cashless transaction drive in Varanasi on Saturday **Pioneer**

This will not only help in reducing the LPG accidents at the customer's premises but also improve in service and customer's faith in company and distributors. Later, a POS for Indian Oil 5 kg FTL was also inaugurated by Dr Bhattacharya at Taj Krishna Filling Station at Nadesar to promote the sale of 5kg FTL LPG cylinders. He said, FTL will be very useful to students, migrant people and anyone can avail this cylinder from any Indian Oil POS by just giving an ID proof. In order to promote these drives, a small flag rally was organised in adjoining area and also a delivery vehicle was flagged off by Dr

Bhattacharya. **CONTRACT TEACHERS SATYAGRAH ENTERS 20TH DAY:** The indefinite satyagrah of the contractual teachers (core faculty) of the Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth (MGKV) entered the 20th day on Saturday reiterating their demands including the salary of their last four months which had been withheld by the varsity administration. Meanwhile, the Vice-Chancellor Prof TN Singh informed that their remuneration of all the works done by them during the lockdown has been paid and the evaluation process of their works of contractual period is being made by the department concerned to find out the possibilities to continue their contracts. Some of the contractual teachers are also co-operating the varsity administration in the evaluation process of their works, he informed.

been informed about this.

The ad-hoc basis teachers have been on indefinite satyagrah for the last 20 days at Gandhi statue in front of the administrative building. They said that the varsity administration had withheld their salary from the month of July and also not paid the remuneration of the works done by them during lockdown including the evaluation of answer sheets of the examination conducted by the university. They had also claimed that the Executive Council had also approved the extension of their contract but the V-C was not extending the same. A delegation of agitated ad-hoc teachers also submitted a memorandum to the office of the DM on Saturday urging his intervention into the matter. Meanwhile, the V-C informed that the remuneration of the works done by them during the lockdown has been paid and the evaluation process of their works of contractual period is being made by the department concerned to find out the possibilities to continue their contracts. Some of the contractual teachers are also co-operating the varsity administration in the evaluation process of their works, he informed.



The four-day Chhath festival concluded in Prayagraj on Saturday morning with the worship of the Sun God. The festival of Chhath has originated from Bihar and reached every state of the country. People, including men, women, and children thronged the ghats of the Ganga, and the Yamuna besides the Sangam to offer Arghya to Surya Dev on Saturday morning. This marked the end of the festival. **Pioneer**

149 more test positive in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

After the festival of Diwali, the increasing number of Covid infected is only around 150. On Friday, samples of 6,541 people were collected for corona testing. At the same time, 149 new cases were detected for COVID-19 in 24 hours. One patient died during treatment. There is also concern among the increasing number of patients that the number of patients getting cured has reduced considerably.

According to CMO GS Bajpai, there has been some increase in the number of infected people. In this sequence, the scope of testing is also being increased. On an average 5,000 people are being tested for Covid test daily. A total of 66 people also defeated corona. In which 15 patients were discharged from different hospitals. 80 people completed home isolation. According to Health department data, the number of active patients is also increasing rapidly. There were 1,130 active patients in the district on Friday. At the same time 6,100 people were discharged from hospitals after treatment. 18,201 people completed home isolation.

On the instructions of the government, the CMO issued an order to all private hospitals

COVID-19 testing made mandatory

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

In a bid to contain the spread of COVID-19, District Health department has made testing mandatory for the adjoining five houses of a patient. The step will be applicable irrespective of whether the patient is being admitted to a hospital for treatment or under home isolation.

Nodal and Additional Chief Medical Officer Dr Rishi Sahai said once a patient (all genders and ages) tests positive for the COVID-19, Health department teams will conduct testing of the patient's family members and those living in the five houses (from all four directions) of the patient's house.

He added that this exercise would help the health authorities to contain the spread of COVID-19, and the department would also be able to identify fresh patients and treat them.

We are conducting testing of around 6,000 people every day and efforts are underway to

increase testing in urban, semi-urban and rural areas, even as the caseload in Prayagraj district is less than 1,000 patients. The focus is on those pockets and colonies from where the increasing number of patients have been reported in the recent days, said Sahai.

Besides testing, a mass-level awareness campaign on the three safety norms of wearing a mask, maintaining social distancing and observing proper hygiene like hand wash has also been launched in the city.

Health department statistics show that 24,094 patients out of the total 25,395 patients have already been cured and the recovery percentage in the city is 94.87 per cent. Data also claimed that testing of around 3.50 lakh people was done in Prayagraj district till now.

Health officials said that the city had reported more cases (more than hundred) in the past two days.

and nursing home operators to operate the Covid desk from ten to six o'clock every day. In this regard, the eight-point instruction states that the availability of paramedical staff along with a physician should be ensured at the help desk.

Ensure availability of infrared thermometer, pulse oximeter etc. at the help desk. Also, patients with complaints of symptoms of cough, such as cough, fever, cold, difficulty in breathing and weakness should be screened and arranged for

treatment with mandatory treatment. On the spot, instructions regarding measures to protect Covid should be disseminated, the letter stated.

During the testing of the Covid Target Group for the purpose of identifying and treating corona patients, the testing was carried out at several places including GGIC on Friday.

During this people were also asked to take measures to prevent corona. Testing was

also conducted in slums on Saturday.

According to Nodal Officer for Corona Dr Rishi Sahai, on the list of Covid infected on Friday, the DGM of NTPC, HR Officer of NTPC, head constable of RAF, head constable posted in Kareli police station were included. The advocate of the district court, a clerk of Ishwar Sharan Inter College, an accountant, a review officer of the High Court have also found to be infected by corona.

Phulpur hooch tragedy toll 7

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Death toll in the hooch tragedy of Phulpur reached seven on Saturday while condition of eight others is stated to be critical. District Magistrate has initiated steps to trace out people who had consumed liquor from that very shop to monitor their health conditions.

Seven persons have been taken into custody so far in this connection including the shopowner, salesmen, and some nearby liquor shop owners who used to pick up crates of bottles from that Phulpur shop.

Spurious liquor had claimed four lives in the trans-Ganga area of Phulpur on

Friday.

According to reports the liquor victims had consumed the poisonous drink from the country liquor shop of Amilavhan village of the area. Officials including DM, IG, SSP have visited the spot immediately after receiving deaths owing to consumption of spurious liquor.

The local residents told the officials that people gathered at the country liquor shop as usual on Friday also, but after consuming the liquor the boozers fainted one after another. They were immediately taken to hospital where four breathed their last. They include Basant Lal, Shambhu Nath Maurya, Raj Bahadur, and Pyare Lal Bind. They all

were the local residents of Phulpur.

UPSESSB cancels recruitment process: Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Service Selection Board (UPSESSB) cancelled a recruitment process to fill up 15,508 vacancies of teachers in over 4,500 government-aided secondary schools due to legal issues on Wednesday, just three weeks after announcing the posts.

The recruitment drive was one of the biggest ever to be launched in the state. Launched on October 29, the drive aimed to fill up 12,913 posts of trained graduate teachers (TGT) and 2,595 vacancies for post graduate teachers (PGT).

UPSESSB Deputy

Secretary Nawal Kishore said the board would issue a fresh advertisement for the recruitment drive after redressing all legal issues in its path. The decision was taken during the online meeting of UPSESSB officials on Wednesday.

UPSESSB officials said that the decision to cancel the advertisement was taken so that no move results in a possible contempt of Supreme Court orders.

Candidates who have already applied online will not be required to re-apply once the new advertisement is issued. National Informatics Centre (NIC) will be requested to make the due provisions in the software, the officials added.

NCR intensifies efforts to protect passengers from COVID-19

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Awareness campaign on COVID-19 appropriate behaviour continuing over North Central Railway. Approximately 230 pair of special trains are being operated over NCR to meet essential travel need during ongoing festival season. In view of increase in special trains and footfalls at different stations, North Central Railway has also intensified efforts to protect passengers and its workforce from COVID-19.

Mass Movement (Jan Aandolan) a high intensity awareness campaign concentrated on regular use of mask,



Loggase sanitising machine at Prayagraj railway station **Pioneer**

maintaining minimum two yard physical distance and proper hand hygiene has been running all over NCR for the past one month. Under this campaign 293 stations handling passenger traffic and 20 pairs of originating special trains of NCR have been provided with posters and banners on Covid appropriate behaviour; auto announce-

ment on COVID-19 awareness is being made at 85 stations; digital displays of awareness clips at nine stations and more than 55,000 passengers, Railway employees and other persons have taken pledge for following Covid appropriate behaviour. Approximately 1.3 crore SMS have been sent to passengers and railway employees related to COVID-19 precautions. Social media platforms have also been used extensively and approximately 200 tweets and 40 Facebook posts on COVID-19 related precautions have been shared since launch of Jan Aandolan. Besides this awareness drive by RPF, my Saheli, door to

door survey cum awareness campaign are also being continued on the three divisions of North Central Railway.

Screening and training efforts to protect railway men and women from COVID-19 are also being continued. As on November 20, 2020 more than 19,500 railway employees and their family members have been screened in five separate clinics running in railway hospitals to identify COVID-19 positive cases. So far, approximately 712 formal and informal training programs have been organised on sanitisation and ICE for housekeeping, paramedical and other railway personnel.

People coming to Kanpur from Delhi to undergo screening, random testing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Chief Medical Officer Dr AK Mishra has directed health officials to ensure that all the people stepping at Kanpur Central railway station from New Delhi are screened and randomly tested for novel coronavirus infection.

He said a special team had been stationed at Kanpur Central station on both entry and exit points for random testing and thermal screening of the people coming from New Delhi.

He said special surveillance was being maintained between 6.00 am and 11.00 am and then again from 7.00 am to

10.00 pm.

Dr Mishra said with reports of COVID-19 surfacing again in Delhi, it had been decided to keeping a track of people who enter into Kanpur.

He said the health staff on duty could stop any person deboarding from the train at Kanpur Nagar, especially the Shatabdi Express, Shramshakti Express, Gomti Express, Swarn Shatabdi Express and a few more prominent trains which carry people to Kanpur Nagar from New Delhi.

Meanwhile, the CMO said the issue of exhaust of medicines in LLR Hospital had been brought to the notice of the district administration

which had taken up the matter with the CM Office.

He said a requisition for medicines costing Rs 41 lakh had been forwarded to the financial controller who had refused to sanction the amount, causing an acute crisis of medicines in the LLR Hospital, especially medicines to treat COVID-19 cases.

He said a meeting had been summoned to work out plans to tide over the present medicine crisis faced by the LLR Hospital.

He said LLRH Chief Medical Superintendent Dr Richa Giri said the corporation which provided medicines to the hospital had already been

paid for the medicines but till date it had failed to provide the required medicines.

Meanwhile, the district administration has imposed a fine of Rs 2,000 on people not wearing a mask outside their houses and it is being strictly implemented.

The Kanpur police have been vested with special power to stop any car or a two-wheeler in case the driver or the rider is not wearing a face mask.

The CMO said in the next week, if people continued to violate the guideline making face masks mandatory outside the houses, the administration would start detention of second time violators.

DM concern over stubble burning

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

District Magistrate Alok Tiwari has expressed concern over the laxity of officials in taking action against farmers burning stubble.

Chairing a meeting at his camp office here on Saturday, the district magistrate directed the officials to ensure that no farmer burnt stubble at any cost and if they did, legal action be taken against them.

He said special teams had been formed to monitor that there was no violation of the order against stubble burning.

He said in the past few days, Rs 60,000 had been recovered as fines from the farmers caught burning stubble.

Tiwari said not FIRs had

been registered against 22 people in this connection, and warned that if burning stubble continued, the committee members would be answerable.

He said the committee should also ensure that the entire stubble was collected and sent to the cow shelters. He said this responsibility should be placed on the block development officers and the BDOs would submit a detailed report on the number of farmers who had handed over the stubble for the cattle shelters.

The district magistrate said in view of the approaching winter, all the temporary cow shelters must make adequate and proper arrangement to prevent the cattle from cold. He said they need to identify land so

that more cow shelters could be set up on the government land.

Speaking in the meeting, Chief Development Officer MK Singh said stubble burning was cited as the main contributor to smog in northern India in pre-winter months.

He said Kanpur Nagar's air quality in winter exacerbated respiratory problems and led to disruption in air and road travel due to the poor visibility.

He said despite the long-standing ban on stubble burning, farmers who had already harvested the crop, had once again resorted to burning the leftover crop residue in order to clear their fields for the next crop.

He said farmers put the stubble on fire in order to prepare their fields for sowing potatoes and other vegetables. He said the majority of the farmers, who were small and did not have big land holdings, could not afford machines on their own and thus they were forced to burn the stubble in their fields like previous years.

He said it was the duty of the officials to ensure that the implementation of the ban on stubble burning was enforced in the right earnest.

The chief development officer said if the people do not become aware then there was every possibility that it may impact spread of COVID-19 in and around Kanpur Nagar.

UP Sahkari Gram Vikas Bank to offer low interest education loans to farmers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Uttar Pradesh Sahkari Gram Vikas Bank Chairman Santraj Yadav said the bank would provide loans to farmers at nominal interest rates to meet expenses on the higher education of their children.

Now, the farmers will not have to depend on private banks for loans for higher education of their wards.

The education loan would be provided to the farmers at 4 percent interest rate, he added.

Yadav said work on this new scheme was on to disburse loan to farmers' children from the ensuing academic session.

Yadav had come here to attend the divisional review meeting on Saturday. Officers of 21 bank branches from six



UP Sahkari Gram Vikas Bank Chairman Santraj Yadav chairs Review Meeting on Saturday.

districts attended the meeting.

Yadav said so far people holding the reins of this bank utilised it as their own proper-

ty.

"They virtually brought the bank to very poor condition but now, with the joint

efforts of all, I am working to improve the financial condition of the bank and this may take around three months time," he said. Yadav said a special investigation team (SIT) had already started probe against irregularities made in recruitment in the bank in the past and probe on other issues could be recommended, if need be.

He said the bank provides loan to farmers at 6 percent interest per annum for investment in agriculture work or for setting up an industry but in the absence of proper publicity the scheme had failed to attract farmers.

"Now, apart from organising meetings with the farmers, hoardings would be installed in villages for publicise the bank schemes," he said.

'Legal awareness essential to safeguard rights of women'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Legal awareness is essential to safeguard the rights of women and this can be improved by education because it gives them a chance to lead dignified lives.

This was stated by Virendra Swarup Institute of Professional Studies Principal Dr Poonam Madan, while addressing a legal awareness function held at the institute on Friday.

She said dowry-related violence, domestic violence, child abuse and eve-teasing were rampant even in this modern age hence women, especially the younger ones, should be legally empowered to tackle these forms of discrimination.

Dr Madan said much needs to be done to empower women and make them aware of their legal rights.

She said that keeping in mind the Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and a number of other laws to empower women, one pertinent question that arose was were women really legally aware.

She said findings showed that a positive relationship existed between education, income, professional work and legal awareness and it was also observed that legal



Principal, VSIPS, Dr Poonam Madan, chairs the function on Legal Awareness for Women on Saturday.

awareness and victimisation of women were inversely related.

Dr Madan said violence affected the life of millions of women in India in all socio-economic and educational classes. She said it cut across cultural and religious barriers, impacting the right of women fully in the society.

She said violence against women took a dismaying variety of forms, from domestic abuse and rape to child marriages.

She said the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 defined

violence as any act, omission or commission or conduct of any adult male person of the family, that harmed or injured or endangered the health, safety, life, limb or well-being, whether mental or physical, of the women.

She added that it also included physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal and emotional abuse, and economic abuse and harassment or coercion to meet any unlawful demand for any dowry constituted domestic violence.

Dr Madan said there were many laws for protection of women but when women

were not aware of the legal remedies available to them, it was unlikely that they would get justice for the violence perpetrated against them.

She added that if people were aware of their rights and duties, the delivery of justice in a society became much easier.

She said legal awareness and legal literacy made drastic changes in a democracy as awareness of laws helped academic professionals as well as the general public to use the legal system more effectively.

She said only two per cent of women in rural areas gained access to justice, even though several laws had been enacted in Parliament for protecting them against violence and abuse.

She said legal awareness among women was vital and efforts were needed to be made through formal and informal education to increase women's awareness of legal recourse and their rights to be free from violence.

Prominent among those who spoke on the occasion were Sakhi Kendra general secretary Neelam Chaturvedi, Anita Sharma, Anjali Porwal, Aruna Bajpai, Asha Awasthi, Seema Mishra and Poonam Gupta.

139 more test positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar reported 139 more coronavirus positive cases on Saturday evening. Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 139 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Friday evening and Saturday evening taking the tally of confirmed cases to 29,721 cases. He said that 9 cases were discharged from hospital. He said no COVID-19 death in the city was reported till Saturday evening keeping the death toll to 762. The CMO said at present 1146 active cases were undergoing treatment. Dr Mishra said 5006 samples were sent for testing in the city.

DDUGU VC discusses film production course with Gorakhpur MP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ GORAKHPUR

Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur University Vice Chancellor Prof. Rajesh Singh met Member of Parliament Ravi Kishan on Saturday and discussed in detail the proposed film production course in the university and various proposals sent by the university to the Central and state governments under the Khelo India Scheme.

Prof Singh informed Ravi Kishan that the PG diploma in film production course had been approved by the Arts Faculty Council and it would be presented for approval in the upcoming Executive Council meeting. Prof Singh said the course would be offered from the next academic session.

During the discussion on the proposals of the University sent under the Khelo India Scheme, Prof Singh sought the support of the parliamentarian in getting speedy approval of these proposals by the Central government and state governments.

Prof Singh said the university would also provide fellowship to 100 meritorious sportspersons from its own resources from the upcoming academic session.

The vice chancellor urged the Gorakhpur MP and actor Ravi Kishan to support the university in finalising the proposed curriculum in film production. He also sought the support of the MP in getting the MoUs signed between the university and other institutions functioning in the film sector such as the National School of Drama (NSD), the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), and convincing film and drama personalities for giving online or offline lectures at the university.

Prof Singh also sought the support of the MP for placement of students of film production courses and help in setting up studios in the university for running the course.

Appreciating the vision of the DDUGU vice chancellor, Ravi Kishan said that the course on film production and Khelo India proposal were a beautiful gift given by Prof Singh and the university to the people of Purvanchal and lakhs of students of the region.

While discussing the film production course, Ravi Kishan said that today when the stories in the film, web series etc. were ours, then with the help of this course offered by the DDUGU, the people behind films showing those stories would also be from Purvanchal and the course on film production would ensure this.

Prof Ajay Shukla briefed the MP about the proposals of the university under Khelo India and Mahendra Kumar Singh gave detailed information on the film production course.

Prof Nandita Singh thanked Ravi Kishan for his full support to the film production course offered by the Faculty of Arts. Prof Ajay Singh gave information about the ongoing fellowship started by the university and urged the MP to support it in future.

Dean Faculty of Arts Prof Nandita Singh, Dean Student Welfare Prof Ajay Singh, Sports Council President Prof Ajay Shukla, Proctor SC Pandey, media and public relations officer Mahendra Kumar Singh, registrar Dr Omprakash, finance officer Dharmendra Prakash Tripathi were also present in the meeting.

Former pradhan shot dead

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

A former gram pradhan was shot dead by some unidentified miscreants at Balahra turn under the Dehat Kotwali police station on Friday. As per the received reports, Rajesh Yadav (50), former pradhan of Hardi village, was going to his residence from his dhaba on Friday evening when two motorcycle-borne miscreants opened fire on him at Balahra turn and escaped from the spot. On getting the information the Dehat Kotwali police reached the spot and brought the victim to the district hospital. In view of his critical condition the doctors referred him to trauma centre in Varanasi but he succumbed to his injuries during treatment. The deceased running a dhaba on Mirzapur-Sonbhadra Road near South Campus BHU under Dehat Kotwali police station. The police have registered a case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the matter was being investigated. No arrests had been made yet, last reports received here said.

PROGRAMMES HELD: On the occasion of World Children's Day programmes were organised at each police station of the district

to make the children aware about normal policing and it's role in society. During the programme, a student was made incharge of a police station for one hour who not only discharged duty in the office but conducted patrolling too



and became aware with the usual problems in policing along with its working. Under the programme the children were accorded a warm reception at the police station and they became aware with the system through different queries and then saw the traffic, picket duty, deployment of cops at banks, different helpline numbers etc.

Youth commits suicide

CORRESPONDENT ■ HAMIRPUR

A youth ended his life by consuming some poisonous substance in Sumerpur township due to unknown reasons. According to a report received here, Mahesh Sahu (26), was the only child of his parents. His father had already died. He was married but he had no children. It is learnt that due to some unknown reasons he consumed some poisonous substance on Thursday and was rushed to Kanpur for treatment where his life could not be saved. On getting information about his sudden death the mother and wife of the victim were shell-shocked and cried inconsolably.

ARRESTED: In a sensational incident a man killed his daughter by slitting her throat with a knife in Maudaha town on Friday. He was later arrested by the police. According to the police, Ramesh Prajapati, lives with his family in Nai Basti in the township. He has been jailed in several serious cases. On Friday evening Ramesh's wife, Bittu, had gone to the field

to cut fodder. His daughter, Anita (22) was a student of BA in a local degree college and was alone at home at that time. Ramesh after taking Anita hostage at pistol point, tied her with a rope and then slit her throat with a knife. After the incident, Ramesh went to a youth, Ajay, who was his neighbour and took him home. Ramesh told him the fabricated story of the murder of his daughter by someone and tried also take him as hostage too. However on hearing the noise there the other neighbours too rushed to the spot and rescued the youth. In the meanwhile, Ramesh managed to escape from the spot. On getting information about the incident Circle Officer (CO), Saumya Pandey, Maudaha kotwali incharge Manoj Shukla, along with heavy police force and people from the nearby areas reached the spot. Police, however, arrested the accused along with a pistol and a knife. After the incident, Superintendent of Police (SP) Narendra Kumar Singh interrogated him at the headquarters for a long time but

he could not give any correct answer. The SP said that his entire family remained upset due to his eccentric behaviour.

MOTORCYCLE WHISKED AWAY: A motorcycle of a youth who had gone to ease himself near Pagra Mod close to Umaria village under the Jariya police station after leaving it in a running condition was whisked away by three persons in Sarila. The victim has registered a case against unidentified persons in this connection. According to a report received here, Jwala Singh, a resident of Galthia village under the Rath police station, was going to his relative's house in Pagra village on his friend's motorcycle. On the Pagra turn near Umaria village, he went for easing himself by leaving his motorcycle in a running condition. In the meantime three people came riding on a motorcycle from the Pagra village side and ran away along with his motorcycle. Police have registered a case of theft against three unknown persons in this connection, last reports received here said.

Man meets tragic end

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

One person was seriously injured when he was knocked down by a trailer and succumbed to his injuries during treatment. Reports said that Sudhir alias Vicky Chaudhary (33), son of Ramratan Chaudhary, a resident of Parasia village under the Hata Kotwali police station in Kushinagar district, was going to Jagdishpur on his motorcycle on Thursday night. When he reached near Belwa Khurd village in Sonbarsa Bazar he was hit by an unidentified trailer on the fourlane as a result of which he was grievously injured. The personnel deployed at Sonbarsa police outpost sent the injured to CHC Sukrauli on an ambulance from where the doctors on duty referred him to the Medical College in view of his critical condition. However, he died during treatment on Friday morning. The police took the body of the deceased into custody and sent it for the post-mortem examination. Meanwhile a motorcyclist hit a cyclist on Thursday night. The critically injured person died on the way while being taken to BRD Medical College for treatment. According to information received here, Imtiaz Ali (53), a resident of Mahua village under the Pipraich police station was going home on his bicycle on Thursday night when the motorcyclist hit him near the Gulariha police station due to which he died. On getting information the police rushed to the spot, took the body of the deceased into custody and sent it for the post-mortem examination.

ONE NABBED WITH PISTOL: The personnel attached to the Gola police station arrested a youth belonging to Ward No 3 under the Barhalganj police station from an area near the Barahor culvert along with a pistol. He was presented in the court from where he was sent to jail. Station House Officer (SHO) Santosh Kumar Singh said that on being tipped off by an informer Vijay Shankar Sonkar, son of Premchand Sonkar, a resident of ward number 3 in Badhalganj town, was arrested near Barahor culvert. A countrymade pistol of 12 bore and a live cartridge were recovered from his possession, the SHO added.

Theft at temple

CORRESPONDENT ■ CHANDAUJI

A gang of unidentified thieves broke open the locks of the gate of Ma Kali temple located in Dedhganwa area under the Dhina police station and took away goods worth thousands of rupees from there. According to a report received here, when the people went for a walk on Friday morning in Dedhganwa under the Dheena police station they were surprised to see the broken door of Ma Kali temple in the village. On seeing it a large number of villagers gathered there. Later, when they entered the temple, they noticed that four big bells, including thousands of rupees kept in donation box, were missing. They informed the police about it which reached the spot and started investigating it. Dhina police station incharge Atul Kumar said that strict action would be taken against those involved in the theft.

SCORCHED: Dheeraj Yadav (8) was severely scorched after he fell into utensil in which milk was being boiled milk in a house in Gauri village under the Baburi police station on Friday. He was later admitted to a private hospital in Pandeypur for treatment. Ramashish Yadav, a resident of Gauri village under Baburi police station area, was boiling milk around 9 am when his son, Dheeraj Yadav, came there and climbed on a table to get something from the cupboard nearby. However his leg staggered and he fell into the utensil in which milk was being boiled. Later the family admitted him to a hospital, last reports received here said.

ARRESTED DEMANDED: The agitated family of Pawan Kumar (20), who was critically injured in a clash between two groups in Rema village under Alinagar police station and died during treatment at Trauma Centre, placed his body at the Godhna intersection and organised a chakka jam demanding the arrest of the accused. The SDM and CO reached there and pacified the people by giving an assurance for arresting the accused within 48 hours.

Eye check-up camp organised

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Under traffic month a free eye check-up camp was organised at Police Lines on Friday. In the series of different awareness programmes

check-up of drivers of Police department was conducted in which the staff of traffic branch too availed the facility. Thereafter the doctors provided eye drops as per the requirement, advised used of



under Traffic Month, a free eye camp was organised at Police Lines under the supervision of Dr Rajendra and Dr Varun Maurya. In the camp eye

spectacles to others and some change in lens. The camp was successfully organised with the initiative of Chandra Prakash and Amarjeet Chauhan,

deployed at Police Lines, who said that the it's purpose was to check road accidents.

ROAD SAFETY WEEK

During the Road Safety Week different teams under the leadership of ARTO Ravikant Shukla checked commercial and private vehicles on Friday. They checked commercial vehicles at different places and put retro reflective tapes on 187 of them on the spot. Besides, pollution was checked in 43 vehicles, including private ones. The ARTO suggested to the vehicle owners to conduct regular checking of pollution otherwise if the vehicle was not found up to the mark a fine of ₹10,000 will be imposed. During the day-long drive the teams checked two-wheelers and four-wheelers too and appealed to people use helmets and wear seat belts for their own safety.

PARL PANEL ASSESSMENT

Exorbitant hospital charges caused more Covid deaths



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Inadequate beds in Government hospitals and absence of specific guidelines for Covid treatment resulted in private hospitals charging exorbitant fees, a Parliamentary panel on Saturday said as it pulled up the Government and asserted that a sustainable pricing model could have averted many deaths.

The first report by any parliamentary committee on the government's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic was submitted by Chairperson of the parliamentary standing committee on health Ram Gopal Yadav to Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu.

Underlining that healthcare spending in the country with a population of 1.3 billion is "abysmally low", the panel said the fragility of Indian health ecosystem posed a big hurdle in generating an effective response against the pandemic.

"The committee, therefore, strongly recommends the Government to increase its investments in the public healthcare system and make consistent efforts to achieve the National Health Policy targets of expenditure up to 2.5 per cent of GDP within two years as the set time frame of year 2025 is far away and the public health cannot be jeopardised till that time schedule," the report stated.

The National Health Policy 2017 has set a target of government expenditure on healthcare up to 2.5 per cent of GDP by 2025 from just 1.15 per cent in 2017.

Stating that the public had to undergo trauma and distress due to absence of a dedicated healthcare system, the committee observed that the number of Government hospital beds in the country were not adequate to handle the increasing number of COVID and non-COVID patients. "... Cost of health service

delivery increased due to absence of specific guidelines for COVID treatment in private hospitals as a result of which patients were charged exorbitant fees," the committee noted in the report.

Stressing on the need for better partnership between the government and private hospitals in wake of the pandemic and shortage of state-run healthcare facilities, the report said, "The Committee is of the view that arriving at a sustainable pricing model to treat COVID patients could have averted many deaths."

The committee believes healthcare should never be limited to only those who can afford to pay but should move towards the noble vision of universal health coverage. For this to happen, the Government needs to be considerate and support the private health care sector, the report said.

The committee was all praise for healthcare workers and doctors for being on the frontline in handling the deadly virus and said they should have defined working hours, predictably functioning reliever rosters and scheduled off-duty days.

The doctors, who have laid down their lives in fight against the pandemic, must be acknowledged as martyrs and their families be adequately compensated, it suggested in the report.

ED raids seven locations in Srinagar, Ananathnag in J&K Bank money laundering case



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday conducted searches at seven places in Jammu and Kashmir under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act in a case relating to suspicious transactions in J&K Bank.

Among these seven locations, six are in Srinagar and one in Ananathnag district.

The ED initiated investigation under PMLA after CID, Srinagar registered an FIR against officials of J & K Bank, unidentified public servants and private persons and others for suspicious transactions in various bank accounts.

It has been alleged in the FIR that the bank accounts were used for routing money of public servants as well as some private parties. Further, bank officials, in connivance with these public servants, deliberately omitted to raise the alerts as required under Anti-Money

Laundering (AML) norms, officials said.

Investigations conducted under PMLA so far have revealed that the transactions in many of these bank accounts maintained with J & K Bank were not genuine and these accounts were utilized for the purpose of laundering, the ED said in a statement.

On the basis of specific information, searches at seven places belonging to accused Mohammad Ibrahim Dar, Murtaza Enterprises, Azad Agro Traders, M & M Cottage Industries and Mohd. Sultan Teli were conducted which resulted in recovery of evidence of money laundering as the bank accounts have been found to be used for routing suspicious transactions, the agency said.

The individuals and entities covered under searches are involved in hospitality and agro based Industries, civil construction and real estate, it said.

India's Covid tally breaches 90.5L mark with 46,232 new infections

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's coronavirus tally crossed the 90.5 lakh-mark on Saturday with 46,232 new infections reported in the last 24 hours, even as the total number of tests conducted across the States has crossed the 13-crore mark with the last one crore done in just 10 days. The total cases in the country now stand at 90,50,597 including 4,39,747 active cases and 84,78,124 recoveries. With 564 new deaths, the count mounted to 1,32,726.

The number of active cases remained below five lakh for the eleventh consecutive day. The total recoveries have surged to 84,78,124 pushing the national recovery rate to 93.67 per cent, while the COVID-19 case fatality rate stands at 1.47 per cent.

According to ICMR, the total number of tests conducted in India for the detection of COVID-19 infection has crossed the 13-crore mark with last one crore done in just 10

days, while the cumulative positivity rate remained low and continues a downward trajectory, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday.

On Friday 10,66,022 were tested.

The cumulative national COVID-19 positivity rate has declined and stood at 6.93 per cent as on date while the daily positivity rate on Friday was just 4.34 per cent.

Higher volumes of testing eventually lead to low positivity rate, the ministry said.

"An average of more than 10 lakh tests conducted daily has ensured that the cumulative positivity rate is sustained at low levels and is presently following a downward trajectory," the ministry underlined.

Twenty-four states and Union Territories have conducted more tests per million population than India as a whole. Twelve states have lower tests per million population than the national average and they have been advised to substantially ramp up the levels of testing, the ministry under-

scored.

"In view of the increase in coronavirus cases of some of the north Indian states, the Centre has advised all states and Union Territories to ramp up testing," the ministry said.

Around 78.19 per cent of the new recovered cases was contributed by 10 states and UTs.

Delhi saw 8,775 people recovering from COVID, while Maharashtra and Kerala reported 6,945 and 6,398 new recoveries, respectively. Besides, ten states and UTs have contributed 77.69 per cent of the new cases of coronavirus infections. Delhi reported 6,608 cases in a day. Kerala recorded 6,028 new cases while Maharashtra reported 5,640 cases on Friday.

Of the 564 new fatalities, 82.62 per cent have been reported from 10 states and UTs. With 155 deaths, Maharashtra reported 27.48 per cent of the new fatalities, Delhi accounted for 20.92 per cent of the daily toll with 118 deaths.

Country to increase natural gas use by 4-fold in decade: Modi

PNS/PTI ■ NEW DELHI/GANDHINAGAR

Maintaining that India was moving forward with the goal of reducing its carbon footprint by 30 to 35 per cent, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said that efforts are on to increase the use of natural gas by four times in this decade and to double the oil refining capacity in the next five years.

He said this while addressing the eighth convocation of Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University (PDPU) via video conference.

"Today, the country is moving forward with the goal of reducing its carbon footprint by 30 to 35 per cent. When I told this to the world, it expressed surprise and wondered if India could achieve this," he said.

"Our effort is to increase the share of natural gas in our energy needs by four times in this decade. Work is also on to nearly double the oil refining capacity in the coming five years," he added.

He also expressed confidence that the country will achieve its renewable energy generation target "before time".

"Today, per unit cost (of solar power) has come down to less than ₹2 from ₹12-13 earlier. Today, solar power has become the country's priority. We have made a commitment to generate 175 gigawatt renewable energy and I am confident that we will achieve this before 2022," he said.

"Also, our renewable energy target of 450 gigawatt by 2030, a big aim, will be achieved before time... I am confident of that," he said.

Modi said that the oil and gas sector will see an investment of crores of rupees in this decade, which will create opportunities for the graduating students of the university in the fields of research, manufacturing and others.



He also said that work is underway to strengthen the start-ups ecosystem related to the energy security sector, and a special fund has been allocated for the purpose.

"If you have any idea, product or any concept which you want to incubate, then this fund will be a good opportunity for you, and a gift from the government," he said.

The PM said that despite the hardships caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the graduating students should remember that their strength and capacities are much bigger than the challenges, and asked them not to lose confidence.

He asked the students to recall the period of the country's Independence movement and how people sacrificed their lives for it. He asked them to similarly become a soldier for "Atmanirbhar Bharat".

"There is a lot to do for the country, but your commitment, your aim should not be fragmented. You see that only they become successful in life who do something with a sense of responsibility... Failures are those who live with a sense of burden. The youth of the 21st century should go ahead with

a clean slate. The concept that "nothing will change" will have to be cleaned..." he said.

The PM asked the students to take sustained efforts as it will bring about positive results.

He said the "Clean India" programme was an example of this, and said small efforts of crores of people turned it into a movement.

During his address, he also recalled how his decision to segregate domestic and agriculture feeders made it possible for the households to get 24-hour electricity in Gujarat.

Modi inaugurated five state-of-the-art facilities to mark the eighth convocation of the PDPU.

The facilities he unveiled at the university are a 45 -MW production of monocrystalline solar photovoltaic panel, a tech business incubator, a sports complex, and a Translational Research Centre at the PDPU, as well as an Indo-EU bilateral project under Horizon 2020 "India-h2o" for industrial waste and desalination.

Modi also suggested the state government to change the name of the Petroleum University to Energy University.

Malabar maritime drill concludes on a high, friendly note

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Malabar maritime exercise hosted by the Indian Navy in two phases concluded on Friday in the Arabian Sea. The Quad countries including India, the US, Australia and Japan took part in the prestigious drill. Australia participated for the first time after India invited it for the event despite Chinese protests.

Giving details of the exercise, navy officials said here on Saturday the 24th edition of the annual Malabar was conducted in two phases. 20. Phase 1 of the exercise involving participation by Indian Navy (IN), United States Navy (USN), Japan Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) and Royal Australian Navy (RAN), was conducted off Visakhapatnam in Bay of Bengal from 3-6 November. The second phase was conducted in the Arabian Sea from 17-20 November.

The first phase witnessed participation of Indian Navy units with United States Ship (USS) John S McCain, Her Majesty's Australian Ship (HMAS) Ballarat with integral MH-60 helicopter, and Japan Maritime Self Defence Ship



(JMSDF) Onami, with integral SH-60 helicopter. Indian Navy's participation in this phase was led by Rear Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet and included destroyer Ranvijay, indigenous frigate Shivalik, Offshore Patrol Vessel Sukanya, Fleet Support Ship Shakti, submarine Sindhuraj, P8I and Dornier maritime reconnaissance aircraft and Advanced Jet Trainer Hawk.

During Phase 2 of the Exercise, the four navies par-

ticipated in joint operations centered on the Vikramaditya Carrier Battle Group of the Indian Navy and Nimitz Carrier Strike Group of the US Navy. The two aircraft carriers, along with other ships, submarine and aircraft of the participating navies, engaged in high intensity naval operations including cross-deck flying operations and advanced air defence exercises by MIG 29K fighters of Vikramaditya and F/A-18 fighters and E2C Hawkeye from Nimitz.

The US Navy's Strike

Carrier Nimitz was accompanied by cruiser Princeton and destroyer Sterett in addition to P8A maritime reconnaissance aircraft.

The Royal Australian Navy and JMSDF were represented by frigate Ballarat and destroyer Mursame respectively, along with their integral helicopters.

Indian Navy's participation in Phase 2 was led by Rear Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet and included aircraft carrier

Vikramaditya, indigenous destroyers Kolkata and Chennai, stealth frigate Talwar, Fleet Support Ship Deepak and the integral helicopters of these warships, indigenously built submarine Khandari and P8I and IL-38 maritime reconnaissance aircraft.

In addition to 'Dual Carrier' operations, advanced surface and anti-submarine warfare exercises, seamanship evolutions and weapon firings were also undertaken during both phases of the exercise demonstrating the synergy, coordination and inter-operability between the four friendly navies.

The Malabar series of exercises, which began as an annual bilateral naval exercise between India and the US in 1992, has seen increasing scope and complexity over the years.

The 24th edition of MALABAR, conducted in a 'non-contact at sea only' format in the backdrop of COVID-19 pandemic, was reflective of the commitment of the participating countries to support a free, open, inclusive Indo-Pacific as well as a rules-based international order.

Depression over Southwest Bay of Bengal during next 48 hrs: IMD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted depression over Southwest Bay of Bengal during the next 48 hours. A low pressure area, formed over equatorial Indian ocean and adjoining central parts of south Bay of Bengal on Saturday, may hit Tamil Nadu-Puducherry coast as a cyclone of lower intensity on November 25.

Predicting the possibility of cyclone, the IMD on Saturday said the depression is likely to intensify further during the subsequent 48 hours. This would expectedly revive the North-East monsoon yet again over the Tamil Nadu coast from Monday itself.

Under the influence of the 'low pressure' area, formed on Saturday, the rainfall activity is likely to increase over extreme south peninsular India from November 23 onwards with fairly widespread to widespread rainfall/thunderstorm activity over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Karaikal and Kerala & Mahe during November 24-26, and over south coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema during November 25-27.

PM Modi to virtually inaugurate multi-storey flats for MPs on Nov 23



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The wait of a number of first-time Lok Sabha MPs for an official accommodation in Delhi will end soon. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate multi-storeyed flats- three towers known as Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati, which have come in place of old bungalows at Dr BD Marg in the national capital, for members of Parliament on November 23 via video-conferencing. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will also be present during the inauguration.

A PMO statement on Saturday said that three towers having 76 flats were constructed on land housing eight old bungalows, which were more than 80 years old. The construction of these flats has been completed with savings of about 14 per cent from the sanctioned cost and without time overrun despite the impact of Covid-19, it added.

The construction of these flats has been completed with savings of about 14 per cent from the sanctioned cost

The new flats have four bedrooms, offices for the MP and his or her secretary and parking spaces and are centrally air-conditioned. In addition, the flats have elevators that connect the basement parking, the ground floor office and living spaces and the first floor bedrooms

The PMO statement said several green building initiatives have been incorporated in the construction, including bricks made from fly ash and construction and demolition waste, double glazed windows for thermal insulation and energy efficiency, energy efficient LED light fittings, occupancy based sensors for light control, air conditioners with VRF system for low power consumption, low flow fixtures for conservation of water, rainwater harvesting system and rooftop solar plant.

President to launch all-India Speakers' conference in Kevadia on November 25

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind will inaugurate the two day long all India Speakers' conference in Kevadia in Gujarat on November 25 and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the valedictory function on November 26.

Addressing the media on Saturday, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that the theme of the two-day meeting will be 'harmonious coordination between legislature, executive and judiciary. Vice President Venkaiah Naidu will also address the presiding officers.

This is the 80th meeting of presiding officers. Birla said that the All India Presiding Officers' Conference (AIPO) was launched in the year 1921 and since then, this Conference has been ceaselessly striving to strengthen the democratic way of life and promoting a sense of unity and oneness in the Indian Legislatures. This Conference provides a platform to share new ideas, views, and experiences with all the Presiding Officers in India. He said that the collective wisdom of our venerable legislators has helped the Legislatures to keep pace with the changing times. Many of the significant

Addressing the media on Saturday, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that the theme of the two-day meeting will be 'harmonious coordination between legislature, executive and judiciary

innovations in parliamentary democracy trace their roots to the deliberations that took place during the Sessions of these Conferences.

Birla said that During this Conference, the Presiding Officers of the Legislatures shall discuss the need for better cooperation and coordination between the three pillars of democracy. "This is in line with our Constitutional obligations that spell out the jurisdictions of the Legislature, Executive and Judiciary and the balance amongst them. It is our collective efforts to maintain the constitutional sanctity, which is very important for mutual coexistence between the three organs of governance and the sustenance of democracy in the nation," he said.

SC judge inaugurates 'North East Delhi Riots Claims Commission'



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Supreme Court Judge Justice Surya Kant on Saturday inaugurated the North East Delhi Riots Claims Commission (NEDRCC) for providing compensation to victims of the communal violence that took place in February.

Justice Kant inaugurated the commission online and said in

a statement that justice to victims of the riot was the need of the hour.

"Justice to the riot victim is the need of the hour. Riot victims must be compensated with promptitude. To achieve this objective, I wish this commission (NEDRCC) all the very best," Justice Kant said in the statement.

Communal clashes had broken out in northeast Delhi on February 24 after violence between citizenship law supporters and protesters spiralled out of control leaving at least 53 people dead and around 200 injured.

There are about 750 cases registered in north east Delhi and around 1,200 persons have been arrested in matters related to the riot.

Court asks if there is chance of settlement between Akbar, Ramani in defamation case

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Saturday asked former Union Minister M J Akbar and journalist Priya Ramani whether there was a chance of settlement between them in a criminal defamation complaint filed by him against her. Akbar had filed the complaint against Ramani for allegedly defaming him by accusing him of sexual misconduct around 20 years ago when he was a journalist.

Ramani had said the allegations against Akbar, made in the wake of #MeToo movement in 2018, were her truth and were made in public good. Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) Ravindra Kumar Pandey posed the query on Saturday as he started hearing afresh the final arguments in the case since the previous judge hearing the matter was transferred to another court on Wednesday.

Country has rallied behind PM in fight against Covid: Shah

Chennai: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said the country has rallied behind Prime Minister Narendra Modi to fight against the Covid-19 pandemic and it was doing better than even developed countries over the handling of the contagion.

Patting the Tamil Nadu government over its effective handling of the situation under the Palaniswami-Panneerselvam leadership, he said it was duly implementing the various instructions of the Centre on the matter.

“The world and country are fighting against COVID-19.

Not just the Government and its machinery, but the entire 130 crore people were fighting against the pandemic, he said

The country has successfully faced it under PM Modi. On a comparative note, India has fared better than many developed countries,” he said.

Not just the government and its machinery, but the entire 130 crore people were fighting against the pandemic, he said at a state government function here. **PTI**

7 of family charred to death in Gujarat road accident

Gandhinagar: Seven members of a family were charred to death in a road accident near Surendranagar at around 3 a.m. on Saturday when a dumper truck hit their Echo vehicle. The accident caused a fire in the vehicle, in which all the seven persons trapped inside perished, according to police.

The Surendranagar police have nabbed the person who was driving the dumper and have sent him for corona test-ing.

The seven victims belonging to the Nai (Barber) community included three women (one girl child) were returning from Chotila pilgrimage to their homes in Patan district. One unit of the extended family was from Nanapura village in Radhanpur Tehsil of Patan while the other was from Korada village in Santalpur Tehsil of Patan.

“The accident is believed to have been caused between 3 to 5 in the morning. We received the information around 5.30 a.m. There were seven persons, including the driver, inside the car which was hit by the dumper.

All the bodies are badly burnt. We have sent the bodies for postmortem to the Rajkot hospital. We have caught the driver of the vehicle which caused the accident, who had fled the scene and sent him for corona testing.

The Bajana police is investigating the matter,” said BN Jadeja, Inspector, Bajana police station, who is investigating the case told IANS. **IANS**

78 cows die of suspected food poisoning in Churu's Govt-aided shelter: Official

PTI ■ JAIPUR

A total of 78 cows belonging to a privately-run government-aided cattle shelter in Churu district have died of suspected food poisoning in the last 24 hours, an official said on Saturday.

While 78 cows have died since Friday night, a few others are sick, said an official of the state's Animal Husbandry Department.

Prima facie, the animals died of food poisoning, said Animal Husbandry Department's joint director, Dr Jagdish.

He said the teams of the department are present in the cow-shelter located in Bilyubas Rampura village in Sardarshahar.

The fodder samples have been collected for testing, he added.

The death of such a large number of cows occurred on a day before ‘Gopasthmi’, a festival dedicated to cows and Lord Krishna.

Army jawan martyred, two women injured in Pak firing

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A soldier of the Indian Army made a supreme sacrifice while two women received injuries during separate incidents of ceasefire violations along the line of control in the twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch on Saturday.

To prevent any misadventure by the Border Action Team (BAT) of the Pakistan army in the region, the foot soldiers of the Indian army have been maintaining tight vigil and conducting regular patrolling in the forward areas.

According to the ground reports, there was no let up from the Pakistan side to provoke strong Indian response. Several sectors remained active across the region since early morning. Local villagers alleged Pakistan army was targeting civilian areas with heavy mortar shelling.

Defence Spokesman in Jammu, Lt-Col Devender Anand said, “Havaldar Patil Sangram Shivaji received critical injuries during unprovoked ceasefire violation by the Pakistan Army along the line of control in

Nowshera sector of Rajouri on Saturday”. He said the Indian Army retaliated strongly. Havaldar Patil,hailling from Kolhapur district in Maharashtra, later succumbed to his fatal injuries.

In the evening, the Pakistan Army once again provoked the Indian army by resorting to fresh mortar shelling in the same sector. Indian army retaliated befittingly, Defence spokesman said.

After a small gap of 15 minutes, ceasefire violation was also reported from the Degwar and Malti sectors of Poonch. Defence Spokesman said, Pakistan army resorted to intense shelling leading to civilian injuries.

According to local villagers, two women identified as Sakina Bi (40 years) W/o Nazm Din and Mansha Bi (18 years) D/O Shams Din of village Bagyal Dara in Poonch received injuries during ongoing mortar shelling. The injured were evacuated to the district hospital in Poonch amid constant shelling. The large population living in the forward villages remained closeted inside their homes due to intense shelling.

BOLLYWOOD-DRUG MAFIA CASE: Comedian Bharti Singh arrested, husband under probe

86.5 grams of cannabis seized during raids

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Saturday evening arrested television comedian Bharti Singh for alleged possession and consumption of a banned drug, hours after it seized 86.5 grams of Cannabis during the raids on one of two homes in north-west Mumbai.

Continuing their investigations into the Bollywood-drug mafia nexus case, the NCB sleuths raided the homes of Bharti Singh and her husband Harsh Limbachiyaa at Andheri's Lokhandwala Complex and Versova in north-west Mumbai to look out for banned drugs.

From one of their homes, the NCB officials seized 86.5 grams of cannabis. After the

raids, the couple was taken to the agency's office where Bharati was placed under arrest as per the provisions of NDPS Act 1986 late in the evening, while the questioning of her husband Harsh was continuing till late in the evening.

During the questioning, Bharti and her husband reportedly confessed to having consumed cannabis (ganja). The drug consumption is in addition to the charge of possessing banned drugs that Bharati faced.

The raid on the homes of Bharti and her husband Harsh and the subsequent arrest of the television comedian came after their names figured in the custodial interrogation of a 21-year-old drug trafficker whom the NCB officials had arrested earlier the day on Saturday. During the raid conducted at a location in Khar Danda area, the investigators seized various drugs including 15 blots of LSD

(commercial quantity), ganja (40 gm) and Nitrazepam (psychotropic medicines).

In a statement released to the media, the NCB said that in a follow-up on the inputs provided by the arrested drug trafficker, the agency “raided two another places on 21.11.2020 including production office and House of actor-comedian Ms Bharti Singh and from both the places 86.5 grams of Ganja was recovered”

“Both Ms Bharti Singh and Her Husband Harsh Limbachiyaa accepted the consumption of Ganja. Ms Bharti Singh was placed under arrest as per the provisions of NDPS Act 1986 and examination of Shri Harsh Limbachiyaa is underway,” the NCB said in its statement.

The NCB said that it had arrested two more persons in connection with seizure of MD, a popular club drug that's sold

in pills (ecstasy) or as a powder (MDMA)..

The arrest of Bharti comes on the heels raids carried out at the residence of Bollywood actor Arjun Rampal on November 9, his and his live-in friend Gabriella Demetriades' questioning and the subsequent arrest of his Australian friend Australian friend Paul Bartel was on Friday arrested by the NCB in the much-discussed Bollywood-drug mafia nexus case.

Earlier on November 8, the NCB officials had carried out searches at film producer Firoz A. Nadiadwala's residence along Gulmohar Cross Road at Juhu Vile Parle Development (JVPD) Scheme in north-west Mumbai. During the searches, the NCB sleuths seized a total of 717.1 gm of Ganja, 74.1 gm charas and 95.1 gm MD (Commercial Quantity) along with Rs 3,58,610. They also seized 10 gm

of Ganja from another accused Wahid Abdul kadir Sheikh @ Sultan. After the seizure of drugs and cash, the NCB officials arrested five persons, including Firoz A. Nadiadwala's wife Shabana Saeed.

On November 9, the NCB officials carried out searches at Rampal's residence for seven hours and seized 11 electronic gadgets including a laptop, mobile phones and tablets from there. They also seized some documents from Rampal's residence.

The raid on Rampal's residence and his subsequent questioning should be seen in the context of the arrest of a South African national Agisilaos Demetriades – the brother of Rampal's live-in partner Gabriella Demetriades -- made by the NCB from Lonavala near Pune last month. Agisilaos was in touch with Omega Godwin, a Nigerian national

Bollywood, which is being investigated after the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

Forty-seven-year-old Rampal was grilled for eight hours by the NCB on November 13 in connection with the nature of his links with Agisilaos and Bartel, the seizures made during the raid conducted at his Bandra residence for seven hours on Monday, the role of his live-in partner Gabriella, a South African model in the nexus with the drug peddlers.

On his part, Rampal had said that he had nothing to do with drugs and he was co-operating with the NCB. Rampal's grilling came after two rounds of questioning that the NCB subjected his live-partner Gabriella to, on November 11 and 12.

The NCB's investigations have revealed that Agisilaos was in touch with Omega Godwin, a Nigerian national

who had earlier been arrested for supply of cocaine in Mumbai. During his custodial interrogation, Godwin had named Agisilaos. Earlier, ex-Dharma Productions employee Kshitij Prasad had earlier been arrested by the NCB in connection with the Sushant Singh Rajput's death-related drug case and expanded Bollywood-drug nexus case.

Sushant, it may be recalled, was found hanging from a ceiling fan in his closed room of his duplex flat at Mont Blanc building at Bandra's Carter Road in north-west Mumbai on June 14.

Incidentally, the raid on Rampal's residence came a day after the NCB officials carried out searches at film producer Firoz A. Nadiadwala's residence along Gulmohar Cross Road at Juhu Vile Parle Development (JVPD) Scheme in north-west Mumbai. During the searches,

the NCB sleuths seized a total of 717.1 gm of Ganja, 74.1 gm charas and 95.1 gm MD (Commercial Quantity) along with Rs 3,58,610. They also seized 10 gm of Ganja from another accused Wahid Abdul kadir Sheikh @ Sultan.

After the seizure of drugs and cash, the NCB officials arrested five persons, including Firoz A. Nadiadwala's wife Shabana Saeed.

The NCB has registered two drugs cases in the wake of the investigations launched by the CBI into the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput in June this year upon the directive issued by the Supreme Court.

Nearly twenty persons –including Sushant's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty and her brother Showik --- were arrested in connection with a case registered by the NCB on August 28, two days after it registered a case suo moto.

Aligarh: Volunteers' identity to be kept secret in vaccine trials

PNS ■ ALIGARH

As volunteers line up to get the first doses in the Phase-III trials of the vaccine to cure Covid-19 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College (JNMC), Aligarh Muslim University; their identities will remain confidential in view of the social stigma related to the pandemic.

The step has been taken in line with various Supreme

Court and High Court judgements on identity protection of volunteers for medical/scientific study, privacy laws, data protection laws for which provisions are made under the India Penal Code.

JNMC is conducting the Phase-III, Covid19 Covaxin trials aimed at evaluating the safety and efficacy of the Covid-19 vaccine study led in collaboration with ICMR and Bharat Biotech.

K'taka CM warns against forceful enforcement of bandh against Maratha Corporation

Bengaluru: As pro-Kannada groups decided to go ahead with Karnataka bandh on December 5 against the establishment of the Maratha Development Corporation (MDC), Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Saturday asked them to withdraw it, as he warned against any forceful enforcement.

Asserting that he was for Kannada and Kannadigas, Yediyurappa said, “I'm ready for all that is required to be done for Kannadigas, but it is not right to call for bandh for

some other reason, people will not appreciate it.”

Speaking to reporters here, he said he will not allow forceful enforcement of bandh. “I'm observing the burning of effigies and bad behaviours. We will have to take strict action. Let them protest peacefully, but the government will not tolerate attempts to give it a different turn,” he added.

Pro Kannada organisations at a meeting on Friday had decided to go ahead with the bandh on December 5 as planned earlier, and have set a

November 30 deadline for the government to withdraw its decision to establish Maratha Development Corporation.

Terming the bandh call 'unnecessary', Yediyurappa had earlier told warned pro-Kannada groups against forcing a bandh on the people of the state. He had even clarified that the decision to set up a Maratha Development Corporation had nothing to do with the Marathi language, and it is for the Maratha community residing in the state.

Noting that his govern-

ment was making all honest efforts to provide justice to all the sections of the society, Yediyurappa on Saturday said, there is no room for discrimination. “Let them (Kannada groups/activists) understand this and withdraw their bandh. I request the activists for cooperation with folded hands,” he added. Kannada activists have been opposing the creation of Maratha Development Corporation, ever since the government mooted the move earlier this month.

It has now been approved

by the cabinet also.The government had earlier announced the setting up of the Maratha Development Authority, but subsequently changed it to corporation, as authority has to be constituted by a law, by passing an act in the legislature.

The creation of the corporation is seen as a move by the BJP to woo the Maratha community that has considerable presence in the Basavakalyan assembly constituency also Belagavi Lok Sabha constituency, which is due for a bypoll. **PTI**

Tripura Advocate General succumbs to coronavirus

IANS ■ AGARTALA/KOLKATA

Veteran lawyer and Tripura's Advocate General Arun Kanti Bhowmik died of Covid-19 early on Saturday in Kolkata, official and family sources said.

Family sources said that Bhowmik, 80, was ailing for quite some time due to his heart disease and was shifted to a private hospital in Kolkata on Friday.

Diya Vashist of Aligarh shines in 2020 German shooting championship

Aligarh: 14-year-old Diya Vashist, the star shooter of the district got 8th rank in the prestigious Walther Meton Cup-2020 shooting championship of Germany and has been selected for the finals. She has become the first girl shooter of the state to play in this championship of Germany at such a young age in a 10-meter air pistol event. She also won bronze in the open shooting championship organized by the Shooting Sports Federation in Indonesia. Due to the Corona, these competitions were conducted online in which more than 365 countries took part

Diya said that at the age of eight, she won the first bronze medal in the 16th Uttar Pradesh Inter School Shooting Championship in 2014 in Agra, and in 2017, she was qualified for the National in All India Inter School Championship and won a gold medal in Varanasi. Since then, she dreamed of playing in Germany's championship. **PNS**

Hathras case: Mother not ready for Narco test of Chhotu

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ HATHRAS

The mother is not ready with the decision of CBI to conduct a narco test of Vikrat alias Chhotu who first arrives at the scene. She has mentioned her son as a minor. He was a target of CBI since the beginning of the investigation. The field belongs to this family. Chhotu has been questioned by the CBI several times. The High Court has asked CBI to submit a status report on 25 November. Due to this, CBI is investigating fast.

The girl was attacked on 14 September at Chhotu's farm. Here, the girl went to cut fodder with her mother and brother. She died on 29 September. CBI started investigat-

ing this on 11 October amidst uproar in the country. Chhotu's name came up only two days later. He was the first to reach the scene. Chhotu gave this same information in several inquiries. Chhotu is an important link in this case. According to Chhotu, the CBI had asked him to conduct a narco test which created panic in the family. Chhotu's mother Bitta Devi told the media that she would not give consent to a narco test for her son because he is a minor (16 years old). Narco should be made for those who were present at the scene and those who are associated with the incident. The elder brother has said that CBI has questioned Chhotu several times.

AMU tailor shot dead in Aligarh

Aligarh: The Tailor of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), who was returning home was shot dead in Nagla Mallah of Kwarasi area. One of the fleeing attackers was captured by the mob and handed over to the police after beating.

The police are investigating the murder as an illicit affair. 20-year-old Salman, son of Sarfuddin Abbasi was a contractual tailor in AMU. Salman was returning home from the mosque in the locality in the evening after offering namaz. On the death of Wahid's son from the locality, there was a crowd in the street. Salman was surrounded by three attackers and fired rapidly. **PNS**

Goa Police preparing for tourist surge in Dec amid Covid fears: DGP

Panaji: Goa Police is gearing up for a surge in tourists ahead of the peak tourism season in December. Director General of Police Mukesh Kumar Meena said on Saturday, adding that preparedness for crowds especially in wake of the pandemic was a challenge for the security force.

Meena also said that nearly 900 police personnel had tested positive for Covid-19, ever since the outbreak earlier this year.“I could see on beaches, the crowd has increased and hotels too are seeing more and more bookings. It will be a

challenging task,” Meena said, when asked about the police preparedness for tourists during the peak tourism season.

“We have already discussed with officers, they are forming a strategy. Because of Covid it is a challenging task to deploy force round the clock,” Meena said. The top cop said that around 900 police personnel, including himself, had tested positive for coronavirus.

“People are fed up with being in one place now. They want to come and relax. They

think Goa is the best place,” Meena said, adding that all activities, including those related to tourism should be allowed by following existing SOPs, wearing masks and maintaining social distancing norms.

Tourism activity in Goa, peaks during the Christmas week leading up to New Year, during which hundreds of thousands of tourists visit the state annually. This year though, tourism activity is slowly picking up, after a several month-long lull in wake of the pandemic. **IANS**



Crowd at Chandpole Bazar amid rise in the Covid-19 cases in Jaipur on Saturday

PTI

Give Maha housing quota to minorities: Activist to Govt

Mumbai: A prominent rights activist has demanded that the Maharashtra Government provide 15 per cent reservations for minorities in the public and private space in the upcoming new housing policy to help maintain the country's 'secular character', here on Saturday.

In a letter to Housing Minister Jitendra Awhad and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Harmony Foundation President Abraham Mathai said that he had made a similar suggestion in 2003 when he was the Chairman of the Minorities Commission.

However, no government initiated any policy that could encourage multi-cultural habitations even as “the rapacious cancer of communalism and radicalism” ruthlessly devastates the fabric of nationhood. Despite attempts, Minister Awhad and other government officials were not available for comments on the issue.

Mathai said that unlike the past when communities lived in harmony as good neighbours, in recent years, the communal forces have led to minorities seeking refuge in ghettos, which in turn led to further divisiveness and rise of radical hate-mongers on

both sides.

In order to curb such 'ghettoization', it is imperative to accommodate the minorities in all housing colonies which have now become vote-banks with political parties soliciting support on communal lines, said Mathai.

He pointed out how such polarisation has resulted in many prominent personalities including Bollywood actors like Emran Hashmi denied a house in an elitist complex in Bandra.

“This only proves that there has been a divide for decades as the majority community is suspicious of the minorities especially the Muslims. When we as a society keep them away it is only natural that they would find security in their ghettos where some have the propensity to embrace extremism and eventually become radicalised,” Mathai pointed out.

He urged the Maha Vikas Aghadi partners - Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress - to give top priority to this and give 15 per cent reservations to all religious minorities in the private housing sector as well as MHADA, CIDCO and other government bodies building homes. **IANS**

15 security personnel among 66 new Covid patients in Mizoram

PTI ■ AIZAWL

Mizoram's COVID-19 tally rose to 3,607 on Saturday as 66 more people, including 15 security personnel, tested positive for the infection, an official statement said.

Aizawl district reported the highest number of new cases at 46, followed by Lawngtlai (eight) and Serchhip (six), the statement issued by the state Information and Public Relations Department said.

Forty-two infections were detected during RT-PCR tests, seven during TrueNat and 17 during rapid antigen tests, it said.

Eleven policemen, three Assam Rifles personnel and one Army jawan are among the new patients, the statement said.

Twenty-five new patients have travel history, while 36 infections were detected during contact tracing and it is yet to be ascertained how five patients contracted the disease, it said.

The state now has 491 active coronavirus cases, while 3,111 people have recovered from the disease and five patients have succumbed to the infection so far, the statement said.

Natives push for diverse Biden Cabinet

Washington: Native Americans are urging President-elect Joe Biden to make history by selecting one of their own to lead the powerful agency that oversees the nation's tribes, setting up one of several looming tests of Biden's pledge to have a Cabinet representative of Americans.

OJ Semans is one of dozens of tribal officials and voting activists around the country pushing selection of Rep. Deb Haaland, a New Mexico Democrat and member of the Pueblo of Laguna, to become the first Native American secretary of interior.

Tell Semans, a member of the Rosebud Sioux, that a well-regarded white lawmaker is considered a front-runner for the job, and Semans chuckles. "Not if I trip him," Semans says.

African Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans and other people of colour played a crucial role in helping



Biden defeat President Donald Trump. In return, they say they want attention on problems affecting their communities — and want to see more people who look like them in positions of power.

"It's nice to know that a Native American is under consideration," said Haaland, who says she is concentrating on her congressional work. "Sometimes we are invisible."

In Arizona, Alejandra Gomez was one of an army of activists who strapped on face

masks and plastic face shields in 100-plus-degree heat to go door-to-door to get out the Mexican American vote. Intensive Mexican American organising there helped flip that state to Democrats for the first time in 24 years.

"We are at a point where there was no pathway to victory" for Democrats without support from voters of colour, said Gomez, co-executive director of the political group Living United for Change in Arizona. **AP**

BIDEN TURNS 78, WILL BE OLDEST US PRESIDENT

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President-elect Joe Biden turned 78 on Friday. In exactly two months, he'll take

the reins of a politically fractured nation facing the worst public health crisis in a century, high unemployment and a reckoning on racial injustice.

Michigan election staff recommend state to approve Biden victory

Detroit: Michigan's elections agency on Friday recommended that the November 3 results be certified next week by state canvassers, a decision that would bless Joe Biden's victory over President Donald Trump but likely not cool partisan strife over the vote.

The recommendation was posted online with the formal Monday meeting notice of the Board of State Canvassers.

The guidance came at the end of a stormy week in which Trump summoned Republican

state lawmakers to the White House on Friday in an extraordinary effort to try to set aside Biden's 154,000-vote victory.

On Tuesday, GOP canvassers in Michigan's largest county, Wayne, refused to certify local results but then changed their position after hours of intense public criticism over Zoom. Then after talking to Trump, they said a day later they were rescinding their previous vote but it was too late. **AP**

Twitter to hand @POTUS account to Joe Biden on Jan 20

Los Angeles: Micro-blogging site Twitter will hand control of the presidential @POTUS account to President-elect Joe Biden the moment he is sworn in on inauguration day on January 20, even if President Donald Trump has not conceded his election loss, the company has said.

The @POTUS account is the official account of the President of the United States and is separate from the @realDonaldTrump account that Trump uses to tweet.

Biden, 78, will be the 46th US President when he is sworn in.

The handover requires no sharing of information between the outgoing Trump team and the incoming Biden team, Twitter said, adding that all existing tweets on those accounts will be archived and Twitter will transfer the accounts — reset to zero tweets — to Biden that day. **PTI**

Top Tibetan political leader visits White House for first time in 6 decades

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The head of the Tibetan government in exile has visited the White House for the first time in six decades and met the newly appointed senior US official on Tibetan issues, the Central Tibetan Administration said on Saturday, a development that could enrage Beijing, which has accused the US of trying to interfere in China's internal affairs.

Dr Lobsang Sangay entered the United States White House on Friday — a historic feat. This is the first time in the last 6 decades the head of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) has been invited into the White House, the CTA said in a statement.

"It is a great honour to be the first political head of the Central Tibetan Administration to formally enter the White House," Sangay said in a tweet.

"Today's visit amounts to an acknowledgement of both the democratic system of the CTA and its political head... This unprecedented meeting perhaps will set an optimistic tone for CTA participation with US officials and be more formalised in the coming years," said the CTA, which is based in Dharamshala in India.

Sangay, the President of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), was invited to the White House to meet the newly appointed US Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, Robert Destro, on Friday, it said.

Pak court jails 2 more aides of 26/11 brains

Lahore: A Pakistani court has jailed two more aides of Mumbai attack mastermind and Jamat-ud-Dawah (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed in a terror financing case.

The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Lahore on Friday handed down six and five-and-a-half years of imprisonment to JuD leaders Muhammad Ashraf and Lucman Shah, respectively.

ATC Judge Arshad Hussain Bhutta also imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 on each of them.

On Thursday, the 70-year-old JuD chief was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment in two terror cases by ATC Lahore. Saeed's two close aides — Zafar Iqbal and Yahya Mujahid — were sentenced to

10 and a half years each, while his brother-in-law Abdul Rehman Makki was sentenced to six months of imprisonment in the same cases.

Saeed, a UN designated terrorist whom the US has placed a \$10 million bounty on, was arrested on July 17 last year in the terror financing cases. He was sentenced to 11 years in jail by an anti-terrorism court in February this year in two terror financing cases.

The JuD chief is lodged at Lahore's high-security Kot Lakhpat jail.

Saeed is wanted in India for planning the 2008 Mumbai attacks when 10 Pakistani terrorists killed 166 people, including six Americans, and injured hundreds others. **PTI**

Chief Afghan peace envoy says US troops pulling out too

Ankara: Afghanistan's chief peace envoy Abdullah Abdullah said on Saturday that the US decision to begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan has come too soon, as his country is still struggling to attain peace and security amid an ongoing conflict.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Abdullah also described as "shocking" an Australian military report that found evidence that elite Australian troops unlawfully killed 39 Afghan prisoners.

He welcomed a decision by Australian authorities to pursue the perpetrators.

Abdullah spoke in Ankara where he sought Turkey's support for negotiations between

the Afghan government and the Taliban that are taking place in Qatar to find an end to decades of war. The talks have made little progress so far.

"This is the decision of the US administration and we respect it," Abdullah said of the US decision this week to reduce troops levels in Afghanistan from more than 4,500 to 2,500.

"Our preference would have been that with the conditions improving, this should have taken place." Acting US Defense Secretary Christopher Miller announced that Washington would reduce troop levels in Iraq and Afghanistan by mid-January, in line with President Donald Trump's pledge to bring US forces home. **AP**

Thai students rally for edu and political reforms



A crowd flashes the three-finger protest gesture during a student rally in Bangkok Saturday

AP

Bangkok: Secondary school students in Thailand's capital rallied Saturday for educational and political reforms, defying government threats to crack down with legal action against the country's high-profile protest movement.

The rally was called by a group that calls itself "Bad Students," mocking their status

as rebels against traditional school rules and authorities.

Reflecting their light touch toward protest actions, they used props including people in dinosaur suits and oversize beach balls standing in for asteroids.

Just as an asteroid hitting the earth is believed to have led to the extinction of the

dinosaurs, they pointed out, the old-fashioned members of Thailand's establishment impeding change will face a collision with the country's pro-democracy movement.

Though the original goals of the Bad Students included abolishing outmoded regulations such as dress codes and reforming antiquated curricu-

lums, they now also support the demands of Thailand's broader pro-democracy movement, which seeks major political change.

Saturday's rally, held in one of Bangkok's busiest shopping areas, attracted a crowd of at least 1,000 people, many of whom were not secondary school students. **AP**

G-20 summit opens with Saudi urging united response to virus

AP ■ DUBAI

Saudi Arabia's King Salman opened on Saturday the Group of 20 summit as the coronavirus pandemic overshadows this year's gathering of heads of state, transforming it from an in-person two-day meeting of the world's most powerful leaders to a virtual gathering of speeches and declarations.

The pandemic, which has claimed more than 1.37 million lives worldwide, has offered the

G-20 an opportunity to prove how such bodies can facilitate international cooperation in crises — but has also underscored their shortcomings.

The G-20's member-countries represent around 85 per cent of the world's economic output and three-quarters of international trade.

"We have a duty to rise to the challenge together during this summit and give a strong message of hope and reassurance," King Salman said in his opening remarks.

Mortar shells hit Kabul residential areas, 8 dead

Kabul: About 23 mortar shells slammed into different parts of the Afghan capital on Saturday, killing at least eight people and wounding 31 others, an official said.

The shells were fired from two cars, Interior Ministry spokesperson Tariq Arian said. No one took immediate responsibility for the early morning attack that also targeted the posh Wazir Akbar Khan area of Kabul, which houses diplomatic missions.

The Taliban issued a quick

statement denying any responsibility for the attack. The Islamic State group affiliate also operates in the area and has claimed responsibility for recent assaults in Kabul including two devastating attacks on educational institutions that killed more than 50 people, many of them students.

As well as insurgent groups, there are several heavily armed warlords with militias living in Kabul with long-standing animosities against each other. **AP**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

57 TRAINEE OFFICERS...

Chopra said that the hostels, mess, administrative office, and the library have been sanitized. "All non-essential departments have been closed, complete sanitation for the entire campus has been undertaken," said Chopra adding that the academy, the Dehradun District Administration and Health Department of Uttarakhand are working together to address the challenge.

There are currently 428 trainee officers of the 95th Foundation Course of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), Indian Forest Service (IFS), and Indian Revenue Service (IRS) at the academy campus that started on October 13.

Later in a statement, the personnel ministry said that all officer trainees, who have tested positive, have been quarantined in a dedicated COVID care Centre. "The academy has conducted more than 162 RT-PCR tests in coordination with district authorities since Friday, the statement said. The academy is taking every measure to break the chain of COVID-19 spread in consonance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the District Administration, Dehradun, the ministry said.

"The academy has decided to conduct all activities, including training, online till the midnight of December 3, 2020. The protocols relating to social distancing, frequent hand wash and wearing of mask are being strictly fol-

lowed by the officer trainees and staff members," it said. The academy had announced special measures to deal with Covid-19 including keeping medical kits, masks, and sanitizers in each room, allocation of time slots and venues for dining, separate time slot allotment for use of the library among many other measures to tackle Covid-19 spread. Food and other necessities are being delivered to the officer trainees in their hostels by staff who are equipped adequately in protective gear, it added.

LBSNAA is a research and training institute on public policy and public administration in India. The academy's main purpose is to train civil service officers of the IAS and also for Group-A Central Services. After completion of training, the trainee officers are awarded an MA degree in Public Administration in India. The academy is a part of Jawaharlal Nehru University. **PNS**

STOP BACKING TERROR...

Two policemen were injured during the gunfight and the driver managed to escape.

The police said it was likely that the terrorists were "planning a big attack" and that they were headed towards the Kashmir Valley where local elections are due later this month.

Modi on Friday held a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval and others. "Our secu-

rity forces have once again displayed utmost bravery and professionalism. Thanks to their alertness, they have defeated a nefarious plot to target grassroots level democratic exercises in Jammu & Kashmir," Modi tweeted.

Incidentally, this is the second time in a week that a Pakistani official has been summoned. Last Saturday, India had summoned the Charge d'Affaires of the Pakistan High Commission to register a strong protest over the heavy shelling by Pakistani forces on multiple sectors along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu & Kashmir that left at least nine people dead.

COVID REINFECTION UNLIKELY FOR...

"This ongoing study involving a large cohort of healthcare workers has shown that being infected with Covid-19 does offer protection against reinfection for most people for at least six months — we found no new symptomatic infections in any of the participants who had tested positive for antibodies, while 89 of those who had tested negative did contract the virus," he said.

Prof Eyre explained that we know from a previous study that antibody levels fall over time, but this latest study shows that there is some immunity in those who have been infected.

"We will continue to follow this cohort of staff carefully to see how long protection lasts and whether the

previous infection affects the severity of infection if people do get infected again," he said.

Additionally, the opposite also proved true — healthcare workers who did not have antibodies against Covid-19 were more likely to develop the infection. The latest study is part of a major ongoing staff testing programme supported by the NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre and Public Health England and covered a 30-week period between April and November this year, with 12,180 healthcare workers employed at OUH. "This is an exciting finding, indicating that infection with the virus provides at least short-term protection from reinfection — this news comes in the same month as other encouraging news about Covid vaccines," said Dr Katie Jeffery, Director of Infection Prevention and Control for OUH. The healthcare workers were tested for antibodies to the virus that causes Covid-19 as a way of detecting who had been infected before. The hospital tested staff regularly for Covid-19, both when they became unwell with symptoms and also as part of regular testing of well staff.

The researchers then followed whether staff who had been infected before had the same number of new Covid-19 infections as those who had not been infected before. During the study, 89 of 11,052 staff without antibodies developed a new infection with symptoms. None of the

1,246 staff with antibodies developed a symptomatic infection.

Staff with antibodies were also less likely to test positive for COVID-19 without symptoms, 76 staff without antibodies tested positive compared to just 3 with antibodies. The three healthcare workers with antibodies who tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 were all well and did not develop symptoms of COVID-19 again. Susan Hopkins, Deputy Director, National Infection Service, PHE and one of the study's authors said: "This study is a fantastic example of how well-structured long-term cohort surveillance can produce hugely useful results. "Studies like this one are absolutely vital in helping us to understand how this new virus behaves and what the implications are for acquired immunity."

"Our comprehensive staff testing programme is revealing a regular stream of valuable information as we try to better understand how to tackle this disease," added OUH Chief Executive Officer Dr Bruno Holthof. Despite an estimated 51 million people infected with the virus worldwide, with high levels of transmission ongoing, reports of patients becoming reinfected after already having had COVID-19 remain rare. However, up until now there have not been any large-scale studies of how much protection from reinfection people get after Covid-19. **PTI**

Trump's eldest son Trump Jr tests positive for Covid-19

PTI ■ WASHINGTON



Donald Trump Jr., the eldest son of US President Donald Trump, has tested positive for COVID-19, his spokesperson said, latest in the First Family to have been infected by the deadly virus.

Trump Jr tested positive at the start of the week and has been "quarantining out at his cabin since the result," the spokesman said on Friday.

"He has been completely asymptomatic so far and is following all medically recommended COVID-19 guidelines," the spokesman added.

Aus will respond to war crime allegations: PM

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australia will respond "very seriously" to war crime allegations against its defence personnel, Prime Minister Scott Morrison has assured

the people of Afghanistan, a day after a long-awaited military report said the country's special forces unlawfully killed 39 people in the war-torn nation.

According to the report

released on Thursday, there is "credible information" that at least 19 serving and former Australian special forces allegedly committed up to 39 unlawful murders during the conflict in Afghanistan.



Mourners gather for the funeral prayer of Khadim Hussein Rizvi, an Islamist scholar and leader of Tehreek-e-Lababi Pakistan, in Lahore on Saturday

AP

HOME THEATRE

Predictable & boring



MISMATCHED
Netflix
***ing: Prajakta Koli, Rohit Saraf, Muskaan Jafari, Devyani Shorey, Taaruk Raina, Vihaan Samat, Rannvijay Singh, Suhasini Mulay, Vidya Malvade**
Rated: 5/10

This film is based on Sandhya Menon's book *When Dimple Met Rishi* and the series has been written by Gazal Dhaliwal and directed by Akarsh Khurana and Nipun Dharmadhikari. On the face of it, *Mismatched* is a light rom-com and at the heart of it are diverse students. This is something that the younger viewers are going to identify with. But then given the theme and the story of the movie, this one is totally for the teenagers — those between the ages of 16 to 19 — young, angry, rebelling, want to have fun, experimenting and just being themselves away from the prying eyes of their parents.

Then there is the lead pair. A girl who only has one thing in mind — to excel and have a career — unlike her mother who only wants to see her daughter married. The boy, a romantic and a

Bollywood movie fan is looking for a wife. Yes, at 18. Sounds bizarre. But it is funny to see how he goes about winning his girl.

But this is make-belief and there has to be drama and nothing comes easy in reel life or real. There are bound to be twists and turns and there are several here.

But if you are the kind of person who likes to watch shows that have a clear-cut ending, this one be avoided since it is season one and given by how things end here, season 2 is definitely on the cards. When? Time will tell. Also, those who are always looking for meaningful content, this is predictable and somewhat boring, at least it will be for the adults. The teenagers are sure to find a connection and see themselves in at least one of the several characters.

While it is interesting to see diverse characters, since the focus is on the lead all the time, the back stories of the others have not been explored even when each has one. This means that there isn't much depth to the characters, at least for now.

Overall, one can binge watch these six episodes.— Shalini Sakseena

A fun Christmas watch

THE PRINCESS SWITCH: SWITCHED AGAIN
Netflix
***ing: Vanessa Hudgens, Sam Palladio, Mark Fleischmann, Mia Lloyd, Nick Sagar, Suanne Braun, Lachlan Nieboer**
Rated: 6/10

Those who saw the original, this sequel will only be a takeoff where things left off. However, one does have to see the first one to enjoy this rather cute but preposterous love story. Preposterous because not only are there three Vanessa Hudgens but they switch again just so one from the original pair is able to spend time with her ex and they need closure while everyone around them is hell bent on getting them together

because they look sweet together.

Preposterous because one of the three Hudgens' is a villain and wants the crown for herself, steals all the jewels and disappear to a non-extradition country! Her own millions have sadly disappeared and her minions are not below stealing or kidnapping from the royalty even though she is one.

But it is a Christmas movie as well and everything has to be sweet and cute with plenty of love thrown in for good measure.

Also, one can't have a Christmas movie where the halls and the entire façade doesn't scream Christmas in bold letters. With everything warm and fuzzy around you, all you have to do is sit back with a mug of hot chocolate and enjoy this one.

— Shalini Sakseena

Sets the Christmas mood

HOLIDAY HOME MAKEOVER WITH MR CHRISTMAS
Netflix
***ing: Benjamin Bradley**
Rated: 6/10

Even though Christmas is more than a month away, people will tell you that there isn't enough time to ensure things are in place if you want to get into the spirit of this festival. *Holiday Home Makeover with Mr Christmas* with Benjamin Bradley who is known in the industry and his clients as a designer of incredibly detailed, atmospheric and beautiful interiors is a series just right for you if you want to know how things are done.

If you don't know how to do it right, then also, the show is interesting to

watch. So much so that one actually wants to go out there but all the decorations there are so make one's home welcoming and full of the festival spirit with family and friends and good food to eat.

One can always tweak it to Indian tastes and we do love a festival and love to celebrate it with all its trimmings — tree, food and OTT decorations. And even if you don't have to go all overboard, Bradley gives little gems of advice on how one can still celebrate without being ostentatious and staying away from the commercial aspect of this festival.

But it is difficult to stay grounded when he goes around doing the absolutely beautiful home transformation. All one wants is to enjoy the brilliance of the reveal.

— Shalini Sakseena

A SIMPLE MURDER
SonyLiv, 7 Episodes
***ing: Mohd Zeeshan Ayyub, Priya Anand and others**
Rated: 5/10

A lot of content is being generated on the OTT platform and in a hurry at that. Reason is simple, once the cinemas open and start getting populated the relegation of alternate

NOT SO SIMPLE AFTER ALL

entertainment avenues will become a natural process. Of course, committed OTT viewers will stay and carry on with their web series but the vertical surge of viewership will recede — equally vertically once life returns to normal.

Sensing this as no rocket science,

the producers are dishing out jiffies and also getting lapped up by home bound bored viewers. *A Simple Murder*, in that sense is not so much of a drag, but calling it run-of-the-mill small budget series would not be an exaggeration.

Greed is of course at the centre of

the story revolving around a proposed *supari* killing but on actual show is the degeneration of society at large. Be it marital relationship, adultery, sexual harassment at office, political criminal nexus, contract killing or, for that matter, even honour killing and inter-religion marriages, there is a peep into

all aspects of what urban jungles are all about.

Showcasing such wholesome negativity comes with obvious baggage and that's what *A Simple Murder* carries with a lot of unease.

The characterisation and the actors chosen for it complement each other with excellence but for a story to carry on through the seven episodes and then into a second season, there needs to be something more.

TELLY TALE

FUN FILLED DIWALI WITH ABHIGYA



While the pandemic might have posed its own challenges for all of us this year, Diwali brought with it a ray of hope. To delight its viewers, Zee TV had a special Diwali surprise in store for audiences with a three-hour special episode of *Kumkum Bhagya*, *Jashn Milan Ka*. Fans of the show had been waiting with bated breath for Pragya to return to Abhi's house. With the festival marking a new beginning for the audience's favourite on-screen *jodi*, viewers got a chance to witness Pragya receiving a *bahu*-like welcome from Dadi, followed by Abhi Pragma performing the Diwali rituals together with hope in their hearts.

The fun and entertainment quotient of the show doubled up as Abhi calls for a Diwali celebration at his house and joining him were all the popular Zee TV faces like Karan-Preeti (Dheeraj Dhoopar and Shraddha Arya), Ranbir-Prachi (Krishna Kaul and Mugdha Chapekar), Agasty-Chhoti Guddan (Savi Thakur and Kanika Mann) and Rishabh-Shrishti (Manit Joura and Anjum Fakih) along with TV stars like Krystle D'Souza, Surbhi Jyoti, Avinash Mishra, Vrushika Mehta and Deepika Singh.

During the shoot of *Jashn Milan Ka*, Sriti Jha and Shabir Ahluwalia's passionate act left everyone mesmerised. The *Kumkum Bhagya* stars swayed to romantic songs like *Ve Maahi* and *Tu Hi Yaar Mera* and we have to say that their chemistry was out of this world. But what was surprising was that our favourite Abhi and Pragya pulled off this flawless act without any prior rehearsals. Their steps, their co-ordination and their expressions were all on point as these seasoned actors danced in sync and complemented each other extremely well. Talking about their *Jashn Milan Ka* act, Shabir Ahluwalia revealed: "It was absolutely fun performing with Sriti once again. We've done several acts together, but this one was special. However, we

didn't get any time at all to rehearse. First of all, we were shooting for *Kumkum Bhagya* back-to-back and after that, we wanted to avoid contact with a lot of people as much as possible during the pandemic. Hence, we came directly to the set on the day of the shoot, we went over the steps with our choreographers and then went for the take. It all went smoothly, and it was really fun."

Sriti Jha also added: "It was a beautiful act, and we had some really amazing songs, and the choreography was simple and sweet. So, it was easy to get into the groove of things without much effort. It is always great dancing with Shabir and we had lots of fun while shooting for *Jashn Milan Ka*."

While Sriti and Shabir have reunited, Alia (Reyhnaa Pandit) is planning a new twist. What will happen next in AbhiGya's life?

INDIAN IDOLS MEET KAPIL



With *Indian Idol Season 12* on the anvil, this weekend, *The Kapil Sharma Show* will extend a warm welcome to the judges Himesh Reshammiya and Vishal Dadlani along with the charming host of the show, Aditya Narayan. Apart from all the fun and banter, there is a little surprise in store for the viewers. The viewers will be privy to some of the *Indian Idol* aspirants of this season — Mohd Danish, Shanmukha Priya, Sireesha Bhagavatula, Ashish Kulkarni and Anjali Gaikwad. These talented singers had the entire cast of *TKSS* in awe with their unique *jugalbandi*!

If this is a teaser, then we can't keep calm for the upcoming *Indian Idol S12* which is all set to premiere on November 28 and will air every Sat-Sun from 8 pm onwards.

RAJU SRIVASTAV IS A FAN OF HAPPU

Known for his incredible comic timing and excellent mass appeal, ace comedian, Raju Srivastav recently disclosed how much he loves and enjoys watching &TV's *Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai* and *Happu Ki Ultan Paltan*, both which have a strong Kanpuria flavour in dialect and narrative. Raju being a Kanpur native, is a 'High Voltage Fan' of both these shows.

On his two favourite shows, Raju Srivastav says: "I am from Kanpur as you all know, and my family and I thoroughly enjoy watching the two shows. *Dono hi shows mein ek anapan hai aur dhansu*



Kanpuria jumle hain joh sabhi ko hasate hain. We have till date never missed a single episode. I especially love Happu Singh and his family, their constant *nok-jhoks* and typical Kanpuria one-liners — *Niyocchavar Kar Do*, *Arrey Dada*, *Gurde Chheel Denge*, *Guiyaan Ke Khet Mein*, *Kantaap*, *Nimbu Nichod Denge*, *Bhaukal*, *Chiraand*, are my favourites. *Sabhi kirdaron ka chikal karne ka andaaz nirala hain*. *Mein toh Kehta Hoon, agar aap UP ya Delhi ke nivasi hain* too you are very lucky as now both these shows are now available in all the pay packs of Den cable. *Dono shows ke naye episodes dekh kar aap sabhi haste-haste lotpot ho jayegein!*"

Replying to Raju ji, Daroga Happu Singh (Yogesh Tripathi) from &TV's *Happu Ki Ultan Paltan* says: "Thank you, Raju ji, for your immense love and encouragement. We are quite humbled and feel elated to be admired by our own *kanpur ke*, *aur bharat ke itne bade aur mashqoor haasy abhineta*. *Ab iss Khushi ke saath, hum ek aur khushi bhi jod dete hain*. *Toh khoob haste rahiye aur &TV ke shows ko apne poore parivaar se saath rok maaize se dekhte rahiye*."

AECL SEASON 3 IS HERE

After the successful completion of IPL 2020, the fun is yet to continue for the cricket lovers. As the fans are eager to watch their favourite celebrities and artists, battling it out on the ground with bat and ball, Artist Event Cricket League (AECL) is soon to commence their upcoming Season 3 of the league.

Formed in 2019, AECL has been a mega success with eight and 16 teams participating in the respective seasons. Eminent and renowned personalities including Sapna Choudhary, Hussain Kuwajeriwala, Millind Gaba, Shibani Kashyap, Ashok Mastie, Tarun Dutt and DJ Sumit Sethi were present along with the founder/MD of AECL Ashish Mathur to officially announce the launch.

The matches will be played with a tennis ball with 12 overs for each side during the league stage and 15 overs for each side during the knockout stages.

‘You should be able to convince audience’

RATI PANDEY, who plays Adi Parashakti on Dangal TV's *Devi Adi Parashakti*, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about her fear of getting back to shoot, why she chose to do reality shows and her Bollywood plans

■ How tough was it to come back to shoot after lockdown opened?

As much as I was excited to be back on set but there was also a sense of fear. Actors don't have



the luxury to always wear a mask so that was something I was scared of. But I was sure that our producers took all the precautions and sanitised the sets frequently. Our shots were also spaced out and only the people required were allowed on the sets. So yes, it was fun yet different.

■ How's your equation with the co-stars? Is there a bit of awkwardness due to social distancing that needs to be maintained?

The equation was nice as I knew Kanan and Tarun and are good friends. Before the lockdown we had a really good time but after the lockdown we had to shoot separately to follow social distancing. We hardly met. We miss each other while shooting.

■ Is the costume heavy to walk around in? How much time does it take to be ready?

Definitely the costume is heavy. It used to take two hours to get ready. We have assumed our Gods and Goddesses wearing heavy jewellery so I had to follow that according to the genre of the show. Also, after the lockdown I had to do my own make-up and it used to take time as we had to sanitise our rooms and maintain hygiene. It has already been four months and I have now started getting used to this.

■ You have been part of many reality shows as well. What was the attraction?

I have not been a part of many reality shows apart from two or three probably. It's a really different experience altogether. Working for daily soaps is a bit stressful, you are always sleep deprived and it's kind of monotonous. So, it was a really good break from that genre. The good thing about reality shows is that you get to be yourself and as an individual you get to show your own talent. I love dance shows but I don't think I'll be a part of any conversational show.

■ Did you have apprehensions in taking up Shaadi Mubarak?

I was a little apprehensive about the character as it was an elderly one. When I watched the show, I came to know that it was a central character and there will be a love angle and it's an interesting concept. The lead of the show is a wedding planner so we get to do a lot of new things daily as we interact with different characters and it's a mixture of lot of emotions and relationships. It's a different show.

The costume is heavy. It used to take two hours to get ready. We have assumed our Gods and Goddesses wearing heavy jewellery so I had to follow that. Also, after the lockdown I had to do my own make-up and it took time as we had to follow proper hygiene as well

■ How easy is it to play Preeti Jindal?

I don't consider any character as easy as I am still a learner in this industry. Even today I am nervous on the first day of shoots. It takes time for me to get into the skin of the character. But yes, now I am at ease. The main concern with Preeti Jindal was that it was a replacement and I have never replaced anyone before. It was a challenge as the audience has seen the character as some other person. I am sure I will leave a mark but let's hope the audience accepts me.

■ Is it okay to draw comparisons when actors are replaced?

Everybody has their own individuality and personality and pattern of performing. Comparing is like an expectation for the actor to be a mimicry artist. The most important aspect is to get into the skin of the character and then add in your element. You should be able to convince the audience by your performance and that is what matters.

■ You have hosted shows as well. How has the experience been?

I have hosted a couple of shows and I love doing it. I would love to get such opportunities. It is very different from acting. I feel actors should not be bound to acting. They must explore all fields of this fraternity. So, I would love to do it again

■ What about Bollywood plans?

Every actor dream's to be in Bollywood. So yes, still looking forward. Let's see what's there.

MAKING WORLD GREENER



SHALINI SAKSENA chats up remote sensing data scientist and a PhD student in environmental science and sustainable development to bring you a report on their innovative ideas and research. In a first, these women from India are proud winners of Green Talent Competition 2020

‘Need better Government policies’



Nidhi Singh, 32
PhD Student
Institute of
Environment and
Sustainable
Development, BHU

Born and brought up in Varanasi, this PhD student always wanted to pursue a career in environmental sciences. When she was doing her PhD, it was a project that studied the effect of climate change on agriculture. During a discussion, she found that there was little work done on the impact of climate change on health. This made her shift her focus of study. Nidhi Singh, who has been doing her research for the last five years tells you that it has not been easy to collect the data. “Back in 2016, there were only a few reviews, one can say there was a big void from India that showed the impact of air pollution and climate change on health. We knew that there was an impact on health from studies from other countries, but no data from India,” Singh says. What got her interested in pursuing a PhD is her father who did his research in Psychological. “As a child, what he did fascinated me and I knew that I wanted to do something similar. I chose Science in Class XI as I wanted to be a doctor but I couldn’t. So environment beckoned me,” Singh recalls. However, to submit her thesis, it has not been easy. “Getting data was a challenge. Hospitals are unable to maintain a proper data. But we managed to get data from the

Municipal Corporation of Varanasi. That data had gender, age, place and date of death and cause of death. In 70 per cent cases, it read cerebrovascular death. I had to struggle to ascertain the actual cause of death. If we had specific data, my research would have better impact due to the findings. Also, there is no single body that keeps a record of proper cause of death; this is a limiting factor. There are no studies that directly indicate that Diabetes or even BP could be attributed to air pollution. Each city has different pollution levels depending on the weather. For proper conclusion we need better monitoring,” Singh opines. Since she lives in Varanasi, her primary focus involved two areas. First, the impact of heat and cold wave and second, impact of air pollution on mortality. In the first instance, she found that impact of heat wave was more pronounced here and the elderly and male were more vulnerable. Her second area of study involved black carbon, the first kind of study on this from India. In fact, both her studies are pioneer works from the country. “I used black carbon and PM2.5 and PM 10 and gases like NO₂, SO₂ and ozone. We wanted to study the impact of these on mortality. We found black carbon is the most important pollutant that increases the risk of mortality and is in fact most lethal of them. This was followed by SO₂, NO₂ and then particular matter. These are good findings and can help the Government to base their policies and include black carbon in order to define quality of air pollution,” Singh tells you. Also, the entire Indo-Gangetic region due to its geographical position makes cities in this area highly polluted and densely populated. “Many people, due to socio-economic conditions, are unable to take required steps to avoid extreme temperatures or air pollution. Again, these findings are important and immediate action is needed by the Government to take corrective steps,” Singh says. Her recommendation based on her research, for her city for now, better traffic rules, doing away with outdated vehicles, introducing LPG and doing away with burning fossil fuel and creating awareness among the public of the impact of air pollution

THERE ARE NO STUDIES THAT DIRECTLY INDICATE THAT DIABETES OR EVEN BP COULD BE ATTRIBUTED TO AIR POLLUTION. FOR PROPER CONCLUSION WE NEED BETTER MONITORING

Out with the old. Bring in the new



Parmita Ghosh, 25
Remote Sensing Data
Scientist
CORTEVA Agriscience

What if it was possible to predict that a disease was about to hit your lush crop? What if there was a way to pinpoint the exact time to harvest your crop to get the most out of it? What if there was a way to predict how the weather will affect your crop in a particular year and necessary steps one could take to prevent damage? This and much more is now possible due to the remote sensing data that is available and there are scientists who can read these numbers and help farmers. Meet one such scientist who won the Green Talent Award this year — Parmita Ghosh who has done her bachelors in agricultural engineering and masters in Geoinformatics. This young scientist who has been working with Corteva Agriscience in Hyderabad for the last one year tells you that her expertise is in remote data science agriculture, her company is a big player in this field and hence chose to be associated with them. “Working with this organisation will help me reach the farmer who can benefit from my research. Solutions I develop directly go to the farmer,” Ghosh says. She tells you that her work involves developing solutions that she gets from the remote sensing data assist the farmer in his cropping pattern like which crop to grow and when to sow the seed, how to save resources and then to generate an alert system for any risk that can arise due to a disease attack and take timely measures to protect their yield. For example, for a farmer in Punjab growing wheat, what Ghosh can do sitting in Hyderabad is monitor the entire wheat season and if there is any crop pests or if the crop needs

irrigation, she can, via the satellite images, monitor the health of the crop and check for any stress and inform the farmer accordingly who can then take preventive steps. What is even better is that Ghosh can even predict the yield so that the farmer can plan post-harvest activities much in advance. However, all the information that Ghosh has at her finger tips is not necessarily welcomed by the farmers. “There have been times when we have sent alerts to them but they are just not ready to accept our advice because they have been following ageold practices and beliefs. To educate farmers, we have ground staff who visit the farmers regularly. This instills some confidence in the advisory. There are so many new crop diseases today, diseases that their forefathers have not even heard of or seen. Take foliar new worms; this is new to India. So some farmers today depend on the advisory given to them and slowly they gain confidence in our methods,” Ghosh says. She agrees that it is easier to bring the younger farmer to the fold since we are living in the era of digital technology and so are they. “These young farmers are looking for methods to increase their yield. They are also aware of the alert system. Workshops that we hold regularly helps the traditional farmer to adapt to using technology to help them,” Ghosh tells you. While she has only been in the profession for a year, she tells you that there are a few basic problems that India’s farmers face. “More than the use of technology, it is the reachability of technology to each farmer,” Ghosh says. The good part is that the data models are available countrywide depending on cropping patterns and kind of diseases that may be indigenous to that region. There are, of course, challenges that come when monitoring the satellite and getting the numbers and algorithm correct. But regular monitoring and taking into account the unpredictability of Mother Nature, we are able to get the number right up to 95 per cent. The advice we give therefore comes with riders,” Ghosh says.

THERE ARE SO MANY NEW CROP DISEASES TODAY. TAKE FOLIAR NEW WORMS; THIS IS NEW TO INDIA. SO SOME FARMERS TODAY DEPEND ON THE ADVISORY GIVEN TO THEM AND SLOWLY THEY GAIN CONFIDENCE IN OUR METHODS

WHAT THE AWARD MEANS

Every year, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) hosts the prestigious Green Talents – International Forum for High Potentials in Sustainable Development to promote the international exchange of innovative green ideas from various fields of research.

The award, under the patronage of Minister Anja Karliczek, honours young researchers each year. The winners come from numerous countries and scientific disciplines and are recognised for their outstanding achievements in making our societies more sustainable. Selected by a jury of German experts,

the award winners are granted unique access to the country’s research elite. The Green Talents Competition focuses on outstanding young scientists, who are active in the field of sustainable development. The BMBF fosters interdisciplinary approaches in this regard.



The programme offers a unique opportunity to become part of an exceptional world-wide network of outstanding young minds and German institutions. The first part of the prize consists of an invitation to a two-week science forum in Germany, where one will be introduced to renowned research

facilities and have individual meetings with experts. One will learn about collaborations and experience the country’s excellent research infrastructure at close hand. A workshop on research and funding opportunities will provide with further information for your future research stay

in Germany. The journey will culminate in a festive award ceremony hosted by a high-level representative from the BMBF. One will have the opportunity to return to Germany for up to three months to conduct a research stay at an institute of one’s choice the year after the science forum.

Hamstring is feeling absolutely fine: Rohit

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The hullabaloo over his hamstring was confusing as well as amusing for Rohit Sharma, who says he always knew that the injury was not that serious and he would be battle-ready for the tour of Australia.

India's white-ball vice-captain, in a detailed conversation with PTI, opened about the left hamstring injury during the IPL, which became a matter of intense speculation after he returned to action within days of being left out of the Australia tour earlier this month. He was subsequently added to the Test squad.

"I don't know what was going on, to be honest and what all were people talking about. But let me put this on record, I was constantly communicating with BCCI and Mumbai Indians," Rohit said.

He hit a match-winning knock of 68 off 50 balls in the IPL final against Delhi Capitals, playing through pain. Rohit is currently doing strength and conditioning work at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru before heading to Australia.



Indian opener Rohit Sharma

PTI/File Picture

"I told them (Mumbai Indians) that I can take the field since it is the shortest format and I will be able to manage the situation quite nicely. Once I made my mind clear, it was all about focussing on what I needed to do," he said.

"Hamstring is feeling absolutely fine. Just started the process of getting it nice and strong. Before I play the longer format, I absolutely needed to be clear in mind that there is no stone that is left unturned, that's probably the reason, I'm at the NCA," Rohit added.

For Rohit, the chatter on the outside regarding his injury and his subsequent participation in the IPL play-offs, didn't matter much.

"So for me, it was not a concern what x, y or z was talking about like whether he would make it to Australia," he said.

"Once the injury happened, the next two days all I did was to figure out what I can do in the next 10 days — whether I will be able to play or not."

Unless one goes to the ground, one won't know how the body is shaping up, feels the five-time IPL champion cap-

tain.

"But every day, hamstring (degree of injury) was changing. The way it was responding was changing, so I was feeling quite confident that I could play and that is the communication that I had with MI at that point.

"I told them that I think I will be okay to play just before play-offs. If there is any discomfort, I won't be playing the play-offs."

All Rohit needed was three and half weeks to get ready for Tests and he fails to understand what the fuss was all about given that the series starts December 17.

"Of course, there is still some work that needs to be done on my hamstring. That's why I didn't go to Australia for the white-ball leg as there are back-to-back games. Around 6 games in 11 days," he said about the limited overs leg beginning November 27.

"So I thought if I get to work on my body for 25 days, I can probably go and play the Test matches. So it was an easy decision for me and I don't know why it became so complicated for others," he wondered aloud.

IPL performance has taken pressure off this Oz tour: Shami

PTI ■ SYDNEY

India's craftiest pacer Mohammed Shami is in the "right zone" after his impressive performance in the IPL, allowing him to prepare for the big Test series against Australia "without any pressure".

Shami had his best IPL season as his 20 wickets for Kings XI Punjab, including a spectacular defence of five runs in double Super Over game against Mumbai Indians, was one of the highlights of the tournament.

"My performances for KXIP in IPL has given me a lot of confidence and put me in the right zone," Shami told BCCI.TV on Saturday.

An artist with the red ball, Shami feels that a good IPL has taken off the burden from him.

"The biggest advantage is that I can now prepare for the upcoming series without any pressure. There is no burden on me. I am very comfortable at the moment.

"I had worked hard on my bowling and my fitness in the lockdown. I knew that IPL would take place sooner or later and I was preparing myself for it."

Shami made no bones that Test matches are a priority for him on this tour as he is trying to get into the groove during the training session over last one week.

"We are going to have a long tour starting with the white ball followed by pink and red ball Tests. My focus area has been the red ball and I am working on my lengths and seam movement.

"I have always felt that



once you start pitching the ball at the lengths you desire, you can succeed in different formats."

He feels that post IPL, his white ball form is in control and that's why he required more preparation with red ball.

"What you need is control. I have done well with the white-ball and now spending time in the nets bowling with the red ball. You don't bowl in the same area since both formats are different but your basics don't change much."

With Steve Smith and David Warner, who were missing during India's victorious campaign in 2018-19, back in the mix, things will get tougher for the Indian pace quartet.

But the senior bowler is hardly perturbed by their presence.

"India have quality batsmen and we bowl at them in the nets. We don't look at

names, we focus on our skills. You can be a world-class batsman, but one good ball will still get you out," Shami said.

The veteran pacer said that the diverse skill sets makes for a very potent attack like the one India has with him, Umesh Yadav, Ishant Sharma and the menacing Jasprit Bumrah.

"Our fast bowling group can bowl at 140 kph plus and you need that kind of pace in Australia. Even our reserves are quick, you don't get to see that kind of an attack."

Shami reminded that the pacers have done well in all overseas conditions and have taken 20 wickets in a lot of away Test matches as well as in spin-friendly conditions at home.

"There is a healthy competition but there is no rivalry within the group. If you look at the numbers, we have managed to pick 20 wickets almost on all our away tours."

Motivation has never been a problem for Kohli: Stoinis

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Virat Kohli is more than hundred percent charged up every time he takes the field and the Australian team is preparing in equal measure to counter the threat posed by the Indian captain, said all-rounder Marcus Stoinis.

Kohli, who is heading family way in January, will be returning after playing the six white ball games and the opening day/night Test scheduled in Adelaide.

"Don't worry about Virat. He is up for every single game that he's playing. Yeah, maybe there will be extra motivation, but I don't think there's any extra motivation than 110 percent," Stoinis was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

"So let's see. I am sure he (Kohli) will be ready to go. He is getting home for the birth of his kid, which is the right decision in my opinion. So I am sure he will be extra motivated."

Stoinis said that coach Justin Langer and his men will have foolproof strategy to counter the India skipper, who is in a league of his own when it comes to white-ball cricket.

"We've definitely got our strategies, we've had things that have worked in the past, and at other times the same plans haven't worked and he's made some runs.

"Obviously, he (Kohli) is a great player, and to all these good players, you do what you want to do, you have your plans, and on the day, you get extra competitive and you hope it all falls in your side of the court."

On the personal front, Stoinis scored 352 runs and took 13 wickets for Delhi Capitals in the IPL and wants to replicate that performance in the limited overs games against India, starting Friday.

Asked what changed for him this season, Stoinis said: "I will hopefully continue to bring that form into the summer, but there's nothing really too different (that I have been doing).

"The break was great — it was nice to come back quite fresh into all these competitions. I feel like I was going well in England before leading in as well, so hopefully the results keep coming my way," he said.



Bereaved Siraj declines BCCI offer to fly back home

PTI ■ KOLKATA

BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Saturday said that pacer Mohammed Siraj, who has lost his father, was given the option of flying back home to be with his grieving family but he decided to stay back in Australia for "national duty".

Ghouse, who was suf-

fering from a lung ailment, died on Friday. He was 53.

"The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) had a discussion with Siraj and he was offered the option of flying back and be with his family in this hour of grief," Shah said in a BCCI media release.

"The fast bowler has decided to stay with the Indian contingent and con-

tinue performing his national duties. The BCCI shares his grief and will be supportive of Siraj in this extremely challenging phase," Shah added.

Board president Sourav Ganguly took to Twitter to laud the Hyderabad pacer for his resilience and mental fortitude in this hour of tragedy.

"May Mohammed siraj

have a lot of strength to overcome this loss..Lots of good wishes for his success in this trip... Tremendous character," Ganguly tweeted.

If Siraj had chosen to fly back to India, he would have had to do another 14-day quarantine here in Australia under the local government rules on his arrival.

Ferguson not worried about missing Test spot

IANIS ■ CHRISTCHURCH

New Zealand fast bowler, who has not been named in the Test squad that plays West Indies next month is not too worried about it and says he will fight for a spot in the long-format side which already has a good pace-bowling attack.

The pace bowler, who is undergoing quarantine after returning from the Indian Premier League, where he impressed with his pace but had a mixed tournament performance-wise, will play the T20 series that begins on November 27.

"The Test side is a really tough team to break into, there is so much depth. Obviously, our big three (Boult, Southee, Wagner) have been so successful for a long period of time," Ferguson told reporters in an interaction.

"I've had chats throughout. Steady (coach Gary Stead) and I talk a lot, I've got some family engagements that week, but even then, (Jamieson) played so well last season, so he certainly deserves a spot

in that side," Ferguson said.

Ferguson picked six wickets in five games he played and conceded runs at just 7.46 in the IPL for KKR.

"When you see the depth, Kyle Jamieson, one of my good mates, coming through and taking the opportunity and playing well, puts pressure on other bowlers to perform well all through the levels. I think it is great. For me, honestly, if it means I've got to work hard to get an opportunity and have a chance for that side, as I always do, take it game by game, keep putting the work in the back-ground, and if that opportunity comes I'll do everything I can to take it with open arms," Ferguson added.

The right-arm pace bowler had a forgettable Test debut in December last year against Australia when he limped off the field after bowling just 11 overs at Perth.



Thiem downs Djokovic in instant classic

PTI ■ LONDON

Dominic Thiem became the first player in four years to reach back-to-back championship matches at the Nitto ATP Finals on Saturday, as he earned a milestone 7-5, 6-7(10), 7-6(5) victory against World No. 1 Novak Djokovic.

The 2019 runner-up failed to convert four match points in a dramatic second-set tie-break, but held his nerve to rally in a final-set tie-break against Djokovic at the O2 for the second straight year. Thiem's victory was his 300th at tour-level and his fifth against a World No. 1. The last player to reach consecutive finals at the season finale was Djokovic (2012-16).

Each set came down to just a few points and it was Thiem who claimed the biggest points in the decider. Thiem increased his aggression to win six consecutive points from 0/4 down in the final-set tie-break and converted his sixth match point with a powerful forehand approach shot. Thiem is only



the second player in 2020 to win a tie-break against the World No. 1. Djokovic entered the third-set tie-break with a 15-1 tie-break record this season.

Thiem has now won five of his seven most recent ATP Head2Head matches against Djokovic, which includes two wins at this event. The Austrian also earned a final-set tie-break victory against Djokovic in the round-robin stage last year.

With his fifth win against Djokovic (5-7), Thiem joins

Andy Murray as the only players to beat each member of the Big Three on five or more occasions. Thiem also owns six wins against Rafael Nadal (6-9) and has triumphed five times against Roger Federer (5-2). Thiem has excelled in matches against the Big Three since the start of the 2019 ATP Tour season (9-3).

In a tight first set, neither player was able to earn a break point in their opening five return games. As Djokovic attempted to shorten points by coming to the net, Thiem made the crucial move at 5-5. The World No. 3 consistently fired backhands down the line to Djokovic's forehand volley and extracted errors to serve for the set. Thiem converted his first set point with an ace down the T.

Thiem was put under pressure on serve in the second set, but he found big serves to save break point at 3-4 and two set points at 5-6, 15/40. In the tie-break, Thiem held four match

points but he could not convert as errors began to creep into his game. Djokovic served with power and fired a forehand onto the line to escape danger on two match points and levelled the match when Thiem drove a backhand into the net.

There were no signs of disappointment from Thiem in the decider. The 27-year-old continued to serve at a high level to stay ahead in the score and reach a tie-break. Thiem committed errors early in the final-set tie-break, but he charged back from 0/4 with consistent aggression to win six of the final seven points. Last year, Thiem recovered from 1/4 to beat Djokovic in another final-set tie-break.

Djokovic was attempting to reach his eighth championship match at the season finale and move one win away from matching Federer's record haul of six Nitto ATP Finals crowns. The six-time year-end World No. 1 ends the year with a 41-5 record and four titles.



Women's football camp from Dec 1

NEW DELHI: The Indian women's senior team will undergo its first national camp since the coronavirus-forced lockdown, in Goa from December 1, kick-starting its preparations for the 2022 AFC Asian Cup with a host of health safety measures. As many as 30 players head coach Maymol Rocky for the camp. The 2022 edition of the continental event will be hosted in India. A detailed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been prepared for the resumption of the team training, which lays down numerous Covid-19 protocols and guidelines in an exhaustive manner.

National teams director Abhishek Yadav said the team is eager to return to the field as soon as possible.

"The team is eager to get back on the pitch as soon as possible. The last few months have been unprecedented but we are taking cautious steps to take Indian football forward together."

Indian Para-shuttlers get new training centre

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Indian para-badminton players have found a new abode, customised and designed as per their needs and requirements. With an eye on Tokyo Olympics and World Championship 2021, also scheduled in Japan, the Indian shuttlers got this facility with the efforts of Indian team coach and Dronacharya awardee Gaurav Khanna. The facility named as Gaurav Khanna Excellia Badminton Academy has been constructed at Excellia School and will be run by Khanna himself.

"This is the first-ever facility dedicated to para-badminton players where they can train all exclusive for bigger events throughout the year. All the top para-shuttlers have already started training here," Khanna said.

"Currently, world number one Pramod Bhagat, world number three Sukant Kadam world number five Manoj Sarkar, Abu Hubeida and Parul Parmar are training while others will join soon as per their schedule," he added.

Khanna, who has turned around para-badminton in India with his utmost dedication, has a desire to convert this facility into a nursery of the best players who will bring glory to the country. "We will try to develop it as 'Khelo India Centre' but the focus is currently on next big events only," he pointed out.

Gaurav is happy with the recognition that the players are getting now but certainly not satisfied as the awards and rewards are not enough to improve things.

"The government has announced equal



treatment to para players but we have some special needs. To chalk out any plans, there should be a representative from para community in the committee that identifies the special needs of players, as per their disabilities," he concluded.

The facility has four indoor courts for practical training and mentoring sessions under experts, physiotherapists, nutritionists and psychologists. Excellia School director Ashish Pathak said they have also started the registration process for other players and is hopeful that they would be motivated with the presence of top international players among them.



Tammy Abraham celebrates after scoring Chelsea's second goal
AFP ■ NEWCASTLE

Chelsea climbed to the top of the Premier League for the first time in more than two years with a convincing 2-0 win at Newcastle, while Brighton survived late penalty controversy to secure their first ever victory at Aston Villa on Saturday.

Frank Lampard's side moved above Leicester on goal difference thanks to Federico Fernandez's first-half own goal and Tammy Abraham's strike after the interval.

Chelsea are unbeaten in nine games in all competitions and have not lost in their last six league matches.

With five clean sheets in their last six matches in all competitions, Chelsea's third

CHELSEA GO TOP



Aston Villa's Jack Grealish, right, argues with Brighton's Tariq Lamptey, left, during the Premier League match
AP

successive league victory was the perfect way to start a hectic period leading up to Christmas.

Maurizio Sarri was in charge the last time Chelsea were in pole position in the Premier League in September 2018.

But Lampard's squad are more formidable than his predecessor's fragile team and a serious title challenge looks increasingly possible.

Chelsea's pressure was rewarded in the 10th minute when a short corner caught Newcastle flat-footed.

Mason Mount whipped in a low cross and Fernandez turned it into his own net under pressure from Ben Chilwell at the far post.

With Lampard's men monopolising possession, Timo

Werner should have doubled their lead from Mount's pass, but the German forward scuffed his shot wide from 10 yards.

The Blues put the result beyond doubt in the 65th minute when Werner accelerated away from the Newcastle defence and slipped a pass to Abraham, who guided his shot past Karl Darlow and in off the post.

Abraham has now scored in three consecutive appearances in all competitions for the first time since September 2019.

"It's not an easy game. We played well in patches and the result is key in these games," Lampard said.

"The Premier League is

tough, relentless, and we dealt with the challenge of the game very well.

"I won't get excited about being top of the table for five minutes. It's important to be humble and know it's a long race."

Chelsea could surrender top spot before the end of the day, with Tottenham able to go above them if they beat Manchester City.

Manchester United host West Brom in the day's late game.

VAR CONTROVERSY

At Villa Park, Brighton's 2-1 success ended a run of seven games without a win in all competitions, but it didn't come



10-year wait is over Werder Bremen earn first point against Bayern Munich since 2010

AFP ■ MADRID

Bayern Munich dropped points for just the second time this season as they were held to a 1-1 draw by Werder Bremen on Saturday.

Maximilian Eggstein's well-worked goal gave the visitors a deserved lead late in the first half before the champions struck back through Kingsley Coman after the hour.

But they were unable to build on their equaliser as a dogged performance from Florian Kohfeldt's men earned a deserved share of the spoils.

Werder travelled to the Allianz Arena having avoided defeat in their previous four outings, though each of those ended in draws.

And, with Bayern having earned 10 consecutive victories coming into this fixture, they would've expected to dominate from the off, rather than give up the best of the first-half chances.

However, only a brilliant Neuer save denied Josh Sargent from close range early on, before Leonardo Bittencourt volleyed into the side-netting when he might have done better.

Werder capitalised on Bayern's uncertainty at the back as Sargent burst in behind down the flank being marshalled by Martinez and Alaba, before pulling back for Eggstein to sidefoot home just before half-time.

Milot Rashica should've made it two shortly after the restart, taking too long in a one-on-one situation, prompting Douglas Costa to respond by cracking the bar with a deflected effort.

That marked the start of a spell of long overdue Bayern pressure that finally told when Coman headed in Goretzka's right-wing cross at the back post.

But, despite the introduction of Leroy Sane and Serge Gnabry off the bench, Hansi Flick's men struggled to create much of note in the final half-hour.

Immobile makes scoring return



AFP ■ MILAN

Ciro Immobile scored on his return from coronavirus isolation as Lazio beat rock-bottom Crotone 2-0 under driving rain in southern Italy on Saturday.

Immobile's diving header put Lazio ahead in the 21st

minute on a water-logged pitch after storms in the sole of Italy.

It was the fourth Serie A goal in six games this term for the top scorer in Europe last season, who had missed Lazio's last two league games.

The Italy international was also involved in the second goal, sending Joaquin Correa through just before the hour mark as the rain briefly subsided in Calabria.

Argentine Correa fired in his first league goal this season from a tight angle through the legs of Crotone goalkeeper Alex Cordaz.

Simone Inzaghi's side moved up to fifth in the early Serie A table.

Crotone fell to their sixth defeat in eight games as they remain winless in their return to the top flight after two seasons in Serie B.

AFP ■ MADRID

patched-up Real Madrid had to hang on for a 1-1 draw away at in-form Villarreal on Saturday, handing Barcelona and Atletico Madrid the chance to capitalise in La Liga.

Barca and Atletico face each other at the Wanda Metropolitano on Saturday night, when victory for either side would now prove even more valuable after another stumble from the reigning champions.

Mariano Diaz gave Real Madrid the lead after just 105 seconds but Zinedine Zidane's team faded at La Ceramica and Villarreal claimed a deserved point through Gerard Moreno's second-half penalty.

Mariano was almost sold last summer but had to stand in for Karim Benzema, who is injured, and Luka Jovic, who tested positive for coronavirus on Friday.

Sergio Ramos and

Penalty spot to the rescue Courtois' error sees depleted Real Madrid draw Villarreal



Casemiro were also missing following the international break.

Given their absences, a draw may not worry Zidane too much, particularly against a Villarreal side who sat second at kick-off after four victories on the bounce.

But another slip means Madrid have now won only three of their last seven games in all competitions, with a crucial visit to Inter Milan to come in the Champions League on Wednesday.

If Atletico Madrid beat Barcelona they will move three points clear of their

city rivals, with a game in hand, and nine ahead of Barca.

Mariano had not started for Real Madrid since May 2019, when he again scored early against Villarreal after just 83 seconds.

He was not far behind this time, heading in Dani Carvajal's cross after Villarreal's defence had stopped for an offside on Lucas Vazquez that never materialised.

Villarreal increasingly took charge of the game, their slick passing giving a sense of control but few chances, the best of them in

the first half falling to Dani Parejo, who nodded over.

But Madrid appeared to tire as the match wore on and Villarreal's pressure turned more threatening in the last 20 minutes, with Moreno flashing wide from the angle and then Parejo missing the target from a cutback.

The equaliser was late but deserved, as Thibaut Courtois flew out to meet a through-ball for Moreno but arrived second and fouled the striker with his hands.

Courtois dived the right way but Moreno's shot was well-placed into the corner.

Haaland crowned 2020 Golden Boy

Dortmund: Borussia Dortmund star Erling Haaland has been rewarded for his stunning exploits, named the 2020 Golden Boy recipient.

The prize, presented by Italian newspaper *Tuttosport* and won by Joao Felix last year, is given to the best player aged 21 or under from a top-tier league in Europe.

And Norway international Haaland – the leading contender – graced Saturday's front page of *Tuttosport*, beating the likes of Dortmund team-mate Jadon Sancho, Bayern Munich's Alphonso Davies, Manchester United forward Mason Greenwood and Barcelona sensation Ansu Fati to the award.

Haaland scored 44 goals across all competitions in 2019-20 – 16 of those coming in 18 appearances after a mid-season move from Austrian champions Salzburg to Bundesliga outfit Borussia Dortmund.

Among all Bundesliga players last season to have scored at least 10 goals, only Robert Lewandowski (81.2) had a better minutes-per-goal record than Haaland (81.7).

Monaco rallies to stun PSG

AP ■ MONACO

Kylian Mbappe's two goals against his former club were not enough as French league leader Paris Saint-Germain wasted a 2-0 lead and lost at Monaco 3-2.

Mbappe's first-half brace took him to 99 goals for PSG since joining from Monaco three years ago in a deal worth a staggering 180 million euros.

But lively German forward Kevin Volland netted twice after the break, and was fouled by center half Abdou Diallo for a penalty converted by former Spain and Barcelona midfielder Cesc Fabregas in the 83rd.

Diallo was sent off to leave PSG with 10 men in the closing stages. The defeat was PSG's third of the season and ended a run of eight straight wins after losing the first two games.

Monaco moved up to second place, and four points behind PSG, despite being without top scorer Wissam Ben Yedder as he recovers from the coronavirus.

Another comfortable PSG win looked on the cards when Mbappe latched on to a fine pass from winger Angel Di Maria and finished confidently in the 24th minute.

The France striker then beat goalkeeper Vito Mannone from the spot in the 36th after midfielder Youssef Fofana gave away a

penalty.

Striker Moise Kean and Mbappe had goals ruled out for offside shortly before the break, and Monaco pulled one back in the 51st when Volland turned in Fofana's cross from the right.

Volland pounced again in the 64th when Fofana set him up from close range and Fofana scooped over a shot 10 minutes later as Monaco found another gear.

In Friday's other game, Rennes missed the chance to move into second after losing at home to Bordeaux 1-0, with winger Hatem Ben Arfa punishing his former teammates with the

only goal.

Ben Arfa scored nine goals for Rennes two seasons ago, and struck in the 36th after cutting past three defenders on the left and smacking in a diagonal shot.

It was the former France international's seventh career goal against Rennes, his best against any side.

Rennes welcomed back influential teen midfielder Eduardo Camavinga, who was out for several weeks with a leg injury, and winger Romain Del Castillo hit the crossbar moments before halftime.

The defeat dropped Rennes to fifth place, while inconsistent Bordeaux climbed to 11th.

Roy Krishna wants to win against SC East Bengal at any cost

PTI ■ BENAULIM

ATK Mohun Bagan Astar forward Roy Krishna has set his sights on their upcoming ISL clash against arch-rivals SC East Bengal, saying they have to win the game "at any cost".

The two Kolkata heavyweights will clash swords in the Indian Super League for the first time, on November 27, after the respective teams' foray into the top-tier tournament this season and



the Fijian International is all pumped up.

"I know, our fans will wait with interest to see our victory in the derby match. We have to win the match at any cost," the 33-year-old said at the team hotel on Saturday.

"I have heard a lot about the Kolkata derby. I am waiting to play that match as I have never seen that match or even had a chance to play."

He had scored the solitary goal in their win over Kerala Blasters in the ISL opener.

NorthEast spoil Lobera's Mumbai bow

PTI ■ VASCO

Kwesi Appiah scored from the spot as NorthEast United FC began their Indian Super League campaign with a 1-0 win over Mumbai City FC here on Saturday.

A red card and a penalty turned a game, that Mumbai were otherwise dominating, on its head and handed NorthEast United FC a winning start at the Tilak Maidan.

Appiah (49') scored the only goal from a penalty after the Islanders were reduced to 10-men following Ahmed Jahouh's red card just before the breather.

In the early stages, it looked like NorthEast were aiming for nothing more than a goalless draw, with extreme caution visible in their game plan.

Predictably, it was Mumbai who dominated the first half. The Islanders were neat and proactive for long spells, though they were unable to find a cutting edge.

Despite having players like Jahouh, Hugo Boumous, and Rowlin Borges, all capable of creating magic on their day, Sergio Lobera's side failed to get a single shot on target in the first 45 minutes.

They did hold the lion's share of the possession that occasionally resulted in hopeful efforts.

The match took an unexpected turn as Jahouh, who was dictating things from midfield, was sent off with a straight red, a couple of minutes before half time. His offence was a studs-up challenge on NorthEast's Khassa Camara.

Gerard Nus' men capitalised on their numerical advantage soon after the restart. The Highlanders were awarded a penalty in the 49th minute when the ball struck Borges' arm after NorthEast's Dylan Fox had headed in a short corner. Appiah sent keeper Amrinder Singh in wrong direction.

With Mumbai now under pressure, NorthEast took control over the game with Khumanthem Meetei and Appiah making regular inroads.

Mumbai had a rare opportunity in the 65th minute when Sarthak got his head to a cross, but his effort sailed inches over the bar. Lobera's team kept knocking on the door in the final quarter, but an equaliser eluded them.



World record holders Kosgei, Yeshaneh add to field for ADHM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Airtel Delhi Half Marathon on Saturday announced the entries of world record holders Brigid Kosgei and Ababel Yeshaneh for the upcoming event, adding lustre to an already star-studded field. The event is part of the countdown to the World Athletics Gold Label Race.

At the Chicago Marathon in October 2019, Kenya's Kosgei stunned the world when she broke the long-standing women's world marathon record by more than a minute, clocking 2:14:04.

Yeshaneh was a distant second on that occasion but still ran a superb personal best of 2:20:51.

However, the tables were turned at the Ras Al Khaimah Half Marathon in February



this year when a contest between the pair in the final stages of the race saw Ethiopians Yeshaneh prevail in a world record 64:31 with Kosgei second in 64:49.

In their most recent outings last month, the 26-year-old Kosgei won the rescheduled London Marathon in 2:18:58 while the 29-year-old Yeshaneh had to contend with misfortune and fell at the World Athletics Half Marathon Championships in Poland, with just over three kilometres remaining, which took her out of medal contention although she recovered quickly to finish fifth. While the elite runners will be at the start line at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, amateurs across the world will join the event using the new Airtel Delhi Half Marathon Mobile App.



■ **You were last seen in Khuda Haafiz playing a cop. Did you have to prepare for the role?**

I had to speak Arabic in the film. I also did action for the very first time. We had to prepare for that. Otherwise the part would have come very easily to me. But this was not the case here. I had to learn a different language and have command over the accent. When we got to the actual

Talktime

AAHANA KUMRA

She was last seen in Khuda Haafiz. The actor speaks with Shalini Saxena about how she had to prepare for essaying Tamena Hamid character, her role in theatrical Sir Sir Sarla and upcoming projects

shooting, there was an action director. He trained all of us on how to throw a punch, how to take a jab and how to take a reaction shot. There was a lot of prep for me.

■ **Did you feel that the role was outside your comfort zone?**

My only worry was what if I am unable to do justice to the character. Since everything that we do is attached to our name. When I said yes to the project a lot of people told me that it would be quality work since I am known to now pick up good projects given the kind of films I have done in the past. Having said this, it is important to take risks and I am very grateful to the director Faruk Kabir and Apoorva for pushing me to take up the part. I came on board the project only a week before the film was to be shot and I saw Annuji (Kapoor) recite his lines with such conviction. I did the same and it came out well.

■ **Does that mean you get only certain kinds of films?**

Not at all. I have a plethora of films and each is different. I have had no role

where I have repeated myself. I can safely say that I can't complain that I have not got different roles to play or enough parts. I am the lucky few who have been offered different characters. In *Marzi*, I played a teacher and in *Betaal* I played as an IPS officer.

■ **What is your character in Sir Sir Sarla?**

I play a student of literature, Sarla. The play has not been set in any particular place; it is the house of the Professor Palekar and his two favourite students – Paridhar and Sarla. To begin with, when the play was first stage, the role of Sarla was essayed by Sonali Kulkarni. It was reopened in 2012 with a new cast and that is when I came in. The first half of the play is about memories. So Sarla keeps coming back in the memory of the Professor and Paridhar; Sarla has got married and gone away. Sarla was always in love with the Professor and Paridhar in love with Sarla. The second half is all about how she can't find a connection with her new family as they speak about money and not literature. And then all three of them come together and share their

problems.

■ **Was it tough to identify with the role? Were there any challenges?**

For me, I grew up with Sarla. I have been playing her for the last eight years. We started rehearsing for this play much in advance and have lived with the character since 2012. Doing theatre is a playground; we are all students. The audience is different, sometimes the timings are different or something else comes up. It feels weird when I was not on stage. For many of us, going back to theatre is like brushing up our skills time and again. When I started playing this role, I didn't understand much of it; I was so nervous since I knew people would make comparisons. The good is it stopped soon and the show has been a hit since then. Over the years, I have found a relationship with Sarla which is very special.

■ **You have been doing theatre for some time. What is the attraction?**

It is my medium. It's an actors' medium. All other mediums are directors'. He tells you what to do, how to do it and when to do it. An actor has no say what the director puts or removes.

I don't have a say here. In theatre, it is my stage; it is my show and it must go on. Theatre is sanity for actors otherwise it is very difficult for us to find our voices. The kind of time we spend on rehearsal, it is quite a bit. You develop a special relationship with every play. Ask any person who has done theatre, he will remember each and every rehearsal. It is very difficult to explain the relationship an actor has with theatre – it is very sacred.

■ **How did you come on board for the role?**

I got a call from Mak sir (Makarand Deshpande). I had already done a couple of plays with him but they were smaller roles. He was looking to revive Sir Sir Sarla. I had no idea about the play but only saw it as a kid. When I got a call, I was shocked to be offered Sarla. I know every actor would have cut an arm to get this role; it is such a powerful play. I was overwhelmed when I was offered the character.

■ **What next?**

I have completed shooting for *Sandwich* by Rohan Sippy. I am shooting for Shaad Ali's *Call My Agent*.

MADE IN WEDHAVEN



Most of us might be guilty of gatecrashing a wedding or the other both knowingly or unknowingly. However, no one would like to put himself in such an unsavoury situation. While putting a filter on the guests can be bit difficult for the organisers, but it is not much difficult to protect yourself from being one in this tech-savvy world.

Meet a 31-year-old husband-wife duo, Rishika Agarwal and Navam Gupta, who have devised WedHaven, a wedding management app that can help keep gatecrashers at bay, while also simplifying the tedious tasks that are involved in it.

Launched in late February, this year, WedHaven is a result of a lot of personal experiences of the duo. "Until we got married in 2014, we didn't know the hassle of arranging marriages in India. It is nothing short of a Herculean task. Moreover, the other big challenge is to make sure that all the guests reached the right location. It took us hours to make sure that all our friends and relatives reach the place on time and while engaging in this we ended up missing on some of the precious moments," Agarwal tells you. She adds that it took them a year for the ideation and research work.

The idea behind the app was to enable people to shed the burden off their shoulders and let the technology do the work.

"Traditionally, people prepare guest lists by writing down the names on paper. It is a tedious task. Now, this is when our app comes to play. One can simply download the app and with the help of our WedHaven Gold plans, they can just export their contacts and prepare a guest list in a matter of seconds," Gupta explains and tells you that the paid plans start at ₹5,000. Not that one can't experience the app for free. There are some features like preparing calendars or scheduling events that one can do for free on the app.

The app creates a digital wedding through the information provided, with details of all the events, venues, timings, real-time updates, and sending out invitations to the guests on the app. Further, one can also prepare a different guest list for all the different functions, given the limited number of guests allowed today. Not only this, to



MUSBA HASHMI chats up RISHIKA AGARWAL and NAVAM GUPTA, Founders of WedHaven, a wedding management app, about how the idea hit them and whether it can be a game changer in the industry

take it a notch higher, one can also track the status of *baraat*.

The other highlight of the app is that it prevents you from gatecrashing a *shaadi*. One doesn't need Google Map, just log in to the app and you will get the directions to the venue. Hence, there is no physical resources on the gate who can confirm the guest name and allow them entry. Moreover, it is also not mandatory for the guests to download the app.

"We are into the early stages of this process and we do have plans to address this problem. We are planning to hire people who can do the check on the entry way. But that will be at a later stage," Gupta says.

Another fact that can prove as a disadvantage for them is the fact that everything here is online. However, for some it can be the best thing that can happen, while for others, may be for our parents or grandparents it can be nothing but pure inconvenience. "It is true to certain extent, but now that lockdown has made us all learn the importance of going online, this will not be much of a problem for anyone. More so, since we have kept the design and feature user-friendly and extremely simple. There is no rocket science involved in it. Even our parents with a little guidance can do the trick," Gupta explains.

He points out that the fact that they are only offering wedding management services and is not involved in organising the same. "We don't have any intentions of eliminating wedding planners or to eat up their jobs, we are clearly a wedding management brand and our services are a proof of it. And also, only about 25 per cent of people actually involve wedding planners in India, rest of us rely on our parents and close relatives to get the job done. So, competing with wedding organisers and planners is out of context here," Gupta asserts and tells you that people can book services on the app itself or can do it over a call.

Post the lockdown, the duo has managed 10 weddings under their Gold plan, and the feedback was encouraging. "We have received a positive response from our customers. Like we mentioned before, there are a few features that we would like to add in the near future including logistics. We will continue to update the app and make it more user-friendly and accessible," Agarwal says.

Acting is like breathing: Sanchita

■ **How did you get interested in acting?**

Since childhood, I had been performing in school plays and continued to do so even during college days. I was working with a shoe designing company and came to Mumbai. I wanted to join acting classes while working. That helped hone in my skills and realised that I could do this as a career. Then I quit my job and took up acting.

■ **How tough was it to quit a well-paying job?**

It was very tough. There was a lot of family pressure. They wanted to know why I was leaving a corporate to pursue acting. But I knew this is what I wanted to do and knew that I would make a mark even if it took time. I took this time, I polished my skills and kept training.

■ **From shoe designing to acting. How did that happen?**

I was also interested in designing and wanted to pursue it. Acting was and is my passion. I wanted to go into acting when I was in Class IX and X But you know how parents are; always protective of the girl child. So, I decided to pursue designing after Class XII. But then when I came to Mumbai, I was right there in the middle of it all. I was so fascinated with the industry. I fought with my


parents and told them this is what I wanted to do. I got some commercials and small acting roles.

■ **You are from Kanpur. Were there adjustment issues when you came to Mumbai?**

When I was working, the pace was hectic. Mumbai is a tough place to be. But I followed my dream and worked hard. I was flexible since the aim was to get into acting.

■ **Was it tough to get your first break?**

Initially, it was. With time, I sorted myself. Newcomers tend to become impatient and desperate. But I do a lot of yoga and meditation. I realised I was not giving myself enough time. I calmed myself down and things started happening automatically. *Ginny weds Sunny* came to me in 2019 after I finished training in 2018.



भारत निर्वाचन आयोग


विशेष संक्षिप्त पुनरीक्षण/मतदाता (वोटर) पंजीकरण कार्यक्रम

दिनांक: 17 नवम्बर, 2020 से 15 दिसम्बर, 2020 तक

लोकसभा/विधानसभा क्षेत्रों की मतदाता सूची में पंजीकरण कराने हेतु सूचना

मतदाता बनने की पात्रता :-

- भारतीय नागरिक हों एवं उत्तर प्रदेश के सम्बन्धित निर्वाचन क्षेत्र में सामान्यतः निवास कर रहे हों।
- 18 वर्ष की आयु पूरे कर चुके हों अथवा 01 जनवरी, 2021 को 18 वर्ष की आयु पूर्ण कर रहे हों।



आवेदन की व्यवस्था

मतदाता सूची में नाम जुड़वाने एवं संशोधन इत्यादि करने हेतु भारत निर्वाचन आयोग द्वारा एक ऑनलाइन वेबपोर्टल www.voterportal.eci.gov.in विकसित किया गया है, जिसके माध्यम से जन सामान्य निम्नलिखित सेवाएं प्राप्त कर सकते हैं:-

1. निर्वाचक नामावली में नाम को सम्मिलित करने के लिए-	फार्म-6
2. किसी प्रवासी निर्वाचक द्वारा निर्वाचक नामावली में नाम सम्मिलित किए जाने के लिए -	फार्म-6ए
3. निर्वाचक नामावली से नाम विलोपित कराने के लिए -	फार्म-7
4. निर्वाचक नामावली में प्रविष्टियों की शुद्धि के लिए-	फार्म-8
5. एक निर्वाचन क्षेत्र में निवास स्थान को एक स्थान से दूसरे स्थान पर स्थानान्तरित कराने के लिए -	फार्म-8ए

उपरोक्त सेवाएं जन सामान्य www.voterportal.eci.gov.in पर अपने **Mobile Number/E-mail ID/ Voter ID Number** अथवा अपने **Facebook/G-mail/Twitter and Linkdin** द्वारा **Login** करके प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

फार्म-6, 6ए, 7, 8 व 8ए में सम्बन्धित आवेदन ऑफलाइन भी यथानिर्दिष्ट स्थानों पर जमा कर सकते हैं।

उक्त के अतिरिक्त ऊपर दिए गए वेबपोर्टल पर अपना नाम **Search in Electoral Roll** बटन द्वारा निर्वाचक नामावली में खोज सकते हैं।

आवेदन की सामान्य व्यवस्था

- संक्षिप्त पुनरीक्षण की अवधि में सभी फार्म अपने बूथ लेवल अधिकारी, पदाभिहीत अधिकारी, तहसील स्थित मतदाता पंजीकरण केन्द्र, जिला निर्वाचन अधिकारी के कार्यालय से अथवा वेबसाइट www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in से डाउनलोड कर प्राप्त किए जा सकते हैं।
- सम्बन्धित फार्मों पर अपना आवेदन (फोटो, पता, जन्मतिथि के प्रमाण सहित) निम्नलिखित स्थानों पर जमा कर सकते हैं:-
 - 2.1 सम्बन्धित पोलिंग बूथ के बूथ लेवल अधिकारी के पास
 - 2.2 तहसील स्थित मतदाता पंजीकरण केन्द्र पर
 - 2.3 तहसील के उप जिलाधिकारी/निर्वाचक रजिस्ट्रीकरण अधिकारी के कार्यालय में
 - 2.4 तहसील के तहसीलदार/सहायक निर्वाचक रजिस्ट्रीकरण अधिकारी के कार्यालय में
 - 2.5 जिलाधिकारी/जिला निर्वाचन अधिकारी के कार्यालय में
- उपरोक्त सभी आवेदन चयनित **CSC (कॉमन सर्विस सेंटर)** के माध्यम से भी निर्धारित शुल्क का भुगतान कर किए जा सकते हैं।

मतदान केन्द्रों पर पंजीकरण हेतु विशेष अभियान दिवस

22 नवम्बर 2020 रविवार

28 नवम्बर 2020 शनिवार

05 दिसम्बर 2020 शनिवार

13 दिसम्बर 2020 रविवार

मतदाता सूची में नाम देखने की व्यवस्था :


- मतदाता सूचियों का आलेख्य 17 नवम्बर, 2020 से 15 दिसम्बर, 2020 के मध्य सभी मतदान केन्द्रों पर देखने के लिए उपलब्ध होगा।
- वेबसाइट www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in पर **Search your name** Electoral Roll बटन पर क्लिक कर मतदाताओं द्वारा अपने से सम्बन्धित विवरण को देखा जा सकता है।

काल सेन्टर/शुल्क रहित निर्वाचन हेल्प लाइन नं. - 1950

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the pioneer agenda




In this world,
everyone wants to
know everything
about you, and I
think that's funny
— Leighton Meester

FROM THE INSIDE

Accounting for Karma

The law of karma provides a system of justice in which one is rewarded for good karma and punished for bad ones

2



Know what you are worth

You can't simply blame time or destiny indications for your failure. Better look into your own fault lines

4

As we learn to live with Covid-19 around, things have been particularly harsh for children who are finding themselves trapped and are struggling to get back to normal, writes KAARTIK GUPTA, as he suggests measures to ensure that our children remain healthy and emerge stronger from this crisis

THE NEW CRISIS POINT

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Till now, the year 2020 has been a difficult one to say the least. The Covid-19 pandemic has changed everything around us. How we meet and greet others, type of clothes we wear, how we stand and even sit in public places, how often we go out; basically everything has changed. Months of uncertainty, lockdown, reports of chaos caused due to the pandemic all over media, restricted movements and forced isolations have taken a toll on the mental and emotional health of a large number of people.

As per recent reports, there has been a significant rise in people seeking psychological help over the past few months. Anxiety, Depression, increased incidents of domestic violence, substance abuse, stress due to loss of livelihood and financial crisis, escalation in the number of suicides were some of the grave issues for which people sought psychological help. People of all ages have been deeply impacted due to the changed world order.

As the nation is in a gradual phase of unlock at present, most of the workforce and economy has opened up. People have resumed work with varied work days and shifts. However, children are still stuck at homes. They are unable to go to their respective schools and colleges as Covid cases continue to rise and thus as a safety measure, educational institutions have not yet been given the nod to operate completely. Students, at different educational levels, are forced to continue with online classes. Some have even appeared for online exams, while few others wait for the technical glitches to be sorted. These have been challenging times especially for children as not just they had to adapt to a very different method of learning, they have also been deprived of the fun times they share with their friends in school and college. Those belonging to the lower socio-economic strata have found it even more difficult to keep up with the teaching due to lack of resources like smartphones, laptops and slower internet speed.

Problems faced by children due to the pandemic include:


- **Online learning:** Technological advancements made it possible for students to continue with their studies even from the space and safety of their own homes. Online classes, e-lectures, webinars replaced regular classrooms and lecture halls. However, it came with the side-effects of reduced attention span, virtual absenteeism as students would login for class but would be watching or playing something else rather than listening to their teachers, lack of writing skills as all the assignments or projects had to be virtually completed and submitted. Poor internet connectivity, concurrent online classes of sibling, lack of smartphone also affected the children's ability to attend e-schools/colleges. In addition to this, time-bound assignment submissions and exams heightened the child's anxiety if in case he/she is unable to upload the document for a reason beyond his/her control. Back-to-back classes also affected the children's ability to pay attention to what is being taught.
- **Restricted outdoor activity:** Childhood is a period where an individual grows not just by learning things at school, but also by engaging in play activities with his/her peers. It is a treasured time of the day and almost all children look forward to going out and playing with their friends. But the pandemic forced them to stay indoors and thus restricted their ability to play with friends and siblings. This has been one of the most important factors for children having more psychological and behavioural issues during the past few months. Regular exercise and playing activities ensure adequate production and secretion of endorphins and

growth hormones which are vital for a child's overall health and well-being.


- **Lack of privacy:** With everyone being at home for most part of the day, one's personal space has also been compromised to a certain extent. This is especially true for adolescents as more family time, less time with friends has been tough on some teenagers. Although, many have utilised this time well to bond with their family members, some found it difficult which often led to an increase in arguments and conflicts at home.
- **Increased screen time:** Ask any parent of a teenager or even a child and they will tell you how fed up they are due to their child's excessive phone/laptop usage. Social media, OTT platforms, messaging apps, online games; this cocktail is any parents' worst enemy and ironically their child's go to thing. Excessive screen time has been an issue for a very long time now, but due to the pandemic when even studies started happening online things just went from bad to worse for children and adolescents. As per a recent pre-Covid times study, an adolescent on an average spends around 6-7 hours watching or using phone/laptop screen; much higher than the healthy usage. Children and adolescents are completely hooked onto the screen which has adverse effects on their psychological well-being.
- **Restricted socialisation:** Due to the pandemic, our social interactions and gatherings have been severely affected. Humans are social animals and we need to socialise for us to feel safe and secure. Adolescents and young adults, especially the ones in their last school or college year, are apprehensive if they would be able to meet their friends and teachers properly one final time before they pass out from the educational institutions. Children have reported feeling isolated and lonely during the past few months as they have not been able to go and meet their friends in person.
- **Increased risk of child abuse:** The pandemic has increased the prevalence of many common sources of family stress, placing children at risk of abuse and neglect. As per recent reports, the incidents of domestic violence and abuse had significantly gone up during the lockdown period placing children at a greater risk and adversely affecting their impressionable minds. A child who has been a victim or even a witness to abuse at home can experience a variety of psychological and emotional issues both as a child and even later on as an adult. Providing a safe and nurturing home environment for a child to grow in is each one's responsibility and we need to take adequate steps to ensure the same. Any incident of abuse needs to be reported to the police and Child Welfare Committee so that the child can be immediately secured and the perpetrators be punished.

As the number of new cases has lessened over the past few weeks and we all learn to live with Covid-19 around, things are slowly getting back to normal; a new normal. As a child/adolescent going through any of the above mentioned issues, you can take the following measures to ensure that you remain healthy and emerge stronger from this crisis:

- **Communication:** Talk to your parents, siblings or friends about how you are feeling about the current scenario. Confide in the one you trust. Share whatever you are feeling or thinking about, no matter how trivial you might think it may sound to them. As a parent, be patient and a good listener to your child/adolescent. Hear them out and try to understand what he/she is going through. Encourage them to talk about their feelings, their thoughts, any apprehensions or anything they are worried about. Listen to understand, rather than to reply. Provide a caring, supportive and non-judgmental environment at home for him/her to feel safe and secure at home. Do not



AS PER RECENT REPORTS, THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT RISE IN PEOPLE SEEKING PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS. ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, INCREASED INCIDENTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, STRESS DUE TO LOSS OF LIVELIHOOD AND FINANCIAL CRISIS, ESCALATION IN THE NUMBER OF SUICIDES WERE SOME OF THE GRAVE ISSUES FOR WHICH PEOPLE SOUGHT PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP. PEOPLE OF ALL AGES HAVE BEEN DEEPLY IMPACTED DUE TO THE CHANGED WORLD ORDER



dismiss their fears or thoughts as illogical, even if they seem so to you.

- **Get involved at home:** Use the current situation to your benefit and try to get involved with some tasks at home. Learn new skills, take up responsibilities and help out at home in whatever way you can.
- **Limit screen time:** It might be difficult with online classes but reduce your screen time as much as possible. Attend classes sincerely rather than trying to multi-task or fool your teacher as you are the only one who'll suffer because of it. Take short breaks between classes. Always sit on a chair or floor and do your work; use your bed only for sleeping. Be mindful of your posture, as long usage of phone/laptop can lead to problems like cervical spondylitis.
- **Read books:** Do not limit your learning only through phone/laptop. Put in the extra effort and prepare through books as well; reading thoroughly helps in concept clarity and thus can be better recalled during exams.
- **Maintain a routine:** Having a structured day will lessen the anxiety or boredom you may feel. Go to bed and wake up at the same time everyday, do some physical exercise for half an hour at least, eat healthy home cooked food. Fix a time for your studies and engage in your hobbies regularly.
- **Socialise but responsibly:** Gradual unlocking of the country has begun and thus it has become easier to meet your friends. Once in a while you can go out and meet your friends for lunch or dinner provided you are following the safety guidelines laid down by the government for prevention of spread of Covid-19. It will be a good change for you and you can catch up with your friends in person after many months. If not

this, you always have the option of being in touch with them over video calls or normal phone calls. The important thing is to be in touch with your loved ones and not be withdrawn or isolated.

- **Avoid substance use:** Teenage is a time when the individual wants to explore and experiment different things in life. The new found sense of independence and an emotional roller-coaster driven by the hormonal changes can tempt one to seek thrill even at the expense of their well-being. Substance or drug use, which can rapidly develop into an abuse, is a major issue which plagues our children and adolescents. With the glorification of such activities in popular songs and movies, it poses a major threat as engaging in such things is wrongly considered to be cool and youngsters give into it just to be a part of a group. Please be advised to stay away from such stuff and use your intelligence and smartness wisely.
- **Seek Professional Help:** If you notice a significant change in your child's behaviour which is affecting his/her personal, social, academic/occupational functioning please be advised to consult your nearest Mental Health Professional like Clinical Psychologist, Child Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Psychiatric Social Worker or Counsellor.

When the going gets tough, the tough get going! Let us all do our bit to ensure that we all emerge stronger and wiser from this pandemic.

The author is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist at AKGsOVIHAMS Medical Centres at Pitampura and Satya Niketan. He provides psychotherapy, counselling, psychological assessment, and de-addiction counselling to people of all age groups

The seventh question is: "What does taking shelter mean to you?" To me it means turning to God and praying for His guidance and help for whatever is troubling me. God is very merciful. He guides and helps. The eighth question is: "What do you really want

Women in a just society in New India

“The awkward fit of theory to actuality is most vivid for poor women in poor economies. These women may depend on others, but lack the supposed securities of dependence. They are impoverished, but are often providers. They are powerless, yet others who are yet more vulnerable depend on them for protection. Their vulnerability reflects heavy demands as much as slender resources.”

— **Philosopher Onora O’Neill**

Concerns about inequality and injustice women face in various societies don’t require a league consisting only of economists and policy-analysts. Both historically and contemporarily, philosophers and literary figures world over have reaffirmed their interest through their characters in these overwhelming problems. I will like to initiate this article by bringing into picture two characters: Sissy Jupe from Charles Dickens’s novel *Hard Times* and Vasilisa Arsenyeva from Salman Rushdie’s novel *The Golden House*. One may wonder what these novelists writing in different centuries have to do with women and a just society. Both Dickens and Rushdie in their own way handled hard facts of life with an unflinching appeal to their readers.

Mr M’Choakumchild was exploring Sissy’s knowledge about national prosperity. “Now, this schoolroom is a Nation. And in this nation, there are fifty millions of money. Isn’t this prosperous nation, and ain’t you in a thriving state?” Sissy pleaded ignorance but nevertheless explained her ignorance. She said she could not answer the question unless she knew, “Who had got the money, and whether any of it was mine.” Obviously Sissy Jupe, not happy with sad affairs of distributive justice chose to lament it.

Rushdie, in *V Arsenyeva*, finds a different version of a woman. Rushdie captured her emotions while she delivered a monologue on poverty, love and need. Let me quote from her monologue. “Please. I require no sympathy regarding the poverty of my origin... Poverty is a disgusting condition and to fail to emerge from it is also disgusting. Fortunately I excelled at all things both physical and mental and so I have been able to come to America... I know my presence here is the fruit of my own labour... The past is a broken cardboard suitcase full of photographs of things I no longer wish to see. I am the general of myself and my body is the foot soldier that obeys what the general commands.”

The two characters share some commonalities. First both are women: one a young school-going girl and the second V Arsenyeva; a relatively older Russian girl with origin in Siberia, and living in America. Next both concern themselves with resources: their distribution and empowerment. Both characters, through their outpourings, set the ball rolling: an emotive story of real agony and anguish of a little girl who would be a woman a few years later and a young woman who was a little girl a few years earlier. Sissy for her age was quite wise; poverty taught her wisdom from very early stage of childhood; it gave her far-sightedness early in life. She could distinguish between finer nuisances of micro and macroeconomics and had no qualms in believing macro affluence did not suo motu convert itself into micro affluence and socio-economic comfort. The monologue of V Arsenyeva is a reflection on overcoming paucity of resources and ignorance by dint of “great self-discipline” and the acquired ability to “build a house” so that “one can live in it (this being an example).” Sissy lamented lack of empowerment, Arsenyeva believed in self-determination and relentless pursuance of her dreams.

Both these women used their experiences to remind the world it fell short of being completely just. History bears us out the world has always fallen short of being completely just particularly when it comes to women. The exclusion of women outside the realm of opportunity to partner in building prosperous societies and economies is denial of a just society to them and others too.

Much work both in theory and practice has been done for exploring the methods to improve the lot of the weak, the exploited and the marginalised. Looking at the recent history of empowerment, a conference that took place at World Institute for Development Economics Research in Helsinki in 1988 to deliberate upon issues like what is meant by “quality of life”, and the requirements in terms of socio-economic policy for improving and ultimately achieving it there-



by empowering the deprived ones, started a lively discussion on way ahead. Helsinki conference unequivocally stressed on the need to assess a number of distinct areas of human life in determining how well people are doing rather than measuring quality of life by hinging on single index of per capita national income.

From Helsinki conference the world travelled through Millennium Development Goals and reached in 2015 more comprehensive and inclusive Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 5 of Sustainable Development Goals 2015 aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women in the public and private spheres and to undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources and access to ownership of property. Descent work, equal access to education, and representation in political and economic decision making processes are the rights women must enjoy. Investment in the empowerment of women results not only in making progress on Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals but also in fuelling sustainable economic development. Let us have a look at Indian scenario.

On August 14, 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru reminded the nation about the task ahead i.e. “...the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity.” But unfortunately for close to six decades (which indeed is a long period) the tasks identified by Nehru remained largely unaccomplished with not much success. Many countries like Cuba, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Costa Rica, etc, following different growth strategies could achieve huge reduction in human deprivation and inequality. In these countries much stress was laid particularly on expansion of basic education and health care. India’s performance was certainly not worth bragging about and not very enthusiastic in the field of opportunities for women and their empowerment. When it comes to women, where does the problem lie particularly in traditional societies like ours?

Julia Annas, Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University, in an essay titled “Women and the Quality of Life: Two Norms or One?” tries to answer above question by analysing the existence of “two actual norms for human life”. She gives examples from traditional societies where certain practices have withheld benefits accruing to women. For example, unfortunately it is still believed that resources should not be “wasted” on educating daughters. The reason adduced for

this as cited by Annas is “...the women in the traditional society, with their domestic futures, don’t desire education.” Annas further gives similar examples like, to quote Annas, “...women may justly be kept from participation in public life because they are more self-centered and less capable of impartial thought than men.” This example shows how such reasons adduced result in various assertions of differences between men’s and women’s natures. Annas ridicules this reasoning and asserts that “superficial desires” as compared to “informed desires” where all positive aspects of education are known to women must recede and thus women will show desire for education. What the learned philosopher means is, “...injustice results from the existence of two norms,” and harps on mitigating superficial desires “resting on an unreflective view of their circumstances.”

Even now it has been a known practice in many households that the woman who cooks food is the last to eat it and that too whatever meagre is leftover. They are not expected to complain and they are ever ready to confess that their nutritional status and physical health are good even when they have physical ailments. Thus desires adjust to deprivation and division of functions. This sort of exclusionary neglect needs immediate attention and equipping women with adequate information not justifying “superficial desires” is the first crucial step towards eliminating cases of exclusionary neglect. Annas rightly concludes in any society gender issues are not focused on women alone but the relationship between men and women.

Current efforts afoot in India under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi reflect on concerns expressed by philosophers like Professors Julia Annas and Onora O’Neill. Narendra Modi has visualised through his vast experience as leader of Gujarat and afterwards the nation the use of comparative perspective by going beyond the limited.

For example, the need to understand the nexus between social conditions and economic opportunities has been properly appreciated. He has realised the crucial linkages between creating basic educational facilities and opening up of new economic opportunities and expanding the scope for better use of labour and skills. Most importantly, it has also been recognised that social opportunities are influenced by a host of factors like the state of health and educational services, the nature and availability of finance, the presence

of markets, including policies to promote and restrict these markets, presence of middlemen in markets and very importantly gender injustice. Therefore, the Prime Minister insists on unified approach to empowerment and this is reflected in various programmes launched by present Government.

The commitment of India to implement the Sustainable Development Goals was spelt out through the speech and commitment made by Prime Minister of India at the UN Summit for the adoption of post 2015 Development Agenda. In his speech the Prime Minister said, “Today, much of India’s development agenda is mirrored in the Sustainable Development Goals.” Further with reference to empowerment, he said, the attack on poverty includes not only expanded conventional schemes of development, but also a new era of inclusion and empowerment, turning distant dreams into immediate possibilities. He further spoke about new bank accounts for 180 million; direct transfer of benefits, micro enterprises and micro finance, drawing on the strength of digital and mobile applications with the focus on basics, housing, power, water and sanitation for all. These are important not just for welfare, but also human dignity. Development is intrinsically linked to empowerment of women and it begins with a massive programme on educating the girl child that has become every family’s mission.

He clarified these are goals with a definite date, not just a mirage of hope. Thus the broad agenda towards empowerment with reference to SDGs in India is set.

The Prime Minister’s constant emphasis on inclusion and inclusiveness is at the root of developmental efforts progressing in India. Sincere, honest and transparent efforts to achieve overall development for all with no exceptions are clearly visible. The Prime Minister’s historic speech makes it amply clear that overall human development has much to do with making structural changes to conquer the inequities and exploitations that characterise society. This in turn constitutes an efficient and effective blend of meeting “basic needs” and equipping people with “capabilities”. Efforts aim at planning and intertwining capabilities created now with a bigger expansion of capabilities in the future. Possible conflicts between immediately enhancing capabilities i.e meeting basic needs and long-term expansion of capabilities in the future i.e economic prosperity cannot be ruled out and

need be addressed in time.

Though SDGs cover all human beings, for the purpose of this article and due to paucity of space, I will limit myself with some important schemes launched in recent past to enhance opportunities for women empowerment.

The Government of India has recognised, amid others, two important ways to empower women: Economic empowerment through participation in economic activities and opportunities and second through mitigation of educational deprivations. The schemes chalked out and implemented broadly address these requirements and thereby endeavour to ensure that women gain equal rights, opportunities and access to resources. The first and foremost thing is their safety, security and economic empowerment. Towards that end, schemes like Mahila Police Volunteers (MPV) envisaging engagement of Mahila Police Volunteers in States/UTs who act as a link between police and community and facilitate women in distress; Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana empowering women below poverty line and protecting their health by providing LPG cylinder free of cost.

Working Women Hostel (WWH) ensures the safety and security for working women by providing safe and conveniently located accommodation. Pradhan Mantri Sukanya Samridhi Yojana aims at economic empowerment of girls by opening their bank accounts and enabling their parents to save funds for their female child’s education and marriage. Under this scheme the account can be opened at any post office or a branch of an authorised commercial bank in India between the birth of the girl child and till the age of ten by a parent or guardian. The account offers 8.6 per cent interest with the girl child able to operate the account once she is ten years old and the account allows for fifty per cent withdrawal at the age of eighteen for higher education. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana aims at prioritising housing for women. Launched in 2016, Mahila-E-Haat is a bilingual marketing platform intended to help aspiring women entrepreneurs, NGOs and self-help groups to showcase their services and products. Mahila Shakti Kendra was launched in 2017 to provide women with opportunities for skill development, employment, health, nutrition and digital literacy.

Each Mahila Shakti Kendra working at National, State, District and Block levels, provides an opportunity to women to approach the

Government for their entitlements through capacity building and training. Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Yojana that came into being in January 2015, drives at generating awareness and improving the efficacy of welfare services for girl child. Most important components of the scheme include addressing the issue of declining child sex ratio, gender-based sex-selective eliminations and protecting survival, protection and education of the girl child.

These schemes resonate well with the sustainable targets on gender equality and are marked by inclusionary coherence. For example, the Government has identified ending violence against women and providing security and safety to women as a key national priority. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme aims at equal opportunity and education for girls; Sukanya Samridhi Yojana aims at prosperity of girl child and Janani Suraksha Yojana provides safe motherhood intervention under National Health Mission with the objective of reducing maternal and neo-natal mortality among poor pregnant women.

The most novel feature of these schemes is generally these don’t flow from a common perception that problems faced by women are cases of more general difficulties of the deprived and marginalised population. Each and every scheme with its distinct identity and full-fledged mission is intended for girls and women and aims at establishment of a just society for women without any discrimination.

The crux of recent efforts in India in the field of women empowerment is reduction of women inequality and injustice by providing them resources and opportunities and equipping them with decision-making power including political powers. Onora O’Neill suggests, “a serious account of justice cannot gloss over the predicaments of impoverished providers in marginalised and developing countries.” That is an important lesson for policy makers who plan for creating a just society or making society less unjust. An emerging New India very well addresses the issue raised by Onora O’Neill. The concept of a just society is firmly embedded in the multi-peaked idea of a New India.

(The writer, a retired Additional Deputy CAG, is a poet, writer and columnist. His fourth book “Soliloquy of a Small-Town Uncivil Servant”, a semi-autobiographical account, published in 2019 by Rupa Publications, New Delhi, has been getting international acclaim)

Current efforts afoot in India under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi reflect on concerns expressed by philosophers like Professors Julia Annas and Onora O’Neill. The crux of recent efforts in India in the field of women empowerment is reduction of women inequality and injustice by providing them resources and opportunities and equipping them with decision-making power, including political powers



KK SRIVASTAVA

