



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

LUCKNOW, TUESDAY NOVEMBER 24, 2020; PAGES 14 ₹3



BAFTA COMES TO INDIA:
TIM HUNTER
13 VIVACITY

SC raises concerns over Covid relapse

Apex court asks Centre, States to file status report in 2 days on steps taken to deal with situation; Maha told to be prepared for worst in Dec

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said that the Covid-19 situation has worsened in Delhi and gone out of control in Gujarat even as it warned Maharashtra to be prepared for the worst in December. Expressing concern over the surge in number of Covid-19 cases across the country, the court asked the Centre and all States to file within two days status reports detailing the steps taken to deal with the situation.

"Things have worsened in Delhi especially in November. You file a status report on what steps have been taken," a Bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan told Additional Solicitor General Sanjay Jain, who was appearing for the Delhi Government.

"In Gujarat, the situation is going out of control," said the Bench, also comprising Justices RS Reddy and MR Shah.

"There is spike in cases and this is only November. Prepare for the worst in December. You have to take steps," the Bench told the lawyer appearing for Maharashtra.

The Bench was hearing a matter regarding the need for proper treatment of Covid-19 patients and dignified handling of dead bodies in the hospitals. It has posted the matter for further hearing on November 27.

The court pointed out that Covid-19 cases have risen across the country especially in Delhi, Maharashtra and Gujarat and noted the submissions of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta who said steps are being taken to deal with the situation in Delhi.

Jain told the Bench that as

per earlier order of the SC, an expert committee has been constituted and other directions have also been complied with by the Delhi Government.

He said that a separate space has been earmarked for the cremation of 385 bodies.

"We have no difficulty that you have complied with orders of this court. But looking at the present situation, what else are you doing," the Bench observed and asked Jain to file a status report.

The apex court also questioned the Gujarat Government over its policy of marriage celebration during the pandemic time, saying cases are rising there and the situation has worsened in the State after Delhi and Maharashtra.

"After Delhi and Maharashtra situation in Gujarat has also worsened. What is that you are allowing marriage celebration during day time? You file an affidavit on the status report on steps taken as on date," the SC said.

Continued on Page 11



A health worker collects samples from a passenger for the Covid-19 test, as coronavirus cases surge across Delhi, at ISBT Kashmere Gate in New Delhi on Monday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

HC DECLINES 'HALF-BAKED' PLEA FOR IMMEDIATE LOCKDOWN IN DELHI

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Monday declined to entertain a plea seeking directions to the AAP Government to immediately place the city under lockdown in view of the rising Covid-19 cases and air pollution levels, saying the petition was "half-baked" and "unnecessary".

OXFORD UNIVERSITY VACCINE 'EFFECTIVE' AT PREVENTING COVID-19; SHOWS 70% PROTECTION

London: The vaccine candidate being trialled by Oxford University on Monday presented crucial Phase 3 interim results which show that it is "effective" at preventing Covid-19 and offers a high level of protection from the deadly virus.

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 91,74,876

DEATHS: 1,34,213

RECOVERED:

86,00,808

ACTIVE: 4,37,778



STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	17,84,361	46,653	16,54,793
Karnataka	8,74,555	11,678	8,38,150
Andhra Pradesh	8,62,758	6,948	8,42,416
Tamil Nadu	7,71,619	11,622	7,47,752
Kerala	5,67,204	2,072	4,99,338
Delhi	5,34,317	8,512	4,88,476
Uttar Pradesh	5,28,833	7,582	4,97,475
West Bengal	4,59,918	8,072	4,26,816
Odisha	3,14,629	1,710	3,06,726
Telangana	2,64,128	1,433	2,51,468
Rajasthan	2,47,168	2,181	2,20,871
Bihar	2,31,044	1,227	2,24,701
Chhattisgarh	2,23,436	2,732	1,99,311
Haryana	2,19,963	2,216	1,97,335
Assam	2,11,682	975	2,07,525
Gujarat	1,98,899	3,876	1,81,287

At least 5 die of Covid an hour in Delhi in 24 hours

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Covid-19 fatalities have increased in the National Capital with at least five people dying of the deadly virus every hour on an average in Delhi in the last 24 hours.

While a total of 511 Covid-19 deaths were recorded across the country in the past 24 hours, Delhi accounted for the largest chunk of such fatalities with 121 fatalities, the data updated at 8 am showed.

This was accounted for the largest chunk of such fatalities across the country, which recorded an average of 21 deaths in this period.

The analysis was based on the data from the Union Health Ministry which gave the total number of deaths recorded in the country and all States and UTs due to Covid-19 in the past 24 hours.

MBBS, students, dentists to assist in Covid-19 care

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday ordered the fourth-fifth-year MBBS students and dentists to be allowed to assist in hospitals and Covid-19 ICU units to meet the manpower shortage.

His decision came after a surge in the coronavirus cases and fatalities reported since last week in the national Capital.

According to an official order, the fourth-and-fifth-year MBBS students and dental doctors will assist duty doctors at the honorarium of ₹1,000 for an eight-hour shift and ₹2,000 for a 12-hour shift per day.

The Delhi Government, in its order, had also said in the case of interns, the honorarium would be over and above their stipend. According to Government database, Delhi has reported 40,212 active cases, 4,81,260 recoveries, and 8,391 deaths.

Covid -ve report must for entering Maha

Those from NCR, Guj, Raj, Goa must carry RT-PCR -ve report with them

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a safety precaution taken in view of increasing Covid-19 cases in the national Capital and three other States, the Maharashtra Government on Monday made it mandatory for

all domestic passengers travelling to Maharashtra by air, trains and roads from the National Capital Region and the States of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa to carry RT-PCR negative test report with them.

Amid a fear of a second Covid-19 wave gripping Maharashtra in the wake of increasing incidence of Covid-19 in New Delhi, Ahmedabad and Surat, the Maharashtra Government put in place a mechanism to prevent the passengers carrying Covid-19

virus from entering Maharashtra from Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had, in his address to the people across the State, said on Sunday that his Government was on a "high alert" in view of increasing pandemic cases in cities like New Delhi, Ahmedabad and Surat. "Though there is no wave in the State, we cannot lower our guard. The State health authorities are well-equipped to tack-

le the second pandemic wave if it hits the State. My request to people is to take all health precautions," he had said.

Amid speculation that started brewing a few days ago that Maharashtra may suspend train and air transport services between Mumbai and Delhi, Uddhav Thackeray made the first move when the State made compulsory for those arriving in Maharashtra by air, train and road to carry RT-PCR negative test report with them.

Continued on Page 11

China's mad infra push along LAC alarms India

Bunkers, roads, dwelling units in eastern sector of LAC besides Ladakh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

While efforts are on to resolve the seven-month-old stand-off through sustained dialogue, China continues with infrastructure development all along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Military ammunition bunkers, roads and prefabricated dwelling units have come up in eastern sector of the LAC besides Ladakh.

These developments come at a time when the two sides are preparing for the ninth round of Corps Commander-level talks soon. While both the commanders reiterated their commitment to continue talks, China's aggressive infrastructure push has alarmed the



Indian security establishment.

Earlier, rapid construction was only confined to Ladakh sector of the LAC in the backdrop of the face-offs. However, the furious pitch of work in the East in Doklam near Sikkim is a cause of serious concern, sources said here on Monday.

The Doklam region saw more than 70-day long face-off in 2017 after India objected to construction of a road by China there. The issue was resolved after intense negotiations at the

diplomatic and military levels.

In the latest developments, satellite images show construction of hardened ammunition bunkers, two kilometers from Sinche-La (pass) on the eastern periphery of the Doklam plateau near the border between Bhutan and China.

The new structures will enable the Chinese troops to withstand intense cold there and face any challenge with sufficient logistical support, sources said here.

High-resolution images from Maxar Technologies indicate road access from the site of the bunkers to the Sinche-La pass, which is then connected to an all-weather road constructed by Chinese workers that stretches across the 5 kilometre-wide Doklam plateau.

The new bunkers and construction of the road on the Doklam plateau after the stand-off in 2017, the construction of a "village" and 9-kilometre track adjacent to the plateau are strong indications that China has no hesitation in construction activity in territory which Bhutan claims to be its own.

A September 2020 study by STRATFOR, the world's leading geopolitical intelligence platform, said the 2017 Doklam crisis "appears to have shifted China's strategic objectives, with China more than doubling its total number of air bases, air defence positions and heliports near the Indian border over the past three years."

Continued on Page 11

AIMIM leaders join TMC to stop minority votes' division

PNS ■ KOLKATA

In a sudden development, a number of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) men, including their senior leader Anwar Pasha, on Monday joined the Trinamool Congress in an apparent bid to stop division of minority votes in Bengal by claiming Asaduddin Owaisi-led party was only acting as a "polariser of votes" to help the BJP.

The AIMIM, however, claimed, Pasha was just a "party worker", and the TMC leadership was trying to fool the masses.

Alleging that a few people are trying to steer the country towards destruction using religion, Pasha said those who are eyeing Bengal at present, whether "wearing saffron or green", should know that there is no place for creating religious

divisions in the State.

"AIMIM has played a hand in the polarisation of votes in Bihar and thus helped the BJP in forming the Government there, but this will not happen in Bengal," he said.

Pasha, who was welcomed to the TMC fold by Ministers Bratya Basu and Moloy Ghatak, said that 30 per cent of West Bengal's population are Muslims, asserting that the political developments in Bihar cannot be emulated in Bengal.

Urging Muslims in the State to stand by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, he said the AIMIM chief should not come to Bengal.

Owaisi had said on Sunday that the party is deliberating with the West Bengal unit over contesting the assembly elections and will take a decision on getting feedback from them.

Pasha said fear was being

created in the minds of minorities over CAA and NRC and the West Bengal CM "is fighting for us and has taken to the streets to support us.

"Making a law in Parliament is not the end, it has to be implemented on the ground," he said.

Senior AIMIM leader and in-charge of Bengal, Asim Waqar, declined to attach much importance to the development and urged the TMC not to fool the masses with their "dirty tricks".

"Those who have joined the TMC today are neither leaders nor office bearers of the state AIMIM unit. They are just party workers, just like lakhs of AIMIM workers across the state. The TMC should stop pursuing such dirty tricks. Their joining would not have any impact on our prospects in Bengal," Waqar said.

CAPSULE

MINIMUM TEMP IN DELHI DROPS TO 6.3 DEGREES C

New Delhi: A cold wave gripped Delhi on Monday as the minimum temperature dropped to 6.3 degrees Celsius, five notches below normal and the lowest in the month of November since 2003, according to the India Meteorological Department.

KASHMIR RECEIVES SEASON'S 1st SNOWFALL

Srinagar: Most of the plain areas in Kashmir experienced the season's first snowfall on Monday, even as the higher reaches witnessed heavy precipitation, leading to the closure of Srinagar-Leh road which connects the valley with Ladakh, officials said here.

CBSE CLASS 12 PRACTICAL EXAM DATES OUT

New Delhi: The CBSE on Monday released the tentative dates for the Class 12th board practical exams amid the speculation of postponing or cancellation of the exams in the wake of coronavirus pandemic.

Kerala puts on hold changes in Police Act after criticism

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The CPI(M)-led Left front Government in Kerala on Monday decided to put on hold a controversial amendment to the Police Act as the law triggered a political storm across the country with many describing the measure as an assault on freedom of expression and media.

Shortly after CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury announced in New Delhi that the amendment providing for up to five years jail term to those making defamatory social media posts would be reconsidered, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said his government was not "intending" to implement it now.

Further action would be taken after detailed discus-

sions in the Assembly and hearing views from various quarters, he said, with the announcement coming amid widespread criticism of the amendment and protests by Congress and threat by BJP to legally challenge it.

While the Government has said it brought the amendment through an ordinance to check cyberbullying, opposition parties and even Left sympathisers have slammed it, saying it was against the freedom of speech and media.

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Ramesh Chennithala dubbed as a "hoax" Vijayan's statement that his Government was not intending to implement the act and demanded that it be repealed at the earliest.

Continued on Page 11

Gogoi succumbs to post-Covid disease

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Veteran Congress leader and a three-term former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi died here on Monday while undergoing treatment for post-Covid-19 complications, State Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

Gogoi, thrice Chief Minister of the state from 2001 to 2016, breathed his last at the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) at 5.34 pm, Sarma said. He was 84 and is survived by wife Dolly, daughter Chandrima and son Gaurav, a Lok Sabha member.

The veteran Congress leader was first admitted to the hospital on August 26 after testing positive for Covid-19 and was discharged for a brief period before being admitted again on November 2.

His condition deteriorated on November 21, following multi-organ failure and was put



TARUN GOGOI
APRIL 1, 1936 — NOVEMBER 23, 2020

on invasive ventilation. Gogoi was given dialysis on Sunday. His condition deteriorated further over the past few hours and the hospital where he was admitted said he was "very, very critical".

"Extremely sad to know of the demise of Shri Tarun Gogoi, former Chief Minister

of Assam. The country has lost a veteran leader with rich political and administrative experience. His long tenure in office was a period of epochal change in Assam," President Ram Nath tweeted.

Expressing his anguish at the death of Gogoi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi

described him as a popular leader and veteran administrator who had years of political experience in Assam as well as at the Centre.

Modi tweeted, "Sri Tarun Gogoi Ji was a popular leader and a veteran administrator, who had years of political experience in Assam as well as the Centre. Anguished by his passing away. My thoughts are with his family and supporters in this hour of sadness. Om Shanti."

"Shri Tarun Gogoi was one of the tallest leaders of the Congress party, admired and respected for his extraordinary wisdom, vision and ability. With his long years of experience as an MLA, an MP, a Central Minister and Chief Minister of Assam, he was someone to whose unfailingly wise counsel and advice we could always turn to," said Congress chief Sonia Gandhi.

Continued on Page 11

State imposes curbs on number of guests

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In view of the spike in COVID-19 cases, the Uttar Pradesh government has decided to limit the number of guests to a maximum of 100 at weddings and other functions across the state.

As per the instructions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, any social, educational, sports, entertainment, cultural, religious, political programme, or other group activities would be permitted with a ceiling of 100 people.

Face masks, social distancing, thermal scanning, sanitiser, and hand wash will be mandatory in the programmes.

An advisory issued by the state government on Monday said that now against the permission of 200 people in a closed area outside the con-

tainment zone, only 100 people would be allowed in any marriage, political or social gathering.

However, in the open area, the restriction will be 40 per cent or less of the total area where the function is being held.

The chief minister Yogi also directed the officials to ensure compliance with all guidelines and orders to control the spread of the novel coronavirus infection.

Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad advised people not to take senior citizens to marriages or social gatherings as they were more vulnerable to the novel coronavirus.

"The novel coronavirus infection is increasing among senior citizens and now it has

Continued on Page 11

Chief Minister inaugurates hi-tech labs

'Kanpur's MKU to jointly make night vision devices for armed forces in UP'

THE MINISTER ALSO REQUESTED THALES GROUP TO INVEST IN UP TO MAKE PARTS OF FIGHTER JETS AND ASSURED OF SUPPORT OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT

"Thales is working alongside HAL, BHEL, L&T in India in the technology sector. This makes it clear that the opening of Thales' office in UP will be a boost to the state's aspiration for becoming 'aatmanirbhar' (self-reliant) in the defence sector," he said. Earlier, MNCs and foreign-based firms preferred to invest in south Indian states, but over the last three years they have increasingly shown interest in UP as an investment destination, he added. He also praised the leadership of the chief minister which he said has resulted in the state jumping from 12th spot to second in the country in terms of ease of doing business. Thales' India head Emmanuel de Roquefeuil said the group is working in 68 countries in the technology sector, employs around 83,000 people and has an annual turnover of approximately USD 20 billion, according to the statement.

Mission Shakti: Adoption of orphaned girls rising encouragingly

NOTICE

NOTICE

NOTICE

आवश्यकता

प्रबन्धक
उच्चतर माध्यमिक विद्यालय
अमरपुर गाजीपुर

सूचना

सूचना
मैं पृथ्वा सिंह पत्नी स्वयं योगेन्द्र विक्रम सिंह
निवासीक्री मॉनरो 14/3 H.A.L. कालोनी
हरजिन्दर नगर, कानपुर अपने छोटे पुत्र
हरि प्रकाश सिंह को मृतक अपहरण के कारण
अपनी समस्त चल अचल सम्पत्ति को
देखबखल करती हूँ उसल द्वारा किये गये
किसी भी कानूनी व असामाजिक कार्यों को
हमारे व हमारे परिवार के अथवा किसी
सदस्यों की कौशल जिम्मेदारी न होगी वहाँ
मेरे पति के मृतक आश्रित स्थान पर पुत्र
नौकरारी प्रकाश सिंह को U.P. पुलिस
सिलनी थी उसल के स्थान पर मेरी पुत्री लाली
सिंह को दे दी जाये इस पर मुझे कोई
अपत्ति न होगी। प्राप्तिनी पृथ्वा सिंह

BJP expels former dist chief of Saharanpur

A graduate constituency is one in which only graduates from any recognised Indian university, or those with an equivalent qualification, can vote.

Owaisi's AIMIM to contest UP assembly elections

He said, "UP's geography is such that there are Muslims in all 403 Vidhan Sabha constituencies. There is

“THE PROCESS OF SEAT SELECTION IS GOING ON INTERNALLY AND WE PLAN TO ESTABLISH OURSELVES ON THOSE SEATS. ALLIANCE POSSIBILITIES ARE BEING EXPLORED RIGHT NOW”

no 'Muslim pocket' as such and hence our strategy is to show that. People complain that we have been raising our

He added that the party was also planning to field Dalit candidates in UP.

The AIMIM has been actively working in Uttar Pradesh since 2015 and had contested the previous assembly elections of 2017 in the state. The SP, during the elections, had cautioned Muslims against Owaisi's party.

'Nriya Gopal Das on oxygen support'



A bulletin said the 80-year-old seer was put on oxygen support after he complained of difficulty in breathing. He has been kept under the watch of critical-care experts, who are monitoring him throughout the day.

Samsung to set up smartphone display unit in Noida

He said the plant was among the big projects that had shifted

The minister said the state government was in touch with all the other companies and investors who had proposed to invest in UP in different sectors.

SCHOOLSCAN

BRONZE MEDAL

Aarav Agarwal, a class IV student of City Montessori School, Kanpur Road Campus, won a bronze medal in Southeast Asian Mathematical Olympiad, organised online by Terry Chew Institute of Mathematical Olympiad, Singapore. Thousands of students from

various countries participated in the event to showcase their knowledge and talents in mathematics and also learn from others. Aarav will now participate in the Champions Trophy, which will be held in January next year and only selected students of various countries will participate in it. Southeast Asian Mathematical Olympiad (SEAMO) is a renowned educational organisation that provides an international platform to students for bringing a cutting edge in their talents and development.

UCO BANK UCO BANK, ZONAL OFFICE,
D-63/8-1-M, MAUZA TULSI PUR
MAHMOORGANJ, VARANASI-221010

Possession Notice (for Immovable Property)

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002)

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of UCO Bank Varanasi under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act No. 51 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2001 issued Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the said act. Dated for calling upon the borrower (detailed below) to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower/guarantor and public in general that the undersigned has taken the possession of the properties described here in below in exercise of the power conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said act read with Rule 9 of the said rule on date 20.11.2020.

The Borrower's Legal heirs and/or Guarantor's attention is invited to provision of sub-suction (8) of section 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets. The property will be subject to the charge of UCO Bank for respectively for an amount plus interest and other charges there on as mentioned below.

Sl No.	Name of Borrower & Branch	Description of immovable Property	Dimand Notice Date Amount Rs
1.	Mr. Uma Shankar Tiwari S/o Mata Badal Tiwari and Mrs. Saroj Tiwari W/o Shri Uma Shankar Tiwari, Both R/o 1N/5C, Durga Bhawan, Tilak Nagar, Allapur, Allahabad Branch- ALLAHABAD MAIN, ALLAHABAD (0032)	All that part and parcel of the property consists of land and building measuring 1829.86 sq.ft. (170 square meter) as per Bahi No. 1, Zild No. 7363, Page No. 169 to 180, Sl. No. 769, Registered on 16.02.2012 at Sub-Registrar-1, Allahabad, Nagar, situated at Arazi no.- 25/1 & 25/2, Mustafabad Munkasa, (Allapur) City & Disst. Allahabad standing in the name of Mr. Uma Shankar Tiwari S/o Mata Badal Tiwari, R/o 1N/5C, Durga Bhawan, Tilak Nagar, Allapur, Allahabad Boundaries:- (As per Deed): East: House of Shri Vishnu Srivastava, West: 21 feet wide Road, North: 25 feet wide Road, Singh, South: House of Banwari Lal Srivastava	03.02.2020 Rs. 16,90,107.22 31.01.2020 & 16,83,107.22 18.11.2020 + further Interest + Other Charges
Note. The above notice is in General for public and specially for Borrower & Guarantor			
Date : 24.11.2020		Place : Allahabad	Authorised Officer, UCO Bank

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

315 more test positive, 290 recover

Strict monitoring of people coming from NCR, Mumbai

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

As many as 315 persons tested positive for coronavirus in the city on Monday while 290 patients recovered. The death toll stands at 965 and there are 3,435 active cases while the number of Covid-19 patients who have recovery is 65,167.

The fresh cases included 39 from Gomtinagar, 34 from Indiranagar, 29 from Rae Bareilly road, 21 from Chowk, 20 from Alambagh, 19 from Hazratganj, 18 from Vikasnagar, 12 from Hasanganj, and each 10 from Mahanagar and Madaion. There were five deaths in the city and two of the deceased belonged to Lucknow while the rest to Gonda, Rae Bareilly and Balrampur. Across the state, 2,067 persons tested positive, including 126 in Ghaziabad, 208 in Meerut, 160 in Gautambuddh Nagar, and 125 in Kanpur Nagar, taking the UP tally of cases to 5,28,833.

There were 23 deaths in the state, including three in Mainpuri, two each in Kanpur, Varanasi & Meerut, and one each in Prayagraj, Gautambuddh Nagar, Gorakhpur, Agra, Ayodhya, Ballia, Muzaffarnagar, Maharajganj, Farrukhabad, Auraiyya, Kanpur & Ambedkarnagar. Besides, 2,060 patients recovered in the state, taking the recovery figures to 4,97,475.

The Health department has increased testing of people coming from NCR and Mumbai to Lucknow and is augmenting the capacity of hospitals for effective containment of coronavirus. A senior health official said people from NCR and Mumbai would be tested because of the spurt of cases there.

The ratio of RT-PCR and antigen tests has been increased to 55:45 in the district. Antigen test is important because despite lower accuracy as compared to RT-PCR, it helps in early segregation, the official



People arriving at Charbagh station being tested by health officials on Monday

Pioneer

said. "RT-PCR takes two days to give out the result whereas antigen test result is faster which helps in isolation of patients," he said.

The official said the maximum cases were detected in

Aliganj, Chinhat and Alambagh. A Central government team had visited Aliganj recently to assess the increase in cases. "These areas are still witnessing the circulation of virus even now because of the

spread of infection during Diwali & Chhath festivities and also because of people not following Covid-19 guidelines. Stepping out for trivial reasons has led to further spread in infection," he added.

In a meeting with the additional chief secretary (Health) on Monday, officials concerned highlighted the best practices that they have been following in Lucknow for containment of the virus. "We made a presentation of how we can handle a case when it comes to a hospital and what all improvements we can do," he said.

A hands-on training of doctors from TS Mishra and Lok Bandhu hospitals began at KGMU from Monday. Nearly 10 Covid hospitals will receive this training. "They will be trained in improving their skills so that they can independently take care of the patients, if need be," the official said.

It was also highlighted in the meeting that there was a need for L-2 and L-3 beds, and not isolation beds.

The official said they are planning on a better discharge policy for reducing the occupancy and ensuring that more beds are available. "As per this policy, any person who has tested positive, is asymptomatic for three days and has completed 10 days in hospital should be discharged and not be kept for second or third tests. If a symptomatic patient remains asymptomatic for three days, he or she should be discharged and not be kept in the hospital any longer. Occupancy of beds can be decreased by timely shifting of patients," he said.

The official said some of the hospitals are keeping patients for a longer period but the stay can be reduced.

Meanwhile, Dr Ishwar Gilada from People's Health Organisation said that states should do RT-PCR and antigen tests in 80:20 ratio. "States where enough tests are being carried out should have more of RT-PCR because of the inaccuracy of antigen tests. Also, some states have more responsibility to protect their vulnerable population because of a huge chunk has still not tested positive unlike other states," he said.

Youth assaulted by Bajrang Dal leaders

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A youth sustained critical injuries after some persons belonging to Bajrang Dal allegedly assaulted him near a Roadways bus stand in Khurja Nagar area of Bulandshahr, police spokesperson said on Monday. The victim also sustained a bullet injury in his hand. Police have registered a case against eight people, including a regional convenor of the Bajrang Dal. The condition of the youth was said to be critical. According to the spokesperson, Manoj Marshall, a resident of Kila Mewai village adjoining the Kotwali Khurja Nagar area, was proceeding towards his village from the Roadways bus stand late Saturday evening.

It has been alleged that the accused accosted him on the

way and started beating him up, resulting in serious injuries to Manoj's head and he fell on the ground. Police later admitted the victim to Khurja's Kailash hospital after informing his family. The victim said Praveen Bhati, a leader associated with the organisation, attacked him owing to animosity. Efforts were on to arrest the accused.

In a sensational murder and loot also reported from Bulandshahr, unidentified miscreants looted precious ornaments after entering a jewellery shop and shot the businessman dead upon objection in the Naraura town, police said on Monday. The miscreants escaped along with the looted booty. Senior Superintendent of Police in Bulandshahr, Santosh Kumar Singh, said that jewellery trader Rohtas Verma

was preparing to close his shop at around 10 late on Sunday night when three miscreants entered the showroom impersonating as buyers and tried to loot the jewellery kept there. Rohtas took out his licensed pistol to resist the loot but the miscreants shot at him.

Hearing the gun shots, the people present nearby rushed to the spot and admitted the trader to a hospital but he succumbed to his injuries while receiving treatment.

The assailants had already escaped during this time. The Narora police station is near the jewellery showroom. Police claimed that they would soon ascertain the whereabouts of the miscreants based on the CCTV footage of the jewellery shop. A police team has been constituted to arrest the miscreants.

Minor boy held for sending threatening messages to CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A minor boy of Agra was taken in police custody on Monday by a joint team of surveillance and cyber team and Agra police for sending threatening messages to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at Dial 112 through WhatsApp. The Sushant Golf City police registered a case under sections 506/507/505(1) and under 66 IT Act against him. The boy has been brought to Lucknow will be produced before a juvenile court for the charges against him.

ADCP (South) SC Rawat said the accused was giving

wishy-washy statements and it is still unclear why he sent the messages. A spokesman of the Commissioner of Police said the accused had deleted the message before he was located and taken into custody. He said the police team could not find the grievance the accused had due to which he sent the messages to the CM.

He said the police recovered the mobile and the SIM used for sending the threats. The accused reportedly owned his crime during interrogation. The police sent the mobile to the forensic lab for recovery of the messages which the accused deleted.

Hardware shop gutted



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A fire broke out at a shop selling paint and hardware items in Bazaarkhala on Monday afternoon. However, no casualty was reported in the incident. Around 2 pm, the fire broke out in the shop after a spark flew from a welding machine and fell on a paint box. In no time, the shop was engulfed by flames. Police said the shop-owner was getting welding work done and sparks flew in the process. The shop is located

on the ground floor of the house at Katra tri-section. Four fire tenders were pressed into service and the rescue operation took about three hours to conclude.

Earlier, after making a call to the fire officials, locals had started the rescue work on their own. The fire was spreading fast and there was a dense cover of smoke. The locals first removed the LPG cylinder from the kitchen and then broke the window panes of a room which was filled with smoke.

Woman gang-raped, thrashed

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 21-year-old woman was allegedly raped and beaten up by three men in a sugarcane field in Shamli district while in another incident in Barabanki, a girl was kidnapped and gang-raped, police said on Monday.

Reports from Shamli said that a woman was raped when she had gone to throw cow dung on Sunday.

According to a complaint lodged by her mother, when the woman tried to resist the attempts to rape her, she was beaten up by three men.

The accused also threatened the victim with dire consequences if she told anyone about the incident, SHO of

Jhinjhana police station Sarvesh Singh said. A case was registered on the basis of the complaint and the accused were arrested, he added.

In Barabanki, an 18-year-old woman was allegedly kidnapped and raped by two men in a village, police said on Monday. The two men kidnapped the woman from her house on Saturday evening and took her to a nearby agricultural field, where they raped her, Superintendent of Police Arvind Chaturvedi said.

The woman's younger brother and father were present in the house at the time of the incident but could not make out what was happening.

The family got to know

about it when her elder brother working in another state called on a relative's phone to talk to his sister and he arrived at her place to inform her about the call. During this period, some villagers had spotted two men holding a woman and immediately informed the police about it. The woman was found lying beside a canal in an unconscious state on Sunday, Chaturvedi said.

ASP (South) Manoj Pande, along with SHO Subeha, rushed to the spot and sent the woman for medical examination after taking her statement. Pandey said that teams had been formed to trace out the accused and they would be arrested soon.

UPPCL officials directed to redress grievances of smart meter consumers

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh Energy Minister Srikant Sharma on Monday directed the officials of UP Power Corporation Ltd to personally contact every electricity consumer using smart meters for the disposal of their grievances and to take their feedback. The minister also said that apart from the UPPCL, all the managing directors of the five distribution companies (discoms) should also regularly review the same at their level.

The five discoms are the wholly-owned subsidiaries of the UPPCL.

The minister gave these directions after receiving complaints regarding difficulties in recharge/depositing bills by the smart meter consumers, inflated bills and not getting the bills. Expressing displeasure over the indifferent attitude of the engineers of the UPPCL on the billing complaints, Sharma directed the UPPCL to take immediate action on all such

complaints. He also directed the officials to ensure that the consumers received the right bill on time. "Incorrect billing is not acceptable. Strict legal action should be ensured against the billing agency concerned in case of faulty bills," he added. The energy minister directed that the discoms' managing directors, directors and engineers should also patrol the feeders along with the staff of the 33 x 11 power distribution sub-stations.

PM to attend university's foundation day online

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the celebration of centenary year foundation day of Lucknow University via video-conferencing on November 25. The PM will unveil LU's centennial commemorative coin on the occasion. He will release a special commemorative postal stamp issued by India Post and its special cover. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Governor Anandiben Patel and CM Yogi Adityanath will also be present on the occasion.

Meanwhile, an international alumni meet of Lucknow University will be held at the Arts Quadrangle on Tuesday evening. Around 150 illustrious alumni will participate in the event. Some of the illustrious alumni, including Kerala governor, will join the event online.

Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Medical Education Suresh Kumar Khanna will be the chief guest while Law Minister Brajesh Pathak the special guest. Former students from various organisations from India and abroad are said to be eager to join the meet.

KUMAR VISHWAS REGALES AUDIENCE

Poet Kumar Vishwas regaled the audience at the cultural evening on the fourth day of Lucknow University centennial celebrations on Monday. The programme also witnessed the presence of Culture Minister Neelkanth Tewari. Vishwas started out with "Gomti sa machalta yeh paani bhi" and praised the city for its beauty, creating an instant connect with the audience. He followed it up with "Jawani mein bhi kai ghashalein adhuri chhoot jaati hain".

He also presented several poems of former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, including "Geet naya gaata hoon".

Earlier, the day was marked by 'Mission Shakti Heritage Walk' with three distinguished former students, a museum visit and science poetry. Former students of LU Anjali Singh, Nandani Diwakar and Laxmi Shukla enjoyed a tonga ride and visited the university campus, reliving its history and architecture. They also visited Art Gallery of Tagore Library, Premchand Vatika, Arts

Quadrangle, Lal Baradari, and Machai Dwar. Local citizens, students and teachers were also present in the heritage walk.

The department of Medieval and Modern History organised a series of lectures by eminent historians. PK Ghosh delivered a lecture on Lal Baradari of LU. The department also organised an exhibition which was inaugurated by LU VC AK Rai. Rai also visited the museum of Ancient Indian History department.

In the science fest, the main attraction was the interesting chemistry experiments displayed by regional director of Regional Science City Raj Mehrotra. He displayed many simple yet interesting experiments with liquid nitrogen.

CDRI scientist Pankaj Prason regaled the audience with his science poetry at the literary fest. He said his main aim was to take sciences to the masses. "We must celebrate science and not fear it, and I am glad my efforts are making a difference because now we are having a science kavi sammelan," he said.



Students stand in queue while going to their classes at National PG College after it reopened on Monday

Pioneer

Job-seeker duped of ₹80K

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A man allegedly duped a job-seeker of Rs 80,000 on the pretext of getting him placed in Saudi Arabia. The victim lodged a case with Madaion police and the probe was started. As per reports, Nafees of Krishnalok Colony in the area gave the money to Akram of Naubasta on October 15 for a job in Saudi Arabia. On getting money, Akram asked Nafees to visit Mumbai where from he was to be sent to Saudi Arab by a flight. It was alleged that Akram did not facilitate the visit of Nafees to Saudi Arabia and made him stay in Mumbai.

Nafees's mother Razia Bano, who works as a maid, said her son was excited to get a job as he thought it would help him get rid of poverty. "I somehow managed the cash which was given to Akram. However, Akram neither provided any visa, nor did he send Nafees to Saudi Arabia. Besides, my son had to spend Rs 30,000 for fooding and lodging in Mumbai," Razia said.

She also alleged that Akram threatened her and Nafees when they demanded the money back. "After a lot of efforts, Akram agreed to return the money. He gave us a cheque but it was dishon-

oured. When we complained about the same, he threatened us again," she alleged.

In another case, a woman was defrauded of more than Rs 25,000 on the pretext of filling an online job application form in Madaion. Reports said Shivani Rawat of Faizullahganj on Saturday got a call from an unidentified man who asked her to fill an online application form for the job that she had applied for. Shivani followed the instructions and was asked to share the OTP, but she sensed the foul and refused to do it. However, she said she still got a message regarding deduction of money from her bank account.

Use love jihad law first against BJP leaders: Rana

Lucknow (PNS): With the Uttar Pradesh government planning to bring a law against religious conversion for marriage or love jihad, Urdu poet Munawwar Rana said the new law should first be used against the leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party and their family members who had married outside the community.

In a tweet in Hindi, Rana said: "We can extend support to a law being enacted against love jihad only on the condition that its beginning should be made from the two big 'love jihadis' sitting in the Central government so that two Muslim girls can then marry them and action should also be taken against all BJP leaders and their family members who have married outside their religion." In another tweet, he said: "Although love jihad is just a jumla used to spread hatred in the society, Muslim girls suffer the most from this because boys get married elsewhere."

The UP government intends to bring a stringent law to deal with alleged religious conversions of Hindu girls in the cover of marriage which is referred to as love jihad.

25

Jubilee Year

SMS

VARANASI

NAAC

A

Grade

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

VARANASI

Approved by AICTE, Ministry of HRD

Accredited 'A' Grade by NAAC

Scan QR Code for details

Applications are invited against

Vacant/Lapse seats for the Session 2020-21

MBA | MCA

Affiliated to AKTU, Lucknow

HOW TO APPLY:

Apply ONLINE through our link

www.online.smsvaranasi.com by making

a payment of Rs. 500/-

Application Form can also be obtained from the City

Office/Campus of the Institute on payment of Rs. 500/-

Admissions will be done as per University Guidelines.

Eligibility as per AKTU norms.

LIVE Virtual Classroom

Sessions and Study Material

through MOODLE

The World's most popular

online education software.

ADMISSION HELPLINE

09161337733, 09628700005, 08417931111, 07052299333

CAMPUS : Khushpur, PO-Bachhaon, Varanasi • Tel: 7052695556, 8953761666, 8953940777

CITY OFFICE: 601, A-block, 6th floor, Vinayak Plaza, Maidanhiya, Varanasi • Tel: 8400277770

www.smsvaranasi.com https://www.facebook.com/smsvsn

Prof. P. N. Jha, B.L.M. (Mgmt.)

CHIEF CLERK

PM Modi likely to see Dev Deepawali grandeur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Though the schedule of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has yet not confirmed, he is likely to see the grandeur of Dev Deepawali here on the auspicious occasion of Karthik Purnima on November 30. If the PM comes here, it would be the first time when Modi will attend the Dev Deepawali function and visit his parliamentary constituency physically since the nationwide lockdown imposed to prevent the spread of coronavirus pandemic on March 25 last, though he had interacted with the local people on many occasions through video conferencing apart from inaugurating and laying foundation stones of many projects through virtual platforms. The Dev Deepawali programme is also likely to be attended by the Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath but all their visits would depend on the permission of the Election Commission (EC) as on December 1, the voting for two MLC seats from



Preparations going on for Dev Deepawali in Varanasi on Monday

Pioneer

Varanasi Graduate and Teacher constituencies will be held. In view of possibilities of arrival of Modi, hectic efforts are being made at various ghats including Dashaswamedh and adjoining ones for giving a grand shape to forthcoming Dev Deepawali function. According to unconfirmed information, Modi will reach Khazuri village in Mirza Murad area around 3 pm where he

would address about 5,000 people attending the function by maintaining social distance. He will also inaugurate Varanasi-Prayagraj Highway and the function is also likely to be attended by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari. Later, by helicopter the PM will reach trans-Ganga Domri village and later on board on cruise from Ramghat near Baba Bhagwan Awadoot Ashram and then

watch the grandeur of Dev Deepawali at different ghats. He may also attend the programme at Dashaswamedh Ghat. Later, he will go to Rajghat in cruise and then visit Sarnath where he will watch recently-inaugurated Light & Sound Show. Later, he will reach Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Babatpur through Ring Road and then leave for Delhi by his special plane.

In view of proposed visit of PM, the local officers inspected various ghats and saw the progress made in preparations. A per the plan, about 15 lakh diyas (earthen lamps) would be lighted on the occasion at city's 84-odd ghats and through laser projector, the glories of this ancient city and Lord Shiva would be highlighted. In view to check rush and ensure implementation of COVID-19 guidelines, the routes approaching to Rajghat, Dashaswamedh Ghat and Assi Ghat will be made as no vehicle zones and they would be barricaded.

88 more test positive in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 88 new Covid-19 patients have been detected in the district on Monday, increasing the total number of cases to 18,535. The day saw one more death, increasing the toll to 296. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 70 and all of them have been

recovered from home isolation, increasing the number to 14,617. As no one has been discharged from the hospitals, the number remained at 2,856. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 17,473, leaving 766 active cases. The recovery rate is 94.27 per cent while the mortality rate is 1.59 per cent. Chief Medical Officer

(CMO) Dr VB Singh has informed that in the first report of the day, 51 positive patients were found out of 2,767 reports received.

Till then, the total test reports received were 3,95,492 and the results of 2,724 are awaited. Out of them, 3,76,999 were negative, while 18,498 positive. The total number of samples collected was 4,16,381.

Earlier, a female aged 50 from Lahartara succumbed to COVID-19 at Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU), while a male aged 96 died at Medwin Hospital. With the addition of 11 new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,458 including 207 red zones. There are 2,251 green zones.

SATHI-Industry meet held at BHU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Banaras Hindu University (BHU) organised a BHU SATHI- Industry meet on Sunday at Mahamana Hall, Seminar Complex, Institute of Science, BHU. Department of Science and Technology, Government of India has sanctioned a grant of ₹ 125 crore to BHU to establish a Sophisticated Analytical Technical Help Institute (SATHI) aimed to cater the analytical needs of the

researchers in industry as well as in academia. Under this SATHI umbrella, the BHU SATHI- Industry meet programme started with the floral tribute to Mahamana Malviya Ji by Prof Rakesh Bhatnagar, Vice-Chancellor, Prof Anil K Tripathi, coordinator- SATHI BHU, and Rajesh Bhatia, President of Small Industries Association, Varanasi.

They also shared their views and welcomed the industry personals to this platform for active participation. Dr SS

Kohli from Department of Science and Technology explained the importance of this meet and the support of Government of India to the industry. Presentation on state-of-the-art high end instruments available/going to be available at the Central Discovery Centre (CDC) building of BHU was explained by the eminent scientists and professors of the university. Besides, 50 online and 80 offline participants have taken part in the meet. Their views

and concerns were thoroughly discussed during the meeting.

The prominent participants were PK Banarjee, Sant Sanganeria, Rajesh Bhatia, Hemant Chandak, Bhuwana Nagerwaran, Devraj Malappally, Gopa Kumar, AR Rao, Pradeep Singh and many more.

The meeting was convened by Prof NV Chalapathi Rao. Finally, the vote of thanks was given by Venu Gopal, Deputy Registrar (Dev), BHU.

Criminal killed in police encounter

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Facing sharp criticism from all corners in view of the rising criminal incidents, the local police and Crime Branch personnel got a major success when they gunned down a hardcore criminal who carried a cash reward of ₹ 50,000 in an encounter at Aidhe on Ring Road, under the Lalpur-Pandeypur police station late evening on Sunday. An aide of the notorious criminal managed to escape from the scene taking advantage of darkness. The incharge of Pandeypur police outpost and a constable in Crime Branch also sustained bullet injuries but their condition was stated to be out of danger. A pistol of .32 bore, a country-made pistol, live cartridges and bike were recovered from the encounter site.

According to the SSP Amit

Pathak, the incharge of Pandeypur police outpost Rajkumar Pandey got a tip-off late evening on Sunday last about the presence of dreaded criminal Monu aka Moni aka Arvind Chauhan at Aidhe on Ring Road. He informed his seniors and Crime Branch too about this and rushed to the place. The cops of Lalur-Pandeypur police station and Sarnath police station also reached there and cordoned off the place.

Finding him surrounded by cops, the criminal opened fire targeting the police team and in retaliation, the cops and Crime Branch personnel also opened fire. In the firing, the circle officer and incharge of Crime Branch Amresh Singh Baghel and Ashwani Pandey respectively got narrow escape as the bullet hit the bullet jacket worn by them but the

incharge of Pandeypur police outpost Rajesh Pandey and constable in Crime Branch Vinay Singh got bullet injury. In the cross firing, the criminal Monu also received bullet injuries at his head and right leg.

Another criminal identified as Anil Yadav, also carrying a cash reward of ₹50,000 on his head, managed to flee away from the encounter scene.

The injured criminal and cops were rushed to the divisional government hospital in Kabirchaura where Monu was declared as brought dead. Both the cops were admitted and their condition was stated to be out of danger. The SSP informed that the recommendation was made for the cash reward of ₹ 1 lakh on the head of a gunned down criminal in view of his criminal history.

There were 17 cases pend-

ing against the gunned down criminal in various police stations of the district. When the STF sleuths had gunned down the hardcore criminal Sunny Singh in an encounter late night on July 29, 2015 at government hospital in Kabirchaura, Monu had managed to escape from the scene along with criminal Manish Singh Sonu, who is currently carrying a cash reward of ₹1 lakh on his head.

A watch trader Shyam Bihari Mishra was shot dead in Cholapur on November 13 last and the murderous attack was made on a woman on November 15 last in Pandeypur. Monu, belonged to Lakhanpur in Cholapur and was currently living in a rented house on Pandeypur-Khajuri road, was wanted in both cases, the police informed adding.

Nishank inaugurates FDP of IM-BHU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank inaugurated the Faculty Development Programme (FDP) of Institute of Management Studies (IM), Banaras Hindu University (BHU) on Social Enterprise Management including other 46 AICTE-ATAL sponsored online faculty development programmes through an online session from New Delhi on Monday. Speaking on the common inauguration ceremony through a video message, Nishank highlighted his vision towards bringing a substantial improvement in higher education of the country. He emphasised on the ability of teachers

to shape leaders of the future in the best way for society to build positive and inspired future generations.

He also shed light on how the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 is going to revamp the education system in India. The Minister also encouraged teachers to train themselves in order to make subjects more interesting and applicable in real life, for the students. Appreciating the initiative taken by educational institutions all over the country, he appreciated the role of BHU in grooming teachers of high technical intellect. He stressed on building Industry-Academia linkages for enhancement of employability of students and suggested that

more FDPs should be organised based upon the current industry requirements. This will be beneficial for students to develop the necessary skills. He concluded by stressing the importance of life management activities in betterment of mental and physical health of students and teachers both.

The AICTE-ATAL sponsored FDP on Social Enterprise Management of IM-BHU will continue through online mode till November 27. The online FDP has received more than 250 applications, but due to the restrictions of participation, it will be attended by only 200 participants from various reputed institutes of the country. Total of 14 technical sessions will be

engaged by the experts of Social Entrepreneurship. Chairperson Prof. Anil D Sahasrabudhe, Vice-Chairman Prof MP Poonia, Member Secretary Prof. Rajive Kumar and Director-ATAL Dr Ravindra Soni of AICTE also addressed the inaugural ceremony. IM-BHU Director Prof SK Dubey, Dean Prof PS Tripathi along with teachers of the institute, attended the inaugural ceremony. Looking at the affirmative response of the participants to attend online FDP, along with its importance in the current education system, the IM-BHU has decided to organise more such FDPs in future in collaboration with All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

Yogi meets Mohan Bhagwat

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also arrived late on Sunday evening to meet Mohan Bhagwat, the head of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh here in Vashistha Vatsalya Public School, Gohania, Prayagraj. The CM Yogi Adityanath asked about the well-being of Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat. During this, he had a lot of talks with Mohan Bhagwat in the presence of Sir Karyavah Bhaiya Ji Joshi. This meeting was presented as a courtesy meeting because of the idea of Mohan Bhagwat being the head of the family. After meeting the Sangh chief, CM Yogi left for Lucknow from the airport at 7.30 pm.

The Chief Minister Yogi was supposed to come to Prayagraj at 5 o'clock in the evening, but his helicopter landed at the helipad in Vashistha Vatsalya Public School campus, Gohania, around 5:30 pm. Around 6 pm, the CM met Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat and Sir Karyavah Bhaiyya Joshi. During this, the Sangh chief inquired about what is going on in the state along with knowing the skill of CM.

It is believed that the Sangh chief also discussed the problems arising out of Covid. It is also discussed that CM Yogi also informed the Sangh chief about the preparations to bring a law against Love Jihad. In fact, after the growing cases of love jihad in Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath Government started preparing to enact a law



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, arrives to attend a programme in Prayagraj

Pioneer

to curb it last week.

Law has been made against Love Jihad in the neighbouring state of Madhya Pradesh, while the Haryana government has started the process along with Uttar Pradesh. The Home department of Uttar Pradesh has sent a proposal in this regard to the Law department.

On the other hand, the meeting between Sangh chief and the CM has been called a courtesy meeting called by the office-bearers of the Sangh. Actually the Sangh chief is the head of the family. Recently, when he visited Karnataka,

CM Yedurappa went to meet him there. Similarly, during his stay in Haryana, CM Khattar came to meet him.

After meeting the Sangh chief, CM Yogi left for Bamarauli Airport by road from Gohania. His special plane arrived from Lucknow around 7 pm in the evening. The CM's helicopter did not leave due to darkness. Meanwhile, the road was barricaded by the police on the way to the airport. Due to this, traffic operations at some places were also affected.

Due to the meeting of the

Sangh office-bearers, there was a strong security around Vashistha Vatsalya Public School Gohania. DM Bhanu Chandra Goswami also reached here to take stock of security. Meanwhile, when the Chief Minister arrived here in the evening, he did not meet the DM.

In fact, the District Magistrate did not even come around CM because of the MLC Election Code of Conduct. During this, the movement of people from the national highway going to Rewa towards the school was stopped since morning.

104 COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

After six days on Sunday, the number of infected has decreased once again, but the number of active patients has increased to 1117. Within the last 24 hours 104 new Covid positive patients including CMO Unnao were identified. At the same time, 92 people beat corona. One infected died during treatment.

According to CMO Dr GS Bajpai, the number of Covid victims has so far increased to 25984 with 104 newly infected in the district. On the other hand, more than 24,000 patients have also become infection free. One patient also died. The number of people who lost their lives to corona infection has increased to 337



on Sunday.

According to the CMO, the percentage of people who beat corona infection has increased. At the same time, the scope of testing has also been extended.

Samples of 5613 people were taken for the Covid test on Sunday. Besides, the testing under the Target Group is also underway. On Sunday, 14 patients were discharged from

Covid hospitals. 55 people completed home isolation. Of the 24530 recuperating patients, 6147 infected were treated in Covid hospitals. 18383 People defeated corona by staying in home isolation.

CMO Unnao is also included in the list of Covid infected on Sunday. According to Nodal Officer for Corona Dr. Rishi Sahai, CMO Unnao is a resident of Prayagraj itself. These days, when he came here, his health deteriorated when he got his Covid test done on suspicion, then the Covid report came positive. At the same time, the Vice President of BJP Yuva Morcha, MRI technician of a diagnostic centre, three advocates, JE of RES, Colonel of Army are also infected with corona.

GM inspects NCR's Crew Lobby

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

North Central Railway General Manager Rajiv Chaudhry inspected NCR's Crew Lobby and Running room at New Delhi on Monday. NCR crew lobby at New Delhi is very important crew booking point for operation of coaching trains from New Delhi and it handles average 320 originating and terminating coaching trains on daily basis.

For safe and punctual running of trains it is extremely essential that crew working these train are equipped with latest safety and operational instructions. To meet this requirement while protecting our workforce from COVID-19, North Central Railway has introduced Computer based counselling system for crew in place of physical counselling sessions. This computer-based and objective assessment allows

concerned loco inspector to counsel and grade assigned crew in objective way based on computer-based assessment and driving skill checked during footplate inspections.

General Manager checked computer-based counselling arrangement at NCR's crew lobby and suggested for improvement through incorporating counselling videos etc. General Manager said that crew is our eyes and ear in the field and they must be encouraged to report unusual noticed during train operations so as timely corrective and preventive actions can be taken. During inspection Chaudhry also advised for use of LED screens for displaying various circulars, case studies etc. and gave instructions for improvement in CMS system and network connectivity. He also suggested that breathalyzer machine air intake should be

one-way to mitigate any chance of COVID-19 infection to crew. For overall improved management of crew lobby and implementation of computer-based counselling system GM declared a group cash award for crew lobby officials.

GM also inspected NCR's 250 bed capacity running room at New Delhi and checked lodging, food, housekeeping and other arrangements provided in this running room for quality rest of crew at outstanding. During inspection GM interacted with crew available in running room and advised officials for improvement in various areas to make outstanding rest of crew comfortable and hassle-free. General Manager also inspected ongoing renovation work at 4th floor of running room and asked officials to expedite progress of the work. During inspection General Manager

instructed for installation of fire hydrant on both sides of running room along with AMC for proper upkeep of the system and directed for immediate repair of fire and smoke alarm system of running room. General Manager also advised officials to draw road map for future improvement and expansion of this important running room at New Delhi catering to crew of passenger trains operating and terminating in New Delhi area. For overall improved management of running room GM also announced a group cash award for the running room officials.

During inspection of General Manager, Sr DEE (Operation) of Agra division Aftab Ahmad, incharge of running room, chief crew controller New Delhi were present along with other supervisors and staff.

Three arrested for killing cop, mother & sister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Three people have been nabbed for allegedly killing a policeman, his mother and sister in Chamraudi area, under the Kotwali police station in Banda district, police said.

According to police, Abhijit, his sister and mother were killed allegedly by his relatives, who were also his neighbour, late last night. Three members of a family were murdered in Banda by their relatives, who live in their neighbourhood, late on Friday night. They were killed after a fight over leftover food thrown at Abhijit house. Three accused

have been apprehended. We are investigating the matter, said Banda Superintendent of Police Siddharth Shankar Meena.

Satya Narayan, IG Banda said Abhijit was a constable with the UP Police. "It may be a case related to finances and money," said Satya Narayan. Dilip, an eyewitness and friend of Abhijit, who was injured in the incident, said the killers abused the sister of Abhijit after which the matter escalated.

'Abhijit's sister asked them not to throw leftovers, following which they abused them. We went to the police station and filed a police complaint. When we came from the police

station, they attacked us. I was injured. They killed Abhijit with his sister and mother," Dilip said.

TEMPLE DEMOLISHED: Just to give the city a smart look, the JCB machines of the Prayagraj Development Authority (PDA) demolished Prachin Ashtabhuj Devi temple near High Court Paani Tanki (overhead tank) on Monday morning. The officers had reached the spot with heavy police force foreseeing strong protest, and completed the work within an hour.

The PDA officials said that the idol has been shifted to another place with full hon-

our, where a temple will be built.

The PDA had demolished the boundary wall of the High Court Hanuman Mandir, and people suspect that this temple will also be demolished in the name of converting Prayagraj into a Smart City.

Road widening is the first step towards making Prayagraj a smart city and the PDA is out to remove all obstacles in its way, may it be a temple, mosque, or any other construction.

Blue print of the Smart City has been prepared and the work is being done on its basis, the officials said.

‘Clean and Abundant Ganga’ drive on November 27

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar on Monday said that the river Ganga was the lifeline of Kanpur and the history, culture, tradition and industrial development of he city largely depended on it.

He said keeping this objective in mind, a special awareness drive — Clean and Abundant Ganga — would be launched at the Atal Ghat on November 27.

He said the drive would start with a grand Ganga aarti at the Atal Ghat.

The divisional commissioner said the event would strictly follow the Covid protocols and a maximum of 100 persons would be allowed to take part in it.

He said the event would continue for one hour only and social distancing, wearing of masks and sitting at a distance of six feet would be strictly followed. He said special teams would be deployed to ensure that the participants followed the Covid protocol in letter and spirit.



Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar, inspecting Atal Ghat on Monday for Ganga Aarti on Friday.

Pioneer

The divisional commissioner said as it was a special programme, necessary preparations had to be made. He said Kanpur Nagar Nigam along with the district administration, with the help of police, would hold the programme.

Shekhar asked the officials to ensure that the Atal Ghat

was spruced up for the event.

He said apart from cleaning the ghat, a beautification drive would also be carried out. He said it was the duty of every citizen to ensure that Ganga was kept holy and clean.

He said much had already been done through the Namami Gange Project and

whatever remained would be done for the grand event.

He, along with the officials of various departments, visited all places of Atal Ghat and issued necessary directives to the officials to prepare the ghat for the event on a war footing so that everything was ready by Thursday.

Kanpur varsity reopens with Covid restrictions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University at Kanpur reopened on Monday after over seven-and-half months on restricted terms, following the Covid protocol.

The university authorities stationed a special team at the gate along with police to screen students before their entry into the premises. However, the attendance on the first day was skeletal.

The students were allowed entry only if they had masks and sanitiser. The special team stationed at the university gate carried out thermal screening

of the students who arrived on Monday.

Registrar Dr Anil Kumar Yadav said entry to the students was given only if they followed the Covid protocol. He said on the first day, the strength was less yet it was quite encouraging that the students had appeared for studies.

He said in view of conditional entry to colleges and university, the teachers and heads of departments had been given a free hand on how and when they would call the students for the studies.

He said in some departments the HoDs had worked out odd and even system under

which students with odd roll numbers were called on the first day and those with even numbers were called on Tuesday.

He said the option of online studies was also there and if the students wished they were free to attend the classes online as well.

He said the teachers had been strictly directed that the seating of the students in the classes had to be as per the Health departments guidelines. He said on Monday, students were called in batches of 30 and messages had been forwarded on their mobile phones.

It may be mentioned here

that entry to students consuming pan masala has already been banned. Besides, spitting on campus has been strictly prohibited.

The registrar said the university had made special arrangements for soap for students to wash their hands before entering the classes. Besides, he added, only one student was being allowed to enter washrooms at a time.

As per the guidelines, mess, cafeteria, swimming pool, gymnasium will remain closed.

The registrar said it was quite encouraging to see at least some students present on the campus.

110 more test positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar reported 110 more coronavirus positive cases on Monday evening. Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 110 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Sunday evening and Monday evening taking the tally of confirmed cases to 29,942 cases. He said that 7 cases were discharged from hospital. He said five COVID-19 deaths in the city was reported till Monday evening keeping the death toll to 770. The CMO said at present 1205 active cases were undergoing treatment. Dr Mishra said 5425 samples were sent for testing in the city.

DM inspects paddy purchase centres

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar District Magistrate Alok Tiwari carried out a surprise inspection of paddy purchase centres at Bilhaur and Chaubeypur and expressed concern over the complaints of farmers that they had to run from pillar to post for the past over 15 days to sell their crop.

He warned the officials concerned to ensure that no farmer was forced to return and paddy of all the farmers was purchased.

He directed that FIR be lodged against centre incharge of Chaubeypur and directed the Lekhpur to monitor the purchase centres regularly.

He gave a dressing down to the officials concerned for purchasing paddy on lower price instead of the recommended maximum support price announced by the government.

The government has fixed the paddy purchase price at ₹ 1,868 per quintal but he farmers are being forced to sell it at ₹ 1,700 per quintal.

The district magistrate directed officials that strict action be taken against the erring staff.

He warned that in case paddy was not purchased at government rates, officials who assigned the task to monitor the procurement would also be held responsible.

It may be mentioned here that the surprise raid was carried out after several complaints had reached the district magistrate about touts forcing the farmers to keep running to the purchase centre for over 15 days and finally forcing them to sell their produce at a lower rate. Many farmers who were fed up of running to the centres were forced to sell their crop at lower rates.

The district magistrate was accompanied by several officials and a police force.

Mason found hanging from a tree

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A mason was found hanging from a tree in Mehuwa village under Bilhaur Kotwali police station on Monday morning.

Police sent the body for autopsy.

Ajay Pal Gautam (50) son of Lallu of Mehuwa village, apart from being a farmer, was also a mason. Of his five daughters, three had been married. Komal and Nanhi were still unmarried. Wife Somwati had gone to Delhi to meet her elder daughter about two months ago.

On Monday morning, villagers going to their fields found Ajay Pal hanging from a tree and informed his family members about it.

Nephew Shilu said uncle Ajay Pal had proceeded for Kanpur on Saturday. Ajay Pal had an argument with neighbours on Deepawali.

The kin suspect that Ajay Pal was killed and his body was hanged from the tree.

Inspector Prayag Narain Bajpai said on the basis of autopsy report, further investigations would be made.

Meanwhile, mystery shrouds the killing of a youth whose profusely-bleeding body was recovered near Sailaha village under Shivrampur police station on Monday morning.

CM’s assurance to NPP chairman

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

During the visit of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Mirzapur Nagar Palika Parishad (NPP) chairman Manoj Jaiswal handed over a letter to him on Sunday. The CM’s main function to celebrate Gopashtami festival was organised at the cow shelter home run by Nagar Palika Parishad at Tanda Fall. The chairman handed over the letter to the CM while presenting a memento to him. The CM assured the chairman to consider the matter sympathetically. In the letter a request was made for setting up of a solar power plant on the Palika land



Chairman Nagar Palika Parishad Manoj Jaiswal presenting a memento to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday

Pioneer

at Tanda besides constructing road on forest land, connecting Tanda dam with Bansagar

canal and setting up of a museum in the historical building of Ghantaghar.

CEPC chairman meets Yogi

PNS ■ VARANASI

Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC) Chairman Siddh Nath Singh, meeting Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath who came to the Tanda Fall-situated cow shelter home on Sunday on the occasion of Gopashtami, congratulated him for giving the gift of ODOP to the Mirzapur-Bhadohi carpet belt. On the occasion Singh also presented a unique gift to him in the form of a memento which was a beautiful carpet made by the weavers of Mirzapur. In it the portrait of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has been carved with great beauty. Siddh Nath Singh said



that CM was extremely sensitive about the development of the state and safety of the people and all the carpet exporters and weavers are thankful to him because the benefit of ODOP is to be received by all of them in future and with it the

economy here will improve. Besides people will get employment, he added. This carpet will always remind the Chief Minister of the cottage industry here, the exporters hoped. Along with Chief Minister was Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh and Uttar Pradesh Jal Shakti Minister Mahendra Singh besides local public representatives were also present.

Seminar to make girls aware about traffic rules

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

In order to make girls aware about traffic rules, road safety, women’s rights, facilities

that through awareness programmes police department was trying to instill the spirit to fight against any type of violence against women, dignity



Awareness programme was held at Aryakanya Inter College in Mirzapur under Road Safety Week

Pioneer

provided to women by the government etc.a seminar was organised at Aryakanya Inter College here. Speaking on the occasion traffic incharge Amarjeet Chauhan said it was the need of the hour that we follow the traffic rules to reduce road accidents. He said that different awareness programmes were launched by the government to make it as a movement so that the common people became alert in order to avoid road accidents. He said

towards them, self-confidence, alertness, self-reliance etc. While interacting with girl students the officer threw light in detail on different helpline numbers, the method to use them and avail the facilities. He further hoped that Mission Shakti would prove as a milestone for the safety of women. The seminar was also addressed by the principal of the college.

‘PROJECT MILAN’ PROGRAMME: Under ‘Project Milan’ programme the family

counselling centre set up at Police Lines succeeded in reuniting eight couples on Sunday. As per the programme, a team of the counsellors made the couples agree to live together by sinking their differences in their larger interest. The couples happily honoured the advice and gave their consent to live together by clearing up the misunderstandings. Police personnel Shashibala Yadav and Preeti Chaubey played a positive role in reuniting the couples.

BLOOD DONATION CAMP ORGANISED: The Mirzapur chapter of a national organisation, Round Table India, organised a blood donation camp at the district hospital on Sunday. Chairman of the district unit of the organisation Shashank Tandon said apart from so many health benefits it was helpful in reducing extra fat and calories. PRO of the blood bank Ram Kumar Gupta said that out of 30 registrations only 22 persons were found fit for donating blood. Prominent among those who took part in the camp were Shubham Agrawal, Kshiti Budhiya, Vaibhav Bhutani, Kushagra Bansal, Sudarshan Budhiya and Abhishek Pandey.

Thieves decamp with booty

CORRESPONDENT ■ CHANDAULI

In a daring incident a gang of unidentified thieves sneaked into the house of a railway personnel situated in the Plant Depot colony in Mughalsarai and decamped with valuables worth nearly ₹2 lakh, including ornaments. The theft came to light on Sunday evening when the victim returned from Chhath Puja. He then reported the theft to the Kotwali police. On getting information the police reached the spot and was investigating the matter. According to a report received here, Amit Gond, a resident of Jalalpur village under the Kandwa police station, had went to the village on Chhath Puja last Friday. On the other hand, his wife went to her mother’s place in Chittampur along with children for performing Chhath Puja. On returning from Chhath Puja on Sunday evening, the railway personnel reached the resi-

dence and was stunned to find the lock of the main gate was broken. When he went inside he found all the valuables lying scattered there. He immediately informed the Kotwali police about it. The police reached the spot and was investigating the matter. According to Amit, the thieves took away nearly valuables worth nearly ₹2 lakh, including a gold chain, a ring, ‘maang tikka, a television, a gas cylinder etc. Mughalsarai police station incharge NN Singh said that the investigation was being carried out on the complaint received in this connection.

MISHAP: Two youths lost their lives when a truck hit an auto near Ilya turn at the headquarters on Sunday. The deceased were identified as auto driver Ajay Kharwar (19) and Amit Mishra (20), residents of Lodhipur village under the Chanpur police station area of Bhabua district in Bihar. A large number of people gathered at the spot after the inci-

dent. On getting information the police reached the spot and took the bodies of the deceased into custody and sent them for the post-mortem examination and informed their family members too. Both the youths had gone to PDDU Junction to on Sunday morning. While they were going back to Chanpur around 11 am on Sunday the truck coming from behind hit the auto near Ilya turn at the headquarters. Thereafter auto went out of control and overturned on the road. Both its occupants died on the spot. People from the nearby areas immediately informed the police about it which rushed to the spot and took their bodies into custody. The deceased were identified with the help of their mobile phones and documents recovered from their possession. The police informed their family members about the incident. The truck driver absconded from the spot.

Youth meets tragic end

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

A youth going on a motor-cycle died on the spot when he was knocked down by some unknown vehicle near Man Vela Gayatripuram under the Chiluatal police station around 11 pm on Saturday. However, another youth who was going along with him was seriously injured, last reports received here said. On being informed by the people from the nearby areas, the Chiluatal police reached the spot and took the body of the victim into custody and sent it for the post-

mortem examination. Besides the seriously injured youth had been admitted to the medical college for treatment. The deceased was identified as Amit Kumar Sahni. He was going on a motorcycle on Saturday night and had just reached near Gayatripuram in Manvela when he was hit by the speeding unidentified vehicle and was seriously injured. Both the youths fell down. The police took them to the medical college where the doctors on duty declared Amit dead. Police registered a case against an unknown driver in this regard.

Arrested

CORRESPONDENT ■ HAMIRPUR

The Jalalpur police arrested an accused who was absconding in two cases of theft from Patria Dera turn along with stolen goods and a pistol on Sunday. Giving details in this connection, SHO Jalalpur Umapati Mishra said that seven cases had been registered against the criminal Vishnu Kewat, a resident of Katehari village. On Sunday he was arrested from the Patria Dera Mor along with a country-made pistol and a cartridge. He had been sent to jail.

Baroda UP Bank distributes loans

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Baroda UP Bank Regional Manager SB Saxena distributed loans to the tune of ₹ 1.16 crore to 45 beneficiaries at Sarsaul block on Monday.

He said the loans were in fact a great opportunity to the beneficiaries as they could repay the amount in 12 months and get the benefit of 4 per cent interest.

He said the loans were for KCC, KCC Dairy Farming and Self Employment Credit Card.

He said the other loan benefits were under Social Security Scheme, Atal Pension Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Yojana and it was just on a premium of ₹ 12 which worked out to ₹ 330 annually. He appealed to the people to avail themselves of the facility.

Those present included Suresh Kumar, RK Jain, AK Shukla and many customers of the bank who had been invited for the occasion.



Regional Manager, Baroda UP Bank, SB Saxena taking part in loan distribution camp on Monday.

Pioneer

Minister, Mayor inaugurate Kanpur's first ‘bartan bank’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

In a bid to save the environment and stop use of banned plastic goods, Smart City Kanpur in association with Punarnava Foundation launched the first ‘bartan bank’ (utensils band) of the state on Monday.

Uttar Pradesh’s Industrial Development Minister Satish Mahana and Kanpur Nagar Mayor Pramila Pandey inaugurated the bartan bank at the Kanpur Nagar Nigam headquarters.

It was observed that during marriage ceremonies, bhandara and other in-house programmes, use of banned plastic drinking glass, bowls and thermocol plates was common. Being non-biodegradable in nature, these items pollute the environment.

Indore Nagar Nigam was the first to start bartan bank to contain use of single use plastics.

The citizens of Kanpur will have to be aware about the



State cabinet minister Satish Mahana and Mayor Pramila Pandey inaugurating the Bartan Bank on Monday.

Pioneer.

demerits of plastics to make the city pollution-free, Satish Mahana and Pramila Pandey said.

Initially, the bank will have 1,000 sets of four-bowl thali, drinking glasses and spoons.

Punarnava Foundation’s founder Manisha Bajpai said applicants, especially those belonging to the weaker sections of society, would have to deposit security amount prior

to delivery of utensils and the security would be refunded on return of the utensils. She said if anybody failed to return the cleaned utensils by the due date, ₹.250 per day would be deducted from the security amount.

For the upkeep and maintenance of utensils, only ₹100 would be charged from the users.

Proper publicity of the bank would be made at reli-

gious places through banners, she added.

Additional Municipal Commissioner Bhanu Pratap Singh, Health Officer Dr Ajay Kumar, Nodal Officer (Smart City) Shakib Khan, officer-in-charge (personnel)

Swarn Singh, Public Relations Officer Neeraj Patel, Rafzul Rehman and priests of different religions were present on the occasion.

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रांसमिशन कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड ई-निविदा संख्या-05 एवं 06 /2020-2021
प्रतिष्ठित एवं ई-निविदा में पंजीकृत / अनुमती फर्मों / ठेकेदारों / आपूर्तिकर्ताओं / निर्माताओं से निम्नालिखित कार्य / सामग्री की आपूर्ति हेतु ई-निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। ई-निविदायें उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की वेबसाइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर स्वीकार की जायेगी। (1) ई-निविदा संख्या-05-ई0टी0डी00090 / 2020-2021-220 एवं 132वें0वी0 उपकेन्द्र झुंसी पर फायर फायटिंग उपकरणों के रिफिलिंग के कार्य हेतु। (2) ई-निविदा संख्या-06-ई0टी0डी00090 / 2020-2021- इस खण्ड के अधीनस्थ तथा मुख्य अभियन्ता (पापद0पु0), कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, कार्यालय एवं लेखाधिकारी (पापद0पु0), प्रयागराज के अन्तर्गत कार्यरत कर्मचारियों हेतु ग्रीष्म कालीन वर्दी उपलब्ध कराने के सम्बन्ध में। उपरोक्त निविदा दिनांक 23-12-2020 को खोली जायेगी। (यदि निविदा खुलने की तिथि को अवकाश पड़ जाता है तो निविदायें अगले कार्य दिवस पर नियत समय एवं नियत स्थान पर खोली जायेगी।) ई-निविदा जमा करने की तिथि तक विवरण के लिए / डाउनलोड के लिए / किसी प्रकार के सुधार / संशोधन / परिवर्तन के लिए कृपया उ0 प्र0 सरकार की वेबसाइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर जायें। अतिशायी अभियन्ता, विद्युत प्रेषण मण्डल प्रथम, 57-जार्ज टाउन, प्रयागराज। पत्रांक-1525 दिनांक :- 23.11.2020 "राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचायें"।

विद्युत नगरीय वितरण मण्डल – द्वितीय, लेसा, लखनऊ (अति अल्प – कालीन ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण सूचना)
इस कार्यालय द्वारा आमन्त्रित निम्नांकित ई-निविदा दिनांक – 02.12.2020 को 14.00 बजे तक ई-पोर्टल पर अपलोड की जा सकेंगी एवं उसी दिन 16.00 बजे खोली जायेगी। निविदा का पूर्ण विवरण वेबसाइट <http://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड कर देखी जा सकेंगी। संशोधन, शुद्धिकरण, विस्ता-रीकरण, नियम एवं शर्तें ई-टेंडर की वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध रहेगी। अधोहस्ताक्षरी के पास एक या समस्त निविदाओं को किसी भी स्तर पर निरस्त / विमस्त करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित रहेगा। निविदा खुलने की तिथि को अवकाश पड़ जाता है तो निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस में नियत समय पर खोली जायेगी। निविदाओं का विवरण निम्नवत् है: **1. अति अल्पकालीन निविदा संख्या – 47-विनोविदामो-द्वि0 / 2020-21 – अतिशायी अभियन्ता, विद्युत नगरीय वितरण खण्ड, गोमतीनगर, लेसा के कार्य क्षेत्र में बिजनेस प्लान वर्ष 2020-21 अन्तर्गत स्वीकृत पैकेजों से सम्बन्धित विद्युतीकरण के कार्य। निविदा प्रपत्र मूल्य रु0 1180.00 (जीएसटी सहित) धरोहर घनराशि रु0 2700.00 मात्र।**
अधीक्षण अभियन्ता विद्युत नगरीय वितरण मण्डल(द्वितीय) लेसा-ट्रा0ग0 मध्यांचल वितरण निगम लि0, 33/11 केवी उपकेन्द्र मंत्री अवास, गोमतीनगर, लखनऊ। पत्रांक-960 दिनांक-23.11.2020 "राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचायें एवं एल0डी0 की प्रयोग करें"

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL PROJECT ENGINEER
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, PIU
Near Jaystambh Chowk, District- Umaria (M.P.)
E-mail:- dppepiu.umaria@mp.gov.in PHONE:- 07653-222584

NIT No. 30/2020/CENTRALISED TENDERING/APD/PIU/4339

REWA, DATE 18-11-2020

Online bids for the following works are invited from registered contractors and firms of repute fulfilling registration criteria :

S. No.	Tender Portal ID	Name of work	District	Probable Amount Contract (Rs. in lakh)	Eranest Money Deposit (EMD) (in Rs.)	Cost of Bid Document (in Rs.)	Period completion (in months i/c Rainy Season)	90% Incumbance Free Land Available And MOU Signed
1	2020_PVPIU_112908_1	SUPERVISION AND QUALITY CONTROL CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS BUILDINGS UNDER DPE PWD PIU UMARIA DISTRICT-UMARIA MADHYA PRADESH (THIRD CALL).	UMARIA	108.49	108490.00	12500.00	24 Months (Including rainy season)	-
2	2020_PVPIU_114894_1	CONSTRUCTION OF UPGRADATION OF DISTRICT HOSPITAL FROM 100 BEDS TO 200 BEDS AT UMARIA BLOCK KARKELI DISTRICT UMARIA (M.P) i/c WATER SUPPLY, SANITARY FITTING & ELECTRIFICATION WORK (FIRST CALL)	UMARIA	1334.99	1000000.00	30000.00	24 Months (Including rainy season)	Yes

1 All details relating to the Bid Document (s) can be viewed and downloaded free of cost from the website. <http://mptenders.gov.in>

2 Bid Document (s) can be purchased after making online payment of portal fees through Credit/Debit/Cash Card/Internet Banking.

3 The Bid Document (s) can be purchased only online from 9:00 AM (time) 20-11-2020 (date) to 06.00 PM (time) 04-12-2020 (date). Other key dates may be seen in Bid Data Sheet.

4 Amendment (s) to NIT, if any, shall be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

G-15733/20

जब तक कोरोना की दवाई नहीं, तब तक हिलाना नहीं।

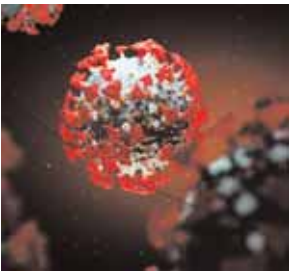
DIVISIONAL PROJECT ENGINEER
PWD PIU UMARIA (M.P.)

Recoveries outnumber new coronavirus cases in 24 hours in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: Recoveries outnumbered the new Covid cases in Kerala in the last 24 hours as fewer samples were tested.

In the past 24 hours, with 35,659 samples send for testing only 3,757 new Covid cases were reported taking the total tally to 5,00,089 while 5,425 people recovered from the virus.

According to a statement issued by state Health Minister K. K. Shailaja, the active cases in the state were reported to be 64,166 whereas with 22 more



deaths due to Covid the total death toll reached 2,071.

3,14,543 people are under observation across the state including 16,148 at the hospital. **IANS**

Shah sharing lunch with tribal photo op: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister on Monday launched a scathing attack on the BJP Government, particularly Union Home Minister Amit Shah — for playing to the gallery while having lunch with tribal and poor people — inviting instantaneous attack from the State BJP leadership that hit out at her for unleashing a “criminal and cut money raj” in the State.

Launching a no-holds-barred attack on the Home Minister, Mamata said how he had shared lunch with a tribal family in Jangal Mahal only fora photo opportunity. “Recently the Home Minister came and held a drama taking lunch with a tribal family which was told that he would stop at their house for having lunch --- but fact to be told in his five star food was comprised of Basmati rice though for the purpose of publicity they made some women to chop vegetables in front of the camera which he never had.”

Comparing Shah’s visit with her own Banerjee who was on a three-day Bankura visit said, “...



in contrast I just made an unscheduled stop at tribal residences discussed their problems with them sitting on charpais. It was not made for the camera.”

Taking a dig at Shah for garlanding the ‘statue’ of a hunter in the name of adoring the statue of freedom fighter Birsa the Chief Minister said “we will erect the real statue of Birsa Munda the great leader and honour him by declaring a holiday on his birth day.” Holding the Centre responsible for rising prices of eatables like onion, potato, and other gro-

608 recoveries in J&K in 24hrs against 351 new Covid cases

Srinagar: Recoveries continued to outnumber the new Covid cases in J&K on the second consecutive day on Monday as 608 patients were discharged while 351 tested positive in the last 24 hours.

Out of 351 new Covid cases, 185 were reported from Jammu division while 166 from Kashmir, the official bulletin said.

The total tally of UT reached 1,06,899 while the total recoveries were reported to be 99,827.

So far, 1,641 people have succumbed to the deadly virus, including 12 who died on Monday.

The number of active cases is 5,431 out of which 1,882 are from Jammu division and 3,549 are from Kashmir division. **IANS**

Fine for not wearing masks in Goa increased to ₹200

Panaji: Fine for not wearing masks in public places in Goa has been doubled from Rs 100 to Rs 200, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said on Monday.

Sawant also said urged people not to visit beaches, airports, railway stations and bus stands without masks in order to control the pandemic.

“Till now we have been charging Rs 100 (per offence). From today onwards the fine (for not wearing a mask) has been increased to Rs 200. At least in public, people will have to wear masks or they will be compulsorily fined,” Sawant said. The CM’s comments come after a busy tourist weekend in Goa, during which thousands of tourists (without masks) were seen on the state’s beaches as well as casinos, throwing social distancing norms to the wind. “No one should be seen without masks on beaches, bus stands, airport. If this happens, only then we will be able to control the pandemic,” Sawant said. **IANS**

Shut down Goa casinos amid increase in Covid cases: AAP

Panaji: Amid reports of more than a dozen persons testing positive for Covid-19 in Goa’s offshore casinos, the Aam Aadmi Party on Monday demanded the closure of the industry, fearing an increase in novel coronavirus in the state.

Addressing a press conference in Panaji on Monday, Goa Aam Aadmi Party spokesperson Surel Tilve said, if the rush to the state’s casinos is not controlled, the state may witness a second wave of infections.

“It is already difficult to control the flow of tourists to Goa’s casinos. It is getting out of control. Covid-19 cases in casinos have also increased. The government is just trying to appease the lobby by allowing this trend to continue,” Tilve told a press conference in Panaji.

“We fear that if the chaos continues, Goa may witness a second Covid-19 wave sooner than later,” Tilve said. Goa

Goa BJP steers clear of cow slaughter ban row in K’taka

Panaji: State BJP president Sadanand Shet Tanavade steered clear of queries related to an impending ban on cow slaughter in Karnataka and its impact on beef availability in Goa, which imports nearly all its slaughtered beef from the Southern state. “What they are doing in the Karnataka assembly, it is their decision. It will be not right for us to comment on it,” Tanavade told reporters.

The state Bharatiya Janata Party president’s comments come days after BJP national secretary and BJP MLA from Karnataka’s Chikkamagaluru legislative assembly constituency, CT Ravi, who also holds brief as the party’s desk in-charge for Goa, said that the Karnataka assembly would be passing a strict law banning

slaughter of cows in Karnataka.

Tanavade also said that just because the Goa desk in-charge has advocated the ban in Karnataka, it does not mean that the same norm would be applied in Goa, where beef is routinely consumed by more than 30 per cent of the state’s minority population and by thousands of tourists, who visit the state every year. “See he (Ravi) is an MLA, so what he needs to do (in Karnataka) is a different matter. Just because they do it there, that means it will happen here. It is not the case. It is a different issue there,” Tanavade said. Majority of the beef sold in Goa is sourced from the neighbouring state of Karnataka, especially from the border district of Belgavi. Goa consumes nearly 25 tons of beef everyday. **IANS**

Addressing a press conference in Panaji on Monday, Goa Aam Aadmi Party spokesperson Surel Tilve said, if the rush to the state’s casinos is not controlled, the state may witness a second wave of infections

has a confirmed tally of 46,826 positive cases, while 677 persons have died in the state after testing positive for Covid-19.

Goa’s state capital Panaji, off which most of the offshore casinos are anchored in the Mandovi river, witnessed chaos over the weekend with thousands of tourists making a beeline for casinos without maintaining social distancing norms and wearing masks.

The melee even forced Panaji MLA Atanasio Monserrate to step out onto the streets with local municipality officials in tow, in a bid to manage the traffic chaos as well as fine casino visitors for

not wearing masks.

When asked about the increase in Covid-19 cases detected in Goa’s casinos, the BJP MLA said: “You can ask the Chief Minister that because he has permitted the casinos to open”.

Casino operations, which were shut down in Goa in March due to the pandemic, restarted operations from November 1 this year. There are six offshore and around 10 onshore casinos operating in the state. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has directed that all casinos should follow both the state as well as the Central government SOPs on resumption. **IANS**

BSF guns down intruder along IB in Samba

PNS ■ JAMMU

Alert jawans of the Border Security Force (BSF) gunned an intruder along the International border in the Samba sector late Monday evening while foiling an infiltration bid from across the border.

On Sunday, a cross border tunnel was detected by a joint team of BSF and Jammu and Kashmir police near the Regal border post in the Samba sector.

In another related development, the DGP J&K police Dilbagh Singh Monday presented rewards to the personnel who were part of the Ban Toll Plaza encounter.

On the occasion, DGP also announced that shields already issued in Kashmir valley would also be provided to the personnel in Jammu zone. He said that protection jackets and helmets with higher level of protection would also be made available to increase the safety and capability of J&K personnel fighting against terrorism. He said that BP vehicles with additional features would also be provided to increase the efficiency of personnel on the anti-terror front. He also sought reports from the field officers and personnel with

regards to the safety gears and other requirements and assured that highlighted requirements would be redressed on priority.

Meanwhile, a senior security expert in Jammu Brigadier (Retd) Anil Gupta Monday expressed grave concern on the repeated failure of the BSF and J&K Police to prevent infiltration through the International Border (IB).

In a written statement, Brig Gupta stated that this is the 4th or 5th time when a tunnel has been detected after the infiltration has taken place.

The occasion is used by the senior officials of BSF and JKP to make tall claims, criticise Pakistan, conduct photo ops and things return to square one after a few days till the next big infiltration becomes public and another tunnel is found again stated Brig Gupta. “Why is it that the tunnels are detected only after the infiltration has taken place?”

Why no action is taken to pinpoint responsibility, lapses and failures and proactive measures taken to prevent similar lapses in future? Is it lack of resources, will, professionalism or sincerity,” questioned Brig Gupta.

BJP flag removal from MLA’s car: AMU to challenge court order in SC

PNS ■ ALIGARH

In the matter of removing the BJP flag from the Scorpio vehicle of MJP MLA Dalvir Singh’s grandson, the Aligarh Muslim University administration will challenge the matter in Supreme Court against the decision of the lower court of High Court.

Professor Shafe Qidwai of the Public Relations Department of the University told that on 22 October 2019, Prof. Bibi Singh, the member of the university’s proctor team, did his duty by taking off the flag of a political party mounted on a vehicle inside a university campus as per university rules.

It is the rule of the university that no political flag-bearing vehicle will enter the campus. He did official work

on government duty, so he has done nothing wrong. The High Court has decided not to quash the trial, which the university administration through its team of advocates will challenge in the Supreme Court.

On 22 October 2019, the Aligarh Muslim University Proctorial Team took the BJP flag off from the vehicle of the grandson of BJP MLA and former minister Dalveer Singh from Barauli at Baab-E-Syed. Vijay Singh alias Pappu, the grandson of MLA Dalveer Singh, was studying in the first year of graduation. The BJP MLA’s driver came to the University campus from Scorpio to pick up Vijay Singh. On reaching Bab-E-Syed, the proctorial team took off the BJP flag from the vehicle.

BOLLYWOOD DRUG MAFIA NEXUS CASE Mumbai court grants bail to comedian Bharti, husband Harsh

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A Special court here on Monday granted a bail to television comedian Bharti Singh and her husband Harsh

Limbachiya against a bond of Rs 15,000 each in the drugs seizure and consumption case filed against them by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

A day after they were sent judicial custody till December 14, 36-year-old Bharti and 33-year-old Harsh, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate at Esplanade Court allowed the bail application of Bharti and her script writer-producer husband Harsh and ordered their release against a bail bond for Rs 15,000 each.

While Bharti was arrested on Saturday evening, Harsh was placed under arrest by the NCB after 15 hours of questioning on Sunday morning.

Their arrests came after the NCB seized 86.5 grams of Cannabis during the raids conducted on their office and residence in north-west Mumbai on Saturday. While the NCB seized 65 gram of Cannabis from Harsh’s production house at Versova. 21.5 grams of the same drug and unaccounted cash of Rs 1.49 lakh were seized from the residence of Bharti and Harsh at Andheri’s Lokhandwala Complex.

Bharti is understood to have told officers that she would smoke weed procured by her husband. Harsh told the investigators that he purchased Cannabis from a peddler. Of the procured cannabis, he would keep a part of the contraband at his office, while he would keep the remaining drug at his for consumption.

During their questioning by the NCB, Bharti and her husband reportedly confessed to having possessed and consumed cannabis (ganja).

Both have been booked under sections 20(b)(ii)(A) (involves small quantity of drugs) and 8(c) (possession of drugs) and 27 (consumption of drugs) of the NDPS Act.

The raid on the homes of Bharti and her husband Harsh and their subsequent arrest 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).

Bharti and Harsh are being investigated in connection with the Bollywood-drug mafia case registered by the NCB in the wake of the alleged suicide of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput. 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.

Earlier, on November 9, the NCB had raided 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.

Rampal and Gabriella were questioned later. The NCB had earlier last month arrested a South African national Agisilaos Demetriades – the brother of Rampal’s live-in partner Gabriella Demetriades from Lonavla near Pune. Agisilaos is alleged to be a part of a larger drug syndicate operating in Bollywood, which is being investigated after the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

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 and seized a total of 717.1 gm of various drugs and arrested five persons, including Firoz A. Nadiadwala’s wife Shabana Saeed.

Nearly twenty persons –including Sushant’s girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty and her brother Shovik --- have so far been arrested in connection with a case registered by the NCB on August 28, two days after it registered a case suo moto.

The CB had registered a second case after it told the Mumbai court that it wanted to “to uproot the drug citadel in Mumbai especially in Bollywood”. Subsequently, Rhea was granted conditional bail by the Bombay High Court in the Sushant death-related drug case on October 7, 2020.

As part of the investigations, the NCB had earlier questioned Bollywood’s prominent actresses Deepika Padukone, Sara Ali Khan, Shraddha Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh.

Andhra registers 545 Covid cases, tally 8.62L

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh has registered 545 new Covid cases, increasing the State’s tally to 8.62 lakh, even as 1,390 persons recovered from the virus on Monday.

Guntur district accounted for the highest number of cases in the past 24 hours at 117, followed by East Godavari (104), West Godavari (76), Krishna (44), Chittoor (32), Kadapa (31), Nellore (30), Prakasam (25), Visakhapatnam (21),

Anantapur and Srikakulam (19 each), Vizianagaram (17) and Kurnool (10). With the new additions, East Godavari continues to shoulder the highest number of cases at 1.21 lakh.

Meanwhile, 10 more people succumbed to the virus, raising the total number of Covid deaths in the state to 6,948. Chittoor district has witnessed the highest number of Covid deaths at 822.

On Monday, 1,390 per-

sons recovered from the virus to increase the total number of recoveries to 8.42 lakh, narrowing the gap between total infections and recoveries.

Of the 8.62 lakh cases, active cases have plummeted to 13,394. Andhra Pradesh has the highest ratio of Covid tests per million samples in the country. It has tested 1.8 lakh people for every million population while the national average is 95,590.

COVID-19

Solution to virus elimination lies in rapid testing

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Testing half the population weekly with inexpensive, rapid-turnaround Covid-19 tests would drive the virus toward elimination within weeks — even if those tests are significantly less sensitive than gold-standard clinical tests, claim researchers.

The observation holds importance in the context of India where while RT-PCR is considered the gold standard for Covid-19 testing because of the high sensitivity of the test, Rapid antigen testing (RAT) is preferred in areas where mass-scale testing needs to be deployed for it gives results in minutes and is cheaper. The test is highly specific, which means it can accurately detect true positive cases.

However, because of the limitations of the test in terms of not being that accurate in detecting true negatives, the Indian Government has advised states to mandatorily test through RT-PCR all RAT negative samples of individuals having Covid-19 like symptoms. RAT is also quicker and gives results in minutes rather than hours taken to get RT-PCR test results.

The rapid antigen test is also cheaper to perform as compared to the RT-PCR, which is a complicated test requiring a specialised laboratory.

Study lead author Daniel Larremore from the University of Colorado Boulder in the US



supports RAT test as he said, “Our big picture finding is that, when it comes to public health, it’s better to have a less sensitive test with results today than a more sensitive one with results tomorrow.”

“Rather than telling everyone to stay home so you can be sure that one person who is sick doesn’t spread it, we could give only the contagious people stay-at-home orders so everyone else can go about their lives,” Larremore added.

For the study, published in the journal Science Advances, the research team teamed up with the Harvard University to explore whether test sensitivity, frequency, or turnaround time is most important to curb the spread of Covid-19.

The researchers scoured available literature on how viral load climbs and falls inside the body during infection, when

people tend to experience symptoms, and when they become contagious.

They then used mathematical modeling to forecast the impact of screening with different kinds of tests on three hypothetical scenarios: in 10,000 individuals; in a university-type setting of 20,000 people; and in a city of 8.4 million.

When it came to curbing spread, they found that frequency and turnaround time are much more important than test sensitivity. For instance, in one scenario in a large city, widespread twice-weekly testing with a rapid but less sensitive test reduced the degree of infectiousness of the virus by 80 per cent.

But twice-weekly testing with a more sensitive PCR

(polymerase chain reaction) test, which takes up to 48 hours to return results, reduced infectiousness by only 58 per cent. When the amount of testing was the same, the rapid test always reduced infectiousness better than the slower, more sensitive PCR test. That’s because about two-thirds of infected people have no symptoms and as they await their results, they continue to spread the virus.

“This paper is one of the first to show we should worry less about test sensitivity and, when it comes to public health, prioritize frequency and turnaround,” said senior co-author Roy Parker.

The study also demonstrates the power of frequent testing in shortening the pandemic and saving lives.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah launches a mobile laboratory that will conduct free RT-PCR tests for Covid-19 here and the results will be available in six to eight hours. SpiceHealth, an initiative of the promoters of SpiceJet, and led by Avani Singh, CEO, SpiceHealth, will be setting up a number of portable testing facilities across the country to make the highly sensitive RT-PCR testing readily accessible

AstraZeneca: We will have 200 million doses by end of 2020

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Stating that its Covid-19 vaccine could be around 90 per cent effective, and potentially cheaper to make, British drug-maker AstraZeneca on Monday said it will have as many as 200 million doses by the end of 2020 — around four times as many as US competitor Pfizer.

Seven hundred million doses could be ready globally as soon as the end of the first quarter of 2021. The combined analysis from both dosing regimens resulted in an average efficacy of 70 per cent.

The vaccine was 90 per cent effective in preventing Covid-19 when it was administered as a half dose followed by a full dose at least a month later, according to data from late-stage trials in Britain and Brazil. No serious safety events were confirmed, the company said.

“This means we have a vaccine for the world,” said Andrew Pollard, director of the Oxford University vaccine group that developed the drug.

The vaccine’s cost works out at just a few dollars a shot,

a fraction of the price of drugs from Pfizer and Moderna, which use a more unconventional technology.

And it can be transported and stored at normal fridge temperatures, which proponents say would make it easier to distribute, especially in poor countries, than Pfizer’s, which needs to be shipped and stored at -70C, the sort of temperature typical of an Antarctic winter.

The effectiveness of AstraZeneca’s vaccine depended on the dosing, and fell to just 62 per cent when given as two full doses rather than a half-dose first. But scientists cautioned against seeing this as evidence that it would be less useful than rivals. Vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna each prevented about 95 per cent of cases according to interim data from their late-stage trials.

“I think it is a real fool’s errand to start trying to pick these three (Pfizer/Moderna/Astra) apart on the basis of snippets of phase 3 data from press releases,” said Danny Altmann, professor of immunology at Imperial College London.

PM: Constructed key buildings within time

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said his Government initiated the construction of many major buildings in the Capital which were in limbo and were only on files for the past two decades and finished the work well before the targeted time.

Inaugurating the new three towers with 76 apartments for MPs, Modi cited that many important buildings like National War Memorial, Ambedkar International Centre, National Police Memorial and CIC building constructions were started from mid 2014.

Modi said delay in construction of major buildings leads to economic burden. “It also leads to economic burden. But serious efforts to overcome this problem began especially after 2014.

The decades-old problems can be resolved by finding solutions to them and not by avoiding.

Not only the accommodation for MPs, there were several projects in Delhi which had been lying incomplete for many years, and were in limbo. Construction of several buildings began during this Government itself and was completed in the stipulated time, even before the scheduled time. When there was the Government of Atal Bihari



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses at the inauguration of multi-storeyed flats for Members of Parliament, through video conferencing, in New Delhi on Monday

Vajpayee ji, discussion began on the Ambedkar National Memorial. It took several years for its construction and it was completed only after the formation of this Government.

“The Doctor Ambedkar International Centre was built by this government after a long wait of 23 years. The new building of the Central Information Commission was completed by this Government. The country was, for decades, discussing a proposal of the War Memorial. The brave soldiers of our country were expecting and demanding this for a long time. Our Government also had the privilege of constructing a war memorial near India Gate in

memory of the country’s martyrs. Thousands of policemen in our country have sacrificed their lives to maintain law and order. Thousands of policemen have been martyred. The National Police Memorial in their memory was also built by this Government,” said Modi, narrating several projects completed by his Government on time.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Union Ministers Prahlad Joshi and Hardeep Puri were present in the function.

The 76 new residences for MPs have been built within 27 months at a cost of Rs 188 crore, in three towers named after Rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati.

CBI books UP resident for impersonating agency official

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a case against an accused, resident of Jwal Khara, Bulandshahr and Shivpuri Choraha, Tehsil Kol, Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh) on the allegations that he has been impersonating himself as RR Singh, DIG, CBI, Delhi for his personal gain.

The agency also conducted searches on Monday at the premises of the accused which led to recovery of two country made firearms and some incriminating documents in connection with the alleged crime.

The accused Rajiv Singh was impersonating as the CBI DIG for personal gains, officials said, adding investigation is continuing in the case.

Meanwhile, the agency on Monday arrested an absconding accused in an ongoing investigation of a case against a Kolkata-based Ponzi company.

A case was registered

against the Ponzy company) and others.

“It was alleged that the Managing Director of the (accused Ponzi company) in pursuance to a conspiracy with other Directors of said Group of Companies (a Ponzi Company) had illegally collected Rs 454.54 crore (approximately) from the investors under various fraudulent schemes on assurance of paying high returns on such investments on maturity,” the CBI said in a statement.

It was further alleged that the accused fled away after cheating the said investors and misappropriated the invested money.

The arrested accused SK Nazubulla, Managing Director of Angel Agritech Group of Companies (a Ponzi Company), was produced before the Court of ACJM, Baruipur (West Bengal) and remanded to 10 days police custody, officials added.

Foreign Secy briefs envoys of key nations on attempts by JeM to carry out terror attack in J&K

New Delhi: Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla on Monday briefed top envoys of key nations, including the US, Russia, France and Japan on the planned terror attack by Pakistan-based terrorist group JeM in Nagrota in Jammu which was foiled by security forces on November 19, sources said.

The heads of missions were provided with a comprehensive “information docket” giving the details of the incident, and also list of items and munition recovered from terrorists, clearly indicating their Pakistani origins. The envoys were sensitised about India’s concerns regarding Pakistan’s sustained efforts to “destabilise” the situation in Jammu & Kashmir and to “subvert” upcoming local elections and democracy in the union territory, sources said.

“In terms of the bigger picture, it was clear that the terrorists were planning the biggest terror attack in India since Pulwama in February 2019 and the implications can be guessed,” said a source, adding that details of JeM’s involvement in previous such incidents were also shared with the envoys.

Four suspected JeM terrorists, who were hiding in a truck, were killed by security forces near Nagrota in an encounter on Thursday morning after which the government asserted that a major terror attack was foiled by the Indian security forces.

It was the first of several briefings to be conducted by the MEA in small groups in view of the Covid-19 situation, the sources said adding other secretaries will also be holding similar sessions with heads of missions of other countries.

Riots case: SC rejects plea of Delhi Police challenging bail granted to man

New Delhi: The Supreme Court dismissed the plea of the Delhi Police challenging the bail granted to a man, who has been accused of selling a SIM card on a fake ID to a Jamia Millia Islamia University student, which was allegedly used for inciting violence during the protests here in February against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan rejected the appeal of the police against the October 23 order of the Delhi High Court granting bail to the accused, observing that the police have not shown that he was party to a conspiracy to organise protests against the CAA.

Alleging that the SIM card obtained on a fake ID was used to coordinate protests against the CAA, the police had invoked the stringent UAPA against the accused.

Palghar lynching case: SC adjourns to next week plea seeking CBI probe

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday adjourned to next week hearing on the pleas seeking a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) or a court-monitored SIT into the Palghar mob lynching incident. A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan adjourned the matter after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta requested for adjournment of the case to the next week.

Maharashtra Government had earlier informed the apex court that all guilty police officials have been punished or suspended from services. “Departmental enquiry was ordered against police personnel, who have been prima-facie found negligent and derelict in the performance of their duties in handling the incident and preventing the commission of a crime at and around the time of the incident,” the Maharashtra Government had submitted in a status report.

SC extends parole of Rajiv Gandhi assassination convict for medical check up

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday extended by a week the parole of AG Perarivalan, serving life sentence in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, for undergoing medical check-up.

A bench comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao, Hemant Gupta and Ajay Rastogi also directed the Tamil Nadu Government to provide police escort to Perarivalan during his visit to the hospital.

The parole, granted to the convict by the Madras High Court, was ending on Monday and now stands extended by one more week. “As prayed for, we further extend the parole of the petitioner by one week from today and direct the respondent — State of Tamil Nadu to provide the necessary police escort to the petitioner to enable him to visit the hospital for treatment. List the matter on January 19, 2021, for final disposal,” the bench said.

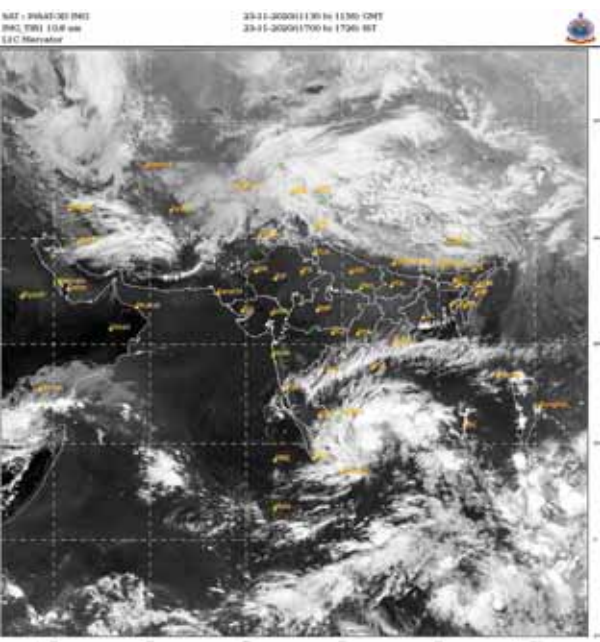
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Cyclone Nivar is brewing in the Bay of Bengal and might make landfall along the Tamil Nadu coast between Karaikal and Mahabalipuram on the afternoon of November 25. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has upgraded the tropical threat to Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry coasts to a severe cyclone and issued an advisory to this effect.

This will be the first cyclone to make landfall on the Indian coast in 2020 and the second to form in the North Indian Ocean region after severe cyclone Gati in the Arabian Sea in 2020. The months from October to December are ‘cyclone season’ and see several originate in the Bay of Bengal.

According to the IMD, Nivar currently lies as a depression some 600 km south south east of Puducherry in the Bay of Bengal. It will intensify into a deep depression by the evening of November 23 and a cyclone by the morning of November 24. The wind speeds at the time of landfall are likely to be in the range of 100-110 kilometres per hour, with gusts of up to 120 km / hr making the storm a severe cyclone. It might bring heavy rainfall to the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana from November 24-26.

The IMD warned that the severe cyclone may inflict damage to thatched houses/ huts with the possibility of rooftops being blown off and unattached



IMD satellite image captured on Monday shows a depression over the Bay of Bengal

metal sheets flying away. Damage to power and communication lines could be expected. Kutchra roads may suffer major damaged while it would be less severe to pucca roads. Escape routes could get flooded after breaking down of tree branches and large avenue trees getting uprooted. The severe cyclone can also cause major damage to banana and papaya trees, horticulture and crops, orchards and coastal crops.

The sea condition was ‘rough to very rough’ (wave heights of 8-20 ft) over South-

West and adjoining West-Central and South-East Bay along and off Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and south Andhra Pradesh coasts and over the Gulf of Mannar on Monday afternoon.

Fishermen are advised not to venture into South-West and adjoining West-Central and South-East Bay; the Gulf of Mannar, and along and off the Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and south Andhra Pradesh coasts from Monday to Wednesday. Those out into the sea already are advised to return to the coast

Union Cabinet Secy chairs meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba on Monday chaired a meeting of the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) to review the status of impending Cyclone through video conferencing with the Chief Secretaries of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

The Chief Secretaries of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry briefed the NCMC about their preparedness and mentioned that the authorities are fully prepared to meet any eventuality. They also informed about the coordination with the NDRF and other agencies to meet this challenge.

“Director General, India Meteorological Department made a presentation on the present situation and mentioned that the status is being shared with the concerned State Governments. He men-

tioned that the impending Cyclone is going to affect coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry between 24th to 26th November, 2020.

“The Cabinet Secretary mentioned that we all are aiming at zero loss of life and early restoration of normalcy in the affected areas. He mentioned that the advisories to fishermen not to go into the sea should be strictly implemented. People living in ‘kutchra’ houses may be advised suitably according to the situation,” he added,” said Cabinet Secretariat in a statement.

Secretaries from Home, Power, Telecommunication, Civil Aviation, Shipping, Health Ministry, Chairman, Railway Board, Member Secretary, NDMA, DG, NDRF and representative of Ministry of Defence also informed the NCMC about the arrangements and assistance to the concerned States.

and avoid the above sea areas.

Throughout August, the Arabian Sea was warmer than usual by two-three degrees Celsius. While the normal sea surface temperatures here are about 28-29°C, the temperatures this August reached up to 29-31°C. The sea surface tem-

peratures in the Bay of Bengal are also in the range of 29-30°C, according to IMD’s latest cyclone update. A deep depression in October had also carried much more rainfall than normal, causing extremely heavy rainfall in many parts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Good enough?

The AstraZeneca vaccine has been clinically tested to have an average efficacy of 70 per cent. We still need containment drills



With India clearly in the midst of a third wave — some might even call it a tsunami of new Coronavirus cases — we should not be surprised. Even a cursory glance of what happened during the 1918-1919 Spanish influenza pandemic should have warned us to be prepared for winter, because even a century ago, there was a massive increase in cases in winter when the cold compromises lungs thanks to congestion and any influenza virus can be devastating. With the Delhi and Gujarat governments in a state of panic, it is almost certain that cases will begin to increase across the country whether

the authorities admit to them or not. But there is some positive news with British pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca, which has jointly developed a vaccine with University of Oxford to combat the Coronavirus, coming out with its trial results. That is because the Serum Institute of India (SII) has been a partner to this research as well and has promised that it will produce hundreds of millions of doses of this vaccine for Indians. Yet, the results have only indicated an average of 70 per cent efficacy with two full doses taken a month apart and up to 90 per cent when an initial half dose is combined with a full dose taken after one month. Promisingly, the vaccine doesn't need super-cold storage like the ones developed by Pfizer and Moderna, requiring only refrigeration. It also appears that as many as five other promising vaccine candidates might make it to the markets by early 2021.

However, as we have maintained, the development of a vaccine is not equal to its deployment. Also, if as the trials have indicated, with at least one-and-a-half doses required for maximum efficacy, India will need a whopping two billion doses. Even if costs are kept in check, this is looking at a time frame that might take well over three-four years to inoculate a substantial number of Indians in order to gain a decent amount of protection. At the same time, because efficacy is not the same as effectiveness, even with 90 per cent efficacy, the Coronavirus will continue to pop up, tens of thousands will continue to get infected and many more will die before the Wuhan pandemic truly settles down. Till then, preparedness and preventable behaviour are the only containment devices against an unexpected surge and given India's population density, we better reconcile ourselves to the fact that our crests will be a constant for some time. Maharashtra, which has been the worst-affected State in the country, fighting the longest battle and is now threatened with a new front, has finally released its new screening SOPs that make a RT-PCR test report mandatory for visitors who are travelling to the State from hotspots. All entry points to the State will have testing and screening centres for those not carrying such a report. This is the first time that international travel protocols are being followed domestically and perhaps would be adopted by other States, too, to keep the numbers down. It is a shame indeed that the Supreme Court has had to pull up State Governments on laxity and seek a status report on preparedness. The court also had to get into the nitty gritty of ensuring dignified treatment of the dead and vetting hospital conditions to treat the sick. A fatigue has undoubtedly set in, socially, psychologically and physically. Doctors are the worst affected, some of whom need to be relieved with younger colleagues now being drafted in to ease frontline pressure. Anticipation is the best defence now. The pandemic has forced Governments to invest in public health like never before but now investments in vaccine manufacturing and deployment will be the challenge. These are positive developments but let us not pretend that the news of a vaccine is a silver bullet that will magically cure the world.

Putin's *nyet* to Biden

Russia yet to acknowledge US President-elect given his past stance on sanctions. Can arms control break the ice?



When all world leaders are already confabulating with President-elect Joe Biden, Russian President Vladimir Putin is not ready to acknowledge the US' chosen leader just yet. In fact, given his history with US President Donald Trump, his latest diplomatic stance portends what the latter might be up to. One that's serious enough for Putin to acknowledge. Although the electoral certification process technically is still on, Biden has emerged the clear winner from the State-by-State vote tallies. And the Electoral College is expected to formally confirm the results on December 14. Trump may exhaust all legal options and challenge

counts but the margins are by now too large to change the outcome in his favour. But he sure is making the transition difficult, determined to make Biden's job difficult and most importantly, fairly decided about weighing his rival down with his flamboyance and show him as a weak leader, who doesn't deserve to be in a chair that demands his kind of robustness. Putin's words on State TV would seem like they were scripted by Trump himself as he said he would work with "anyone who has the confidence of the American people. But that confidence can only be given to a candidate whose victory has been recognised by the opposing party, or after the results are confirmed in a legitimate, legal way." The contrast is sharper as in 2016, Putin had wasted no time in congratulating Trump for winning the election. Of course, Clinton had conceded the day after the vote and the Russian involvement in influencing the election in Trump's favour is not quite a secret. So beyond the personal equation, Putin's continued deference to Trump as a world leader seemed less than diplomatic, considering the impact it could have on US-Russia relations and global geopolitics. Putin, of course, claimed that his latest stance wouldn't impact mutual relations much as they were "already ruined." The Trump Administration has already withdrawn from the Open Skies Treaty and the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Thanks to the US, Russia is already under international sanctions for actions, including its annexation of Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 (one where Biden had a key role to play), interference in the US election in 2016 and reported involvement in a nerve agent attack in the UK in 2018. So unless Putin is humouring Trump in the run-up to 2024, which the latter is seemingly keen to contest, and investing for the future, little else makes sense. Besides, Trump's "America first" policy and withdrawal from global arenas of conflict had helped Russia somewhat regain its heft and self-worth in Europe in the power vacuum thus caused, all the way up to Turkey. With Biden's renewed commitment to world bodies, particularly NATO, Russia's clout could be considerably diminished. In fact, it could be blindsided again.

The Kremlin has historically not been comfortable with the Democrats and finds Biden an impediment, given his tough stance on Putin. As Vice-President, Biden had stridently pushed for sanctions against Russia in response to the 2014 Ukrainian crisis. With no signs of conflict resolution on that count, Putin now expects tougher counter-measures against him. Besides, given Biden's stance that morality must play a role in US foreign policy, Russia fears sharper US condemnation of its rights issues and what the US considers "subversive" activities in the neighbourhood. This brand of US exceptionalism is antithetical to Russia's newly extended sphere of influence. All through his campaign, Biden did mention Russia's meddling in US elections as also its alleged endorsement of Taliban attacks on US troops in Afghanistan. So rightfully, Putin does expect a hitback and is probably raising his stakes to deflect the US. Of course, Biden and his team are pragmatic and a balanced lot and would not want to precipitate a crisis, working on areas of mutual interest. The renewal of arms control could be a starting point. Biden has already said that he wants extension of existing or new treaties on reducing US-Russian nuclear arms. That works with the Russians, too.



J.S. RAJPUT

Policies are formulated on the strong foundation of the outcomes of incisive analysis of past experiences coupled with futuristic vision that could respond to emerging issues, concerns and aspirations. Gandhiji consistently articulated the India of his dreams and his concerns about the impediments ahead. These are evident in the seven social sins he published in the *Young India* of October 22, 1925. These are: politics without principles, wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity and worship without sacrifice.

No policy, the one on education included, can ignore the contemporary severity of these sins. It could also be witnessed in the seven tensions identified in the report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the 21st century — also known as the Delors Commission Report. These are the tensions between global and local, universal and individual, tradition and modernity, long-term and short term considerations, the need for competition and concern for opportunity, extraordinary expansion of knowledge and the human being's capacity to assimilate, and finally, the conflict between the spiritual and the material. One could, in the present context, reformulate them but it would be perilous to neglect any of these. The "sins" are taking stronger roots while the "tensions" are disturbing human habitation and systems that are already under severe strains and pressures as consequences of declining moral, ethical and humanistic considerations.

An incisive scrutiny of the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) would indicate the extent to which both the sins and tensions need to be responded to, as is essential to prepare human beings imbued with character, commitment and concern. It acknowledges the guiding light it derived from the "rich heritage of ancient and eternal Indian knowledge and thought." The pursuit of knowledge, wisdom and truth is considered the highest goal of human life. The NEP mentions, "The aim of education in ancient India was not just the acquisition of knowledge as preparation for life in this world, or life beyond schooling, but for the complete realisation and liberation of the Soul. World class

institutions in India, such as Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramshila and Vallabhi, set the highest standards of multi-disciplinary teaching and research and hosted scholars and students from across backgrounds and countries." The ancient Indian system of education valued the pursuit of knowledge with the sole objective of utilising it for the welfare of humanity: "Let all be happy, let all be healthy; let all see good around and let none suffer pain of any kind." Could there be a better comprehension of the essential unity of human beings as one family? And in a family, differences and diversities are accepted and respected. This is what the NEP has imbibed in word and spirit. It recalls how the products of ancient Indian education system strived tirelessly to make seminal contributions in diverse fields of knowledge, including mathematics, astronomy, metallurgy, surgery, health, architecture, engineering, ship building, navigation, yoga, fine arts and so much more. Every Indian student — inheritor of this great legacy — must be made familiar with it and accept the responsibility to enhance it further through excellence in his chosen area of activity and expertise. Each one of them is an inheritor of the legacy of luminaries like Charak, Susruta, Aryabhata, Bhaskaracharya, Brahmagupta, Nagarjuna, Gautama, Maitreyi, Gargi and Thiruvalluvar.

Once the NEP 2020 is implemented appropriately, no Indian shall remain "delinked from India." Every learner would be exposed to modern knowledge that would be given to him/her in institutions following the most modern pedagogy, and with due emphasis on critical thinking, creativity and innovations. It would aim at developing a student's full human potential. Higher education, the NEP-2020 acknowledges, must aim to develop good, thoughtful, well rounded and creative individuals. Obviously, the school education would take note of these aspects in the most sensitive years. Recommendations on multi-disciplinary universities, robust autonomy, revamping of curriculum and pedagogy, reforms in governance of higher education Institutions (HEIs), creation of National Research Foundation (NRF) and National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) would be positive additions to the quality and contemporary relevance of the future model of Indian education.

India could finally turn into an international education hub and certainly attract attention of the corresponding international institutions. The proposed changes in structure, flexibility, autonomy, pedagogy, multidimensionality, assessment procedures, including transfer of credit systems, would remove several agonising technicalities. The availability of internationally relevant curricula in the history, heritage and culture of India, as also modern subject areas, could attract a sizeable number of foreign students, helping us achieve the goal of "internationalisation at home." Some well-thought out suggestions like opening of foreign campuses by established Indian institutions and permitting top international universities to operate in India would effectively put Indian education firmly on the international podium, with dignity, credibility and expectations. Shared courses with reputed international institutions could pave the way for a much-needed morale boosting and encourage our young to compete with and excel among

foreign students. One has to be cautious about certain aspects though. Global credibility and recognition would require certain minimum levels of infrastructure and facilities which, sadly enough, are still missing in a large number of education institutions across the board. The NEP 2020 assures availability of all of these: "Every classroom shall have access to the latest educational technology that enables better learning experiences." There can be no compromise on the professionally acceptable teacher-taught ratio. This raises several related requirements. Quality just cannot be raised by engaging guest teachers, teachers on lecture-based payments, para teachers and keeping more than a million posts of school teachers vacant for decades together! In HEIs, the quality of products, research and innovations would be greatly impeded if there are 40-60 per cent vacant academic positions. The NEP 2020 boldly acknowledges this concern and articulates: "The teacher must be at the centre of the fundamental reforms in the education system. The new education policy must help re-establish teachers, at all levels, as the most respected and essential members of our society, because they truly shape our next generation of citizens. It must do everything to empower teachers and help them do their job as effectively as possible." Expressing serious concern on the quality of teacher education, the recommendation is to replace by 2030 all of the present one-year school teacher preparation programmes by four-year integrated teacher education programmes. It may be worthwhile to recall that the four-year integrated teacher preparation programmes began in the four institutions of the NCERT in 1964-64, and the products

were indeed far ahead of others in their professional performance in schools and teacher education institutions. Unfortunately, the module was not replicated.

In higher education, the policy acknowledges the "criticality, quality and engagement" of the faculty. It also accepts that "faculty motivation" remains far lower than the desired level. Several steps have been listed to attract "the best, motivated, and capable faculty in the HEIs." The right-teacher-student ratio, access to education technology, freedom to design their own curricular and pedagogical approaches, incentives like appropriate rewards, promotions, recognition and movement into institutional leadership are included in the list.

In his book of 1932, *Remakers of Mankind*, Carl Washburne writes that when asked, "What is your goal in education when India obtains self-rule?," Gandhi answered, "Character-building. I would try to develop courage, strength, virtue, the ability to forget oneself in working towards great aims. This is more important than literacy; academic learning is only a means to this great end." Character formation was the strength of the traditional Indian system of knowledge quest that included creation, generation, utilisation and transfer of knowledge to generations ahead. With all the experiences gained globally in varying contexts and approaches, it is now accepted globally that education in every country must be rooted to culture and committed to progress. Character-building just cannot be envisioned in isolation unless linked to culture. No culture would flourish in isolation and our youth can become global citizens only when they are made well aware and conversant with their own culture before being introduced to others. India painfully suffered as the transplanted system deliberately kept young "educated" Indians away from getting familiar with the nuances of their own culture; they were systematically indoctrinated in the "superiority of the Western culture." This was very comprehensively articulated by Gandhiji in the *Young India* of September 1, 1921, "It is my firm opinion that no culture has a treasure so rich as ours. We have not known it, we have been made even to depreciate its value. We have almost ceased to live it." Let us hope that the proposed educational reforms would prepare young people with credentials, and they would be looking after the masses. Education must lead to human dignity for one and all.

(The author works in education and social cohesion)

SOUND BITE

Virat Kohli will be missed. But like I say, in adversity comes opportunity. There are a lot of young guys on the side and it's an opportunity for them.



Head coach, Team India
—Ravi Shastri

You just cannot create the right atmospherics in a virtual concert. There is no intimacy, no immediate feedback and no interaction with the audience.



Singer
—Pankaj Udhass

I hope we'll leave in history an example of how to deal with a global health threat and an economic crisis by applying the principle of universal brotherhood.



Mexican President
—Andres Obrador

I've got to learn next year to get off my devices. You scroll through social media for your news and it's just bad anyway, which just brings you anxiety and puts you in depression.



Singer
—Shaggy

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Will Cong ever act?

Sir — The Congress Party has suffered a debacle in the just-concluded Bihar elections due to its political blunders and poor organisation. It has also suffered defeat in the byelections in different States.

Because of the worrisome state the party is in all over the country, senior leaders like Kapil Sibal and P Chidambaram have lashed out against the present leadership of the Congress. They have echoed the words of those members of the grand old party who wrote a dissent letter in August. The Congress Party has become weak because of the trust deficit, loss of public appeal, identity politics and political polarisation. There is a crisis of leadership due to the lack of vision and idealism. Brainstorming by senior leaders and dissenters in a democratic spirit of accommodation will help overhaul the party. A graceful and dignified change of leadership can also help open a new and meaningful chapter in its history.

This, in turn, will help build a strong Opposition, which is essential for the growth of a healthy and vital democracy in

No room for divisive politics in TN

The announcement about the continuity of the AIADMK-BJP alliance in Tamil Nadu has finally laid all speculation to rest. The reception given to Union Home Minister Amit Shah by the party's top leadership has confirmed that the AIADMK Government is tied to the NDA Government's apron strings. This is partly attributed to the fear of Central agencies being unleashed upon its leaders. Interestingly, the number of AIADMK cadres out to greet Shah was more than the BJP's men. Significantly, the "Go back Amit Shah" hashtag that was trending showed the strong anti-BJP sentiment that is prevailing in the State as it is inhospitable terrain for divisive politics, especially on religious grounds.

With the sealing of the AIADMK-BJP pact for the Assembly election, the prospect of any significant political realignment or formation of a third front, making it a triangular contest has now receded. At the same time, the moves by late Jayalalithaa's companion, Sasikala, who will be out of jail by January 27, superstar Rajinikanth and MK Alagiri will be watched with interest.

In the present political situation, the ideological incompatibility between a Dravidian party and a Hindutva-oriented party could get starker. This would be to the disadvantage of both the parties as the election nears. Obviously the State unit of the BJP has made the restrictions on idol immersion during the Vinayaka



Chaturthi an issue. It has invoked the traditional Tamil deity Lord Murugan and undertaken the Vetrivel Yatra (why bring Muruga Peruman from the shrine to the street?) despite the denial of permission because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As an ally, the AIADMK supported the BJP on the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act and the three farm Acts. True, the BJP holds sway over much of the country but it has only a negligible presence in Tamil Nadu. In its eagerness to gain a toehold and build a base in the State by piggybacking on the AIADMK, the BJP could bargain for seats disproportionate to its strength. Overall, the DMK looks the firm favourite to occupy Fort St George.

G. David Milton
Maruthanadon

Help others in need

Sir — We are being buffeted by yet another wave of the pandemic. As feared by health experts, the cold, the pollution

and the cavalier attitude of the milling masses roaming around in overcrowded markets without masks during the festive season have led to this surge. Many States are again thinking of going into a lock-

down. This will be nothing short of a disaster for our country as the economy, which has been ailing for quite some time now, cannot take yet another hit.

Amid all this, we cannot ignore the plight of the poor who have been forced out of even daily wage and minimum wage jobs. Also, street vendors have been struggling. With the unlocking of the country, their lives were just about getting back on track again as people had begun spending.

Now, if there is another lockdown, the wheels of the economy will stop moving again and the poor will be left to starve and fend for themselves in a nation that does not have unemployment benefits or social security. Till we get a Universal Basic Income in India, we as citizens of the country, should find it in our hearts to help the underprivileged. We need to stop being so self-centred and reach out and help those in distress.

Ashmit Aaron
Noida

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Shape the future at cyber speed

Being prepared to weather any storm is possible with the right digital strategy and continuous, concerted effort



ALOK OHRIE

The need for businesses to digitally transform themselves is something that has been discussed for years. However, as we saw in the 2018 Digital Transformation Index that serves as a benchmark for computerisation technology adoption among organisations, many enterprises' digital transformation programmes did not keep up with the advancements in computing power and the influx of emerging technologies. Coupled with the imperative to adapt to today's unprecedented business disruption, the need to digitally transform has never been more urgent and challenging.

It is encouraging to see that many enterprises are rising to the occasion. In the 2020 Digital Transformation Index, it was found that 95 per cent of respondents in India have successfully accelerated at least some of their transformation programmes this year. This shows immense progress in computerisation. However, there is still a lot of work to be done. As it is, continuous digital transformation is not easy, with 97 per cent of Indian businesses facing entrenched barriers to cyber networked business processes as they navigate their future.

By committing to continual transformation — even amid uncertainty such as the kind the world is facing right now — businesses can help to shape their ideal future. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated that organisations can be nimble and transform quickly. A third have already extended their business domain; however, what companies do next will be telling. Ongoing transformation is vital, and there is plenty of room for advancement.

As of now, just 12 per cent of Indian firms surveyed are defined as "Digital Leaders", meaning these are companies with digital transformation ingrained in the DNA of their business, end-to-end. And even though they are leaders in cyber networked business processes, they recognise that change requires continuous effort — with more "Digital Leaders" accelerating their transformation programmes this year compared to "Digital Laggards", meaning those that don't even have a computerisation plan or their investments in such technology are few and far between. Here is some inspiration from more mature digital businesses as they consider how to implement an ongoing advancement plan for their firm:

Data privacy and cybersecurity: These are constant and evolving concerns that should not be overlooked. Mature digital businesses recognise more often than others that data privacy and cybersecurity warrant proper consideration. In fact, 47 per cent of Indian businesses are of the opinion that data privacy and cybersecurity are the major barriers in their digital transformation journey.

Budget and resources: Financial constraints — both budget pressures and lack of economic growth — have not slowed down transformation for the more mature digital businesses. They position Information Technology investments as strategic drivers for innovation instead of thinking of them as a cost. However, a whopping 32 per cent of Indian respondents said that lack of budget and resources is a barrier to digital progress in their organisation.

Data is the lifeblood of a company: As we move towards a Zettabyte era, the ability to extract insights from data will become a major stumbling block if it is left unresolved. There is hope that the recent disruption will ignite a new wave of data-first, data-anywhere businesses. We found that 94 per cent of Indian organisations agree that extracting valuable insights from data will be more important for their business than ever before as one of the great benefits of this is the ability to track metrics and analyse them. Using these insights allows firms to optimise their strategies and processes for better results. In businesses, two things matter more than most — costs and revenue. It's possible to make massive changes to both by integrating data-based insights into the company culture. However, working towards this change sooner rather than later is imperative.

Overall, businesses should be applauded for adapting so quickly to the extreme and sudden onset of disruption from recent events. Some companies were poised to respond better than others, based on where they were on their digital journey. However, being prepared to weather any storm is possible with the right digital strategy and continuous, concerted effort.

In this hyper-connected data decade, every business needs to be a cyber business to survive and thrive. With digital disruptors snapping at the heels of many sectors, success will come to the organisations that ensure their workforce is skilled in the best practices of the digital age. Moreover, this change must be woven into the DNA of the firm and championed by its leadership to have a maximum impact. With a strong ally by your side, businesses of varying sizes, industries and digital maturities can find ways to adapt to new routines and push the frontiers of what's possible.

(The writer is president and MD, Dell Technologies, India)

WITH THE AMENDMENT TO THE POLICE ACT, THE KERALA GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO SILENCE THE VOICE OF THOSE WHO CRITICISE IT.

—LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN THE ASSEMBLY
RAMESH CHENNITHALA

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



MANY HAVE VOICED CONCERN OVER THE ACT'S AMENDMENT. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT WANT TO IMPLEMENT IT.
—KERALA CHIEF MINISTER
PINARAYI VIJAYAN

Fertiliser DBT an illusion

Despite tall claims made by the UPA and the NDA dispensations since 2012, a gradual transition to direct cash or benefit transfer of subsidy to the farmers has not been done



UTTAM GUPTA

The additional provision of ₹65,000 crore towards fertiliser subsidy (over and above the ₹71,000 crore allocated in the Budget for 2020-21), that was announced by the Finance Minister under "Stimulus- III" on November 12, will help in clearing all pending dues to the industry. This has led the latter to believe that this is a precursor to a gradual transition to direct cash or benefit transfer (DBT) of subsidy to the farmers. This is illusory, as despite tall claims made by the UPA and the NDA dispensations since 2012, this has not been done. The dominant stumbling blocks are a threat to the viability of high cost units in the public sector, including revival projects viz Sindri, Gorakhpur, Barauni and so on. Plus there is the risk of inviting the farmers' wrath if subsidy does not reach them in time. Bureaucratic red tape is a third major factor. Till these are addressed, DBT to farmers won't see the light of the day.

In the Budget for 2012-13, the then UPA Government had announced tracking the movement of fertilisers from retailers to farmers, and linking part of the subsidy payment to manufacturers for sale to farmers by retailers. In the mid-year economic analysis of 2012-13, the Finance Ministry came out with a blueprint on modalities for implementing the Budget announcement. Pilot projects in 10 districts spread over nine States were to be launched, which were to be followed by DBT in these districts from April 1, 2013. Concurrently, the Government planned to track fertilisers movement in the whole country. A pan-India launch was contemplated from April 2014.

Even as the Department of Fertilisers developed the technology platform called e-Fertiliser Monitoring System (e-FMS) to execute the blueprint, the DBT remained on paper. Meanwhile, the NDA Government under Narendra Modi recognised that there was rampant misuse of subsidy. According to the *Economic Survey 2015-16*, as much as 24 per cent of the subsidy was spent on inefficient producers, 41 per cent was diverted to non-agricultural uses, including smuggling to neighbouring countries, and 24 per cent was consumed by larger, presumably richer farmers. That left a tiny 11 per cent for small and marginal farmers, who alone, according to Modi, should have been the sole beneficiaries of the subsidy. The survey advocated DBT using the Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) platform. In the Budget for 2016-17, the then Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley, made an announcement to this effect followed by the launch of pilot projects for linking subsidy payments to producers with the sale of fertilisers to farmers by retailers in 18 districts spread over 12 States. In March 2018, the scheme was launched across the country.

Under it, the Government has made disbursement of 100 per cent of the subsidy to producers conditional upon actual sales to farmers and these getting registered on point-of-sale (PoS) machines at the dealer's shop (prior to this, they were getting 95 per cent of subsidy on receipt of material at a district's railhead point or approved godown and the balance five per cent on confirmation of sales to farmers by States). But this is not DBT as subsidy continues to be routed through manufacturers. Now, just because the Government has cleared all subsidy dues to manufacturers, it gives no clue that this will happen soon. In fact, there are major roadblocks on the way — some explicit and others not so. To understand these, let us look at how the extant sys-

“THE SUBSIDY MAY BE COMPUTED ON A PER HECTARE BASIS AND GIVEN ANNUALLY AS MOOTED BY THE COMMISSION FOR AGRICULTURE COSTS AND PRICES. IN ITS RABI REPORT FOR THE 2021-22 MARKETING YEAR, IT HAS PROPOSED A SUBSIDY OF ₹5,000 PER YEAR TO BE GIVEN IN TWO TRANCHES OF ₹2,500 EACH IN THE KHARIF AND RABI SEASONS. THIS SHOULD BE GIVEN ONLY TO THE SMALL AND MARGINAL FARMERS OR THOSE WITH LAND HOLDINGS OF LESS THAN TWO HECTARES



tem works. The Centre controls the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of urea at a low level, unrelated to the cost of production and distribution, which is higher. It reimburses the manufacturers for the shortfall as subsidy on a "unit-specific" basis under the New Pricing Scheme (NPS). The current MRP of urea is ridiculously low at ₹5,360 per tonne even as the cost can vary from about ₹15,000 per tonne to ₹25,000 per tonne. Even as all units (31) sell urea at the same price, each one of them gets paid on the basis of its own production cost. Thus, an efficient unit producing at, say ₹15,000 per tonne, gets a subsidy of ₹9,640 per tonne whereas another producing at ₹25,000 per tonne, gets a subsidy of ₹19,640 per tonne.

In the case of P and K fertilisers, the Government gives "uniform" subsidy on per nutrient basis to all manufacturers under the Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) Scheme. For arriving at the MRP, they are expected to deduct the subsidy amount from the cost. For instance, if a unit produces DAP (dia-ammonium phosphate) at a cost of say ₹34,000 per tonne and subsidy is ₹10,000 per tonne, then it will have to fix the MRP at ₹24,000 per tonne.

Now, if instead of routing through the manufacturers, the subsidy is to be given directly to farmers, the transition in case of P and K fertilisers may not face much of a hurdle. The subsidy of ₹10,000 per tonne or ₹500 per bag (50 kg) of DAP can be credited to a farmers' account even as the manufacturer will sell at the market-based price, say ₹34,000 per tonne or ₹1,700 per bag, this being the cost of the most efficient producer (this could also be an average of all units depending on how market dynamics evolve). However, the farmer will have to spend ₹500 per bag

extra at the time of purchase, though he will get back this amount from the Government as subsidy later.

In the urea segment, however, the transition will be tough for manufacturers as well as farmers. For producers, since each one of them will have to sell at the market-based price, all those whose production cost is higher than that of the most efficient producer or the industry average, will either have to perform or wind up. As for the farmer, he will have to spend, at the time of purchase, at least thrice (based on the market price of ₹15,000 per tonne or ₹750 per bag) of what he is spending now.

The Government has fears on both counts. On the production front, there are several public sector plants, which fall in the high cost zone and hence risk being chopped under the DBT. Even the revival projects, like Sindri, Gorakhpur and Barauni, on completion (2021) will have a production cost of over ₹30,000 per tonne. Hence it won't be viable under the new regime. As for farmers, it risks inviting their wrath if subsidy money does not reach them in time, which is inevitable if the budgetary allocation is inadequate.

There are other roadblocks which are not so explicit. Under the present system of urea being available at a throwaway price of ₹5,360 per tonne, a mere one-fourth of the cost, dubious operators make a quick buck by diverting it to chemical industries or smuggling it to neighbouring countries. This won't be possible without the tacit consent of those in the hot seat. Further, urea imports are canalised through State agencies like the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC), State Trading Corporation (STC) and there is a lot to gain for deci-

sion-makers. Clearly, there are vested interests in continuing with the *status quo*.

Unless the above roadblocks are cleared, the transition to DBT will be next to impossible. But this is doable provided Modi sheds his plan of linking development of eastern India with the revival of Sindri, Gorakhpur, Barauni (alternatively, their production cost needs to be cut drastically); pledges to fully fund subsidy requirement (if it can be done for 2020-21, why not every year then); ruthlessly applies his dictum of "*naa khaonga, naa khane doonga* (neither will I take bribe nor will I let anyone else take it)"; and does away with bureaucratic red tape by removing all controls, including on urea import. The subsidy may be computed on a per hectare basis and given annually as mooted by the Commission for Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACPC). In its Rabi report for the 2021-22 marketing year, it has proposed a subsidy of ₹5,000 per year to be given in two tranches of ₹2,500 each in the Kharif and Rabi seasons. This should be given only to the small and marginal farmers, i.e. those with land holdings of less than two hectares. Further, a cultivator must not be denied subsidy merely because s/he does not own the land tilled by her/him.

The Government should garner data on all 140 million farm households and put it on a web portal. This is an absolute must to ensure that no one is left out. At present, there is a void as even under PM Kisan, just about 80 million farmers are receiving the eligible amount of ₹6,000. Under a business as usual scenario, leaving out 60 million from subsidy payments could be catastrophic.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst)

BJP yet to consolidate Hindu votes down South

Success has been eluding the saffron party so far as its penetration has been restricted to Karnataka. It has failed in TN, Puducherry and Kerala



KALYANI SHANKAR

After the big win in the Bihar Assembly elections this month, the BJP is now focussing on the South, where Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry are going to the polls early next year. Elections are scheduled for West Bengal and Assam, too. Will the BJP achieve its goal of gaining a foothold in the South? Success has been eluding the saffron party so far, as its penetration has been restricted to Karnataka. It has failed in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala because of historic, religious, social and ideological reasons.

In Tamil Nadu, the BJP firmed up its poll alliance with the ruling AIADMK during the weekend. Eyebrows were raised at this early pact when the State's Deputy Chief

Minister and party coordinator O Panneerselvam announced it at a function attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Though the late AIADMK chief J Jayalithaa had a good equation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, she did not go for a tie-up with the BJP in the 2016 polls. After her demise, in 2019, the UPA made it in 37 of the 40 seats won. The BJP went with the AIADMK.

The BJP now wants to make a mark in the South, riding piggyback on the AIADMK. The Congress is in alliance with the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) while smaller parties like actor Vijayakanth's Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK), S Ramadoss' Paattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), Thirumavalavan's Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) and others choose the DMK or AIADMK coalition according to the situation.

The BJP has strengthened its Tamil Nadu unit by appointing Murugan, a lawyer, as its chief and has also activated its workers. There has been a recruitment spree in the State since 2014. It has brought to its fold celebrities, bureaucrats and politicians from other parties. Recently, the

actor-turned-politician and Congress spokesperson Khushbu's joining of the party was a significant event. So the big question is why was the BJP unable to make inroads in Tamil Nadu till now?

First of all, the saffron party had no tall leaders to match the iconic Dravidian leaders like M Karunanidhi, J Jayalithaa and MG Ramachandran. It is likely to be Modi versus DMK chief MK Stalin now. Second, the BJP is perceived to be a North Indian Brahminical party and the word Brahmin is anathema to Dravidian parties. Third, Tamil Nadu saw a huge anti-Hindi agitation in the 60s. The Dravidian parties are against any imposition of Hindi and the Modi Government is in favour of it. Fourth, influenced by the anti-Brahmin movement of the 50s and the 60s, many caste-based parties like the Vanniyars (dominant in north-west parts of Tamil Nadu, Thevars (dominant in southern part of the State in the Madurai belt) and Gounders (in the Kongu belt in the west), have sprung up in the last three decades, resulting in the splintering of votes. Fifth, the BJP's stand on conversions to Christianity and its hostility to Islam

and other religions has no takers in the South. The BJP's polarising tactics won't work in the South. Sixth, new parties have sprung up with two untested superstars — Kamal Haasan and Rajinikanth — on the horizon.

The DMK has been making poll preparations for some months now and MK Stalin has already announced an alliance with the Congress. In the 2019 Lok Sabha, the Congress-DMK combination swept the polls. The State has been alternating between the DMK and the AIADMK and now it is the turn of the DMK. It was only in 2016 that the AIADMK got a second term.

The neighbouring Puducherry often reflects Tamil Nadu's politics. In any case, it is a small Union Territory and has just one seat in the Lok Sabha. Currently, the Congress is ruling in the State.

Kerala is a different story. The Left-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) alternate in power. It is the UDF's turn now. The BJP has not been able to penetrate much in the State despite the ground-work done by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Further, the Kerala electorate consists of a sizeable number of Christians and Muslims and they remain non-BJP voters.

In 2019, the LDF posted a landslide victory, winning 19 of the 20 seats while the UDF won just one seat and the BJP got zero seats. The RSS tried to mobilise support on the contentious Sabarimala issue but the counter-mobilisation presented an effective alternative control.

With more literate voters, Kerala alternates between the Communists or anti-Communists. The BJP is seeing slow growth in the State because of it. While the minority communities in the State have successfully ensured the protection of their respective cultures, the Hindu community has relentlessly ceded its own cultural space. The BJP is taking advantage of it, but it is taking time to translate into votes.

Also, the BJP is facing factionalism in Kerala. The RSS has cautioned the central leadership that the friction in the State unit could impact the performance in the polls.

Kerala won kudos in containing the COVID-19 pandemic. A few months ago it looked as if the LDF

could return to power but that came to a screeching halt in July after the Chief Minister's Office was found to be allegedly involved in a gold smuggling scam. Several protests broke out across Kerala after the smuggling of 30 kg gold worth ₹14.82 crore through diplomatic channels came to light on July 5. The case is currently being probed by the ED, the National Investigation Agency and the Customs Department. Another nail in the coffin was the recent promulgation of The Kerala Police (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020. Vide this Ordinance, a new Section 118A was introduced in the Kerala Police Act, 2011. This was widely viewed as a brazen assault on freedom of speech.

Though the Chief Minister insisted that "no action would be taken against the media or critics who stay within the limits of the Constitution" and in the end decided not to implement the amended Act, the damage has been done to the Government's reputation and credibility in a fiercely independent State.

Now, it remains to be seen whether the BJP can consolidate its Hindu votes in the South.

(The writer is a senior journalist)



FOREIGN EYE



THE TIME TO THINK IS NOW

Plans for mass immunisation against COVID-19 are developing fast. The last year has exacerbated anti-vaccination emotions, and they will not disappear when lockdowns end. Restoring confidence in immunisation may require the much more fundamental rethink that many hoped this pandemic might produce: A reappraisal of who and what is valued, and how we should be living and relating to each other. (The Guardian editorial)

Markets march higher on vaccine progress

RIL, IT STOCKS SPARKLE

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks made a winning start to the week on Monday as positive results from another COVID-19 vaccine candidate bolstered investor confidence globally. A recovering rupee and unabated foreign fund inflows added to the momentum, traders said.

After touching a record intra-day high of 44,271.15, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 194.90 points or 0.44 per cent higher at 44,077.15. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty rose 67.40 points or 0.52 per cent to close at 12,926.45. ONGC was the top performer on the Sensex chart, surging 6.84 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Reliance Industries, HCL Tech and TCS.

Index heavyweight Reliance Industries climbed 2.72 per cent, accounting for

most of the Sensex's gains, after the Competition Commission on Friday evening said it has approved the conglomerate's proposed acquisition of Future Group's retail assets. On the other hand, HDFC, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, SBI and M&M were among the main laggards, slumping up to 3.55 per cent.

Global equities were on the upswing after Oxford University and AstraZeneca announced that their COVID-19 vaccine candidate was found to be around 90 per cent effective in preventing the disease.

This is the third major vaccine trial to have reported encouraging results, after Moderna and Pfizer came out with positive Phase 3 data.

“While global cues remained favourable, a sharp rebound in IT, pharma, metals and Reliance Industries led domestic equities to register further gains. However, profit booking was witnessed in select heavyweight financials after recommendation of IWG (Internal Working Group) of RBI did not favour them much, which led financials to end in red today.

Momentum of economic reforms will continue, FM assures industry

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday assured the industry that momentum of economic reforms will continue to make India a hotspot of global investment.

India has turned the crisis created by COVID-19 pandemic into an opportunity to push the economic reforms, which remained pending for decades, she said while addressing the National MNC's Conference 2020 organised by the industry chamber CII.

“Even at the time (of) COVID pandemic, the Prime Minister has not lost an opportunity to take deep reforms, to undertake those kinds of reforms which have not seen the light of the day over the decades.

“The momentum for reform shall continue. Several more active reform-related steps are being taken up,” Sitharaman said.

The financial sector is being professionalised and the government will continue with disinvestment agenda, she added.

Govt's ‘unprecedented’ reforms to usher in new era of growth: Kant

New Delhi: Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant on Monday said that “unprecedented” reforms undertaken on both governance and economic fronts by the government will usher in a new era of growth and prosperity.

Kant also stressed the need to increase expenditure on research and development and strengthen intellectual property rights (IPR) laws.

“The economic and governance reforms undertaken by the government have been quite unprecedented and they will usher in a new era of

growth and prosperity,” he said.

“We are making states compete on ease of doing business parameters. We are ranking states and naming and shaming them,” he said while addressing a virtual event organised by industry body CII. Listing out reforms undertaken by the government in recent times, Kant said as the world battles contraction in economic growth, India has initiated reforms in key sectors including agriculture, labour and mining.

Bank licences to corporates a ‘bad idea’: Raghuram Rajan

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Days after an Internal Working Group (IWG) of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recommended allowing large Indian corporates to enter the banking sector, former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan and Deputy Governor Viral Acharya have hit back at the suggestion and questioned the timing for it.

Terming the recommendation as a “bombshell”, in a blogpost, they said that although several recommendations of the report are worth adopting the one to allow corporate houses into banking should not be taken up.

“To the contrary, it is even more important today to stick to the tried and tested limits on corporate involvement in banking,” said the article.



India exports 11mn smartphones in Jan-Sep

Gururam: The exports of smartphones from India is expected to cross \$1.5 billion (by value) this year -- constituting 98 per cent of the total mobile phones exported from the country, a new report said on Monday. A total of 12.8 million mobile phones were exported from India from January to September this year and of these, 10.9 million units were smartphones, according to market research firm techARC.

IAN S

No respite from rising onion prices till Dec, potato prices decline

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Due to the declining onion imports from abroad, the price of the staple vegetable is once again set to soar even while there is a large supply of onions coming from Rajasthan. The retail price of onions in the national capital is between Rs

50 to Rs 70 per kg while the wholesale price ranges from Rs 15 to Rs 47.5 per kg which had fallen slightly to Rs 42 per kg before the Diwali season.

According to traders, there are slim chances of getting a respite from the rising onion prices before December this year. However, there is some

relief for the common man as the prices of potatoes sharply declined due to the new potato crop. The increase in onion prices is being attributed to the decrease in imports even as the fresh supply of onions from Rajasthan is in full flow to various parts of the country, including north India. Traders

say that in the last few days due to the increasing supply of locally-produced onions, the pace of onion imports has slowed down. Horticulture Produce Exporters Association President, Ajit Shah, said the import of onions has not stopped but it has considerably reduced.

NIFTY 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY 50	12960.30	12968.85	12825.70	12926.45	67.40	
ONGC	72.00	77.80	71.80	76.40	4.75	
INDUSINDBK	836.00	880.90	832.50	841.70	30.70	
GAIL	99.00	101.50	97.60	100.90	3.45	
DREDDY	4685.00	4870.00	4671.00	4835.00	164.05	
INFY	1105.00	1144.80	1101.95	1138.50	35.15	
TECHM	838.00	869.40	836.75	863.45	25.90	
WIPRO	348.00	357.40	346.00	356.60	10.30	
RELIANCE	1951.00	1970.00	1926.25	1955.20	55.70	
BPCL	386.00	395.55	383.00	393.20	9.90	
TCS	2690.00	2730.00	2665.00	2727.25	67.00	
HCLTECH	825.00	842.00	816.25	838.50	19.25	
HEROMOTOCO	3024.60	3074.00	2982.00	3063.10	64.45	
IOC	85.50	86.65	84.05	86.60	1.75	
SUNPHARMA	504.00	516.40	501.00	513.50	10.25	
DIVISLAB	3486.40	3637.80	3470.50	3538.20	69.10	
NTPC	92.90	94.40	92.00	93.55	1.75	
BAJAJFINSV	8710.00	8982.65	8621.00	8700.10	157.50	
TATASTEEL	538.00	546.00	536.35	541.65	8.75	
BAFINANCE	4769.00	4869.30	4733.55	4790.00	74.15	
SHREECEM	24000.00	24598.95	23987.00	24320.00	371.30	
POWERGRID	192.00	195.90	190.50	194.75	2.90	
UPL	423.00	429.50	421.35	426.70	6.30	
NESTLEIND	1746.00	1784.90	1746.40	1771.45	25.05	
HINDALCO	217.00	221.95	215.55	217.95	2.40	
COALINDIA	121.25	123.45	119.75	122.75	1.30	
ASIANPAINT	2140.55	2196.95	2138.80	2188.00	21.45	
CPIA	741.65	758.05	739.40	746.30	6.40	
HINDUNILVR	169.50	173.90	165.55	170.45	1.35	
TATAMOTORS	2140.00	2140.00	2095.00	2132.00	11.75	
BAJAJ-AUTO	3068.00	3085.00	3030.60	3072.70	14.15	
ULTRACEMCO	4874.00	4915.00	4863.35	4885.00	22.45	
KOTAKBANK	1892.40	1905.30	1871.15	1896.30	6.90	
MARUTI	7040.00	7044.00	6932.60	6986.50	20.65	
JSWSTEEL	338.25	342.20	336.00	337.00	0.85	
BRITANNIA	3575.00	3599.00	3552.00	3559.95	7.85	
EICHERMOT	2595.55	2606.55	2560.00	2596.00	5.55	
ADANIPORTS	375.85	379.35	373.00	375.40	-0.45	
GRASIM	863.40	868.90	851.10	852.30	-3.70	
ITC	192.00	192.50	188.65	189.05	-0.80	
HDFCBANK	1415.00	1423.65	1375.35	1397.30	-6.35	
HDFCLIFE	667.20	674.30	665.95	666.00	-3.90	
LI	1138.80	1147.85	1122.85	1125.10	-7.20	
BHARTIARTL	486.75	486.75	475.10	476.75	-6.95	
M&M	716.40	720.75	699.00	705.00	-10.60	
SBIN	243.50	246.15	238.10	238.60	-4.15	
TITAN	1375.00	1375.00	1332.00	1341.50	-23.65	
SBILIFE	847.20	854.40	830.00	830.65	-14.80	
AXISBANK	610.05	612.60	592.70	596.95	-10.90	
ICICIBANK	481.80	483.35	466.50	468.30	-11.90	
HDFC	2344.20	2347.85	2230.10	2253.05	-81.75	

NIFTY NEXT 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY NEXT 50	30150.50	30298.20	30130.20	30220.30	267.40	
BAJAJHLDNG	3100.00	3279.00	3027.40	3244.00	235.20	
ITI	3120.00	3289.55	3110.00	3230.00	138.40	
MOTHERSUNI	140.90	148.30	140.80	144.90	5.35	
GICRE	126.00	131.70	125.65	130.50	4.75	
ADANIGREEN	1155.00	1191.25	1150.10	1175.00	40.45	
ALKEM	2688.00	2775.00	2680.10	2760.00	71.90	
COALPIA	1540.00	1574.95	1539.95	1567.00	32.90	
DLF	183.95	187.40	181.10	185.55	3.60	
ACC	1704.00	1757.00	1697.00	1719.00	32.20	
AUROPHARMA	839.30	863.80	831.05	848.00	15.85	
NAUKRI	4025.00	4073.20	3955.00	4047.80	67.40	
PGHIL	10600.00	10799.95	10556.00	10677.80	177.45	
CADILAHC	429.65	437.85	412.40	432.30	6.50	
PIDILITIND	1562.10	1590.00	1557.20	1582.10	21.90	
IGL	445.45	457.50	442.55	449.10	5.90	
GODREJCP	705.00	715.45	701.25	707.95	8.95	
SBICARD	810.00	821.05	806.45	815.15	8.25	
PNB	29.95	30.15	29.75	30.10	0.30	
BANDHANBNK	358.00	360.55	352.00	353.40	3.50	
MARICO	374.40	379.90	371.15	377.60	3.20	
HDFCAMC	2439.00	2476.00	2425.00	2429.25	19.60	
LUPIN	886.00	900.85	877.50	884.60	5.90	
CONCOR	414.00	418.85	409.90	412.50	2.50	
HINDPETRO	215.00	216.25	213.10	215.20	1.15	
PEC	104.00	105.50	103.70	104.00	0.50	
AMBUJACEM	259.00	262.50	257.50	257.90	0.80	
BERGEPAINT	646.30	648.00	633.60	645.00	1.90	
PETRONET	259.70	263.50	260.00	251.70	0.75	
TATACONSUM	520.00	534.90	519.00	520.00	0.95	
DABUR	508.00	511.40	505.10	509.05	0.65	
TORNTPHARM	2609.90	2628.75	2565.00	2611.00	1.10	
INDIGO	1680.25	1698.70	1646.10	1679.95	0.25	
BIOCON	421.00	425.30	417.60	419.70	-0.25	
ICICIGI	1360.00	1381.00	1344.05	1355.50	-0.80	
NMDC	94.00	94.40	92.10	93.30	-0.15	
INFRAEEL	221.70	222.50	213.00	218.60	-0.45	
ICICIPRULI	455.80	459.45	450.20	452.60	-1.00	
HAVELLS	830.00	840.00	820.95	823.00	-2.00	
OFSS	3036.00	3059.55	3010.00	3021.90	-13.10	
PEL	1413.25	1438.95	1380.10	1386.90	-8.55	
BOSCHLTD	11975.00	11990.00	11782.75	11826.75	-84.50	
MCWELL-N	576.00	577.80	563.30	567.40	-4.40	
DMART	2361.10	2379.90	2352.25	2362.85	-19.75	
HINDZINC	223.00	224.95	218.55	219.50	-2.05	
ABBOTINDIA	15400.00	15450.00	15169.65	15200.00	-144.55	
BANKBARODA	47.85	48.20	46.70	46.95	-0.60	
UBL	1094.65	1099.70	1063.00	1080.00	-14.25	
ADANITRANS	385.60	389.60	375.00	378.95	-5.05	
SIEMENS	1432.30	1432.30	1392.00	1397.45	-27.85	
MUTHOOTFIN	1195.00	1197.75	1152.00	1156.95	-26.40	

BSE 500

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP	HDFC	2428.00	2474.40	2425.00	2428.55
AAVAS	1505.00	1606.70	1505.00	1527.05	HDFCLIFE	668.95	674.10	656.20	661.20
BAJFINANCE	4780.00	4868.30	4735.00	4809.65	TATAELXSI	1542.00	1604.95	1533.15	1561.00
KOTAKBANK	1895.45	1905.20	1871.45	1897.60	BSOFT	181.60	198.00	179.20	193.15
SRTRANSFIN	940.00	978.90	940.00	974.60	BEL	108.80	109.00	104.55	105.80
RELIANCE	1929.00	1970.00	1927.00	1950.80	RANKBARODA	48.00	48.15	46.70	46.90
INDUSINDBK	838.00	880.60	832.95	848.85	LICHSGFIN	333.00	333.15	319.70	321.65
SBIN	243.20	246.10	238.05	238.70	NCC	41.60	44.40	41.60	43.70
BAJAJFINSV	8730.00	9100.00	8625.00	8773.45	INDIACEM	148.25	158.85	146.85	155.65
INFY	1103.20	1144.50	1102.30	1140.25	RECLTD	113.10	116.95	113.10	115.45
ICICI	480.40	483.20	466.60	468.30	SHREECEM	2399.00	2458.95	2398.35	2440.90
HDFCBANK	1412.00	1422.00	1375.25	1394.85	HSLC	39.00	42.15	37.55	41.80
IDEA	10.28	10.60	10.17	10.40	NAUKRI	4000.00	4072.80	3955.35	4060.20
TINDIA	797.50	838.60	787.10	831.20	ABCAPITAL	83.60	87.20	82.30	84.05
JSWENERGY	63.50	63.80	62.00	62.25	DIXON	10450.00	10833.00	10430.00	10697.40
TATAMOTORS	169.70	173.90	165.00	170.60	BAJAJHLONG	3100.00	3276.00	3030.40	328.65
CPIA	741.00	758.10	739.55	746.10	TATACALC	358.30	362.75	351.15	358.35
FINOLEXIND	610.95	626.00	606.70	621.90	ADANIPORTS	376.35	379.05	370.30	375.10
TATASTEEL	536.15	546.00	536.15	542.70	TATAMTRDRVR	73.00	74.90	70.40	72.70
DREDDY	4689.00	4870.40	4673.90	4828.30	BHARATFORG	498.10	501.90	491.25	499.25
TCS	2685.00	2730.00	2666.00	2724.00	CADILAHC	427.00	437.65	425.52	432.70
CONCOR	411.30	418.60	410.10	412.65	SOUTHBANK	6.90	7.37	6.85	7.28
AXISBANK	611.50	612.70	593.05	595.60	ESCORTS	1418.30	1430.30	1389.70	1402.20
BHEL	29.50	31.50	29.25	31.35	BRITANNIA	3560.50	3597.95	3549.30	3557.80
HDFC	2340.00	2345.00	2229.05	2250.80	MGL	934.70	955.00	931.00	947.10
WIPRO	347.60	357.50	346.00	355.85	IRB	119.00	122.50	116.50	120.00
HCLTECH	823.20	846.00	816.75	839.20	BAJAJ-AUTO	3063.00	3082.75	3032.30	3077.10
BPCL	383.35	395.30	382.85	394.55	BATAINDIA	1490.00	1507.80	1461.00	1504.00
GAIL	98.55	101.45	97.55	100.90	POWERGRID	193.00	195.95	190.95	194.90
BIOCON	420.10	425.35	417.60	419.90	JUBFOOD	2600.05	2645.00	2572.65	2618.45
WOCKPHARMA	410.00	451.95	407.25	434.10	TRENT	751.50	808.75	751.50	787.60
DIVISLAB	3472.10	3636.00	3470.75	3545.15	FRETAIL	79.00	79.00	78.15	79.00
PIIND	2477.90	2515.00	2393.55	2419.95	LAURUSLABS	284.25	291.80	284.20	290.05
ADANIGREEN	1150.25	1191.40	1140.15	1180.00	NBC	26.15	26.75	25.80	26.10
INFRAEEL	223.40	223.40	208.65	218.00	EICHERMOT	2600.00	2604.15	2560.35	2597.40
HINDUNILVR	2146.00	2186.00	2095.00	2129.85	GUGJAG	319.95	331.75	319.95	323.25
PVR	1225.00	1247.55	1213.10	1275.90	BUSISGS	164.70	165.55	160.55	163.20
MOTHERSUNI	141.25	148.25	140.95	146.75	GMRINFRA	25.15	26.90	25.15	26.60
TECHM	837.00	869.00	837.00	865.75	MCX	1610.00	1618.95	1585.00	1587.75
NTPC	92.90	94.00	92.10	93.65	AMBUJACEM	258.35	262.50	257.50	258.15
ASHOKLEY	91.40	92.40	89.80	91.20	GMM	3792.00	3826.80	3679.70	3813.95
DFCIRSTB	34.45	37.75	33.80	36.85	GRASIM	858.10	868.85	851.00	857.85
TITAN	1371.00	1375.85	1331.80	1346.25	GRANULES	372.70	400.80	372.70	398.60
JUVV	290.00	298.57	277.25	294.65	DEEPAKNI	810.00	831.30	808.80	817.30
BANDHANBNK	356.25	360.30	352.00	353.65	CAPPL	475.00	504.15	473.95	498.40
TATACALC	192.00	192.50	188.70	190.80	MINDTREE	1380.45	1405.00	1361.90	1395.75
ICICI	1357.80	1380.10	1343.85	1352.85	JSWSTEEL	338.35	342.15	336.15	337.65
ADANIGAS	354.15	366.15	340.85	344.75	ENDURANCE	1100.00	1172.00	1090.05	1164.75
ACC	1710.00	1757.25	1692.00	1724.15	COFORGE	2377.80	2448.00	2350.00	2424.55
AUROPHARMA	853.05	863.50	834.95	847.95	SANOFI	509.50	511.00	502.50	508.95
LT	1138.00	1148.10	1123.20	1125.70	PEL	1424.00	1438.00	1382.30	1390.65
ADANIANT	388.35	414.45	383.25	408.80	FSL	76.50	79.45	73.00	76.10
IOC	85.25	86.60	84.05	86.45	NAVINFLOUR	2595.00	2750.00	2587.80	2727.75
MARUTI	7002.25	7043.00	6935.05	6986.65	PHIZER	5130.00	5166.00	5090.00	5148.15
IBULHSGFIN	177.00	180.00	176.05	177.70	PAGEIND	22136.90	22250.00	21872.75	21928.40
COALINDIA	120.75	123.40	119.75	122.70	SUNTV	430.00	439.65	427.20	430.95
DLF	182.05	187.40	181.10	186.10	TORNTPHARM	2618.00	2627.30	2565.85	2608.75
MRPL	80000.00	81000.00	79182.05	79956.75	ENERGINSR	71.75	73.85	70.50	73.35
L&THT	72.00	73.80	71.40	73.35	SHICARD	807.00	821.00	806.85	814.55
HEG	820.00	852.20	795.60	818.80	CASTROLIND	124.00	125.80	121.10	124.00
ONGC	72.00	77.75	71.80	76.50	EXOTIND	173.00	175.50	173.00	173.65
BHPL	1535.00	1575.00	1535.00	1566.75	INDHOTEL	113.45	115.40	110.90	113.25
CHOLARTIL	488.85	488.00	475.10	477.05	JUBILANT	698.00	704.95	692.30	732.40
SAIL	41.50	44.20	40.85	43.20	PNB	29.95	30.20	29.75	30.30
RELIANCE	213.70	219.70	211.70	212.55	HINDPETRO*	213.10	216.15	213.10	215.35
NESTEIND	17549.95	17840.00	17472.00	17791.35	MPHASIS	131.00	1339.95	1293.30	1315.15
MUTHOOTFIN	1194.35	1194.85	1152.00	1155.70	BANKINDIA	44.70	44.70	42.75	43.50
GRAPHITE	240.50	268.00	234.50	256.00	NMDC	93.80	94.35	92.10	93.65
ZEEL	187.00	187.95	183.75	187.20	SPARC	164.10	177.00	164.10	173.65
TATACONST	513.70	534.70	517.30	521.25	AMBER	2176.00	2240.00	2171.10	2230.15
JINDALSTEEL	238.00	245.70	238.00	241.75	RALLIS	260.25	269.50	260.25	266.75
UPL	421.00	429.60	421.00	426.30	CANBK	94.50	94.50	92.65	93.90
HINDALCO	217.85	221.95	215.60	218.05	COCHINSHIP	344.00	358.80	341.70	353.25
SUNPHARMA	504.80	516.50	501.15	512.80	AUBANK	882.10	891.05	865.45	869.20
LUPIN	889.90	900.75	877.70	883.95	JUSTDIAL	622.40	639.35	618.35	620.70
APOLLOHOSP	2147.00	2278.95	2138.50	2193.40	METROPOLIS	2127.05	2245.00	2127.00	2237.45
INCOATLTYRE	175.35	177.95	173.75	173.95	DMART	2375.00	2381.70	2353.00	2358.75
FEDERALBNK	59.00	59.60	57.85	58.35	APLTD	974.30	999.95	968.15	992.70
&K&N	21.80	24.62	21.40	24.57	PFC	103.60	105.40	103.60	103.95
SPIECET	74.05	76.00	66.40	70.60	INDIAMART	4997.10	5100.00	4901.05	4958.95
HEROMOTOCO	3022.05	3070.00	2984.30	3058.40	SHILIFE	847.00	854.00	830.00	831.45
TATAPOWER	58.55	59.70	57.85	58.85	PHILPCARB	164.00	169.75	163.15	167.80
MJM	71.50	72.00	69.90	70.25	VOLITAS	280.00	782.85	757.20	759.40
UJJAINSBF	35.30	40.40	35.00	40.40	INOXLEISUR	761.10	265.00	259.00	260.95
BALKRIND	1617.10	1690.00	1617.10	1675.75	NATOPHARM	910.00	933.75	905.00	910.45
PIDILITIND	1575.00	1589.50	1558.35	1583.70	HAVELLS	822.90	839.75	821.05	823.35
VEDL	112.00	113.50	110.85	113.05	CENTLBK	11.74	11.85	11.65	11.70
EQUITAS	62.90	63.40	60.30	63.40	ABR	1123.00	1160.00	1050.35	1071.15
APOLLOHOSP	2362.00	2402.05	2328.05	2373.40	SFR	5076.00	5174.75	5076.00	5156.85
ANSAPINT	2176.00	2197.75	2140.00	2189.40	STAR	713.45	714.40	690.40	696.35
M&MFIN	159.00	161.80	155.55	158.70	DALBHARAT	985.00	1049.00	985.00	1031.30
GODREJCP	70.30	715.60	701.50	705.20	IRCTC	1371.85	1371.85	1357.45	1362.15
IGGL	447.70	457.35	445.40	449.60	ADANIPOWER	38.40	39.00	38.05	38.40
GODREJPROP	3205.00	3305.75	3205.00	3305.75	SUNTECK	272.30	293.80	270.00	285.25
CHOLAFIN	1065.25	1100.05	1051.90	1088.10	CHOLAHLDNG	489.00	579.45	489.00	502.90
AMARAJABAT	864.60	878.15	863.20	872.80	SIEMENS	1425.00	1429.20	1393.00	1398.30
GLENMARK	481.45	489.05	475.20	479.80	HFCL	18.30	18.85	17.95	18.40
INDIGO	1671.55	1697.00	1646.10	1669.05	TRIDENT	8.30	8.51	8.09	8.17
MFSL	61.00	64.50	61.00	63.65	MINDACORP	75.00	77.95	74.30	77.45
ALKYLAMINE	3431.00	3780.00	3431.00	3745.15	JACORPLTD	89.90	93.30	89.45	91.10
PETRONET	259.95	267.25	250.00	252.55	CeatlTD	1149.70	1157.95	1125.00	1128.45
LTI	3146.90	3286.25	3118.00	3262.75	BALRAMCHIN	153.25	156.00	153.25	155.60
ULTRACEMCO	4869.00	4911.00	4864.45	4887.55	SHK	120.35	128.45	120.35	125.90
ASTRAZEN	4400.05	4562.95	4400.05	4451.85	BEML	665.00	674.30	662.80	670.00
					LEMONTREE	33.00	33.75	30.25	31.70

‘Biden to pick Antony Blinken as State Secy’

Washington: Joe Biden intends to pick his trusted foreign policy advisor Antony Blinken as the US Secretary of State and Jake Sullivan as National Security Advisor, media reports said on Monday, as the President-elect is poised to make his first round of Cabinet announcements on Tuesday.

Blinken, 58, has served as the Deputy Secretary of State in the second term of the Obama administration and National Security Advisor to Biden when he was the vice president.

A strong India-hand, Blinken was the top foreign policy advisor to the Biden campaign.

“President-elect Joe Biden intends to nominate Antony Blinken to serve as secretary of State, turning to a trusted diplomat and foreign-policy adviser to oversee his work to rebuild US relationships around the globe, according to people familiar with the deci-

sion,” The Wall Street Journal reported.

“President-elect Joe Biden is planning to announce that he has selected Antony Blinken, one of his closest and longest-serving foreign policy advisers, as secretary of state,” The Washington Post said.

“Jake Sullivan, another top Biden advisers, is expected to be named as national security adviser, according to two people familiar with the announcement,” the daily said.

Last week, Biden said he had decided on his name for the Treasury Secretary. **PTI**

New Zealand’s Ardern offers virus know-how to Joe Biden

Wellington: New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on Monday became the latest world leader to congratulate President-elect Joe Biden on his election victory, saying she offered to share her nation’s expertise on dealing with the coronavirus.

Ardern said the tone of the 20-minute phone call was warm and that Biden spoke very favorably about how New Zealand was handling the pandemic.

“What has been really at the center of our response has been some fundamentals around testing, contact tracing, isolation,” Ardern said.

“That’s over and above what we’ve done at our borders.” New Zealand has been largely successful in eliminating the virus after imposing a strict lockdown in March and closing its borders. Only 25 people in the nation of 5 million have died from COVID-19. **AP**

US TROOP WITHDRAWAL

China worried Afghan may become hotbed for Uighur militants

Beijing: A wary China on Monday urged the US to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan in an “orderly and responsible manner” amidst increasing concern here that the war-torn country, which shares borders with the volatile Xinjiang province, could become a breeding ground for Uighur Muslim militants.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian’s remarks came after acting US Defence Secretary Christopher Miller last week said that the US would cut its military presence in Afghanistan to 2,500 troops from 4,500 by January 15.

“China calls on foreign troops to leave Afghanistan in an orderly and responsible manner, give terrorist forces no breathing space and contribute to Afghanistan peace and reconciliation process,” Zhao told a media briefing here.

He also condemned the recent Islamic State attack on

Kabul, saying “China will continue to firmly support the Afghan government and people in their efforts to combat terrorism and safeguard the national stability and their own security”.

Observers say that America’s latest plan to speed up the withdrawal of more troops from Afghanistan may have troubling consequences for China as Washington’s withdrawal also coincides with its move to lift the ban on the Uighur militant group -- the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM).

Earlier this month, the Trump administration, in a sudden move, lifted the ban on the separatist ETIM, which has been designated as a terrorist organisation by the UN’s 1267 counter-terrorism committee in 2002 for its alleged association with al-Qaida, Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. **PTI**

China lashes out at US withdrawal from Open Skies Treaty with Russia



Beijing: China on Monday lashed out at Washington over its withdrawal from the “Open Skies Treaty” with Russia, saying the move undermined military trust and transparency and imperiled future attempts at arms control.

The treaty, to which China is not a signatory, had allowed each country overflight rights to inspect military facilities.

That leaves only one arms-control pact still in force between the former Cold War foes, the New START treaty, which limits the number of nuclear warheads each may have. That treaty will expire in February and the Trump administration had said it wasn’t interested in extending it unless China also joined, something Beijing says it will not do. **AP**

UK SC to decide if ISIS bride can be back to London

London: Britain’s Supreme Court is set to decide whether a woman who ran away from her London home as a teenager to join the Islamic State group in Syria can return to the UK.

The British government is fighting to keep Shamima Begum from coming back to the country where she was born.

At a hearing beginning on Monday, it is challenging a lower court’s ruling that Begum can return to Britain to mount a legal challenge aimed at restoring her UK citizenship, which was revoked on national security grounds.

The Court of Appeal said in July that “the only way in which she can have a fair and effective appeal is to be permitted to come into the United Kingdom.”

But James Eadie, a lawyer acting for the UK government, told the Supreme Court justices that Begum “is considered to pose a real and current threat

to national security.”

Begum, now 21, was one of three east London schoolgirls who traveled to Syria in 2015 to live under IS rule.

She says she married an Islamic State member from the Netherlands and had three children, all of whom have died.

She resurfaced at a refugee camp in Syria in 2019 and told reporters she wanted to come home, but was denied the chance when then-Home Secretary Sajid Javid revoked her citizenship.

He argued that she was Bangladeshi by descent and could go there.

The situation has thrown into sharp relief the larger question of how Western societies deal with people who joined IS but want to go back to their home countries.

Begum challenged the decision, arguing she is not the citizen of another country and that Javid’s decision left her stateless. **AP**

First Americans could be vaccinated next month: House vaccine chief

Washington: The first Americans to receive a COVID-19 vaccine could be as early as the second week of December, according to the White House vaccine czar.

American pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech submitted an application to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on November 20 for emergency use authorisation for its COVID-19 vaccine candidate. An FDA vaccine advisory committee is slated to meet December on 10.

Dr Moncef Slaoui, the head of the US coronavirus vaccine programme said that it means, if authorised by the FDA, the vaccine could be rolled out the next day

(December 11).

“Our plan is to be able to ship vaccines to the immunisation sites within 24 hours from the approval, so I would expect maybe on day two after approval, on the 11th or on the 12th of December,” he told CNN on Sunday.

The vaccine, which requires two doses, has been shown by tests to be 95 per cent effective. Pfizer hopes to produce up to 50 million doses by the end of the year.

US pharmaceutical company Moderna has also reported that its vaccine is nearly 95 per cent effective, according to test data. The company is expected to seek approval for the vaccine in the coming weeks. **PTI**

Burkina Faso counts ballots; extremist threats affected vote

Ouagadougou: Votes are being counted in Burkina Faso after Sunday’s presidential and legislative elections, where threats of extremist violence linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State prevented parts of the country from casting ballots.

Election workers began the counting after polls closed by holding up the ballots up for observers and marking the votes on a chalkboard beside the candidate’s name. Preliminary results are expected within the next two days.

While there were no reported incidents of major attacks, threats of violence prevented people from casting ballots in hard-hit parts of the country, in the North, Sahel and East regions. Nearly 3,000 polling stations expected to open yesterday didn’t, preventing up to 350,000 people



Election officials count the ballots in at a polling station in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, for the presidential and legislative elections late on Sunday **AP**

from voting, said Newton Ahmed Barry, president for the National Independent Electoral Commission, on local television.

In Tapoa province in the east, 224 polling stations out of 335 didn’t open, according to a report from CODEL, a local

organization monitoring the elections. CODEL said it was “concerned about the situation in areas weakened by insecurity”.

Local officials in the Sahel and Center North, the epicenters of the violence, told the AP people were angry about not being able to vote. **AP**

HK’s Joshua Wong to plead guilty to protest charges

Hong Kong: Prominent Hong Kong pro-democracy activist Joshua Wong said on Monday that he plans to plead guilty to charges related to a demonstration outside police headquarters during anti-government protests last year.

Ahead of a court hearing Monday, Wong said that he and fellow activist Ivan Lam would both plead guilty to organizing, taking part in and inciting protesters to join an unauthorized protest outside police headquarters in Wan Chai last June. Both Wong and Lam were members of the now-disbanded Demosisto political party.

“I am persuaded that neither prison bars, nor election ban, nor any other arbitrary powers would stop us from activism,” Wong said.

“What we are doing now is to explain the value of freedom

to the world, through our compassion to whom we love, so much that we are willing to sacrifice the freedom of our own. I’m prepared for the thin chance of walking free.” Those found guilty of taking part in an unlawful assembly could face as long as five years in prison depending on the severity of the offense.

Wong rose to prominence as a student leader during the 2014 Umbrella Movement pro-democracy protests and is among a growing number of activists being charged for various relatively minor offenses since Beijing in June imposed a sweeping national security law on the territory that has severely restricted political speech. Pro-democracy supporters have said the legal charges are part of a campaign to harass and intimidate them. **AP**

French ex-Prez Sarkozy stands trial for corruption

Paris: Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy goes on trial Monday on charges of corruption and influence peddling in a phone-tapping scandal, a first for the 65-year-old politician who has faced several other judicial investigations since leaving office in 2012.

Sarkozy is being accused of having tried to illegally obtain information from a magistrate about an investigation involving him in 2014.

He stands trial in a Paris court along with his lawyer Thierry Herzog, 65, and the magistrate, Gilbert Azibert, 73.

They face a prison sentence of up to 10 years and a maximum fine of 1 million euros (\$1.2 million). They deny any wrongdoing.

Hearings are scheduled until Dec. 10. **AP**

US provides missiles, renews pledge to defend Philippines

Manila: President Donald Trump’s administration provided precision-guided missiles and other weapons to help the Philippines battle Islamic State group-aligned militants and renewed a pledge to defend its treaty ally if it comes under attack in the disputed South China Sea.

National Security Adviser Robert O’Brien represented Trump in Monday’s ceremony

at the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila, where he announced the delivery of the cache of missiles and bombs to the Philippine military.

Trump pledged to provide the \$18 million worth of missiles in a phone conversation with Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte in April.

O’Brien expressed condolences to the Philippines after

back-to-back typhoons left a trail of death and devastation in the country and outlined US Help to the country battle the coronavirus pandemic.

The US assistance projects normalcy in Washington’s foreign relations as Trump worked to challenge the results of the November 3 presidential election, claiming he was a victim of fraud. **AP**

Yemen rebels claim attack on Saudi oil facility in Jiddah

Dubai: Yemen’s Houthi rebels said they struck a Saudi oil facility in the port city of Jiddah on Monday with a new cruise missile, just hours after the kingdom finished hosting its virtual Group of 20 leaders summit.

The kingdom did not immediately acknowledge any attack as videos on social media suggested a fire at an Aramco oil facility.

Brig. Gen. Yehia Sarie, a Houthi military spokesman,

tweeted that the rebels fired a new Quds 2 cruise missile at the facility. He posted a satellite image online that matched Aramco’s North Jiddah Bulk Plant, where oil products are stored in tanks.

That facility is just southeast of Jiddah’s King Abdulaziz International Airport, a major facility that handles incoming Muslim pilgrims en route to nearby Mecca.

Online videos appeared to

show a tank farm similar to the bulk plant on fire. Details of the videos posted pre-dawn Monday matched the general layout of the bulk plant.

Saudi state-run media did not immediately acknowledge the Houthi claim.

Saudi Aramco, the kingdom’s oil giant that now has a sliver of its worth traded publicly on the stock market, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. **AP**

Officials: 113 bodies found in secret graves in Mexico

Mexico City: Mexican authorities have recovered 113 bodies and additional human remains from a secret grave outside the western city of Guadalajara.

Jalisco state Attorney Gerardo Octavio Solis said on Sunday night that 30 of the victims had been identified.

The state is home to Jalisco New Generation Cartel, one of Mexico’s most violent and powerful. More bodies have been found in secret graves

there than in any other state in recent years.

According to Mexico’s Interior Ministry, from 2006 through September 30 of this year, 897 bodies had been recovered from secret graves in Jalisco, 605 of those during the administration of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador who took office in December 2018.

The burial ground in El Salto, southeast of Guadalajara, was found in October. **AP**

FROM PAGE 1

SC RAISES CONCERNS OVER COVID RELAPSE

At the outset, Mehta said the matter is related to the handling of dead bodies and it is “painful that the court has to deal with this issue.”

“It was only part of the order. It relates to the hospital situation also,” the Bench observed.

In the June 19 order, the apex court had directed the Centre and States to set up an expert panel for effective monitoring, supervision and guidance of Government and Covid-dedicated hospitals for providing proper healthcare to patients.

It had directed the Centre to bring uniformity in charges of testing and other facilities and ordered it to constitute an expert committee of senior doctors of Central Government hospitals, GNCTD run hospitals, AIIMS and the responsible officer from the Union Health Ministry.

It had said that the expert committee shall inspect, supervise and issue necessary directions to all Government hospitals, Covid hospitals and other hospitals in NCT of Delhi for taking care of Covid patients and the panel shall ensure that at least one visit in each hospital is done weekly.

The top court had further directed that all States shall constitute an expert team of doctors and other experts for inspection, supervision and guidance of Government hospitals and other hospitals dedicated to Covid-19 in each State.

It had said that the team may inspect, supervise the hospitals in the State and issue necessary directions for the improvement to the concerned hospital and report to the Government.

The court had also issued directions

with regard to the patient care and said, “All Covid-dedicated hospitals shall permit one willing attendant of the patient in the hospital premise, who can remain in an area earmarked by the hospital”

COVID -VE REPORT MUST FOR ENTERING MAHA

“The Airport Authority of India is requested to check for RT-PCR test report before allowing the passengers to board the flight. The RT-PCR sample collection should have been done within 72 hours of the scheduled time of landing at airports in Maharashtra, “a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by the Maharashtra Government stated.

According to the SOP, passengers not having RT-PCR test reports fulfilling the two primary requisites shall compulsorily undergo RT-PCR tests at the airports concerned “at their own costs”. The airports shall arrange the testing centres and charge the passengers directly for testing.

“Only after undertaking the test, the passengers will be allowed to go home by the Airport Operator. The contact information and address shall be collected from all passengers who undergo tests at the airport by the Airport Operator to facilitate contact, in case the report comes positive.

“Passengers whose test report comes positive will be contacted and treated as per existing protocols,” the SOP stated.

Similarly, all passengers travelling by trains originating from or having halt/stop at the National Capital Region of Delhi, states of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa shall carry with them an RT-PCR negative test report with them if they decide to enter Maharashtra.

“The RT-PCR sample collection should have been done within 96 hours of

the scheduled arrival in Maharashtra. Passengers not having RT-PCR negative test report with them shall be screened for symptoms and body temperature at the alighting railway stations,” a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by the Maharashtra Government stated.

“The passengers without symptoms would be allowed to go home, while those who display symptoms will be subjected to antigen tests. If the antigen test comes negative, the passengers concerned will be allowed to go home, while those testing positive will be sent to Covid Caring Centre (CCC) for further care. The cost of further care including the charges at the CCC shall be borne by the passengers concerned,” the SOP stated.

Similarly, in the case of passengers entering Maharashtra by road from the National Capital Region of Delhi, States of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa shall be screened at the border areas for Covid symptoms and temperature. The passengers without symptoms will be allowed entry, while others have the option of going back to their homes for recuperation.

As in the case of those arriving in Maharashtra by trains, the passengers arriving by road will be subsequently subjected to antigen tests and if found positive, they will be sent to nearby CCCs for further care. The passengers will have to bear the cost of further care including the charges at the CCC.

GOGOI SUCCEUMS TO POST-COVID DISEASE

His body will be taken to his residence in Dispur and from there to the Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra where people can pay their homage to the leader on Tuesday, said Sarma, a former cabinet col-

league of Gogoi.

He will be cremated with full state honours and the venue will be decided in consultation with his family, the minister added.

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said in his letter, “I was deeply shocked and saddened by the untimely passing away of your beloved husband Shri Tarun Gogoi ji. He was one of my dearest friends from the state of Assam. Shri Tarun Gogoi ji was the most popular leader from Assam who served six terms as a member of Parliament and has led the party to a record three consecutive electoral victories in the state of Assam as chief minister.”

STATE IMPOSES CURBS ON NUMBER OF GUESTS

reached 10.13 percent of the total positive cases, which is a matter of concern. The case fatality rate (CFR) among people above 60 years of age is also above 45 per cent,” he said.

Prasad said that UP had been able to contain the positivity rate below 5 per cent as at present it was 3.2 percent till now even as in November it was just 1.6 per cent. The case fatality rate (CFR) was also just 1.43 per cent, he added.

Meanwhile, 2,067 more COVID-19 cases were detected in UP during the past 24 hours.

Prasad said the recovery rate in the state had now come down to 94.07 percent. As many as 4,97,475 COVID-19 patients have recovered in the state, including 2,060 during the past 24 hours.

At present there are 23,776 active COVID-19 cases in the state out of which 10,948 are in home isolation, 2,405 in private hospitals and the rest in government-run Covid hospitals.

The death toll reached 7,582 on Monday evening with 23 deaths during the past 24 hours.

As many as 1,45,704 samples were tested on Sunday and wit it 1,81,31,693 samples have been tested in UP, the highest in the country.

Around 4.61 surveillance teams have so far visited 2.92 crore houses in the state and have checked the health of over 14.30 crore people.

CHINA'S MAD INFRA PUSH ALONG LAC ALARMS INDIA

Moreover, China has adopted a new modus operandi to avoid detection by building beautiful homes, recreational facilities and roads as part of its so-called civil projects near the LAC.

Sources said these smartly camouflaged homes are mini military stations with local population not welcome near these structures. Most of these dwelling units have come up near the Torsa river on the Bhutan-China border near the Doklam plateau. These construction activities are besides China ramping up its road network in the entire Tibetan plateau region. Moreover, it is also upgrading its key five airfields in the region to enable the Chinese air force fighter jets to take off and land. These airfields are close to the LAC in the Ladakh region.

Taking note of these activities, sources said India cannot take any chances in slackening its operational readiness to deal with any threat. Also, it has completed all preparations for its troops to be deployed during the winter months in Ladakh as the talks so far have failed to break the logjam.

At present, more than one lakh troops from both the armies are facing each other at the 1,700 km long LAC in Ladakh sec-

tor. Moreover, both the armies have dug in for a long haul during the winter months when the temperatures dip to minus 20 to 30 degrees.

KERALA PUTS ON HOLD CHANGES IN POLICE ACT AFTER CRITICISM

The ordinance has become a law when it was signed by the Governor and no one, even the Chief Minister, could say that a law would not be implemented once it comes into force. “So, Vijayan’s statement that the amendment would not be enforced is only to deceive people,” the Congress leader alleged in a statement, adding police can still register cases under the section as long as it remains as a law.

Sources in the Chief Minister’s Office (CMO) told PTI that either the State Cabinet will recommend to the Governor withdrawal of the ordinance or the Home Ministry will issue a direction to Police not to take any action under it.

Supreme court lawyer and constitutional expert Kaleswaram Raj said the only way to undo the effect of an ordinance was to withdraw the same by way of another ordinance. “Since the ordinance is notified, the law has come into being. The stand of the government that it will not invoke the ordinance does not have any legal foundation... It should be recalled by a method known to law,” he told PTI.

The International Press Institute condemned the ordinance, saying it was a “nasty and diabolical” attempt to muzzle the media in Kerala.

Governor Arif Mohammed Khan on Saturday signed the Kerala Police Act Amendment ordinance envisaging addition of Section 118-A to prevent cyber attacks against women and children.

DOCYARD
DR KUSHAL BANERJEE
Consultant Homeopath



DR KALYAN BANERJEE'S CLINIC,
NEW DELHI

Take help from Homeopathy



India is considered as the Diabetes capital of the world. Approximately eight-point seven percent of Indians between the age of twenty to seventy years are Diabetic. The country suffers substantial loss of productivity and thus bears a huge economic burden because of Diabetes.

An exceedingly high number of Diabetics around the world are looking to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) to act as an adjuvant or substitute for the management of their condition. Diabetes affects multiple organ systems resulting in a wide range of serious issues in patients. Many of these complications of Diabetes do not have any specific treatment in conventional medicine.

India is known for its larger than life festivals, and sweets and delicacies is a part and parcel of it. However, during this time, Diabetics should exercise caution and only consume extremely limited quantities of sweets or restrict themselves to food items which will not increase their blood sugar levels if they have very high levels of blood sugar. A temporary but sharp rise in blood sugar can cause irreversible damage to vital organs. Elevated blood sugar may take days to settle to its previous levels. We are also beginning to understand the correlation between Diabetes and COVID-19. Although research is still new, it is being postulated that diabetics have a higher chance of severe clinical outcomes and mortality due to COVID-19. Again, experts recommend that

Diabetes affects multiple organs resulting in a wide range of serious issues in patients. Many of these complications do not have any specific treatment in conventional medicine

earlier.

Doctors usually spend a lot of time explaining the importance of lifestyle changes, including diet, mealtimes, exercise and sleep patterns, in addition to advising homeopathic medicines. Many of these patients can report lasting blood sugar control with these modifications. There are many cases where homeopathic medicines can be completely withdrawn.

Some of the other complications which occur in chronic Diabetics are conditions like peripheral neuropathy (degeneration of the nerves in the periphery of the body), Diabetic retinopathy (degeneration of the retina and related structures) and diabetic nephropathy (degeneration of the structures of the kidney, affecting its functioning). These conditions are known to respond poorly to conventional medicines. However, homeopathy can address these issues in many patients. From providing relief to pain, burning and loss of sensation of limbs, to improving or preventing further loss of vision. There is anecdotal data demonstrating improvement or arrest of degeneration of kidney functioning with homeopathic management in cases of nephropathy. We are also able to see remarkable improvements in cases of Diabetic foot, where the foot of patient begins to degenerate into a gangrenous condition due to poor blood supply. Patients are often able to avoid an amputation!

As the country takes some early steps towards an integrated healthcare system, it is important to consider homeopathy as an essential option for patients in all stages of Diabetes.

WARMFOODS

BROWN RICE: Brown rice are rich in proteins, thiamine, calcium, magnesium, fiber, and potassium. For those trying to lose weight or those suffering from diabetes, it can prove a healthy staple given its low glycemic rating which helps reduce insulin spikes.

It is rich in selenium which reduces the risk for developing common illnesses such as cancer, heart disease and arthritis. One cup of it provides 80 per cent of our daily manganese requirements. Manganese helps the body

synthesise fats. It also benefits our nervous and reproductive systems.

The naturally occurring oils are beneficial for the body as these healthy fats help normalise cholesterol levels. The fiber content of brown rice keeps bowel function at its peak since it makes digestion that much easier. It is the perfect addition to the daily diet for those seeking bowel regularity. In addition, it also makes the tummy feel full which translates to smaller meal portions.



TEST YOUR LUNGEVITY

Pneumonia is common among people of all ages. DR SAMIR GARDE busts myths related to the disease and tells you symptoms to look out for

Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs. It causes the air sacs (alveoli) of the lungs to get inflamed (irritated and swollen). They may fill up with fluid or pus. This causes a variety of symptoms, which range from mild to severe. Pneumonia is usually caused by bacteria or a virus. It also can be caused by fungi or irritants that you breathe into your lungs. How serious pneumonia is depends on many factors. These include what caused the pneumonia, your age, and your overall health.

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of pneumonia can range from mild to severe. This depends on your risk factors and the type of pneumonia you have. Common symptoms are similar to the symptoms caused by a cold or the flu. They include:

- Cough
- Fever
- Bringing up mucus when you cough

You may also sweat, have a headache, and feel very tired. Some people also experience nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

MYTHS

- It can always be treated with antibiotics
- Elderly people are the only ones required to receive vaccinations
- Healthy people can't get pneumonia
- An individual with pneumonia must be hospitalised

FACTS

- With many possible causes for pneumonia, treatment could include



Turn to breathing exercises

Like people say, prevention is better than cure. So is the case with pneumonia. Here are a few tips that can help.

- Having good immunity is the single most important factor in prevention of pneumonia.
- Healthy lifestyle — a good

more than just antibiotics

■ People age 65 and older are at a higher risk, but anyone can catch pneumonia at any age and therefore should consider getting vaccinated

■ People who are considered healthy have a lower risk, but could still catch pneumonia

■ If the condition is less severe, treatment may not include hospitalisation

CAUSES

Bacterial: This is the commonest cause of pneumonia. There is a wide range of bacteria that can infect the lungs - in children as well as adults

Viral: Nowadays due to COVID 19; everyone seems to have got alerted about viral pneumonia. Viral infections are rather common in children and there are dozens of viruses that cause infection of the lungs. Influenza related pneumonia are common in adults and various other viruses can cause lung infection in adults where immunity is compromised. COVID-19 related inflammation is not a pneumonia in true sense; its more of inflammatory condition of the lungs — the discussion of which is beyond the scope of this article.

Fungal: Happens in immunocompromised individuals. People who are suffering from Diabetes; chronic kidney disease; those having HIV/AIDS; or those who are on medicines that compromise the immunity; especially after organ transplant etc are immunocompromised people.

Tuberculous infections: Infection caused by Mycobacterium Tuberculosis (popularly known as TB) is the biggest menace in front of our country and needs to be tackled on war footing. There are other

breakfast; two square meals per day, having fresh fruit everyday; regular exercise with deep breathing exercises; adequate sleep are of utmost importance to maintain good immunity.

■ People with Diabetes; renal conditions; those on chemother-

apy should take regular guidance of their treating physician; to keep their conditions under control.

- Avoiding smoking.
- Taking influenza and Pneumococcal vaccines as per the advice of regular doctor/chest physician.

bacteria from the Mycobacterium family that can cause lung infections.

Aspiration pneumonia: When one ends up aspirating contents of the stomach into the lungs via; breathing pipe — one gets — chemical pneumonitis.

How is pneumonia diagnosed?

When a person reaches a doctor/hospital with above mentioned symptoms and after clinical examination pneumonia is suspected; Xray of the chest is done to diagnose pneumonia. At times a CT scan of the chest is necessary to see the extent of the infection. Sending sputum for culture test helps in deciding the causative factor of pneumonia.

How is it treated?

As discussed above; depending on the Causative agent (Bacterial/viral/TB etc); and patient's condition (stable or critical) medicines are prescribed to be taken orally (at home) or Intravenously (in the hospital). Patients also need supportive care in the form of hydration; control of Diabetes; vitamin supplements etc.

The writer is Consultant Respiratory Medicine, Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre

The symptoms of pneumonia can range from mild to severe. This depends on your risk factors and the type of pneumonia you have. Common signs are similar to the ones caused by a cold or flu

DadiKaKehna

Winters are here and with it the usual problems of dry skin, dandruff and cracked heels. A few simple ingredients available in your kitchen can help tackle the issue, says ROSHANI DEVI



While we all look forward to winters — sitting in front of the fire, drinking tea and talking about everything under the sun; there are some annoying problems that crop up — dry skin and dandruff.

There are many products available in the market but a few home remedies work just as well with long lasting effect.

If you have dry skin, one of the best remedies is to mix two parts glycerin, two parts rose water and one part lemon juice. Keep this in a bottle. Apply on the skin. Avoid areas where there is a break in the skin. Leave it overnight. Wash

with warm water the next morning. One can use this on the face — the results are amazing.

For cracked heels mix beeswax and mustard oil by heating them together in equal parts. Pour it

into a container.

Let it cool. Apply over the cracked heels. Wear socks. Wash feet the next morning. Repeat till you get smooth heels.

Dandruff is another winter problem that many face. Mix orange peel powder and coconut oil to make a mask. Apply this on the scalp. Leave it overnight or at least for an hour. Wash off with shampoo. Do this thrice a week till dandruff disappears.



Ultrasound is key

India is severely impacted by the sudden outbreak of highly infectious COVID-19 pandemic which is overwhelming our healthcare system & the number of patients being diagnosed with it is staggering. Amidst these unprecedented times; Point-of-care Ultrasound (POCUS) technology has emerged as a key screening tool for physicians to access the actual clinical conditions in the medically fragile patients.

Nowadays, compact ultrasound machines are increasingly being used to diagnose, monitor and manage patients in ICU, emergency wards and other inpatient services. For patients diagnosed with COVID-19 infection, it is an excellent adjunct tool for performing comprehensive head-to-toe clinical study & is an ideal device for bedside examination of patients in isolation wards. COVID-19 primarily attacks the lung in the initial stages of the disease and it can also have significant

cardiac manifestations in the later stages of the disease.

So, lung ultrasound and focused echocardiography has the potential to aid the diagnosis and management of patients with COVID-19 infection. Moreover, the patients infected with COVID-19 require airway management, or venous access under ultrasound guidance (to administer essential fluids & medications), or some patients in shock or trauma needs a proper shock assessment where ultrasound plays a vital role in clinical evaluation process.

Portable diagnostic ultrasound machine is like a Swiss-army knife which has multiple advantages as it is non-invasive, possess no ionising radiations, can be quickly & repeatedly performed at the bedside, cost-effective and is easily sanitised as compared to other imaging modalities in indoor settings.

Hospitals need to

employ proper set of cleaning protocols for machine disinfection prior to use in COVID-19 isolation wards. Because the utility of each application varies by setting, hospitals should consider how they can best use ultrasound within their specific environments.

As per the directive from Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOHFW) and guidelines of National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), the portable ultrasound plays a significant role in clinical evaluation of COVID-19 patients and should be considered as an invaluable tool for isolation wards.

Major player in this segment is Fujifilm Sonosite company which has partnered with different medical societies across India and assisting healthcare professionals in their battle against this pandemic by providing them the right technology, disinfection guidelines and ultrasound educational resources.

DON'T MISS YOUR CHILD'S VACCINATION



Approximately 3.7 lakh children die of pneumonia annually in India. DR SISIR PAUL tells how timely immunisation can reduce the risk

Pneumonia is one of the leading causes of sickness and mortality in children in developing countries especially under the age of 5 years. Pneumonia can be easily prevented by immunization, adequate nutrition, and taking care of some environmental factors.

As per WHO Pneumonia accounts for almost 15% to 18 % of all deaths (1.3 million deaths) globally of which 99% cases seen in 15 developing countries, in children under 5 years age. Approximately 3.7 lakh children die of Pneumonia annually in India. Pneumonia can be caused by viruses, bacteria, or fungi.

Pneumonia can spread in several ways like via air-borne droplets from a cough or sneeze from an infected person or the organisms which are normally present in one's nose and throat can become infective if conditions are unfavourable and can infect the lungs if they are inhaled. In addition, in young infants it can spread through blood also. Various factors that may influence the occurrence of pneumonia include, premature and low birth weight child, undernutrition, indoor overcrowding, poor hygiene, previous history of allergies, recent history of Measles and Chicken Pox, Pneumonia or hospitalisation and many more.

The presenting features of viral and bacterial pneumonia are similar. However, the symptoms of viral pneumonia may be more when compared with bacterial pneumonia. In children under five years of age they can present with cough and/or fast and difficult breathing, with or without fever and there may be retraction of lower chest wall. Wheezing is more common in viral infections. Very severely ill infants may be unable to take feed or drink.

Three strategic interventions include-vaccination, breastfeeding/nutrition and access to care and antibiotic treatment along with Parent Education Programs, Pneumonia awareness Programs for Community and health workers. Awareness of practices like hand hygiene-washing hands frequently, avoiding indoor pollution (smoking, usage of firewood, kerosene, incense, deo-sprays etc) as well as outdoor pollution.

Besides the general precautions as already discussed keep your child's vaccination upto date which starts from six weeks of age.

All children should be given vaccines to prevent against bacterial infections like Pneumococcus and Hib. All children six-months of age or older should get a flu (Influenza) vaccine yearly at least up to eight years of age (MOH) because the maximum spread in the community is through children in this age group.

Children should also be vaccinated against Measles and Chicken Pox because these illnesses can reduce the immunity severely and increase the risk of secondary pneumonia. Older children should follow cough and sneeze etiquettes (cover their nose and mouth with facial tissue or a sleeve of their shirt when sneezing and throw away tissues after use).

If the child is showing symptoms suggestive of pneumonia consult your Paediatrician and do not indulge in self medications.

The writer is Clinical Director for Paediatrics, Madhukar Rainbow Children's Hospital

INBRIEF

Therapeutic food makers in the country have asked for launching specific programmes at the community level to tackle the problem of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) in the country since Covid restrictions and reverse migration are feared to have led to drop in the nutrition levels in the vulnerable sections of society.

CMAM Association of India, comprising manufacturers of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) globally used in community management of acute malnutrition (CMAM), has extended support to the Government to develop new products so as to eradicate SAM under the PoshanAbhiyan.

In a communication to the Ministry of Women & Child Development, CMAM Association of India has offered to support and implement any feeding protocols to be laid down by the Government in the upcoming nutrition guidelines using its R&D and product development prowess to ensure that the children receive adequate nutrition.

Feeding protocols that use a combination of home-based food and high-quality energy dense nutrition supplement, including all micronutrients, which are easy to transport to villages, deliver to families and administer to children need to be urgently explored, CMAM Association has stated.

According to Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) have nine times higher risk of dying than well-nourished children. CMAM Association has pointed out the urgent need for collaboration between Government, therapeutic food manufacturers and civil society to meet the challenge of SAM in the country.

TrendSlazer

Sanjana to star opposite Aditya

Actress **SANJANA SANGHI**, who starred opposite **Sushant Singh Rajput** in *Dil Bechara*, is set to join actor **ADITYA ROY KAPUR** in the forthcoming action film, *OM: The Battle Within*.

"Getting to delve into the action genre so early on, is something I view as an absolute honour. I have immense gratitude for my producers and my director Kapil (Verma) for the potential they have seen in me being able to pull off such a part in our film," Sanjana said.

"After exploring many scripts and possibilities, *OM* felt just right since it was the spectrum jump I was looking for in terms of throwing myself into an entirely uncharted territory," she added.



'The beauty is Rajkumar (Rao) has never lost his humility and generosity that he always had

as an actor. He has remained that same person. What has changed is that Rajkumar has become really popular. I think the success has brought with it some limitations. But his success makes me happy. I feel like a happy parent.'

—Hansal Mehta

Comedian-actor **VIR DAS** feels celebrities should not post videos on social media that show them undergoing COVID-19 tests.

"Please stop posting videos of your COVID tests. From the collection to the test, you are literally doing none of the work. The fact you tilted your head back and managed not to sneeze is not engaging content," he wrote.

"Hear me out please. There's someone drenched in a full PPE kit one foot away from you who does this 30 times a day, door to door. You're not the one struggling. The test sucks for them more," Vir urged.

Swift wins 'Artist of the Year' at AMAs

Singer **TAYLOR SWIFT** won Artist of the Year award for the third year in a row at the American Music Awards but had to skip the ceremony.

In 2019, Swift expressed anger over her former record label, Big Machine Label Group, selling her master recordings to Scooter Braun, the manager of singers like Justin Bieber and Ariana Grande. So she was busy re-recording the albums she made with the label.

"Thank you so much for this. This is a fan-voted award, which means so much to me. You guys have been beyond wonderful all the years of my career, but especially this one, when we've been so far apart, we haven't been able to see each other in concert, but I still feel really connected to you through the music," she shared.



The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) is taking its first step into India with a talent hunt initiative that lets the Academy identify and nurture up to five talents working in film, games or television in India. The exercise, known as BAFTA Breakthrough initiative, is part of the Academy's year-round effort to support new talent, operating alongside their Awards ceremonies.

The programme has in the past supported artistes such as Tom Holland, Letitia Wright, Florence Pugh, Jessie Buckley, Josh O'Connor and Callum Turner. Coming to India is part of BAFTA's global expansion effort of the initiative. BAFTA Breakthrough India aims at facilitating the development of relationships between British and Indian talents.

The chosen participants will be offered a year-long support programme from BAFTA and be showcased across India and the UK. By showcasing talent global-

BAFTA comes to India

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts is taking its first step at global inclusiveness with a local talent hunt



national iteration of the successful Breakthrough initiative, which has been running in the UK since 2013 and China since 2019. The effort was launched in the United States this year, supporting over 130 emerging talents to date.

Industry supporters of the initiative in recent years include actors Oliva Colman, Naomi Harris, Tom Hiddleston and Tilda Swinton, actor-producer Brad Pitt, directors Tom Harper and Barry Jenkins, game designers Brenda Romero and Tim Schafer and actor-writers Sharon Horgan and Amy Schumer.

"BAFTA is uniquely placed to facilitate creative partnerships

across the moving arts, being one of the only art charities to work across film, games and television and on a global scale," said Tim Hunter, Director of Learning and New Talent, BAFTA.

"India is one of the most prolific and accomplished industries and a fascinating centre for the screen arts with lots of creative diversity, which extends far beyond the world-famous 'Bollywood.' Some of the best practitioners in the world work in Indian film, games and television — and practitioners from around the world have much to learn from them," Hunter added.

The initiative will showcase and support emerging stars of

film, games, and television in India, supported by Netflix. "We share BAFTA's vision and responsibility in providing 'breakthrough' opportunities to emerging talent. We're thrilled to extend our support to the programme in India and help amplify our country's new voices. This initiative will meaningfully bring together creative communities across borders, support their stories, unearth raw talent and provide them with recognition on the world stage," said Monika Shergill on behalf of the streaming giant.

Under the initiative, BAFTA will work closely with local cultural bodies and industry in India to reach each sub-region and identify excellent individuals. The programme will be supported by a series of craft masterclasses, which will feature British and Indian talent sharing their expertise and insights with the audience across India and the UK.

—IANS

Directed by **RAJAT KAPOOR**, a rendition of the Shakespearean play *As You Like It* comes to screens for Aadyam's debut digital theatre fest

FROM STAGE TO SCREEN

How many clowns does it take to recreate a Shakespearean classic on stage and question gender roles while doing this? Well, seven clowns across a runtime of 106 minutes, as seen in veteran director Rajat Kapoor's clowning glory, *I Don't Like It As You Like It*, a rendition of Shakespeare's play *As You Like It*, will premiere on the screens with Aadyam's digital edition this December.

A raging hit, this play was first staged during Aadyam's second season in 2016 and will be coming back for its digital edition as the theatre takes the stage to the screen. Maintaining the authenticity of its theatre going experience the digital showcase will be a striking affair — to be recorded with a multi camera set up, enveloped for virtual viewing for three limited edition screenings via Insider.in's digital streaming service for audience across the country.

With equal nervous and excitement about their first play, Shernaz Patel, theatre's returning artistic director says, "There is great excitement and challenge in reinvention. In taking a show that has been successful on stage and finding a novel way to reinterpret it for the camera. That's what we have set out to do with all three of our plays, the first of which is this hilarious and boisterous Shakespeare adaptation. We are lucky to have a good lineup of actors with impeccable comic timing. They make clowning seem effortless. And a film and theatre director at the helm, who is a master of this genre. As with all our plays we dream big. We want our viewers to have a theatre experience with high production standards. That's why we are shooting the play professionally in an auditorium and on a set and not in isolation or on Zoom. This is the closest we can come to the magic of live theatre because the actors will be performing together on the stage, feeding off each other. So beat those pandemic blues and make the stage your world for a couple of hours. Laughter is



'ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES IS THE PROCESS BEHIND RETAINING A PLAY'S IDENTITY AS A THEATRICAL EXPERIENCE. TRADITIONALLY, I HAVE NEVER REALLY AGREED TO THIS IDEA OF RECORDING PLAYS TO BE WATCHED ELSEWHERE BECAUSE I FEEL SOMETHING DIES IN TRANSITION'



the only medicine right now. Let these lovable and joyous characters prove that to you."

On adapting his play for screen, director Rajat Kapoor adds, "This is one of the biggest challenges — the process behind retaining a play's identity as a theatrical experience. Traditionally, I have never really agreed to this idea of recording plays to be watched elsewhere because I feel something dies in transition. For me, the play exists for the purpose that it was designed for — to be watched live. Ensuring what we present and how we do it, I believe, will elevate its identity from a mere recording to then hold a deeper meaning for the production and the audience alike. With this firmly in mind, we move forward to present this new version of our play."

"This digital edition has been months

in the making. We have been evolving and adapting our efforts to suit the needs of the new viewing format. We are all very excited to see the final product and the audience reaction to it," mentions Brian Tellis, Co-Founder and Group CEO of Fountainhead MKTG that produces and promotes Aadyam in India.

This is the Rajat's fifth Shakespearean adaptation that is retold through clown style theatre as the plot follows a group of clowns who endeavour to put up *As You Like It*. In the play, the troupe director has no faith in the tale itself and believes it to be a comedy that is 'two laughs and a death away from tragedy'. A lack of skill, rehearsal space and fondness for his troupe, creates a comedy of errors that takes the spectator on a hilarious ride, complete with gender role reversal led by the thought, 'Shakespeare made Rosalind Ganymede. What an underachiever. I will make all the men play women, and all the women play men.'

This story explores the highs and lows faced by a circus troupe highlighting the fact that to find yourself, you must become the other. It depicts that behind the smiles and entertainment, these are just ordinary people dealing with stress, angst and the madness that is life.

It has some of the most talented actors — Aadar Malik, Cyrus Sahukar, Faeze Jalali, Joy Fernandes, Rytasha Rathore, Shruti Vyas and Vinay Pathak.

(The play opens on Insider's streaming platform on December 7. Tickets are available on Paytm Insider.)

Sumeet recalls his defining moment



Actor Sumeet Vyas recalls the defining moment when he decided to become an actor, two decades ago. "I think it was 20 years ago. I was already working in the studio as an editor and earning money. Since I grew up watching theatre, surrounded by people who were constantly talking about plays, literature, art, history and culture. I took them as a part of my life, without thinking of taking it up professionally. Then one day, I watched a play in Prithvi Theatre, in which my father acted. After the play ended, when I was returning home, I just told myself I will live to perform — that this is the true calling. I have been acting seriously, since then," he said.

Sumeet will soon be seen in the web series *Dark 7 White*, produced by Ekta Kapoor.

"It is interesting that in the two shows (with Ekta), I play drastically different characters. Previously on *The Verdict: State vs Navavati*, I played the lawyer Ram Jethmalani, a much older character. With heavy prosthetics and a different body language, I was almost unrecognisable. In this show, *Dark 7 White*, I play a young man from a royal family who starts off as an aimless brat and turns into a manipulative individual with a great plan. My idea is always to play something different and challenge myself," Sumeet said. About playing his role, he added that it was "interesting to tap into a mindset that is so multi-layered."

The series, which also features Nidhi Singh, Jatin Sarna, is on ZEE5 and ALT Balaji.

—IANS

Dhoom 2 turns 14



cuts through and becomes popular because it was important for me at that time. It's always important for a song to become popular but at that time I was just hoping and praying. I remember the day *Dhoom* was releasing, I was going to Shirdi and on the way I

heard in two places — one was a car back horn with the *Dhoom Machale* tune and the other when somebody in Shirdi was singing it. Then I knew, *gaana toh popular hogaya!* It was a great gig."

Recounting his experience of choreographing two of the most

good-looking superstars, Hrithik and Aishwarya (Rai Bachchan), Shiamak says, "I had worked with Aishwarya in *Taal* and before she became Miss World, I'd worked with her already in a Sufi jazz piece, so she was already quite close to understanding my style

and delivering it really well. Hrithik was very new to what I do, but the best part about Hrithik was that he is just so natural with dancing and my kind of style on him worked so well. I think he was also quite excited with the fact that he could do such a different, unusual kind of work from what he was normally doing, which is a very strong Bollywood dance. Suddenly, we were to put a little bit of jazz and contemporary. It was quite a thought process to see him and Aishwarya interpret the song. I was very happy that they both did a good job. I was very proud of them because when they both came in together, it was electrifying!"

Vijay Krishna (Viktor) Acharya, the writer of the series, says, "The success of *Dhoom* told us that there was a possibility of a cooler style of an action film in India. However, Adi was very clear that we should never make a film only to satisfy the idea of a franchise. We have tried to stick to that principle throughout. *Dhoom 2* had everything pushed up a couple of notches, in every department. I think we managed a racy screenplay, one that keeps you wanting to know more and personally, I really enjoyed writing all the characters and their minor quirks."

He adds, "I remember when *Dhoom 2* was announced, every-

one felt that this will have a natural continuation — since the first part had bikes and this one has cars. But the fact is that you don't make a film about inanimate objects. Even if there are bikes and there's action, we are always trying to encapsulate a feeling. You are always trying to convey an emotion, whatever that might be and *Dhoom 2*, with its love story, connected with everyone."

Talking about Hrithik's character, Viktor reveals, "Aryan was in the tradition of what we think is the *Dhoom* anti-hero. And for me, the idea was someone who exists within society and yet on the fringes of it. Yes, he is a criminal, but he is somebody who is also looking for things which are only special. He is someone exceptionally good at his craft. Those things went into the making of the character and that helps the actor embody something. It helps the director visualise something. He is actually a passionate collector. Curiously enough, his arc is that through his theft, what he finally manages to steal, is somebody else's heart and that ends his life of crime. So, in a very unsaid way, there was a kind of redemption to his character. I think both Hrithik and Aishwarya, in that sense, came into the film in a very exciting manner."

At 34, my days are numbered: Warner

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia's big-hitting opener David Warner on Monday said his "days are numbered" in international cricket and continuing an approach of keeping his aggression in check, he would rather ignore than engage if Indian players attempt to sledge him during the upcoming series.

Warner, in a virtual press conference on Monday, touched upon his evolution as a batsman in the past couple of years.

"I've just recently turned 34, so my days are numbered, when you're in the 30s. There's obviously a risk element but there's obviously a cricket smarts element to it as well," the explosive opener said ahead of the limited-overs series against India starting with the first ODI on November 27.

Warner, who has had his share of aggressive on-field showdowns, said he would prefer to look the other way if Indians try to get chatty with him.

"I'll always draw from that mate. To try and get engaged, that's the way they like to play as well," he said.

"We're learning over time, trying not to engage in that. Probably try and reversing the effect by trying and ignoring it,



trying to take it on board and using it against them by using your bat," he added.

"It's probably something I've learnt over time. And you don't know the effect it can have on your teammates as well. You've got to be a bit more humble in that respect."

Warner said at 34, he has become a calculated risk-taker and is focussed on maintaining a strong strike rate.

"For myself, it's about getting off to a good start and taking calculated risks in that middle-overs period if we're talking about 50-over games," he said.

"For me, it's about making sure that I am batting as much as I can and at a good strike-rate as well. I think last year was probably the most disciplined I've batted in Test match cricket as well.

"I really took pride in the last 12-24 months, to apply that discipline and you keep learning as you get older...You've got to be on top of your game to be able to adapt to that.

Talking about the Indian team, which will not feature in-form opener Rohit Sharma at least in the ODIs and T20Is, Warner said it would be a big hole to fill but Virat Kohli's men do have the wherewithal to manage.

"...Obviously he is a big piece of their team, that they are going to be missing, but they have got great in-form guys KL Rahul, Shikhar Dhawan and Mayank (Agarwal), these guys

'Don't think Burns did anything wrong last summer'

ANS ■ MELBOURNE

David Warner on Monday stated that Joe Burns hasn't done "anything wrong last summer" but the left-handed batsman insisted he'll embrace uncapped prodigy Will Pucovski if selected for the much-anticipated first Test against India to be played at the Adelaide Oval from December 17.

Burns — who is Warner's incumbent partner — and Pucovski have been named in the 17-member squad for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Pucovski, who is among

the five uncapped players, has made a strong case for selection in the playing XI with back-to-back double centuries for Victoria in the Sheffield Shield.

Right-handed Queensland batsman Burns, however, has had a highest of just 29 in his five innings this season.

"If they go the way of Will, he has batting fantastic and been in and out of the Test squad. He is in the right frame of mind at the moment. It probably is an opportunity for him to come into the team. But as we know it's harder to get out of this team than get in," Warner was

quoted as saying by *cricket.com.au*.
"At the moment I didn't think Joe did anything wrong last summer. We had some great partnerships and averaged over 60. And that's what you want from your opening partnership. And at the end of the day I have to be happy with it and embrace (whoever they pick)," he added.

Warner and Burns have combined six century opening stands and average more than 50 for the first wicket till now — a record bettered only by Warner's combination with Chris Rogers.

"Yeah definitely. What do you want to see? 100 of 10 overs or something? In the one-day stuff, I'll still come out and play the way I normally do. There's probably going to be no change to that," he said.

"Here in Australia, it's a bit different, in 50-over cricket, you can still play the normal way you do and I think I showed that last year, the way I played against Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

"I played pretty much the same way as I did during the backend of that IPL. I won't be changing my game and will go out and tackle it the way I always do," added Warner, who has 5,303 ODI runs.

"...It's like chalk and cheese with them two (Kolhi and Rahane) and as a player to try and engage him on the field, as we're talking about engaging, and getting into that contest as players, it's obviously lots to think about how to do that especially with Ajinkya as captain.

"The great thing from India's perspective is that you've got three if not four very good players who could captain the team at any time. With him, he'll bring a calm and measured approach with his nature."

Warner was seen playing aggressively at the back end of the IPL and he stressed that he won't be changing his game.

Stoinis playing five times better than a year ago: Ponting

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Batting legend Ricky Ponting believes all-rounder Marcus Stoinis is playing "five times better" than what he was a year ago and could take up "multiple roles" for Australian cricket, including the job of a finisher.

Stoinis scored 352 runs and snapped 13 wickets to play a big role in Delhi Capitals, coached by Ponting, reaching the final of the recent IPL in the UAE. He is in Australia's ODI and T20I squads for the series against India starting on Friday.

Ponting said it was Alex Carey who had told him about Stoinis' incredible turnaround during the IPL.

"From the moment he turned up at the IPL, having come straight from England ... he was pretty keen to show me improvements that he'd made. And his first few net sessions, I could just tell then," Ponting told *cricket.Com.Au*.

"Having spent a fair bit of time with him over the past couple of years, what I saw from him at the IPL suggests to me that he's five times better player than he was 12 months ago."

The 31-year-old Stoinis was dropped from Australia's T20 squad after a disappointing 50-over World Cup last year. But, he made a suc-

cessful comeback, riding on his incredible performance for the Melbourne Stars in the Big Bash League where he scored 705 runs in a single season and also smashed tournament's highest individual score of 147 not out.

Ponting said Stoinis has proven himself as a finisher but believes he should open the innings.

"I think the future for him either at Delhi or whoever he plays for in T20 cricket will be at the top of the order. I think he can do (the finishing role). I think he's proven that he can do multiple different roles now," said Ponting.

"And I think the more responsibility he gets in the white-ball team, the better he'll be as well. We'll see what happens over the next few weeks (against India), but if he gets a decent chance at it, I think he'll impress everyone."

"With the way he's thinking about the game, with a bit of experience and the consistent exposure he's had with the Aussie guys, I don't think it really matters where he plays."

Ponting also said Stoinis looks "a lot more positive and aggressive against spin bowling now" compared to the past.

But, he made a suc-



Mitchell Marsh hopeful of comeback in warm-up game

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Recovering from an ankle injury, Australia all-rounder Mitchell Marsh says he is "hopeful" of playing next month's warm-up game against India 'A' as he eagerly waits for a clear picture to emerge this Friday.

The 29-year-old Marsh suffered an ankle injury in the opening match of the Indian Premier League in September and has been out of action since then.

He was included in the Australia 'A' squad which will play two three-day tour games against India 'A' on December 6-8 and December 11-13 respectively.

"I'm hopeful, I'll probably find out this week whether I'm

ruled in or out," Marsh was quoted as saying by *The West Australia*.

"I'll probably know on Friday, I've got a few things to tick off rehab-wise and then go from there."

Marsh said he won't be able to bowl and might play as a batsman.

"I started running last week and I've got a few kilos to shed before I start playing. It's been a pretty slow process but speaking to a few AFL players about it, it gets pretty good quickly at the end so hopefully that's the case in the next couple of weeks."

"At this stage it will just be batting, I wouldn't imagine I would be bowling until midway through the Big Bash at this point in time."

To combat Covid-19 threat, SA cricketers training in two groups

JOHANNESBURG: Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada revealed on Monday that the South African cricket team are training in two groups to minimise the risk of further Covid-19 infections ahead of their series against England.

Two members of the South African squad have tested positive for Covid since the squad assembled last week and two other players had to go into isolation because of their close contact with one of the infected players.

"It's been quite bizarre," Rabada told an online press conference from the team hotel in Cape Town.

"We have to train in groups — a group of non-

contacts and a group of close contacts.

"It doesn't mean anyone is positive but we have to take that extra precaution."

Rabada did not reveal how many players were in each group but planned intra-squad matches on Saturday and Monday were cancelled, presumably to reduce the risk of infections.

He said more Covid tests would be conducted with the players "soon".

Despite the unusual training arrangements, Rabada said "training is going smoothly" ahead of the first T20I against England at Newlands on Friday.

"The team is doing well at sticking to strict rules."

Surya should've made cut in Indian team: Lara

PTI ■ MUMBAI

West Indies great Brian Lara feels that a batsman of Suryakumar Yadav's calibre should have been in the Indian white-ball squad for the tour of Australia.

The Mumbai Indians batsman's non-inclusion, despite being seventh in the IPL run-getters' list with 480 runs at a strike-rate of 145 plus, has become a major talking point.

"I see no reason why, looking at the (Indian) squad, he can't be a part of it," Lara said on *Star Sports* show *Cricket Connected*.

Lara said he is impressed not just by the runs but also the manner in which Yadav has scored them.

"Ye a h, definitely. He is a class player. I don't just look at players that score runs, I look at their technique, capabilities under pressure, positions that they are batting and for me."

"Suryakumar Yadav has done such a wonderful job for Mumbai."

The only explanation that has come for the 30-year-old's exclusion is the lack of space in the line-up. Lara said he fits the bill for the No 3 slot.

"He comes to bat on the back of Rohit Sharma, and Quinton de Kock and every time, they are under pressure, he comes in at No 3," he said.

"Just remember, other than the openers, the No 3 batsman in any cricket team is normally your best player, your most reliable player and for me, he (Surya) has been that for Mumbai Indians," he stated.

From January 13, the BBL will travel to Sydney and Melbourne for the run to the finals. Eight matches will be played in Sydney, with the Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Showground Stadium to host four each.

Melbourne will host 11 matches in total. Five of these will be held at Marvel Stadium and six at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Additional matches have also been confirmed for the Adelaide Oval (three), the Gabba (two), Metrickon Stadium (four) and Blundstone Arena (two) in early January.

The final day of the regular season will be played on January 26 and feature a triple-header split between the SCG (one match) and MCG (two matches). The five-match finals series begins on January 29 with the final slated for February 6.

BBL 10 will start with the season opener between Hobart Hurricanes and defending champions Sydney Sixers at the Blundstone Arena on December 10.

But, he made a suc-

less debut in London.

But it is a painful defeat for Thiem, who also lost in the final of the elite eight-man event last year, to Stefanos Tsitsipas.

"What a match," said Medvedev. "One of my best victories, two hours and 42 min-



ing point.

"I see no reason why, looking at the (Indian) squad, he can't be a part of it," Lara said on *Star Sports* show *Cricket Connected*.

Lara said he is impressed not just by the runs but also the manner in which Yadav has scored them.

"Ye a h, definitely. He is a class player. I don't just look at players that score runs, I look at their technique, capabilities under pressure, positions that they are batting and for me."

"Suryakumar Yadav has done such a wonderful job for Mumbai."

The only explanation that has come for the 30-year-old's exclusion is the lack of space in the line-up. Lara said he fits the bill for the No 3 slot.

"He comes to bat on the back of Rohit Sharma, and Quinton de Kock and every time, they are under pressure, he comes in at No 3," he said.

"Just remember, other than the openers, the No 3 batsman in any cricket team is normally your best player, your most reliable player and for me, he (Surya) has been that for Mumbai Indians," he stated.

From January 13, the BBL will travel to Sydney and Melbourne for the run to the finals. Eight matches will be played in Sydney, with the Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Showground Stadium to host four each.

Melbourne will host 11 matches in total. Five of these will be held at Marvel Stadium and six at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Additional matches have also been confirmed for the Adelaide Oval (three), the Gabba (two), Metrickon Stadium (four) and Blundstone Arena (two) in early January.

The final day of the regular season will be played on January 26 and feature a triple-header split between the SCG (one match) and MCG (two matches). The five-match finals series begins on January 29 with the final slated for February 6.

BBL 10 will start with the season opener between Hobart Hurricanes and defending champions Sydney Sixers at the Blundstone Arena on December 10.

But, he made a suc-

less debut in London.

But it is a painful defeat for Thiem, who also lost in the final of the elite eight-man event last year, to Stefanos Tsitsipas.

"What a match," said Medvedev. "One of my best victories, two hours and 42 min-

utes, three sets against an amazing player.

"Dominic, congratulations already for what you achieved in your career. Your name is already in the history of tennis books."

"It is amazing. You won a Grand Slam this year. You are playing unbelievable. I hope we are going to have many more matches to come on the big occasions like this."

"Of course, I am disappointed, but at the same time I am also proud of the performance of all the week," said Thiem. "Daniil really deserved it. It was an amazing match."

Medvedev is the first Russian to win the ATP Finals since 2009, when Nikolay Davydenko triumphed at the first edition of the season finale held in London. Next year, the tournament moves to Turin in Italy.

Virat bhai said that tough situation will make me stronger: Siraj

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Away from family while grieving the recent loss of his father, Indian pacer Mohammed Siraj says skipper Virat Kohli's advice to "be strong" has helped him stay afloat as he gears up for a gruelling series against Australia.

Kohli is no stranger to overcoming personal tragedy while carrying on with professional duties. In 2007, Kohli, then a teenager, lost his father in the middle of a Ranji Trophy match but he came back next day to score 97 for Delhi, showing his mental fortitude.

Siraj's father Mohammed Ghouse, 53, died due to a lung ailment in Hyderabad last week and despite BCCI offering him the option to return home, the fast bowler decided to stay put on national duty.

"Virat bhai said 'Miyaan tension maat le (don't be tense) and be strong. Your dad wanted you to play for India. So, do that and don't stress,' the 26-year-old Siraj told *bcci.Tv*."

"The skipper told me, 'If you can be strong in this situation, it will only help you'. So those were positive words from the Indian captain and it felt nice."

Siraj's father drove auto rickshaw during his formative years as a cricketer and has been the single biggest influence on the Hyderabad man.

"It's a huge loss for me as



he was the biggest support system of my life. He wanted me to shine for my country and my mindset now is to fulfil his dreams," he said.

Siraj thanked his teammates, who have rallied around him.

"I am indebted to my teammates as they stood by me in these tough times and every thing was well taken care of," he said.

Siraj said even his mother advised him not to abandon the assignment, which starts with the limited-overs leg from November 27.

"Mom said that 'everyone has to go one day. Today, it's your dad, tomorrow it will be me. Just do what your dad wished for you. Play well for India'."

"May be, he is not physically present but I can feel that he is always there with me," Siraj said.

CA confirm full BBL 10 schedule

ANS ■ MELBOURNE

Western Australia, New South Wales and Victoria have been confirmed host matches in the upcoming edition of the Big Bash League (BBL) in January next year "subject to the public health situation and associated impacts including border restrictions", Cricket Australia announced on Monday.

Earlier this month, the board had announced the schedule for first 21 BBL matches in December in which it confirmed that bubbles in Hobart and Canberra will host the initial games starting December 10 before venues in Queensland (Dec 23) and Adelaide (Dec 28) join the party.

Five matches will be played at Optus Stadium in Perth, with the first to be held on January 3. Four of these matches will be Perth Scorchers home games.

From January 13, the BBL will travel to Sydney and Melbourne for the run to the finals. Eight matches will be played in Sydney, with the Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Showground Stadium to host four each.

Melbourne will host 11 matches in total. Five of these will be held at Marvel Stadium and six at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Additional matches have also been confirmed for the Adelaide Oval (three), the Gabba (two), Metrickon Stadium (four) and Blundstone Arena (two) in early January.

The final day of the regular season will be played on January 26 and feature a triple-header split between the SCG (one match) and MCG (two matches). The five-match finals series begins on January 29 with the final slated for February 6.

BBL 10 will start with the season opener between Hobart Hurricanes and defending champions Sydney Sixers at the Blundstone Arena on December 10.

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Liverpool were not derailed by an injury crisis as Jurgen Klopp's men produced a dominant display to beat Leicester 3-0 and move level on points with Premier League leaders Tottenham.

Klopp was missing seven first-team regulars through injury and top scorer Mohamed Salah due to a positive coronavirus test, but Liverpool still swept aside a Leicester team who had started the weekend on top of the table.

Jonny Evans's own goal was just reward for the Reds' bright start before Diogo Jota set a record-breaking start to life at Anfield.

The Portuguese international became the first Liverpool player to score in his first four home league games when he headed home Andy Robertson's inch-perfect cross.

Kasper Schmeichel in the Leicester goal kept the score down as he made a series of second-half saves, notably from Sadio Mane and Jota, while Evans had a lucky

Mark of champions

Under-strength Liverpool still too strong for Foxes



escape as the post prevented him from scoring a second own goal.

Roberto Firmino thought he had been denied just his third league goal in 24 games when the Brazilian's shot came back off the post and his follow-up was cleared by Marc Albrighton with just 10 minutes of the ball not over the line.

But Firmino rounded off a brilliant team performance by rising highest to meet James Milner's corner.

Another muscle injury suffered by Naby Keita was the only negative for Klopp on a night when his side showed they will not give up their title easily despite losing centre-backs Virgil van Dijk and Joe Gomez for the rest of the season.

Inspirational Ibra

Zlatan scores twice in Milan's 3-1 win

AFP ■ NAPLES

Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored twice to bring his tally to 10 league goals this season before limping off with a muscular strain as AC Milan stayed top in Serie A on Sunday with a 3-1 win at ten-man Napoli.

Milan move back two points ahead of Sassuolo — 2-0 winners earlier at Hellas Verona — with Roma third after Henrikh Mkhitaryan scored twice in a dominant 3-0 win over Parma.

Ibrahimovic continued his fine form, heading in a Theo Hernandez cross after 20 minutes, sending in the second with his knee nine minutes after the break.

But the 39-year-old pulled up clutching his left hamstring and was substituted after 79

minutes.

The Swede has scored in all six games he has played this season, having missed two after contracting coronavirus.

Coach Stefano Pioli missed the trip south with Covid-19, but his side got their first league win in Naples since October 2010, the season they last won the Scudetto, with Ibrahimovic also on the score-sheet that time.

Napoli played the final half an hour a man down after Tiemoune Bakayoko was sent off for two yellow cards, just after Dries Mertens had pulled a goal back for the hosts.

Norwegian Jens Petter Hauge completed the scoring five minutes into injury time with the 21-year-old getting his first Serie A goal.



Medvedev tops Thiem for ATP Finals title

AFP ■ LONDON

Daniil Medvedev came from behind to beat US Open champion Dominic Thiem in a gripping encounter and win the biggest title of his career at the ATP Finals in London on Sunday.

The Russian fourth seed was second best for large periods at the empty O2 Arena but found a way back into the contest and prevailed 4-6, 7-6 (2), 6-4.

Medvedev, who beat five-time champion Novak Djokovic and world number two Rafael Nadal earlier in the week, is the first man to beat all three of the world's top-ranked players at the season finale.

The giant Russian, 24, has now won 10 consecutive matches following his title earlier this month at the Paris Masters and his victory will taste sweet a year after a win-



less debut in London.

But it is a painful defeat for Thiem, who also lost in the final of the elite eight-man event last year, to Stefanos Tsitsipas.

"What a match," said Medvedev. "One of my best victories, two hours and 42 min-

utes, three sets against an amazing player.

"Dominic, congratulations already for what you achieved in your career. Your name is already in the history of tennis books."

"It is amazing. You won a Grand Slam this year. You are playing unbelievable. I hope we are going to have many more matches to come on the big occasions like this."

"Of course, I am disappointed, but at the same time I am also proud of the performance of all the week," said Thiem. "Daniil really deserved it. It was an amazing match."

Medvedev is the first Russian to win the ATP Finals since 2009, when Nikolay Davydenko triumphed at the first edition of the season finale held in London. Next year, the tournament moves to Turin in Italy.