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LUCKNOW, THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2020; PAGES 14 ₹3



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13 VIVACITY

# States can't impose lockdown sans MHA nod

## MHA's guidelines call for crowd management, but empowers States to clamp lockdown and night curfew in Covid zones

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The States cannot impose lockdown without approval from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). According to new guidelines released by the Ministry of Home on Wednesday, only in containment zones, the States are empowered to impose lockdowns and the list of containment zones has to be updated with the Union Health Ministry.

The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday issued new guidelines asking States to follow the strict directives in crowd management to contain the Covid-19 pandemic. As per the new directions, the States are allowed to impose restrictions like night curfew and reduction of number of people allowed to assemble but can't impose lockdown without approval from the MHA. Only in containment zones, the States are empowered to impose lockdowns and the list of containment zones has to be updated with Union Health Ministry.

The MHA's new directions, titled as 'Guidelines for Surveillance, Containment and



A health worker collects swab samples of a passenger at New Delhi railway station on Wednesday  
Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Caution' will be applicable from December 1 to December 31, directed the States and Union Territories to implement Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) approved by the Union Health Ministry in controlling the crowd management, fines for non-mask wearing, opening of academic institutions etc. These guidelines are to implement 'Covid appropriate behaviour', said the MHA.

"The main focus of the guidelines is to consolidate the substantial gains that have been achieved against the spread of Covid-19 which is visible in the steady decline in number of active cases in the country. Further, keeping in view the recent spike in new cases in a few States/UTs, ongoing festival season and onset of winter, it is emphasised that to fully overcome the pandemic, there is need to maintain caution and

to strictly follow the prescribed containment strategy, focussed on surveillance, containment and strict observance of the guidelines/SOPs issued by MHA and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOHFW).

"Local district, police and municipal authorities shall be responsible to ensure that the prescribed containment measures are strictly followed. States and UTs, based on their assessment of the situation, may impose local restrictions, with a view to contain the spread of Covid-19 and implement surveillance and containment," said the MHA's new guidelines. There shall be intensive house-to-house surveillance by surveillance teams formed for the purpose and testing shall be carried out as per prescribed protocol in containment zones.

"Listing of contacts shall be carried out in respect of all persons found positive, along with their tracking, identification, quarantine and follow up of contacts for 14 days (80 per cent of contacts to be traced in 72 hours). Quick isolation of Covid-19 patients shall be ensured in treatment facilities/ home (subject to fulfilling the home isolation guidelines), said the MHA detailing the SOPs to be followed in containment zones.

The new guidelines directed that the State/UT Governments shall take all necessary measures to promote Covid-19 appropriate behaviour and to ensure strict enforcement of wearing of face masks, hand hygiene and social distancing. "In order to enforce the core requirement of wearing of face masks, States and UTs may consider administrative actions, including imposition of appropriate fines, on persons not wearing face masks in public and work spaces," it said.

"Social/ religious/ sports/ entertainment/ educational/ cultural/ religious gatherings, with up to a maximum of 50 per cent of the hall capacity, with a ceiling of 200 persons in closed spaces; and keeping of the size of the ground/ space in view, in open spaces. However, based on their assessment of the situation, State/ UT Governments may reduce the ceiling to 100 persons or less, in closed spaces," said the

Covid-19  
IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 92,59,561

DEATHS: 1,35,181

RECOVERED:

86,75,326

ACTIVE: 4,46,955



STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	17,95,959	46,748	16,63,723
Karnataka	8,78,055	11,714	8,41,432
Andhra Pradesh	8,64,674	6,962	8,45,039
Tamil Nadu	7,74,710	11,655	7,51,535
Kerala	5,78,364	2,122	5,11,008
Delhi	5,45,787	8,720	4,98,780
Uttar Pradesh	5,31,050	7,615	4,99,507
West Bengal	4,66,991	8,172	4,34,067
Odisha	3,16,001	1,740	3,08,102
Telangana	2,66,042	1,441	2,53,715
Rajasthan	2,53,767	2,218	2,25,229
Bihar	2,32,460	1,237	2,25,797
Chhattisgarh	2,27,326	2,767	2,01,744
Haryana	2,24,489	2,291	2,01,250
Assam	2,12,021	978	2,07,763
Gujarat	2,01,949	3,906	1,83,856

guidelines.

States and UTs, based on their assessment of the situation, may impose local restrictions, with a view to contain the spread of Covid-19 such as night curfew. However, State/ UT Governments shall not impose any local lockdown (State/ district/ sub-division/city level), outside the containment zones, without prior consultation with the Central Government. States and UTs also need to enforce social distancing in offices. In cities, where the weekly Case Positivity Rate is more than 10

per cent, States and UTs concerned shall consider implementing staggered office timings and other suitable measures, with a view to reduce the number of employees attending office at the same time, thereby ensuring social distancing. No restriction on Inter-State and intra-State movement, said the new guidelines.

"There shall be no restriction on inter-State and intra-State movement of persons and goods including those for cross land-border trade under treaties with neighbouring countries. No separate per-

mission/ approval/ e-permit will be required for such movements," said the guidelines.

**CENTRE ASKS STATES TO TAKE STEPS TO REOPEN MEDICAL COLLEGES FROM OR BEFORE DEC 1**

New Delhi: The Union Health Ministry Wednesday asked state governments to initiate steps for reopening of medical colleges from December 1 or before it, but with strict adherence to all Covid-19 related guidelines.

## Punjab farmers on way to Delhi despite curbs

Haryana seals border, Delhi Police refuses permission to protest

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

While the Delhi Police has refused permission and the Haryana Government sealed borders with Punjab, thousands of farmers from Haryana and Punjab started moving towards the national Capital on Wednesday for their "Delhi Chalo" march on November 26-27 against the agricultural legislations.

The farmers had major scuffles with the Haryana Police which failed to stop them despite heavy deployment of men and use of water cannons. A viral video showed that after crossing the barricades at Ambala, hundreds of farmers faced water cannons at Kurukshetra. The visuals showed massive jets of water being fired at a huge crowd on the highway barricaded by the police.

The scuffle between the farmers and the police broke out at the Shambhu border near Ambala city when the farmers broke the blockades



Police personnel check vehicles at Singhu border ahead of the scheduled farmers' protest march to Delhi on Nov 26-27 against the Centre's new farm laws in New Delhi on Wednesday  
PTI

and managed to proceed to Delhi for staging a demonstration.

Despite the use of water cannons, the protesting farmers, riding tractor-trailers, cars and motorcycles, managed to enter Haryana from Punjab. They were later joined by thousands of their counterparts from Haryana, led by Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) State chief Gurnam Singh Charuni.

Meanwhile, the Haryana Police set up barricades and deployed water cannons across the State. Massive security arrangements have been made at the Delhi-Haryana border at Gurugram. The build-up is

the heaviest on the Haryana side. As a preventive step, neighbouring BJP-ruled Haryana has imposed Section 144 of the CrPC to prevent assembly of protesters. Also, the police had taken nearly 100 farmer leaders from the State into "preventive custody".

However, there was no report of any violence or the use of teargas shells or batons. BKU Punjab president Balbir Singh Rajewal said Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has got the inter-State borders sealed for Punjab farmers to prove that "Punjab is not part of India".

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## China cries foul after India bans its 43 more apps

AGENCIES ■ BEIJING

A day after India banned 43 more Chinese mobile apps, including Alibaba Group Holding's e-commerce app AliExpress on national security ground, China on Wednesday said it is firmly opposed to India's decision, claiming the move violated WTO rules.

The ban had come against the backdrop of border tensions with China in eastern Ladakh since May. The banned applications, which include a few dating apps, were a threat to the "sovereignty and integrity of India", an official statement said in New Delhi.

Asked for his reaction to the latest ban on Chinese apps by India, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said, "Since June this year four times India has imposed restrictions on smart phone apps that have Chinese backgrounds under the pretext of national security... This behaviour violates market principles and World Trade Organisation rules, severely undermines the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies. China firmly rejects it."

## Prepare road map for 2047, PM tells LU

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Extending his good wishes on its centennial year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged Lucknow University to prepare a road map in terms of what it can contribute to the nation when it completes its hundred years of freedom in 2047. The PM was addressing the university virtually on the occasion of its foundation day on Wednesday.

"When you are celebrating the centenary year with so much enthusiasm, the stories of the past should become an inspiration and guiding force for the future. The university's aim should be to contribute in a certain way to the country," he said.

He said he was urging the policy-makers of LU to hold discussions in small groups to set goals for hundred years of country's freedom.

Recalling the grand history of LU, he said it was from the same Arts Quadrangle that Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose had raised his voice to let the people of the country make their own constitution or face the consequences.

"When we celebrate the Constitution Day, that call of



Netaji from within the Lucknow University premises will bring in new energy," the PM said. He also suggested that LU should associate with the analysis and promotion of local products and the skill development required.

"Modern solutions for value addition, research on modern technology for them, marketing, branding or management strategy for these products can be a part of the university's courses and daily routine of students. New studies and researches can be carried out to make chikankari of Lucknow, locks of Aligarh, bronze work of Moradabad, carpets of Bhadohi and many other products globally com-

petitive. These studies will also help the government frame its policies after which the 'One Product, One District' scheme will flourish in a proper way," he said.

"We have to continuously work towards a global reach for our arts and culture. This soft power will help create a strong image of the country in the world. You have experienced the power of yoga which has inspired the world to make it a part of their lives," he added.

The PM said educational institutes are not only centres of higher education but are powerhouses for achieving bigger aims. "They build our character and inspire our inner

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## SC undoes HC's gag order on Amaravati land scam FIR news

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the Andhra Pradesh High Court direction restraining the media from publishing news regarding an FIR lodged on alleged irregularities in land transactions in Amaravati.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan said that the high court shall not decide till January last week the pending matter which relates to the alleged illegal land transactions during shifting of the State capital to Amaravati.

The bench, also comprising Justices RS Reddy and MR Shah, refused to stay at this stage the other directions of the HC, including the stay on probe into the FIR. The SC passed the order while hearing an appeal filed by the Andhra Pradesh Government against HC's September 15 order.

The top court, which did not issue notice to chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on the appeal, sought responses from others including the Director General of Police of Andhra Pradesh.

"In the meantime, directions issued in the impugned order dated September 15, 2020 to the extent of following shall remain stayed.

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## CAPSULE

**KALBE SADIQ DIES, PM CONDOLES HIS DEATH**

Lucknow: Prominent Shia cleric and All India Muslim Personal Law Board vice president Maulana Kalbe Sadiq died in Lucknow on Tuesday. He was 83. Expressing grief, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the Maulana made notable efforts towards social harmony and brotherhood.

**SOCCER GREAT DIEGO MARADONA NO MORE**

Buenos Aires: Diego Maradona, the Argentine soccer great who was among the best players ever and who led his country to the 1986 World Cup title before struggling with cocaine use and obesity, has died. He was 60.

**'JALLIKATTU' IS INDIA'S OFFICIAL OSCAR ENTRY**

New Delhi: Malayalam feature "Jallikattu", directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery, has been selected as India's official entry for the International Feature Film category at the Oscars, the Film Federation of India (FFI) announced on Thursday.

## Chennai halts ahead of Nivar's landfall

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Flights operations were cancelled from 7 pm onward at the Chennai airport for 12 hours; metro and buses services suspended, and trains cancelled or diverted as torrential rain and heavy winds continued to lash Chennai and the coastal districts of Tamil Nadu ahead of severe cyclone 'Nivar's' landfall. More than 1.25 lakh people have been shifted to safer places in the State.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the powerful cyclone is likely to cross Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts between Karaikal and Mamallapuram around Puducherry around early hours (2 am) of November 26 with a wind speed of 120-130 kmph, gusting up to 145 kmph. Nivar has brought with it heavy rain and strong winds in coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

"Due to #CycloneNivar aircraft operations at #AAI #Chennaiairport will remain suspended from 1900hrs of 25.11.2020 (today) to 0700hrs of 26.11.2020. The decision has been taken considering the safety aspect of passengers and the severity of approaching Cyclone," the airport said on its Twitter handle.

In Chennai, the impact of powerful cyclone is being felt in the form of heavy rain and waterlogging in parts of the city.

Velachery, Madipakkam, Valluvar Kottam, Royapetta, Triplicane and adjacent sides of Mount Road — all prime areas in Chennai — have reported waterlogging.

The authorities also announced a closure of all roads leading to Marina beach, Pattinambakkam, Kasimedu Harbour, Besant Nagar beach, and Thiruvanniyur.

Continued on Page 12

## Sonia's Man Friday Patel succumbs to Covid

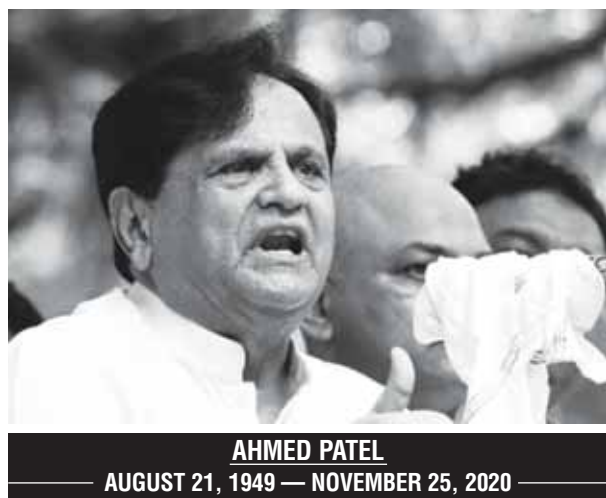
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader and the party's trusted backroom strategist Ahmed Patel died at a Gurugram hospital in the early hours of Wednesday due to multiple organ failure more than a month after he tested positive for Covid-19.

His son Faisal took to social media to share that Patel died at 3.30 am at Medanta hospital in Gurugram where he was admitted on November 15 after he developed complications.

Patel's family urged all well-wishers to adhere to the Covid-19 regulations by avoiding mass gatherings. The veteran Congress leader had himself announced on Twitter on October 1 that he had tested positive for Covid-19 and all those who had come in close contact of him should also get tested.

Patel leaves behind his wife, a son and a daughter. Patel will be laid to rest at his pater-



AHMED PATEL  
AUGUST 21, 1949 — NOVEMBER 25, 2020

nal village and also his birthplace at Piraman in Gujarat on Thursday.

"AP" to his friends and "Ahmed Bhai" to colleagues, Patel was one of the closest aides of Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and her political secretary for a long time. He was the troubleshooter of the

Congress and had steered the party out of ticklish situations many a time.

He was the grand old party's pointsman for building consensus on key issues with other parties and leaders and was instrumental in steering two UPA Governments under the Prime Ministership of

Manmohan Singh.

A soft-spoken and affable man, Patel was well respected and had friends across the aisle and in different spheres. Patel was currently a member of the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat. He was an eight-time parliamentarian — five times in the Rajya Sabha, three times in the Lok Sabha. His last Rajya Sabha election in 2017 was contested very keenly amid charges of horse-trading. He was currently the Congress treasurer, a post that he occupied thrice. Patel began his political career by contesting the local body polls in Gujarat's Bharuch district in 1976. He became a Lok Sabha member in March 1977 and was a member of the sixth, seventh and eighth Lok Sabha till 1989. He was elected to the Rajya Sabha for the first time in August 1993.

Patel was a close confidant of Rajiv Gandhi and the parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister from 1985 to 1986. He later took charge of

the Congress's organisational structure both in Gujarat and at the party high-command. Though Patel never became a Minister, he always worked as the background man in the Congress and was at the centre-stage of the party's decision-making till his death.

"Secrets will travel with me to my grave." That was Patel's matter-of-fact response a few months ago when asked if he would pen his memoirs to share his experiences as the party insider with a finger on its power buttons.

Patel's name cropped in several political scams and scandals and he was also undergoing probes regarding which he always claimed that he will come out clean.

Patel could have been the tell-all leader offering insights and information with his inside view of the workings of the Congress and the political world. But he would have none of it.

Continued on Page 12





**सूचना**  
मै सीमा मिश्रा पत्नी विशाल सिंह निवासी बी 16 शीतल कुंज लैन नं 10 निराला नगर शिवपुरा छितपुर महानगर जिला उत्तर प्रदेश 221010 अपना नाम सीमा सुचीका कर दिया है अब से मुझे इसी नाम से जाना पहचाना जाए।

## NOTICE

Be it known to all that my Pass Transfer Certificate, Class 10th and Class 12th Marksheet of the year 2010, 2012 ICSE and ISC, Index No.-T/4085/004 and Index No.-B/8846/153 of St. Joseph's College, Prayagraj have actually been lost. Abhishek Singh S/o Sri Ajai Singh, 14/11/3/1, Prayag Street, Prayagraj.

## NOTICE

**NOTICE**  
I, MAIMUNA HUSSAIN W/o Sh. DILDAR HUSSAIN, R/o 62/1-A, First Floor, Humayun Pur, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110029. It is declare that on my Adhaar Card no. 7355 3557 3775, my name mentioned as MAIMUNA HUSSAIN, but on my daughter (IZEEN, Grade-9, D.P.S. R.K. Puram, New Delhi) school record, my name mentioned MAIMUNA instead of MAIMUNA HUSSAIN. The correct name is MAIMUNA HUSSAIN for all purpose and Records.

# UP cabinet approves export policy

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has formulated a comprehensive Uttar Pradesh Export Promotion Policy 2020-25. The policy was approved by the cabinet which met here on Tuesday. This is the first time that such an elaborate export policy has been formulated by the UP government.

The key focus areas of the Uttar Pradesh Export Promotion Policy 2020-25 include handicrafts, agriculture and processed food products, engineering goods, handloom and textile, leather products, carpets and rugs, glass and ceramic products, wood products, sports goods, defence products, services sector, education, tourism, information technology and information technology enabled services (IT & ITES), medical value travels and logistics.

The new export policy will be implemented by the UP Export Promotion Bureau.

The Uttar Pradesh Export Promotion Policy 2020-25 will adopt all those components which were not covered by the Uttar Pradesh Agricultural Promotion Policy for the purpose of doubling the income of farmers and promoting exports from the agricultural sector.

As per the policy, a e-Haat portal will be developed for the sale and purchase of cattle. Provision of financial assistance has been made in the policy for the recruitment of specialised services by the exporting units related to food processing to ensure international quality.

The export policy also

aims at availability of natural and human resources in the state and opportunities available in the international market, use of existing possibilities in the state, employment generation for youth, rapid growth in the direction of exports, export incentives, creation of incentive environment etc.

The aim of this policy is to promote development and competitiveness in the field of exports and to provide necessary export-related assistance and services to the export subsidiaries and establishments and development of technical and physical infrastructures to increase exports from the state.

Providing the necessary support for the development of the export potential of the country, identifying the opportunities available in the global market for products manufactured locally/indigenously in the country and encouraging capacity development by adopting best practices related to exports is another high point of this policy.

A detailed implementation strategy has been chalked out to achieve the objectives set out in the policy. It includes simplification of the export process under the implementation strategy, early disposal of export related forms of various departments of the state by reducing procedural formalities through a single window system and the role of coordinator by the Export Promotion Bureau in troubleshooting the problems of exporters, development and promotion of Make in UP and Make in India brands, cooperation in obtaining registrations of geo-

graphical indicators (GI) for exportable products.

Organising capacity development and training programmes of service providers, establishment of B2B exchanges so that medium and small entrepreneurs of the state are also able to take advantage of online trading facility, special provision to increase exports from service sector, exports and exporters in Uttar Pradesh strategies such as creation of an analytical database, organising 'District Export Bandhu' meeting every quarter are some other features of the export policy.

The expenditure on facilities and other ancillary activities provided to eligible units under the export policy 2020-25 will be kept within the limit of the amount provided in the budget. Development of infrastructure facilities to be developed in cluster based special economic zones in each district of the state will be funded with the provisioned funds for UP Export Infrastructure Development Scheme.

One of the pivotal aims of the Export Policy 2020-25 is doubling the income of farmers and also increasing exports from the agricultural sector.

The UP government announced the Uttar Pradesh Agricultural Export Promotion Policy, 2019 with the objective of promoting agro-based exports and doubling the income of farmers.

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## PUBLIC NOTICE


Notice is hereby given by the undersigned for and on behalf of LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Area Office, Shahmuj Road, Lucknow pursuant to Circular No. 422/Annexure-E of LIC HFL that the original sale deed dated 21.11.2009 executed by Lucknow Development Authority in favour of Nirankar Prasad S/o Badi Prasad and Smt. Sumitra Devi W/o Nirankar Prasad in respect of House No. DS-212 Duplex (First Floor), area 12.04 Sqm, situated at Sector-6, Kanpur Road Scheme, Ward Vidyawati Devi Nagar, Lucknow has been lost by present owner Smt. Sandhya Trivedi W/o Mahesh Chandra Trivedi. The said sale deed is registered in the office of Sub-Registrar-1, Lucknow Book No. 1, Volume No. 10698, on pages 41/60, Serial No. 13859 dated 21.11.2009. Sri Arvind Kumar has applied for housing loan for purchasing the said property, for which has proposed the said property to be mortgaged by depositing Original sale deed dated 21.11.2009 with LIC HFL and as such any person claiming to be the said property covered by the said documents may file claim before me within 15 days from the date of publication of notice failing which it will be presumed that the property in question is free from any encumbrance and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 days of publication of the notice.

Mahendra Mohan Mishra, Advocate  
Chamber: Shop No. 4 & 5, Ground Floor, Krishna Tower, Near CMO Office, Kaiserbagh, Lucknow.  
Mob.: 9559985554, 9559975554

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by the undersigned for and on behalf of LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Area Office, Shahmuj Road, Lucknow pursuant to Circular No. 422/Annexure-E of LIC HFL that the original sale deed dated 16-06-2016 executed by Amer Ali S/o Rahman Ali and Mohd. Mohsin S/o Late Sarful Hasanin in favour of Veer Bharat Singh S/o Vijay Kumar Singh in respect of house built over Plot No. 260 Khasra No. 433 area 600 Sqft, situated at Baraura Husain Badi, Ward Kanhaiya Madhopur, Lucknow has been lost by previous owner Veer Bharat Singh. The said sale deed is registered in the office of Sub-Registrar-1, Lucknow Book No. 1, Volume No. 11576, on pages 271/320, Serial No. 5897 dated 16.06.2016. Sri Imran Khan has applied for housing loan for purchasing the said property, for which has proposed the said property to be mortgaged by depositing Original sale deed dated 16.06.2016 with LIC HFL and as such any person claiming to be the said property covered by the said documents may file claim before me within 15 days from the date of publication of notice failing which it will be presumed that the property in question is free from any encumbrance and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 days of publication of the notice.

Mahendra Mohan Mishra, Advocate  
Chamber: Shop No. 4 & 5, Ground Floor, Krishna Tower, Near CMO Office, Kaiserbagh, Lucknow.  
Mob.: 9559985554, 9559975554

<div>  <b>ARYAVART BANK</b>                      (erstwhile, Allahabad U.P. Gramin Bank)                      Regional Office, Mahoba, Near Tourist Bangla, Gandhi Nagar, Chhatrapur Road, Mahoba U.P. 210427                 </div>				Possession Notice (For Immovable Property)
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised officer ARYAVART BANK, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued a Demand notice in the account mentioned hereunder on the date mentioned before their names calling upon the borrowers and guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice along with interest within sixty days from the date of receipt of said notice. The Borrower and the guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notices are hereby given to the borrower and guarantors in particular and the public in general that the bank has taken the possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(4) of the said Act read with relevant Rules on the dates mentioned against property. The borrowers and guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealing with the under noted property will be subject to the charge of ARYAVART BANK for the amount with interest and other charges etc. thereon. "The borrower's & Guarantor's attention is invited to provisions of Section 13 (8) of the Act. In respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets." Details of Properties whose possession has been taken are as follows:-				
Sr. No.	Name of Borrowers & Guarantors	Amount Outstanding	Description of Property & Name of Owner	Date of Demand Notice / Possession taken
<b>BRANCH: KABRAI, MOB. : 9792203686</b>				
1.	<b>Borrower-</b> M/S Siddhi Vinayak Granite Industries, Proprietor- Raj Kishore Shukla S/o Ram Dayal, R/o Vill- and Post- Kabrai, Tehsil- Mahoba, Distt- Mahoba <b>Guarantor-</b> 1. Mr. Devendra Kumar S/o Rampyare, R/o Vill- and Post- Dharaun, Mahoba Distt- Mahoba 2. Mr. Krishna Raj Singh S/o Shiv Sankar, Vill- Utiyan, Mahoba, Distt- Mahoba 3. Mr. Veerbhan S/o Vrindavan, R/o House No. 544, Behind Dak bungalow Maidan, Gandhi Nagar, Mahoba	Rs. 17,97,784.50 + Interest & Expenses	1. All Piece & Parcel of Plot Consisting of Gata No. 220,221, Situated at Gugaura mauja, Distt- Mahoba, Uttar Pradesh Having Area: 1.385 Hec. Held in Name of Raj Kishore Shukla S/o Ram Dayal Bounded (as Per Sale Deed) North: Agriculture Land owned by Bhojia, South: Link Marg, East: Agriculture Land owned by Ram Pal Singh, West: Agriculture Land owned by Achhe Lal, Area: 1.385 Hect. 2. All Piece & Parcel of Plot Consisting of House No. 544, Situated Behind Dak bungalow Maidan, Gandhi Nagar, Mahoba Distt- Mahoba, Uttar Pradesh Having Area: 120.876 Sq Mtr. Held in Name of Guarantor Mr. Veerbhan S/o Vrindavan Bounded (as Per Sale Deed) North: House Owned by Suraj Gupta & Khallu, South: 12 Ft. Wide Road, East: Ruind Property Owned by Devendra, West: House Owned by Bafati Khan, Area: 120.876 Sq. mtr.	18.08.2020 19.11.2020
<b>BRANCH: Tikri Bujurg, Mob. : 9792203587</b>				
2.	<b>Borrower-</b> Shri Ram Shyam Mahavidhyalya, Tikri Bujurg through Mr. Indrajeet Singh S/o Ghanshyam Singh (Manager) R/o Tikri Bujurg, Tehsil- Maudaha, Distt- Hamirpur, <b>Guarantor-</b> Mr. Raj Kumar Sharma S/o Nandlal Sharma, R/o E1/615, Vinay Khand Gomti Nagar, Lucknow 2. Mr. Ram Bharse Singh S/o Ghanshyam Singh, R/o Vill- Tikri Bujurg, Maudaha, Hamirpur 3. Mr. Jay Parakash Singh S/o Ramautar Singh, R/o Vill- Tikri Bujurg, Maudaha, Hamirpur 4. Mr. Kishun Singh Kachhwah S/o Chet Singh, R/o Sambhu Nagar Banda, Distt- Banda 5. Mr. Shivendra Pratap Singh S/o Ravikarn Singh, R/o Vill- Tikri Bujurg, Maudaha, Hamirpur 6. Mr. Ravi Karan Singh S/o Ghanshyam Singh, R/o Vill- Tikri Bujurg, Maudaha, Hamirpur 7. Mr. Indrajeet Singh S/o Ghanshyam Singh, R/o Vill- Tikri Bujurg, Maudaha, Hamirpur 8. Mrs. Chundi Devi W/o Indrajeet Singh, R/o Vill- Tikri Bujurg, Maudaha, Hamirpur 9. Mr. Shiv Kumar Pandey S/o Maan Bahadur Pandey, R/o Near Bus Stand, Maudaha, Hamirpur	Rs. 21,74,585.82 + Interest & Expenses	All Piece & Parcel of Building of Ram Shyam Mahavidhyalya Consisting of Gata No. 306/2, Gata No. 300/1, Gata No. 301/2, Tikri Bujurg Maudaha Distt- Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh Having Area: 1.009 Hec. Held in Name of Borrower- Shri Ram Shyam Mahavidhyalya, Tikri Bujurg, Maudaha, Distt- Hamirpur 1. Bounded (as Per Sale Deed) Gata No. 306/2, North: Chak Road, South: Land Shri Ram Shyam Mahavidhyalya, East: Farm, Temple Lord Shiva, West: Agriculture Land Deelip Singh, Area : 0.174 Hect. 2. Bounded (as Per Sale Deed) Gata No. 300/1, North: Agriculture Land Lakshmi Singh, South: Maudaha to Kapsa Road, East: Agriculture Land Reeta Singh, West: Agriculture Land Kishun Singh, Area : 0.487 Hect. 3. Bounded (as Per Sale Deed) Gata No. 301/2, North: Agriculture Land Deelip Singh, South: Maudaha to Kapsa Road, East: Land Shri Ram Shyam Mahavidhyalya, West: Agriculture Land Ajay Prakash Singh, Area : 0.348 Hect.	17.08.2020 19.11.2020
Date: 26.11.2020, Place: Mahoba Authorised Officer, ARYAVART BANK, (erstwhile, Allahabad U.P. Gramin Bank)				






# संविधान दिवस

के अवसर पर 26 नवम्बर, 2020

## प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी

के नेतृत्व में मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ के साथ

## संविधान की उद्देशिका का पाठन

विधायी विभाग द्वारा तैयार की गयी

## उत्तर प्रदेश संहिता (द्विभाषीय) के दो संस्करणों का

### विमोचन

## योगी आदित्यनाथ

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश द्वारा

गरिमामयी उपस्थिति

**केशव प्रसाद मौर्य**  
उप मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

**सुरेश कुमार खन्ना**  
मंत्री, संसदीय कार्य, विज्ञान एवं चिकित्सा शिक्षा, उत्तर प्रदेश

**डॉ. दिनेश शर्मा**  
उप मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

**ब्रजेश पाठक**  
मंत्री, विधायी एवं न्याय तथा ग्रामीण अभियन्त्रण सेवा, उत्तर प्रदेश

**स्वतंत्र देव सिंह**  
सदस्य, विधान परिषद

कार्यक्रम का लाइव प्रसारण

UPGovtOfficial

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सोशल मीडिया हैण्डल्स के माध्यम से देख सकते हैं।

दिनांक : 26 नवम्बर, 2020 | समय : पूर्वाह्न 10:45 बजे | स्थान : 5, कालिदास मार्ग, लखनऊ

संसदीय कार्य विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

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नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री

# मजबूत कनेक्टिविटी से तेज विकास के पथ पर अग्रसर उत्तर प्रदेश



योगी आदित्यनाथ  
मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

## ₹7477 करोड़ की लागत से 505 किमी लम्बी 16 सड़क परियोजनाओं का लोकार्पण, शिलान्यास व कार्य शुभारम्भ

(वीडियो कॉन्फ्रेंसिंग से)

**नितिन गडकरी**

मंत्री, सड़क परिवहन एवं राजमार्ग  
एवं सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यम, भारत सरकार  
के कर-कमलों द्वारा

**योगी आदित्यनाथ**

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

की अध्यक्षता में

### लोकार्पण

मेरठ से बुलन्दशहर खण्ड एन एच-235 का चार लेन चौड़ीकरण (कुल लम्बाई 61 किमी, कुल लागत ₹2408 करोड़)	गोरखपुर बाईपास (जंगल कौड़िया) एन एच-24 से कालेश्वर एन एच-27 तक का चार लेन निर्माण (कुल लम्बाई 18 किमी, कुल लागत ₹866 करोड़)	महोबा एवं बांदा जनपद के अन्तर्गत कबरई से बांदा खण्ड एन एच-76 के चौड़ीकरण एवं उन्नयन का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 37 किमी, कुल लागत ₹215 करोड़)	चित्रकूट एवं प्रयागराज जनपद के अन्तर्गत मऊ से जसरा खण्ड एन एच-76 के चौड़ीकरण एवं उन्नयन का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 54 किमी, कुल लागत ₹219 करोड़)
प्रतापगढ़ एवं प्रयागराज जनपद के अन्तर्गत प्रतापगढ़ से प्रयागराज बाईपास खण्ड एन एच-96 के चार लेन चौड़ीकरण एवं उन्नयन का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 35 किमी, कुल लागत ₹599 करोड़)	सिद्धार्थनगर जनपद के अन्तर्गत बढ़नी से कटाया चौक खण्ड एन एच-730 के चौड़ीकरण एवं उन्नयन का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 35 किमी, कुल लागत ₹209 करोड़)	बहराइच एवं श्रावस्ती जनपद के अन्तर्गत बहराइच से श्रावस्ती खण्ड एन एच-730 के चौड़ीकरण एवं उन्नयन का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 62 किमी, कुल लागत ₹389 करोड़)	कानपुर जनपद के अन्तर्गत एन एच-91 के लेबल क्रॉसिंग संख्या 79डी0 (सी.ओ.डी. क्रॉसिंग) पर आर0ओ0बी0 का निर्माण कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 790 मी, कुल लागत ₹ 51 करोड़)

### शिलान्यास

- इटवा एवं औरैया जनपद के अन्तर्गत भरथना चौक इटावा से कुदरकोट मार्ग एन एच-91ए (234)  
के चौड़ीकरण एवं सुदृढ़ीकरण का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 40 किमी, कुल लागत ₹262 करोड़)
- सोनभद्र जनपद में एन एच-75 ई के म.प्र./उ.प्र. बार्डर से शुरू होकर सोनभद्र होते हुए  
उत्तर प्रदेश/झारखंड सीमा तक के सुदृढ़ीकरण का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 65 किमी, कुल लागत ₹58 करोड़)
- सोनभद्र जनपद में एन एच-75 ई के म.प्र./उ.प्र. बार्डर से शुरू होकर सोनभद्र होते हुए  
उत्तर प्रदेश/झारखंड सीमा तक के सुदृढ़ीकरण का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 27 किमी, कुल लागत ₹30 करोड़)
- मिर्जापुर जनपद में एन एच-135 सी के डूमण्डगंज से हलिया तक मार्ग चौड़ीकरण एवं  
सुदृढ़ीकरण का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 18 किमी, कुल लागत ₹39 करोड़)
- प्रयागराज जनपद में एन एच-135 सी के रामपुर से भडेवरा तक मार्ग चौड़ीकरण एवं  
सुदृढ़ीकरण का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 15 किमी, कुल लागत ₹76 करोड़)
- गोरखपुर जनपद में एन एच-227 ए के सीकरीगंज और गोला के बीच में मार्ग चौड़ीकरण एवं  
सुदृढ़ीकरण का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 09 किमी, कुल लागत ₹38 करोड़)
- कुशीनगर जनपद में एन एच-730 के तमकुहीराज और पडरौना के बीच में मार्ग चौड़ीकरण एवं  
सुदृढ़ीकरण का कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 19 किमी, कुल लागत ₹70 करोड़)

### कार्य शुभारम्भ

प्रयागराज जनपद में राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग संख्या-96 (330) पर फाफामऊ में गंगा नदी पर बने सेतु के  
समानान्तर नये छः लेन सेतु एवं पहुँच मार्ग का निर्माण कार्य (कुल लम्बाई 10 किमी, कुल लागत ₹ 1948 करोड़)

### विशेषतायें

- मेरठ-बुलन्दशहर 4 लेन से गन्ना किसानों को खास सुविधा।
- NCR से बेहतर कनेक्टिविटी तथा औद्योगिक क्षेत्रों में सुविधा।
- गोरखपुर बाईपास से बौद्ध सर्किट के यात्रियों के लिये सुगमता तथा सांस्कृतिक एवं औद्योगिक विकास में सहायक।
- कबरई से बांदा राजमार्ग के चौड़ीकरण से झांसी से प्रयागराज तक का आवागमन सुगम।
- प्रोजेक्ट से क्षेत्र की आर्थिक गतिविधियों को बढ़ावा।
- बहराइच एवं श्रावस्ती राजमार्ग के चौड़ीकरण से इस क्षेत्र में आवागमन सुगम तथा चहुँमुखी विकास को बल।
- फाफामऊ सेतु से लखनऊ, रायबरेली, प्रतापगढ़ तथा अयोध्या से कनेक्टिविटी बढ़ेगी साथ ही करोड़ों श्रद्धालुओं को संगम पहुंचने में सुविधा होगी।
- मजबूत सड़क नेटवर्क से यात्रियों का आवागमन और वस्तुओं की ढुलाई सुगम।
- समय और ईंधन की बचत और प्रदूषण में कमी।
- कृषि उपज, स्थानीय और अन्य उत्पादों की बड़े बाजारों तक पहुंच में सुविधा।
- रोजगार और स्वरोजगार के नए अवसरों का सृजन।

### गरिमामयी उपस्थिति

जनरल (डॉ.) वी.के.सिंह (सेवानिवृत्त)

राज्यमंत्री, सड़क परिवहन एवं राजमार्ग मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

केशव प्रसाद मौर्य

उप मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

सूर्य प्रताप शाही  
कैबिनेट मंत्री, कृषि, कृषि शिक्षा,  
कृषि अनुसंधान, उत्तर प्रदेश

स्वामी प्रसाद मौर्य  
कैबिनेट मंत्री, श्रम, सेवायोजन,  
समन्वय, उत्तर प्रदेश

जय प्रताप सिंह  
कैबिनेट मंत्री, चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य,  
परिवार कल्याण, मातृ एवं शिशु कल्याण, उत्तर प्रदेश

डा. महेन्द्र सिंह  
कैबिनेट मंत्री  
जल शक्ति, उत्तर प्रदेश

सतीश द्विवेदी  
राज्यमंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)  
बेसिक शिक्षा, उत्तर प्रदेश

श्रीराम चौहान  
राज्यमंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार), उद्यान, कृषि विपणन,  
कृषि विदेश व्यापार, कृषि निर्यात, उत्तर प्रदेश

### माननीय सांसदगण

प्रो. (डॉ.) राम शंकर कठेरिया । प्रो. शैला बहुगुणा जोशी । डॉ. महेश शर्मा । रमापति राम त्रिपाठी । जगदम्बिका पाल । रेवती रमन सिंह । सत्यदेव पचौरी । अनुप्रिया पटेल । प्रो. राम गोपाल यादव । शिव प्रताप शुक्ल । राजेन्द्र अग्रवाल । भोला सिंह सुब्रत पाठक । रवि किशन शुक्ला । संगम लाल गुप्ता । केसरी देवी पटेल । अक्षयवर लाल । रामशिशोमणि वर्मा । पकोडी लाल कोल । कुंवर पुष्पेन्द्र सिंह चन्देल । आर.के.सिंह पटेल । विजय कुमार दूबे । प्रवीन कुमार निषाद । कमलेश पासवान विजय पाल सिंह तोमर । कान्ता कर्दम । विशम्भर प्रसाद निषाद । जय प्रकाश निषाद । राम शकल । हरीश द्विवेदी । पंकज चौधरी । रविन्दर कुशवाहा । सुरेन्द्र सिंह नागर

(दिन : बृहस्पतिवार, 26 नवम्बर, 2020, सायं: 04.00 बजे)

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/pages/Ministry-of-Road-Transport-and-Highways/179136175451970

सड़कें ही नहीं, राष्ट्र का निर्माण भी









# Cabinet approves district-wise alignment of Ganga E-way

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh cabinet has approved the construction of the ambitious Ganga Expressway linking Meerut with Prayagraj district in east UP. The cabinet, besides granting approval to district-wise alignment of the expressway, also accorded in-principle approval of the estimated cost of the project estimated to be Rs 36,402 crore.

The cabinet has given in-principle approval for funding the expressway project via foreign direct investment (FDI) and has also approved the proposal for appointing SBI Capital Markets Limited as the consultant.

The cabinet has also approved the proposals for mobilising resources for the mega infrastructure project. The gram samaj land will be provided free of cost for the project and the state government will also seek credit from HUDCO for it.

The cabinet also approved the proposal for the monetisation of the Agra-Lucknow Expressway. A technical consultant will be appointed to supervise its monetisation.

For the monetisation of the Agra-Lucknow Expressway, the cabinet also approved a proposal for authorising Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for setting up a high powered committee to supervise the procedure and operation of the monetisation process and for taking policy decisions on the recommendation of the committee.

The cabinet also decided that the proceeds received from the monetisation of the Agra-Lucknow Expressway will be deposited in the consolidated fund of the UP government and later the funds will be drawn from exchequer through annual budget.

In view of the huge cost of the project, the cabinet approved the proposal for exploring the possibility of executing the project through PPP model and inviting Expression of Interest (EIO) from potential investors.

The proposal for Ganga Expressway as approved by the cabinet said, "After exhausting all options for funding the project, the administrative department — the UP Expressway Industrial Development Authority — will

**The cabinet has also approved the proposals for mobilising resources for the mega infrastructure project. The gram samaj land will be provided free of cost for the project and the state government will also seek credit from HUDCO for it**

consider other options."

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had announced construction of Ganga Expressway connecting Meerut with Prayagraj during the Kumbh Mela 2019. The project was pending for the last 15 years. Immediately, after the chief minister's announcement, the government started work on the state's longest, six-lane (expandable to eight lanes) 600-km-long expressway connecting west UP with east UP.

The expressway will start from NH-235 near Shankarpur village in Meerut and will end at NH 330 near Soraon in Prayagraj district. Of the total cost of the project Rs 9,500 crore will be spent on acquisition of land and the rest on the construction of the highway.

The unique aspect of Ganga Expressway is that it will

link other expressways in the state through Agra-Lucknow Expressway, Purvanchal Expressway and Ballia Link Expressway. Once completed, the total network of expressways in UP will be 1,900 km and it will provide pace to industrial and agriculture development and draw investments in various sectors.

The expressway will pass through 12 districts — Meerut, Bulandshahr, Hapur, Amroha, Sambhal, Budaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, Rae Bareilly, Pratapgarh and Prayagraj. All cities, towns, highways and roads on the expressway will be connected with 19 inter-changes. This expressway will require 6,556 hectares of land and it will be access-controlled and four-lane expandable to six lanes.

# NEP's focus on basic knowledge, skill development, says Rajnath

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The New Education Policy's (NEP) stress will be on basic knowledge and skill development and it will bring in major changes in years to come, Defense Minister Rajnath Singh said while addressing Lucknow University's centennial celebrations online on Wednesday. He said the process of change, which has started, should continue.

He said India is moving towards becoming a three trillion dollar economy and the long awaited improvements in various sectors in the country will happen with the implementation of the NEP. Singh said very few universities have completed hundred years.

He said LU was established with historical changes taking place in the country. "It was established first established as Canning College in 1862 after the first World War and in 1920 when the Non-Cooperation Movement had just started, it was established at Lucknow University," Singh said.

"The fact that LU has survived and thrived for so long shows that the foundation values must be great. There have been great personalities from



(Top) Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath joining LU centenary year celebrations online. (Above) Former student Malini Awasthi honoured by DyCM Dinesh Sharma

the university," he added.

He said the country is facing the challenge of coronavirus pandemic and the youth have played an important role

in it. "The youth worked like corona warriors in this pandemic and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has come up with the concept of

'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' to fight Covid," he said. He congratulated the vice-chancellor for starting new departments and centres to strengthen the scientific value of the society.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who also joined the programme online, and defence minister inaugurated a documentary about LU, which was made by the department of Journalism and Mass Communications. They also inaugurated a coffee-table book and a book written by Prof Nishi Pandey.

The PM inaugurated the centennial postal ticket based on University of Lucknow, special cover of the University and special centennial coin of hundred rupees. Some illustrious alumni like Malini Awasthi, Suresh Kumar Khanna and Dr Naresh Trehan were felicitated on the occasion.

Vice-Chancellor AK Rai shared the achievements and contribution of the university and also talked about the measures for welfare of the society. Rai stressed on holistic education where there is a need of intellectual quotient, emotional quotient and spiritual quotient as three basic tenets of higher education.



Huge rush of mourners at Imambara Ghurana'ab where Maulana Dr Kalbe Sadiq's mortal remains were laid to rest on Wednesday

Pioneer

## Nitin Gadkari to inaugurate, lay foundation stone of 16 highways

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union minister Nitin Gadkari will inaugurate and lay foundation stone of 16 highway projects worth around Rs 7,500 crore in Uttar Pradesh on Thursday.

Paving the way for development of Uttar Pradesh, these roads will enhance better connectivity, convenience and economic growth in the state, the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways said in a statement on Wednesday.

"Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari will inaugurate and lay foundation stone of 16 highway projects in Uttar Pradesh tomorrow," it said. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will preside over the virtual function, the statement said.

"These projects for inauguration and foundation laying carry a road length of 505 kilometers, involving construction value of nearly Rs 7,500 crore," it said.

## Woman ends life in front of her lover's house

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a bizarre case, a 26-year-old woman ended her life by consuming poison in front of her lover's house in Muzaffarnagar on Tuesday.

The victim alleged that she was sexually exploited by her lover who had vowed to tie the knot with her but later declined, police said.

The doctors pronounced the woman dead after she was taken to a nearby hospital.

According to reports, the woman consumed poison outside the man's residence just before he was about to marry another woman after ditching the victim. The victim first lodged an FIR against the man on November 20 in which she alleged that they were in love for the past seven months, Ramraj Police Station House Officer Satyendra Nagar said.

In the FIR, the 26-year-old had also alleged that the man raped her by promising that he would marry her but refused to do so, the SHO said.

As soon as the victim came to know that the man was going to marry another woman on Tuesday evening (November 24), she went to the man's village in Jamalpur and killed herself by consuming poison

outside his residence, police said.

The man was taken into custody on the charges of rape and a probe is underway. The body was sent for post-mortem. Meanwhile, one person was stabbed to death under mysterious circumstances in Julahpurwa area of Ahirauli Bazaar in Kushinagar.

On Tuesday evening, the victim prepared sweets for the tilak ceremony of his niece scheduled for Thursday but was found murdered in the wee hours of Wednesday.

Reports said that Kunj Bihari Maurya went to his brother Shankar's house in his neighbourhood where sweets had been prepared for the tilak ceremony of his daughter. He called Shankar's wife Shanti but both were shocked when they found Shankar lying dead. His clothes were soaked in blood and it appeared that someone hit a blunt object on his head and brutally stabbed him to death.

Shankar's son Ajay Lal Maurya lodged a report in this regard naming one Ramniwas Singh, residing in the same locality. Ajay alleged that his father had an old enmity with the accused. SP Kushinagar, Vinod Kumar Singh, said they were trying to nab the accused to interrogate him and find out the motive behind the killing.

## AP govt to adopt Varanasi's waste mgmt model

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Varanasi's solid and liquid waste management model under the Namami Gange Programme has caught the fancy of Andhra Pradesh as the AP government is planning to implement the same model in the rural and urban areas of its state.

To study the best practices related to solid and liquid waste management, Praveen Prakash, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy, will visit Varanasi on November 28 and 29.

"I am planning to visit Varanasi to have a first-hand understanding of various parameters being implemented through this programme," Prakash said.

It may be recalled that the Yogi Adityanath government had implemented the solid and liquid waste management model in Varanasi as part of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan as a Smart City component.

It may also be mentioned that an independent trust, Tirupati Tirumala Devasthanam (TTD), is also planning to construct Sri Venkateswara temple in the holy city of Varanasi on 5 acre land.

Varanasi District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma said the model would be taken forward after discussion with the AP team.

## UPSMA against any hike in cane SAP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Sugar Mills Association (UPSMA), a body of private sugar mills, apprehending a hike in state advisory price (SAP) of sugarcane for the current crushing season (2020-21), has said the industry will be unable to meet any further hike in the cane price.

The UPSMA has also written to the state government, expressing its concern over the possible hike in cane SAP. In a letter released to the media here on Tuesday, it said the sugar industry continued to face cash flow challenges owing to the sugar glut in the market and higher cost of production than the prevailing prices of sugar in the market.

"This scenario is expected to continue in 2020-21 as well owing to the surplus production in Maharashtra by 40 lakh metric tons and reduced consumption due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown leading to closure of restaurants that reduced sale of sweets, beverages, etc. Also, the export policy for 2020-21 has been delayed due to which exports

will be lower this year. As such sugar glut will continue leading to blockage of huge working capital. Ethanol blending programme is a welcome move but it will not ease financial stress presently faced by the industry," it said.

During season 2018-19, when the industry was facing similar challenges, the government had acknowledged the precarious financial condition of the mills and helped in the form of soft loans and other Incentives. These measures had an impact of at least Rs.15 per quintal of cane on cash flows. Since then the sugar

mills continue to face similar challenges due to ongoing the glut. The letter said that at present the minimum sale price of sugar was Rs 3,100 per quintal and it did not support the cost of production.

It said the cogen dues for 2019-20 still remained outstanding, thereby impacting the working capital with average time lag of one year.

Meanwhile, Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) president Chaudhary Naresh Tikait has demanded that the UP government declare at least Rs 450 per quintal as the cane price.

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## Police accused of favouring youths who thrashed security guards

**Lucknow (PNS):** Police were embroiled in a controversy over accusations of siding with a group of youths who allegedly thrashed a security guards on being denied forced entry to Omaxe City Apartment on Monday night.

One of the victims alleged that the youths were in a sozzled state and they thrashed him and his colleagues on being denied forced entry to the apartment, situated close to the UP Police headquarters.

He alleged that the police gave special treatment to the accused and later let them off. There were allegations that the goons greased the palms of some of the cops for the favour. However, DCP (South) Raees Akhtar rubbished the allegations, saying the goons fled the

scene after executing the crime. However, he admitted that the brawl took place and the security guards were attacked.

After the issue went viral on social media, the commissioner of police ordered a probe into the incident by ACP (Gosainganj) Archana Singh. According to police, the youths reached Omaxe City Apartment on Tuesday night to meet some of the inmates. As the security guards objected to their entry in huge numbers, the youths attacked a security guard, identified as Satya. He later called the police and lodged a case in this connection. It was alleged that the police took the accused into custody but later let them off after accepting the bribe. A spokesman said the commissioner ordered a probe into the allegations.

## KGMU interns in soup over protest

**Lucknow (PNS):** A case for violation of Covid-19 protocols was registered against hundreds of KGMU interns on Tuesday. The case was registered on the complaint of police outpost in-charge, sub-inspector Ramapati Singh. In his complaint, Singh said he was told about a protest by KGMU's intern students who had assembled at gate number one, demanding that their stipend be increased.

He said the protesters failed to show the

permission letter for the protest. "There was possibility of coronavirus spread by the assembly of interns," he stated in the FIR.

Meanwhile, a 22-year-old helper of a dumper driver died after the vehicle overturned and he was crushed under it in Mohanlalganj on Wednesday morning. The deceased was identified as Kuldeep Kushwaha of Meenapur village in the area. Reports said Kuldeep was engaged by a contractor supplying soil to a construction site.

## UP invokes ESMA, bans strikes for six months

**Lucknow (PNS):** The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday invoked the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA), banning strikes in government departments and state-run corporations for the next six months.

"The Uttar Pradesh Essential Services Maintenance Act, 1966, prohibits strikes by employees in a long list of essential services like railways, airport, post and telegraph, and port operations. The state government is satisfied that it is necessary and expedient in the public interest to do so," read the official notification issued on Wednesday.

It added, "The Governor is pleased to prohibit for a period of six months strikes in any public service in connection with the affairs of the State of Uttar Pradesh and any service under a corporation owned or controlled by the state government and any service under a local authority."

The ESMA mandates imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or fine which may extend to Rs 1,000, or with both, to any person who instigates a strike which is illegal under this Act. It also gives the police the right to arrest without a warrant anybody violating the Act's provisions. The UP government had last invoked ESMA in May this year. The ban on strikes will continue till May 2021.



Ajay Kumar Lallu and Pramod Tiwari paying tributes to senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel

Pioneer



# COVID-19 toll 300 in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 81 new COVID-19 patients have been detected in the district on Wednesday, increasing the total number of cases to 18,700. The day saw two more deaths, increasing the toll to 300. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 37 and out of them 35 have been recovered from home isolation while two from the hospitals, increasing the number to 14,758 and 2,860 respectively.

The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 17,618, leaving 782 active cases. The recovery rate is 94.21 per cent, while the mortality rate is 1.60 per cent. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh has informed that in the first report of the day, 41 positive patients were found out of 4,049 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 4,03,394 and the results of 3,013 are awaited. Out of them, 3,85,234 were negative, while 18,660 positive. The total number of

samples collected was 4,25,067. Earlier, two males aged 55 and 45 from Meerapur Basahi and Bachhav Lathiya succumbed to COVID-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU). With the addition of seven new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,466 including 210 red zones. Eight green zones have been converted into red zones again. There are 2,256 green zones with nine new ones. Under the ongoing mass/group antigen tests, the passen-

gers were tested at both Varanasi Junction (Cantt.) and Manduadih railway station but all the 264 and 225 tests were found negative there respectively. Besides, all the 326 tests at Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura, 308 at Government Women's Hospital, 82 at CHC Shivpur, 95 at Swami Vivekanand Government Hospital, Bhelupur, 175 at LBS Hospital, Ramnagar and 140 at SSH BHU were also found negative.

# Prabodhini Ekadashi celebrated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Hundreds of devotees took a holy dip in the sacred water of river Ganga at different ghats here on the auspicious occasion of Prabodhini Ekadashi, also known as Devotthan Ekadashi. The festival also marked the end of Chaturmas and beginning of Hindu wedding season. After taking bath in river Ganga, the group of women assembled at different ghats to celebrate the marriage of Lord Vishnu and Goddess Tulsi. Due to the prevailing coronavirus pandemic, no big rush was seen at the ghats in comparison to previous years but in this holy city, a huge number of women observed fast and offered prayer near Tulsi plants at their own home premises.

On the occasion, various functions were also organised. Under the auspices of Kendriya Brahmin Mahasabha Yuva Manch, the members offered Dughdhabhishek at Dashashwamedh Ghat on this



Tulsi Vivah being performed on the occasion of Prabodhini Ekadashi in Varanasi on Wednesday **Pioneer**

occasion. They were led by national general secretary Pandit Dinesh Kumar Tiwari and state president (youth wing) Pt Rajesh Tripathi. Speaking on the occasion, Dinesh Tiwari said that the purpose of the programme is to mobilise the people to keep the river clean and pollution-free by maintaining its purity as the

river is known as Mokshasayni. He said that through the programme, the organisation tried to inspire the younger generation towards river Ganga and our traditions. Rajesh Tripathi said that the Yuva Manch will launch a mass awareness campaign across the state right from Gangotri to Ballia and mobilise the people to keep the

river clean. Pt Amod Shukla and many others were also present.

Meanwhile, the activists of Namami Gange, after performing marriage of Bhagwati Tulsi and Lord Shaligram, prayed to the Almighty to help the people get rid of coronavirus. At Panchganga Ghat, they distributed the saplings of Tulsi among the devotees and appealed to them to keep the river clean and protect the environment.

Earlier, Aarti was performed after Lord Vishnu got married to Goddess Tulsi. Convenor Rajesh Shukla said that the festival of Devotthan Ekadashi gives us the opportunity to work with religion. This is a festival which gives a message to the people to know their duties and responsibilities. The event was also attended by Shivdutt Dwivedi, Shivam Agrahari, Ramprakash Jaiswal, Priti Jaiswal, Satyam Jaiswal, Sarika Gupta, Rashmi Sahu, Sita Sahu, Swati Jaiswal, Rupa Jaiswal and Pari Jaiswal.

# Foundation Day of UP College held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Foundation Day of Uday Pratap College was celebrated here on Wednesday in which the Director of Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development (IESD), Banaras Hindu University (BHU) Prof AS Raghuvanshi was the chief guest. In the beginning, he lighted the lamp to mark the inauguration of the function. Then the students of Uday Pratap Public School and Rani Murar Kumari Girls Inter college recited Kulgeet and Saraswati Vandana respectively.

The Principal Dr S Rathore welcomed the guests. In his address, he said that the unique character of this leading college of the region is not only its high academic standard but also its efforts to maintain the old Guru-Shishya tradition. Besides, the college has also excelled in sports field and research work. He also presented annual report of the college. The function was



Foundation Day of UP College being celebrated in Varanasi on Wednesday **Pioneer**

also addressed by guest of honour Padmashree Prof Saroj Chooramani Gopal, member of Uday Pratap Shiksha Samiti and former Vice-Chancellor of KGMU, Lucknow. In her address, she called upon the teachers to give a right direction to the students so that they can do better in their future.

Addressing the function, the chief guest Prof Raghuvanshi threw light on

the prevailing disparities in education system, commercialisation and scarcity of teachers and employees in higher educational institutions. He highlighted the glorious history of the college and stressed the need for making its best. Throwing light on coronavirus pandemic, he said that it was also due to environment imbalance and appealed to the students to continue their education taking online

studies seriously. He also threw light on forthcoming challenges in the field of education in the coming 2-3 years and appealed to all to make them ready to face such challenges.

On the occasion, he honoured the retired teachers of UP College, UP Inter College and UP Public School.

Chairman of Uday Pratap Shiksha Samiti Justice DP Singh highlighted the contributions of Rajarshi and his objectives behind setting up of this college. He expressed his happiness over getting Arjun Award by Vishesh Bharguvanshi. The vote of thanks was proposed by Principal of UP Inter College Dr Ramesh Pratap Singh. The function was conducted by Dr Dhirendra Kumar Singh, while attended by Dr Manjula Srivastava, Dr Dharmbir Singh, Sangeeta Kumar, Dr Manish Kumar Singh, Dr Raghvendra Pratap Singh, Dr Neelima Singh, Dr Chandra Prakash Singh and Dr Sharad Kumar Srivastava.

# Notorious criminal arrested

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Now, the local police seem to be in action as the cops succeeded in arresting the notorious criminal carrying a cash reward of ₹ 50,000 after an encounter. But other hardcore criminal carrying a cash reward of ₹ 1 lakh managed to escape from the scene. The criminal sustained bullet injury during the encounter and was admitted at hospital where his condition was stated to be out of danger.

It is pointed out that late evening on November 22 last, the cops of Lalpur-Pandeypur and Crime Branch personnel had gunned down the notorious criminal Monu Chauhan, who was carrying a cash reward of ₹ 50,000, in an encounter at Aidhe on Ring Road. But his aide and hardcore criminal Anil Yadav, also carrying a cash reward of ₹ 50,000, had managed to flee away from the scene.

The Crime Branch got a tip-off at night on Tuesday last that the hardcore criminal Roshan Gupta, carrying a cash reward of ₹ 1 lakh on his head along with his close accomplice Anil Yadav, also carrying a cash reward of ₹ 50,000 and managed to escape from the scene during the encounter with police on

November 22 last in which his aide Monu Chauhan was gunned down, was going towards Nakhhi Ghat area to commit a heinous crime. The Crime Branch personnel informed the Jaipura police about this.

And acting on the tip-off, the Circle Officer and incharge of Crime Branch Amresh Singh Baghel and Ashwani Pandey respectively and incharge of Jaipura police station Shashi Bhushan Rai along with cops cordoned off the above mentioned area. Seeing the police, the criminals tried to escape from the scene on a bike. When the cops asked them to stop the vehicle they opened fire targeting a police party. The police also opened fire in retaliation and during the cross firing, the criminal Anil Yadav received a bullet below the knee of his right leg and fell down on the ground with bike. The other criminal Roshan Gupta aka Kittu managed to flee away from the scene taking advantage of darkness. Kittu has taken the command of Sunny Gang after the STF sleuths had gunned down Sunny on July 29, 2015 at government hospital in Kabirchaura. Kittu had managed to escape from the scene at that time. The

ADG Braj Bhushan had recently recommended for the cash reward of ₹ 1 lakh by increasing from ₹ 50,000 on the proposal sent by the SSP Amit Pathak.

The cops recovered a pistol of .32 bore, cartridges and bike from the possession of an injured criminal who was rushed to divisional government hospital in Kabirchaura where his condition was stated to be out of danger. Four cases are pending against the injured criminal including the murder of trader Shyam Bihari Mishra in Chhapra on November 13 last and murderous attempt on a woman in Pandeypur on November 15 last.

Meanwhile, the police handed over the body of Monu Chauhan after the post-mortem examination to the family members. They performed his last rites on Tuesday last.

**THEFT:** Unidentified miscreants committed theft at the house of an engineer in Yash Vihar Colony in Lathiya, under the Rohania police station by making family members captive in the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday and escaped from the scene with valuable goods. The police lodged a complaint and launched a drive to

nab the criminals but in vain.

According to information, the engineer Rajiv Ranjan Kumar is an engineer and posted in Gujarat but his mother, wife and son live in the above mentioned colony. The criminals entered into the house through the window of the kitchen by cutting a net fixed in it. The family members got up hearing the clack sound of foot-step of the criminals and raised an alarm. The criminals made them captive, showing knives and tied their hands and legs. They took the key of almirahs and collected ornaments and valuables worth lakhs. The criminals managed to flee away from the scene and also took away mobile phones of family members so that they could not inform the police.

After the criminals fled away, the family members came out and informed their neighbours and local police as well about the incident. The police took a stock of information about the incident and lodged a complaint. The police watched CCTV cameras installed at the gate of the colony and launched a drive to nab the criminals by identifying them on the basis of CCTV footage. But the police failed in reaching out to criminals till the news last came in.

# 63 new Covid cases in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Health workers along with people breathed a sigh of relief for the second consecutive day after decrease in the number of corona infected. Samples were taken on Tuesday on the Covid test of 5,637 people in the last 24 hours. Of them, 63 new infected were identified. 109 people became infection free. At the same time, one patient died during treatment.

According to CMO Dr. GS Bajpai, the scope of testing was increased but the number of infected people was reduced. The Covid report of just 63 people has come positive in 24 hours. At the same time, 28



Covid patients were discharged from the hospitals. 81 people completed home isolation. He further said that till now 18,496

people have recovered in home isolation.

According to the CMO, 5,637 investigations were con-

ducted on Tuesday which included 2,897 through anti-gens, 2478 RTPCRs, (110 private labs), 152 Trunat.

There are 193 patients admitted in various Covid hospitals, SRN Hospital has 116 patients, Beli has 43 patients. Private sector Covid Hospital United Medicity has 34 infected patients admitted.

The list of Covid infections on Tuesday also included an orthopedist.

According to Nodal Officer for Corona Dr Rishi Sahai, Divisional Electrical Engineer (DEE) of Railway, two employees of High Court, one officer of Nagar Panchayat Shankargarh have also been infected.

# Prayagraj-New Delhi special starts its maiden run at 130 kmph

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Prayagraj-New Delhi special (02417/18), the first 24 LHB coach train on Indian Railways started its maiden run at 130 Kmph on November 25 in late evening hours. Besides this originating pair of train, eight additional pair of special trains are also being speeded up to 130 kmph for full or part of their journey over North Central Railway.

Introduced on July 16, 1984, Prayagraj Express is the flagship train of North Central Railway and has been very popular among travellers in last four decades. Started with 17 vacuum braked red coloured coaches it was converted to 24 coach blue coloured air braked stock in

2003 and latest LHB rake w.e.f. December 16, 2016 with 21 coaches. Popularity of this train can be gauged from the fact that it was augmented to 22 coaches w.e.f. December 18, 2016, 23 coaches from May 15, 2017 and maximum 24 LHB coaches w.e.f. September 2, 2019.

This important achievement would not have been possible without the relentless and dedicated efforts of maintenance and operating personnel and to mark their contribution a special felicitation-cum-encouragement programme was organised at Prayagraj Jn. station on November 25, 2020. Prior to departure of 02417 Prayagraj-New Delhi special, General Manager North Central rail-

way Rajiv Chaudhry felicitated crew, maintenance, commercial, and security staff of first 130 kmph run of this prestigious service. Those felicitated include Loco Pilot Mohammad. Arsal Khan, Co-Lo Pilot of the train Anil Kumar Tiwari, Guard Arvind Tiwari, Train caption PP Pandey, onboard C&W technician Dev Dutt Soni and RPF head constable Nityanand Rai.

During this event organised at Prayagraj Jn. station, General Manager also released animation character 'Gappu Bhaiya' based video spot for public awareness on COVID-19. North Central Railway had created an animation based character Gappu Bhaiya in 2019 and a series of public

awareness animation videos were made on safety and security related issues for rail users. This animation based series has been quite popular among rail users and these video spots were also tweeted by the Minister of Railways and Ministry of Railways for creating awareness on safety and security in rail travel. Same animation based character 'Gappu Bhaiya' has now been used for making video spot for public awareness on COVID-19 appropriate behaviour for rail users. After release by General Manager it will be shared among rail users and public at large using all social and electronic media platforms and digital displays available at stations over North Central Railway.

# Sale of sanitiser declines in city

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Sales of sanitiser, which crested the peak during the Corona transition period, have gone haywire. From March to October, the sales of sanitiser, which touched the six million mark in the wholesale drug market, in November is 60,000 only. There is a huge stock dump of sanitisers due to reduced sales of wholesale drug dealers and surgical goods vendors. Drug and surgical goods vendors are fearing loss due to reduced sales.

In the months of April and May, there was a scarcity of sanitiser with mask. Stocks at wholesale shops were closed by noon. Then the sanitiser sales reached the peak with the awareness in June-July. According to drug and surgical goods vendors, the sanitiser sales at the wholesale and retail stores in the district had crossed six crore by September-October. Now people are asking for less sanitiser.

At the present time, sanitiser sales in the five-litre gallon on the boom have also decreased after sanitiser sales started unlocking with smaller 50, 100, 200 and 500 ml packs. The sanitiser, which sells about a hundred gallons from wholesale shops, is now reduced to two to four gallons. Demand for vial sanitisers in small packs has reduced considerably. These days, due to declining sale of sanitiser, the shops and their warehouses of wholesale drug dealers are filled with sanitiser. Neeraj Purwar, proprietor of Krishna Surgical Goods, said that suddenly the demand for sanitiser has come down. Stock is dumped, now the concern is of loss. At the same time, according to the drug dealer Manoj Rastogi, the price of sanitiser has already come down by 25 per cent, but sales have come down by 90 per cent.

Recently, people have become relaxed due to reduced number of corona patients. At the moment there has been a huge reduction in sales of

sanitiser. Retail drug dealers are also making little purchases. Sales across the district are now limited to thousands of rupees. This is a matter of concern for drug dealers, Anil Dubey, president Allahabad Chemist and Druggist Association, said this.

**CONDITION OF CULVERT MISERABLE:** The condition of roads and culvert in remote rural areas has become miserable. The culvert on the way to the new health centre and inter college via Lalapur village of trans-Yamuna area has been completely demolished. Due to this, any untoward incident can happen at any time. There have been several demands for culvert repair. Despite this, officials concerned had turned blind eyes to this issue.

The culvert, which has come on the way from Lalapur village to the health centre and the Inter College, has been lying in a damaged condition for the last two years. People living in Lalapur area travel to Shankargarh daily through this

route. The students also go to school through this culvert. There is a high risk during rainy seasons because water starts flowing over the culvert and people do not see where the culvert is broken.

Due to the broken culvert, many times people have fallen and injured. Despite knowing this fact, neither the administrative officer nor the politicians get the attention of the broken culvert. The villagers and children go to school to study and for their treatment in some way. Many times in Tehsil Diwas and high officials have been demanded to build a bridge, but all the times their grievances went unattended.

The application has also been given by the people of the region including Shivendra Kumar Pandey, Nanhu, Monu Dwivedi, Vanshidhar Dwivedi, Nandan Dubey, Pappu Dubey, Ramashankar Tiwari, but the broken bridge was yet to be fixed by the administration. Due to which there is anger among the villagers.

# AU students agitated over song sung by Bihar folk singer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Students of Allahabad University (AU) are agitated over a song sung by Bihar folk singer Neha Singh Rathore, which has gone viral on social media. Actually, Neha's Bhojpuri song is based on the university.

The song's lyrics sounded exasperating to the students, as they contain a few lines from the hostels of the university and the students' union, which give a negative message to the image of the Allahabad University also called as 'East of Oxford'. Angered over it, the students submitted a memorandum to the Chief Proctor demanding registration of an FIR against Neha Singh.

The students said that Neha should have thought twice before making this song viral on social media that this university has given many IAS, IPS officers to the country. Students of this varsity also have been Prime Minister and Chief Minister. Neha should have also mentioned in her song that hundreds of students of this place are selected in prestigious exams like PCS and PCS J.

In Bihar's PCS exam, a large number of students of Allahabad University are selected. The issue also arose on Tuesday among students who have been sitting on an indefinite strike for 126 days in the university for restoration of the students' union.

District president of Samajwadi Chhatra Sabha Akhilesh Gupta 'Guddu' said that Neha tarnished the image of the university by singing a controversy song and insulted the historic students' union and seniors who played the role of parents for their juniors.

District vice-president of Samajwadi Chhatra Sabha Chaudhary Sandeep Yadav and student leader Rohit Yadav said that if Neha Singh does not publicly apologise, the AUSU will file a defamation suit against her. Student leader Masood Ansari said that in order to gain cheap popularity, folk singer Neha made fun of the historical culture and tradition of Allahabad University. She should apologise for this act, he added.

**E-WORKSHOP ON BIOTECHNOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES HELD:** A seven-day interdisciplinary e-workshop on "Fundamentals of

Biotechnological Techniques" jointly organised by the departments of Botany and Zoology under the aegis of CMP College, University of Allahabad was inaugurated on Wednesday. This has been organised under the DBT star college scheme.

In this workshop, the participants were welcomed by Dr Sanjay Singh, convener, Department of Botany, CMP College. Thereafter, Dr Brijesh Kumar, Principal, CMP College gave his wishes for the successful completion of the workshop. Further, Dr Sarita Srivastava, Associate Professor and Programme Coordinator, DBT star college Project, gave detailed information of programme schedule and also gave an introduction of the speakers for the day.

Dr Sangeeta Srivastava, Principal Scientist and Head, Division of Crop Improvement, ICAR-Indian Institute of Sugar cane research, Lucknow, chaired the inaugural session. In her inaugural address she asserted that biotechnology has been immanent since ancient times. Our fore fathers had unknowingly made use of biotechnology in the past in their everyday life. She also talked about the

myriad possibilities of biotechnology in the field of agriculture, through which new resistant varieties of crops have been and can be developed. She also talked about the benefits of genetic engineering.

The keynote speaker Prof Ajay Pratap Singh, Director of Research, Department of Pathology, College of Medicine, Programme Leader, Cancer Biology, University of South Alabama, US delivered a fascinating lecture on biotechnology in medicine. He made the participants aware of the DNA techniques along with immunological and oncological insights. He further shed light on the RT-PCR and antibody test in the wake of COVID-19 crisis.

The first technical session of the workshop was chaired by Dr Uma Rani Agarwal, Coordinator Department of Zoology. In addition, Sujit Kumar Singh, Director, Cytogene Research & Development, Lucknow gave an outline of the experiments to be conducted during the course of the workshop. Vishal Kumar Maurya delivered an enlightening lecture on DNA isolation and also displayed its practical aspects.



# DM warns shopkeepers not wearing masks

... asks people to follow Covid protocol

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar District Magistrate Alok Tiwari warned the shopkeepers to either put on face mask as per the Covid protocol or their shops would not be allowed to open.

He cautioned the shopkeepers that in case they were found sans a mask the second time, their shops would be sealed.

Tiwari said it was mandatory for the shopkeepers to arrange for hand sanitisers and ensure thermal screening of all the customers entering their shops.

The district magistrate along with Kanpur municipal commissioner and other officials toured the city areas

from morning to late night and swooped down on shops in main markets, especially on Birhana Road, where there is always a rush at the jewellers and sweet selling shops. The shopkeepers were caught off guard and were shaken on seeing the team of officials headed by the district magistrate entering their shops and cautioning the shop owners and the customers as well.

Tiwari said the shopkeepers should not allow entry to customers not wearing a mask. He said the shopkeepers need to employ a person at the entry point for thermal screening of those entering the shop and ensure the customers sanitised their hands before entering the shop.

The district magistrate said that to curb the spread of

COVID-19 it was essential to maintain social distancing which acted like social vaccine. He said masks had been made mandatory for commuters and pedestrians on road and if they were found not wearing masks they would be fined then and there.

Tiwari then visited Z Square Mall and entered all shops and asked the shopkeepers to ensure that they refused entry to people not wearing masks and did not sell anything to such people. He summoned the manager of Z Square Mall and strictly warned him that not a single person without mask should be seen on the campus.

He then visited other prominent areas of the city where he warned the people of action in case they did not

wear masks.

He also made surprise checks of the edible vends in Swarup Nagar. He also visited The chat shop where he found customers flouting the Covid norms and scolded the shop owners, saying that if they saw anyone without mask coming for purchase they should not only check them to put on their masks but also ensure they maintained social distancing.

He appealed to the customers to maintain social distancing when they stood before the counter to purchase the edible items.

He issued directives to the police and district officials to deploy teams to implement the Covid preventive guidelines in the right earnest.

## 82 more test positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar reported 82 more coronavirus positive cases on Wednesday evening. Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 82 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Tuesday evening and Wednesday evening taking the tally of confirmed cases to 30,132 cases. He said that 7 cases were discharged from hospital. He said two COVID-19 deaths in the city were reported till Wednesday evening keeping the death toll to 773. The CMO said at present 1211 active cases were undergoing treatment. Dr Mishra said 5368 samples were sent for testing in the city.

## Central trade unions to strike work today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

To press their demands for fixing the minimum wages at Rs.24,000, allowing pension benefits to all workmen and in protest against the increased work hours, workers of all government departments and industrial units will go on strike on Thursday. Employees of banks, bus drivers and conductors, employees of railway, BSNL, LIC, Water and Electricity departments will take part in the strike. All trade unions affiliated to INTUC will also take part in the proposed nation-wide strike. They have announced to lend their support on the call of the Joint Forum of Central Trade Unions. Talking to media persons here on Wednesday, INTUC local unit president Sidhnath Tewari said hundreds of workers of defence organisations, railways, electricity department, banks, insurance company, postal department and other unorganised sectors would stage dharna-cum-demonstration at the gates of their respective units on Thursday by following the Covid norms.

## One booked for using abusive language against PM, CM

KANPUR (PNS): An FIR was registered against a youth with the Ghatampur Kotwali police for using abusive language for senior BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Yogi Aditya Nath and Member of Parliament Devendra Singh Bhole on Wednesday.

During a heated argument with his partner in a pecuniary dispute over phone, the youth used abusive language against these leaders. With the audio of his talk going viral on social media from Wednesday morning, irate BJP activists immediately rushed to the Ghatampur Kotwali and lodged an FIR against the youth, identified as Shahban Qureshi of Hafizpur Katra. According to reports, there was a pecuniary dispute between Ruchi Singh, daughter of Shiv Lakhani Singh of Shitalpur village, and Shahban Qureshi of Hafizpur Katra over partnership of a truck. On Sunday, Ruchi Singh had lodged a complaint with the Ghatampur Kotwali against Shahban Qureshi, alleging that his cheque of Rs.9.50 lakh had bounced and that he was not giving account of Rs.2.50 lakh to her. Thereafter, the audio of the talk between them went viral in which Shahban was purportedly heard using abusive language for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Yogi Aditya Nath, MP Devendra Singh Bhole and his supporters belonging to a particular caste. As Shahban was also heard using the name of late cabinet minister Kamal Rani Varun, it was apprehended that the audio related to past few months. But with the audio going viral on social media on Wednesday, dozens of BJP activists, including the mandal president Rajesh Singh, district Yuva Morcha vice-president Sanjay Chauhan Ghatampur Kotwali and demanded action against the guilty youth. On their written complaint, an FIR was registered against Shahban Qureshi.

# Spl trains to run as per revised timetable from December 1

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration decided to run the 02555/02556 Gorakhpur-Hisar-Gorakhpur superfast, 02559/02560 Manduadih-New Delhi-Manduadih superfast and 02571/02572 Gorakhpur-Anand Vihar Terminus-Gorakhpur Humsafar special trains from December 1 as per the revised timetable. All coaches in this train will be of reserved category and passengers travelling in them will have to follow the Covid-19 prevention guidelines, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said.

**GORAKHPUR-HISAR SPECIAL:** The 02555 Gorakhpur-Hisar Superfast special train will depart from Gorakhpur at 16:35 hours, from Khalilabad at 17:15 hours, from Gonda at 19:10 hours, from Barabanki at 20:35 hours, from Lucknow (Northern Railway) at 21:45 hours, from Unnao at 22:45 hours, from Kanpur Central at 23:25 hours, the second day from New Delhi at 05:40 hours, from Shakurbasti at 06:13 hrs, from Nangloi at 06:23 hrs, from Bahadurgarh at 06:36 hrs, from Rohtak at 07:48 hrs, from Bhiwani at 09:10 hrs and reach Hisar at 10:00 hrs.

Likewise the 02556 Hisar-Gorakhpur superfast special strain will depart from Hisar at 17:00 hrs, from Bhiwani at 18:10 hrs, from Rohtak at 19:13 hours, from Bahadurgarh at 19:43 hrs, from Nangloi at 19:56 hours, from Shakurbasti at 20:15 hours, from New Delhi at 21:25 hrs, the second day from Kanpur Central at 03:10 hours, from Unnao at 03:38 hrs, from Lucknow (NR) at 05:00 hrs, Barabanki at 05:50 hrs, from Gonda at 07:05 hrs, from Basti at 08:10 hrs, from Khalilabad at 08:37 hours and reach Gorakhpur at 09:45

hours. The dates of run of these trains and their rake composition will remain as notified earlier.

**MANDUADIH-NEW DELHI SPECIAL:** The 02559 Manduadih-New Delhi superfast special train will depart from Manduadih at 22:15 hours, the second day from Prayagraj Junction at 00:35 hrs, from Kanpur Central at 02:50 hrs and will reach New Delhi at 08:25 hours. Likewise the 02560 New Delhi-Manduadih superfast special train will depart from New Delhi at 20:05 hrs, on the second day from Kanpur Central at 01:20 hrs, from Prayagraj Junction at 04:05 hrs and reach Manduadih at 06:25 hrs. The dates of run of these trains and their rake composition will remain as notified earlier.

**GKP-ANAND VIHAR TERMINUS SPECIAL:** The 02571 Gorakhpur-Anand Vihar Terminus Humsafar Special train will depart from Gorakhpur at 18:45 hours, from Anand Nagar at 19:29 hours, from Siddharthnagar at 19:56 hours, from Barhni at 20:29 hours, from Balrampur at 21:30 hours, from Gonda at 22:45 hours, the second day from Lucknow (NR) at 01:25 hours, from Kanpur Central at 03:05 hours, and reach Anand Vihar Terminus at 08:25 hours. The 02572 Anand Vihar Terminus-Gorakhpur Humsafar special train will depart from Anand Vihar Terminus at 20:00 hours, the second day from Kanpur Central at 01:00 hours, Lucknow (NR) at 02:40 hours, Gonda at 05:20 hours, Balrampur at 06:05 hrs, Barhni at 07:20 hrs, from Siddharthnagar at 07:54 hrs, from Anandnagar at 08:28 hours and will reach Gorakhpur at 09:30 hrs. The dates of run of these trains and their rake composition will remain as notified earlier.

**GIRL FOUND:** The Railway Protection Force (RPF), North Eastern Railway (NER), makes constant efforts for ensuring safety of passengers besides providing them better travel facilities. In the same sequence the RPF post, Gorakhpur, found a 19-year-old girl in an unclaimed condition during patrolling at Gorakhpur railway station. On inquiry it was found that the girl's missing report was registered at Rudhauli police station. The girl was handed over to Rudhauli police station, CPRO PK Singh said. Besides one person was caught with one e-tickets by the RPF post, Nakaha Jungle, from a shop in Maharajganj. Action was taken under the Railway Act and a case was registered in this connection. Likewise one person was caught with 11 e-tickets by the Cyber Cell and RPF, Gorakhpur, from a shop. Action was taken under the Railway Act and a case was registered in this connection. Moreover one person was caught with five e-tickets from a shop in Jaunpur by RPF post, Azamgarh. Action was taken under the Railway Act and a case registered in this connection. Meanwhile a 22-year-old mentally weak youth who had come to the Maghar railway station with the intention of committing suicide was caught by the staff of the RPF, Khalilabad, with the support of Government Railway Police (GRP) and handed over to his father. Earlier members of RPF Aishbagh caught a 23-year-old girl, who had run away from home, from train no 02563 Saharsa-New Delhi Humsafar Express. She was later handed over to her family. Likewise the Crime Intelligence Branch and RPF post, Gonda, caught one person with two e-tickets from a shop against whom action under the Railway Act and a case was registered in this connection.

## Cash, mobile phones looted

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

Two motorcycle-borne miscreants looted ₹13,000 cash and 13 mobile phones from a salesman at gunpoint near the Campierganj overbridge under the Campierganj police station on Tuesday afternoon. After the incident, the miscreants escaped towards Peppeganj. The CCTV camera footage was being scanned by the police and crime branch team. According to information, Rajkumar alias Sonu, a resident of Uska Bazar in Siddharthnagar, was coming towards Campierganj on a motorcycle. In the meantime two motorcycle-borne miscreants stopped him near the overbridge after overtaking him. As soon as he stopped, they whipped out a pistol and escaped after looting the money and mobile phones which were kept in the bag. After the incident, the salesman took a lift from a car rider passing from there and chased the goons till Mahavan Khor intersection but they managed to flee. Rajkumar informed the agency owner about the incident. On getting information Campierganj SHO Naveen Singh reached the spot. Till late in the evening a search was launched for the miscreants but to no avail. SP (North) Arvind Kumar Pandey said that the investigation into the case was going on.

## Emphasis on safe driving

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Majhawaan MLA Shuchismita Maurya said that laws were made in the larger interest of the society so they should be followed instead of violated. These views were expressed by her as the chief guest during the concluding ceremony of the Traffic Week in the auditorium of Government Inter College on Tuesday. She said by violating the traffic rules we not only put our lives in danger but of innocent persons too. She appreciated the approach of the Transport department which made the school students aware because they were good canvassers and could convince their parents to follow traffic rules in the larger interest of not only the society but their families too. She said that inventions should not be misused by people for their petty interests. She added that vehi-



cles were invented to make works easy for human beings.

Conducting the programme ARTO Ravi Kant Shukla said that though the road accidents had reduced to some extent last year but the department had targeted to reduce it up to 10 per cent in current year. He said that while driving we should think about our loved ones and avoid rash driving. He said that safe driving was the purpose behind the use of vehicles. On the occasion the students were who had secured the first, second and third place in different competitions held under Road Safety Week were presented certificates by the MLA and CDO Avinash Singh. A letter of thanks was given to those who had contributed during the awareness drive. The programme was also attended by RTO OP Singh, DIOS Devki Singh, incharge traffic police Amarjeet Chauhan apart from others.

## Criminal held with stolen cell phones

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

GRP Vindhyachal nabbed a criminal along with stolen mobile phones worth about ₹1,20,000. As per the reports,



incharge GRP outpost Vindhyachal Rajendra Yadav was patrolling along with his team when that he intercepted

a suspect on platform No 1. When he was frisked the GRP recovered five costly mobile phones sets which were stolen from different places. Registering the case the GRP sent the accused to jail and seized mobile phones worth about ₹1,20,000. The accused was identified as Gopal Bind, son of Munnial Bind, a resident of Gopalpur village under Vindhyachal police station.

**KILLED:** A motorcyclist died in a road mishap in an area under Lalganj police station on Tuesday. As per the reports, Ramadaya (40), son of Sadhu Kol, a resident of Bagahi village under Lalganj police station, was on the way on his motorcycle when a tanker hit him near Bastara village as a result of which he died on the spot. On getting information

the Lalganj police reached the spot, impounded the tanker and took its driver into custody and completed the legal formalities. An earlier report said that two persons died in a collision between two motorcycles near Dadara village under Madihan police station. Three others are still fighting for their lives in a hospital, last reports received here said. According to a report, that two motorcycles collided head on near Dadara village under Madihan police station as a result of which Sandeep, Deepak, Jitendra, Om Prakash and Deepu sustained serious injuries. The police admitted the victims to a hospital. However Sandeep (35) and Jitendra succumbed to their injuries during treatment while others are still fighting for their lives.

# Shekhar inspects Kanpur Metro's ongoing works

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar carried out a spot inspection of the ongoing Kanpur Metro works at IIT-Kanpur on Wednesday and the depot site at polytechnic and interacted with project director Arvind and other senior officials of the metro.

He said as it was one of the most prestigious projects of the city, every effort had to be made to ensure that the work was completed on time and without any compromise on quality.

He, however, expressed satisfaction at the progress of the work.

The divisional commissioner said the metro works were being carried out on a war footing. The Kanpur Metro project director informed the divisional commissioner that there was no major issue as of now and the works were being carried out smoothly and swiftly so that the metro train was thrown open for public in December 2021.

The project director said that in the priority corridor 1 (from IIT-K to Motijheel), there were seven stations and one depot. He said in this section, eight metro trains would be run at a gap of five minutes each and each metro train would have seating capacity of 1,000 passengers.

The divisional commissioner said the engine and



The Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar, inspecting the Metro construction works progress at Kalyanpur on Wednesday.

Pioneer

compartments would be of the Bombardier Company and they would be manufactured at the Gujarat plant.

He said that the recruitment of the staff and employees for the metro operations were going on and would be completed soon.

The divisional commissioner then visited the metro depot site at polytechnic. The administrative office of Kanpur

Metro would be on this campus. He said the work would be completed by May 2021.

Shekhar also enquired about the steps taken by Kanpur Metro to reduce the pollution levels and also for the smooth flow of the traffic. He was informed that the Metro had three high capacity mist sprayers and they were being used round the clock to settle down the dust particles in the

air and that traffic marshals were deputed round the clock to assist traffic police and public in smooth the flow of traffic.

The divisional commissioner asked the UP Metro Rail Corporation officials to complete the work in time and make Kanpur Metro operational by December 2021 as per the directives of the UP government.

# Jaipuria School to celebrate Founder's Day virtually



The Principal, Seth Anandram Jaipuria Public School along with teachers addressing presspersons on Wednesday

Pioneer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Like in the past, this year also Seth Anandram Jaipuria School will hold its Founder's Day on Thursday and Friday but virtually.

The chief guest will be Rajbir (Bubbles) Sandhu, schools sports director of South Asia and The Gulf of the Round Square Organisation. The guest of honour will be noted actor Darsheel Safari.

The school will felicitate its

outstanding students who brought laurels to the institution and also the teachers who had contributed long years of dedicated and productive service to the institution.

The attraction of the event will be 'Dreams Forever', 'The World of Fantasy' and 'Aawriti' which will witness poets and the two-day programme will end with a grand finale.

Principal Shikha Bannerjee, on Wednesday, said that on the opening day there would be a colourful cultural

programme, presented by the junior students, followed by an English group song and the welcome address by the principal.

She said this would be followed by the address of Sunita Jaipuria followed by the address of Rajbir.

She said on the second day, the senior students of the school would present a colourful cultural programme which would be followed by the special address of the Jaipuria Group of Institutions and

Ginni Filaments Ltd Chairman Shishir Jaipuria.

She added that the annual school report would be read out and the chief guest of the second day would be Sonam Wangchuk, the founder of " students education and cultural movement of Ladakh and vice-principal of the school Ashley Fernandez would deliver the vote of thanks.

The prime events of the closing day would be the famous English play 'Chanakya' and Hindi play 'Fariyad'.



## An era ends in Congress

With the passing away of Ahmed Patel and Tarun Gogoi, the old order has receded further. Rebuilding just got tougher



Perhaps, the Congress is in its last year indeed. Perhaps that's the trigger for that emboldening moment among its legacy holders to rescue the party. Electorally, it is quite done with trying to make a difference. Organisationally, it has been torn asunder like never before. And now an era that justified its bigness and relevance has ended with the passing away of two of its senior and indispensable leaders, Ahmed Patel and Tarun Gogoi. Both were organisation builders who used dissent as an opportunity to strengthen and glue the party further. But Patel's loss is indeed irreplaceable as the Congress has lost its Chanakya. And the Gandhis, their lone warrior and the gatekeeper, who kept them safe and convinced everybody else that the party indeed needed them. A self-effacing man, who masterminded the shrewdest backroom strategies, he ran the party much like the late Pranab Mukherjee ran the Government under successive Gandhis, from Indira to Sonia. But he never let his ambition show unlike the latter, helming the party through crisis after crisis, propping up Governments with coalition partners when the numbers seemed impossible, raising funds and building a worth that would be bigger than any chair. He became the party, the Gandhis the representable face. That doesn't mean he was a courtier, far from it. Or that he was shy, being socially one of the most accessible of Congressmen. He was just sagacious and discreet that made him the most trustworthy leader and the party's ablest troubleshooter. He got the job done. A fact that he put to good use to build connections within the party and outside. He was accessible to cadres, had his ear to the ground and addressed their grievances, a quality that junior leaders are yet to imbibe, believing in data analytics than the human connect. A failing described by the well-meaning and weathered senior leader Ghulam Nabi Azad as "five-star" culture. In fact, Patel was the bridge in the perennial tussle between the old guard and the young Turks, between the Congress and its allies in the coalition era and between the party and the Opposition. And he endeared himself to corporates, a fact that even compelled Rahul Gandhi to bring him in as Treasurer though the latter was not too close to him unlike his parents. Patel never went public, choosing to settle matters in private, his last manoeuvre being calming the 23 senior "letter writers" and keeping the party leadership out of an ugly spat. In short, he embodied all that held the Congress together. And he had deep political foresight, winning the Bharuch seat swearing loyalty to Indira Gandhi in 1977, post-Emergency, when the tide was against her even in her own party. Rajiv Gandhi noticed his deliverer capabilities and made him party general secretary, a most wanted post back then. Then he became part of the first family circle. Obviously, he was left out in the cold after Rajiv's assassination but he never embarrassed PV Narasimha Rao despite being sidelined or chorused the then Prime Minister's critics. He had that stabilising quality. By the time Sonia Gandhi warmed up to politics and was ready for the 2004 Lok Sabha election, Patel became her strategist and advisor, finding relevant talk points in the campaign that demolished the "India Shining" blitz by the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government. And despite the Modi wave, Patel made sure that the Congress at least had a moral victory by narrowing the BJP's margins in the Gujarat Assembly elections or clinching his own Rajya Sabha victory. But the best part was that for all the Congress' appeasement politics, Patel never ever played the Muslim card himself. Personal heft and consensus-building were also the virtues of Tarun Gogoi, who steadied the party's presence in Assam in the post-militancy years as Chief Minister, ensuring development, peace and growth and rescuing a ravaged State from the brink. Both these stalwarts did pull the party out of its morass and kept it on course.

The problem with the Congress now is that none of them is around to steer it back. The senior leaders are understandably adrift, unable to convince the leadership that the party should now give up the culture of nomination and restore organisational democracy first before renewing and rebuilding itself. Sonia, bereft of fresh ideas and now Patel, continues to be reluctant about anything that could challenge the continuity of the Gandhi bloodline at the helm of affairs. And with divisions so sharp, anybody with a prescriptive formula to revive it is usually considered a rebel than a well-meaning loyalist or dismissed as a defector, usually to the other national party. Yet the dynastic entitlement has outlived its purpose in a politically empowered India, one that sees no potential in the leadership of Sonia's children but would certainly believe in a rebuilt party. The Congress last held CWC elections 1998 and holding one now would keep the field workers and grassroots leaders invested in the party. All of them are currently cut off by a sedimentary layer of loyal courtiers, who are interested in simply playing along as long as their posts are secure. Yet State leaders like Chhattisgarh's Bhupesh Baghel and Punjab's Amarinder Singh have proven that they are able organisers and can even articulate and take a stand on national issues. If the Congress wants to stick around, this is its last chance to self-correct, rise above ego, value honest counsel and appear selfless in the interest of a larger political legacy. Unless its leadership just wants to exist for the sake of it. Dynastic stubbornness would have to give way to reason, wisdom and reconciliation. And if Rahul Gandhi still wants the adulation, he has to earn the confidence of the rank and file to be elected, not foisted, in the hardest of times. At least, he would have made a brave choice.

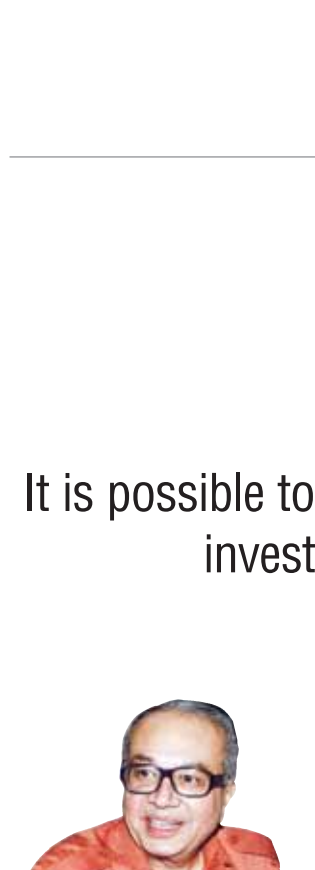
## Beating Twitter?

While the makers of Tooter are hoping that a home-grown social network can take off, that bird has long flown



This is not the first time a new social network has popped up to take on the might of Twitter. A few months ago another network called Mastodon created a buzz and while many, particularly those of a certain liberal persuasion, populated the site, sadly its fate wasn't very different from the animal it was named after. The latest site to float up on your device is called Tooter, which is really just a rebadged version of the social network called Gab in the United States (US). While its makers claim it to be Indian or *swadeshi*, it turned out that even the "Terms Of Service" were copied almost verbatim from the American service. Without disparaging the efforts of those trying to create a new service, it would be good if Indian software engineers could create a new social network, one that integrates the best of the others and adds features, rather than blithely copying another product. On this front, India would be well served to learn from the Chinese internet experience.

That said, can Twitter or Facebook ever be replaced? There is an argument that says yes, given their monolithic power now as opinion makers themselves. Twitter has, in particular, played a dubious role in restricting access to certain information during the US election, or so the losing candidate, President Donald Trump, alleges. Then again, one could argue that without Twitter, Trump's popularity would never have soared. It is important that services like Facebook and Twitter, which are transnational, should come under some sort of regulatory mechanism and should not become some extra-constitutional force in nations like India. That said, the arguments for free speech and misinformation make for a dubious grey area and territories have to be clearly demarcated by the Government of the day. Also, a lot of the lamenting about Twitter being right or wrong for one side or another disguises the fact that it is what it is because of such issues and cannot be equal to the electorate. Much of what goes on in social media is happening at a level that the elite, on either side, have little or no idea about, on messaging applications like WhatsApp. Yes, social networks should be subjected to Indian regulations and it may not be a bad idea to create an Indian social network, but clearly, Tooter, like Mastodon, isn't the answer.



PRAFULL GORADIA

If I were still a resident of West Bengal, my first priority in the coming Assembly elections would be to retain the identity of our State. It should not in any way get compromised by Bangladesh or its concerns. We need to recall that on the eve of the Partition of 1947, Sir Abdul Rahim and the popular peasant leader, Fazlur Rahman, had come to Calcutta to convince Netaji's brother Sarat Bose that a united Bengal should be the third dominion besides Hindustan and Pakistan. The Communist Party then began to support the idea of an undivided Bengal. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah also backed it because a Muslim-dominated Bengal would willy nilly side with Pakistan rather than India.

When it comes to song, music, language and literature, all Bengalis take pride in them. But when it comes to memories, most Bangladeshis would recall their social oppression at the hands of the zamindars and their camp followers. Many remember that even when they were invited to dinner at wedding celebrations, they would be asked to sit separately and after meals were expected to clear their clay *thalis*. This hierarchical rift ran so deep that a united Bengal would eventually be torn from within. In conversation a few years ago with some acquaintances from Dhaka, I was surprised to find that they resented how East Bengal was not given Calcutta during the Partition, although the city was, as it were, a stone's throw from Jessore. They believed it was unfair of the British to change the allocation at the last minute, and while conceding Lahore to Pakistan, they had done grave injustice to them. Calcutta was sought after because it was an economic hub and a port city; it supplied all the raw jute and the merchant princes of Kolkata reaped the benefit of jute mills and many other industries.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah was anxious to acquire Calcutta and the impression was that he was a capable negotiator. But obviously, he lost out, perhaps because his lungs were failing and his heart was set on getting Pakistan. The interests of East Bengal had a lower priority for him. Incidentally, the Qaid had never visited East Bengal until February 1948. The only so-called industry given to it was the Sylhet district, which was rich in tea gardens. Bangladesh has very few economic means, other

# Bengal's revival

It is possible to make a quick start in reviving the State's economy without large investments but through governmental will and management



than subsistence resources, such as rice and fish. That is why, it needs to follow the Japanese model of importing raw materials from overseas and converting them into products with high technology for export. It is difficult for any people to have such techno-entrepreneurial genius as the Japanese. The legend of *Sonar Bangla* is now threatened because six of the western districts no longer receive the rainfall of yesteryears and they badly need river water from India. The other misfortune is that most of the land is low-lying and the sea level is rising. According to scientists, in two decades' time, 17 per cent of Bangladesh's land area is expected to be submerged. All these factors make Bangladeshis the highest number of migrants to other parts of the world. But West Bengal has borne the brunt of this influx.

My heart throbbed with delight when a few years ago, Mamata Banerjee, with all the fury at her command, threw a sheaf of papers on the Lok Sabha Speaker's table. She was then demanding an infiltrator-free West Bengal. The State has limited land and plentiful people and its resources have undoubtedly been stretched over the years, the refugees bulging that burden. Then the many industries — small, medium and heavy — that the State was proud of rapidly turned into industrial graveyards thanks to trade unions and poor management in years past.

Bengalis are a gifted people and certainly intelligent right down to the illiterate. If for

**BENGALIS ARE A GIFTED PEOPLE. IF FOR NOTHING ELSE, FOR THEIR TALENT, THE STATE DESERVES A BETTER ECONOMY. A REVIVAL IS OVERDUE AND IT SHOULD TOP THE NEW AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT**



nothing else, for their talent, the State deserves a better economy. A revival is overdue and it should soon set a new economic agenda. Setting up a new industry is like creating a brand, which would have to compete in this age of globalisation. On the other hand, education is a sphere in which Bengal enjoys a natural advantage as well as reputation. The first major thrust should be in the field of schools, colleges and universities. There is scope for developing a big knowledge economy because the catchment area can sweep UP, Bihar, Nepal, Assam and the Northeast, as well as Bangladesh. None of these regions is able to provide young people with quality education.

I would begin with medical studies. With efficient management and capable doctors, as many hospitals as possible across the State could be improved by deploying professional managers supported by medics. Let the doctors do their own specialised work. Management and medicine/surgery should not be mixed up. Thereafter, medical colleges along with as many hospitals as possible could be set up. The significant investment would largely be in creating medical colleges. The World Bank could lend the money since the Government could guarantee the loans. There should be an option, wherever possible, for expanding the hospital and adding another college, considering the best of technology is already available in India.

There is a crying need not for ordinary schools but for excellent ones with hostel facilities. The

New Education Policy (NEP) should be used as the lodestar for these schools to come up in the private sector with improved facilities. The land could be allotted by the State or there could be private-public partnerships. A similar strategy should be followed for colleges and universities. This would restore Bengal's pride as the seat of intellect.

Next, the Government should attend to sub-Himalayan West Bengal. There is space for a splendid international airport in and around Bagdogra, which is near the town of Siliguri. This is the place for proceeding to either Darjeeling, Kalimpong or Gangtok in Sikkim. The most glorious mountains in the world form the backdrop of these hill stations. Darjeeling is at 6,000 ft, and another 6,000 ft above that is Sandakphu, which is motorable, too, and from where one can view the Everest on a clear day. World class hotel groups and enterprising airlines could be lured with promises of support, a stable law and order situation and assurance that any obstacles in their path would be removed. Himalayan Bengal would become a brand in itself for Nature has indeed done its best to give North Bengal an unparalleled beauty. It is, therefore, possible to make a quick start in reviving the economy of West Bengal without undue large investments but with governmental will and excellence of management.

(The writer is a well-known columnist and an author. Views expressed are personal)

### SOUND BITE

I am satisfied with the discussions with Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit on the issue of release of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassins.



**DMK President**  
—MK Stalin

We cannot take any risks. We still have to wait and see when educational institutions can be opened. We will take up the matter with the experts.



**Kerala Chief Minister**  
—Pinarayi Vijayan

I share a special bond with Mumbai. I have experienced failure way more than the success that I am enjoying now. Perhaps that is one of the reasons I value success!



**Actor**  
—Angad Bedi

I remember missing a couple of Ranji Trophy matches to be with my wife for the delivery of my daughter. It is a very important feeling, especially when you are going to get your first child.



**Former cricketer**  
—VVS Laxman

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Best of luck, boys

Sir — Cricket is also a game of luck and like any other sport has its ups and downs. India's top-most spinner has been neglected and put under quarantine by the Indian cricket board despite showing superb performance with the ball in all the three formats of the game.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) decennially honours some of the most prolific names in men's and women's international cricket. These players are voted for by respected members of the cricket fraternity and the general public.

Virat Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin are two Indians among seven players nominated for the prestigious "Player of the Decade" category. Ravichandran Ashwin is the only bowler in the ICC "Player of the Decade" repertoire. He finished the decade with the most number of wickets across formats (564). Let us all wish that the ball rolls in favour of India's top spinner and our captain Kohli, too, bags the prestigious honour. Let both the men walk into the hall of fame.

**Gundu Maniam**  
Mumbai

## Maharashtra's COVID plan a good move

It is good that the Maharashtra Government has made it compulsory for all travellers coming to the State from other parts of the country to carry RT-PCR negative reports. Due to the second wave of COVID-19, the State Government has issued new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to contain fresh triggers for a pandemic spread. Just like in international travel, fliers to Maharashtra should get themselves tested 72 hours before boarding. Those passengers who do not have the RT-PCR test reports will have to compulsorily undergo tests at the airports at their own expense. The Airports Authority of India has been requested to check the report before allowing the passengers to board flights.

People arriving in the State via train will have to carry an RT-PCR negative test report from a sample collected 96 hours before their scheduled arrival in Maharashtra. Those rail passengers who do not have an RT-PCR report will be screened for symptoms at the alighting railway stations. And only passengers without Coronavirus symptoms would be allowed to go home.

For those travelling by road, the District Collectors of the State's border districts shall make arrangements to ensure that people are tested for symptoms, includ-



ing body temperature. Those with Corona symptoms will have to undergo an antigen test and will be allowed entry in the State only if the report is negative. People with COVID-19 symptoms would be turned back.

This is being done as Maharashtra's COVID-19 tally has risen to 17,84,361 infections with 46,653 deaths. It is the first State under the Shiv-Sena-Congress-NCP rule to introduce such tough restrictions through notifications. This is a step in the right direction as the State will have to clamp down on imported infections if it has to get a grip on the pandemic on its own turf.

**Bhagwan Thadani**  
Mumbai

#### Better sense prevails

Sir — We appreciate the LDF Government in Kerala for bowing to public opinion and agreeing to put on hold the regressive Ordinance empowering the police to prosecute persons disseminating "defam-

atory content." Unlike other Governments, the Leftist Government in the State listened to sane voices, realised the scope of potential abuse of the Ordinance and made amends by keeping it in abeyance. One wishes that the Centre, too, would pay heed to

the voice of the people on undemocratic laws. Clearly, the text of the law was not drafted by those with a clear understanding of the niceties of constitutional provisions. A staggering ignorance of the landmark rulings of the Supreme Court on criminal

defamation was writ large on the Ordinance that had to be put in cold storage. The State Government may have had the good intention of curbing defamatory social media posts. But then the Ordinance, in the form in which it was promulgated, was seen as an attempt to gag the freedom of expression, which is the bedrock of democracy. The phraseology of the Ordinance, built on sweeping generalisations, did not indicate either discernment or sensitivity and gave the police blanket powers of crackdown.

The State cannot be seen to be arrogating to itself or arming itself with arbitrary powers in the guise of curbing abusive or offensive online content. Had the Ordinance been shown to Sitaram Yechury or the Politburo, the Kerala Government could have avoided the embarrassment of promulgating such a dubious law. Better sense has prevailed in the nick of time and saved us another round of Left-Right whataboutery.

**David Milton**  
Maruthancode

Send your feedback to:  
**letterstopioneer@gmail.com**



FIRST COLUMN

## A different ball game altogether

It is crucial to understand the financial behaviour and practices of SMEs which are totally separate from those of larger firms



HIMA BINDU KOTA

Although capital is a scarce resource for any business, it is even more scant for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Therefore, cash flow and working capital management are the most crucial challenges of organisations in general and SMEs in particular. Working capital is short-term in nature and refers to the funds required for the daily functioning of a firm. In business parlance it consists of accounts receivables (debtors and any pre-payments, stock or inventory) and accounts payable (creditors and short-term provisions). The timeline of any enterprise is the flow of cash and other liquid assets through a business cycle — a journey of collecting receivables from the debtors to pay off the creditors. This is also known as the cash conversion cycle. The efficiency and, therefore, the success of a business depends upon how fast the goods are converted into cash. SMEs differ in many ways from large firms in terms of their financial behaviour and decision-making, mainly because of their characteristics and ownership. This ultimately reflects in their financial habits. So, what are the factors that affect the availability of capital to small enterprises? One of the most important issues is the size. According to researchers, during the start-up phase, the owner's personal savings are an important source of funds. Young and small firms do not have an established track record and may be characterised by informational opacity, making banks and other financial institutions reluctant to lend to them. In general, firms which are less than four years old, rely more on informal sources of funding.

However, when the SMEs increase in size and become larger, they have a greater network of banks willing to fund their business. The firm's ability to deal with multiple banks and other credit agencies generally grows with size, too. So, they rely more on long-term debt and external financing, including bank loans.

Second, the type of ownership is another important determinant for the source of funding. Any SME with a concentrated ownership, like in a proprietorship, should be more prepared to use bootstrap financing, as it would have greater difficulty in accessing a formal source of credit. From the lender's perspective, in such SMEs, there is no clear distinction between the owner and the firm, information asymmetry is prevalent and an ability to provide collateral is missing. On the other hand, a private limited SME may be viewed by financing agencies as more structured and credible. As a result, formal financing options are freely available to it. Third, the location of the start-up makes a huge impact. A firm's proximity to the banks has an influence on its ability to gain external funding. Research also suggests that one of the reasons for a company's failure is poor location that prevents customers and suppliers from reaching it. Therefore, despite high rentals, SMEs prefer to move to urban areas for the sake of better infrastructure and the ease of raising external finance.

Fourth, several researchers have provided evidence that the sector where the SME is operating has an impact on the short and long-term debt available to it. For example, short-term credit is used more in wholesale and retail trade as compared to manufacturing SMEs. Whereas the construction sector, hotel, hospitality and mining industries appear to depend more on long-term finance. And finally, availability of assets plays an important role in raising funds. From a lender's point of view, collateral, which is also known as the lender's second line of defence, is highly relevant while approving loans. Researchers Ono and Uesugi studied the Japanese SME loan market and found a positive relationship between the use of collateral and the ease of access to bank loans and external financing. It can also be understood that firms with lower tangible assets would face difficulties in accessing funds.

Additionally, the characteristics and gender of the owner too influence a firm's capability to raise external funding. According to several researchers in different countries, men and women differ in the way they raise cash for their businesses. There is empirical evidence that women entrepreneurs start their business with a smaller start-up capital, in fact less than half of the amount used by men. In addition, women also face discrimination from banks and other financial institutions. This is evident from the higher rates of interest charged from women entrepreneurs, the requirement of additional collateral, higher loan denial rate and so on. The age of the owner, too, impacts the personal financing preference. Older SME owners are less likely to take additional finance into their firms. Younger owners tend to use a variety of external cash sources like loans, overdrafts, credit cards and personal savings.

SMEs are the backbone of any growing economy. Therefore, it is crucial to understand their financial behaviour and practices which are very different from the financial management of large corporations. This would help policymakers come up with ways to improve the external financing scenario for such firms, as stronger SMEs make a stronger economy.

(The writer is Associate Professor, Amity University, Noida)

A FEW DAYS AGO, THE HOME MINISTER WAS HERE. THE FOOD THAT HE ATE WAS COOKED IN FIVE-STAR HOTELS AND TAKEN TO THE DALIT HOUSEHOLD. —WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER MAMATA BANERJEE



THE TMC HAS A HABIT OF PLAYING POLITICS ON EVERY ISSUE. THE FOOD THAT AMIT SHAH ATE AT BANKURA WAS COOKED AT THAT VERY HOUSE. — BJP NATIONAL SECRETARY ANUPAM HAZRA

# A case for natural gas

Consumption of one fossil fuel over another will, on its own, not offer a long-term solution to climate change, but employing less emission-intensive fuels can reduce pollution significantly



JONATHAN SYIEMLIEH

As the winter approaches, Delhi-NCR is under its annual envelop of smog. Caused by an unhealthy combination of low wind speed, change in wind direction, dip in temperatures and stubble burning in parts of North India, air pollution is back in the headlines and our daily lives. According to a study of 28 cities by IQAir and Greenpeace Southeast Asia, air pollution in Delhi-NCR was linked to the loss of an estimated 24,000 lives and 5.8 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the first two quarters of this year, despite a strict COVID-19 lockdown since March. In fact, the linkage between rising air pollution levels and increase in COVID 19-related cases and deaths is being confirmed by several studies from around the world.

A recent study published in *Cardiovascular Research*, which was the first of its kind to distinguish between fossil fuel-related and other human-generated sources of air pollution, estimated that long-term exposure to air pollution has been linked to an increased risk of dying from COVID-19. The study estimated that about 15 per cent of deaths worldwide from the virus could be attributed to long-term exposure to air pollution. In Europe, the proportion was about 19 per cent, in North America it was 17 per cent and in East Asia about 27 per cent.

A recent study by Harvard University indicated that an increase of only one microgram per cubic metre in PM2.5 is associated with an eight per cent increase in the Coronavirus death rate. Long-term exposure to chronically-high PM2.5 levels weakens the ability of the lungs to fight off infections, therefore making people more susceptible to COVID complications.

In 2016, the national Capital ranked third on a list of cities around the world reporting close to 15,000 deaths due to air pollution. Shanghai was ranked first among the cities with most premature deaths at 17,600, followed by Beijing with 18,200 premature deaths due to PM2.5 pollutants. A study undertaken by *Lancet Planetary Health* the following year stated that Delhi had recorded the highest annual population-weighted mean PM2.5 levels in its air. Further, in 2019, the World Air Quality Report, compiled by IQAir, listed Delhi on top of the list of the capital cities with most polluted air for the second consecutive year with annual PM2.5 levels nearly 10 times the limit prescribed by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Other prominent NCR cities were also listed among the top 10 cities in the world with most polluted air.

Source apportionment studies, such as the ones conducted by IIT Kanpur (2013-2014) and National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (2017), have pointed out that secondary particles are a significant contributor to PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations in Delhi-NCR, with industrial point sources being the top four major contributors to PM2.5. Polluting fuels such as coal, diesel, pet coke and heavy fuel oil used by industries in Delhi-NCR are a major reason for this.

In such a dismal scenario, natural gas provides a good alternative to not only meet the energy needs of industries, but also as a less polluting option that can contribute to addressing environmental problems. The burning of natural gas for energy results in lower emissions of green house gas (GHG), Carbon Dioxide (CO2) and nearly all types of air pollutants in comparison to burning coal or other fossil fuels to produce an equal amount of energy. However, natural gas has not seen much penetration in industries, especially those situated in Delhi-NCR. According to British Petroleum, India's share of natural gas in the energy mix is lower than

“THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NATURAL GAS PENETRATION IN THE MSME SECTOR PROVIDED THE PRICES ARE RATIONALISED, ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES ARE PUT IN PLACE, AND PROPER REGULATIONS IMPOSED TO RESTRICT CONSUMPTION OF POLLUTING FUELS. A POLICY DIRECTIVE FROM THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO ENFORCE THE BAN ON USAGE OF NON-CLEAN FUELS LIKE COAL, WOOD AND SO ON COULD BE INTRODUCED IN A PHASED MANNER”



many large economies. It had reached a mere 6.2 per cent in 2019; this when the Government aims to raise the share of natural gas in the country's energy mix to 15 per cent by 2030.

Switching to natural gas and displacing polluting fuels has contributed to lower GHG emissions and improved air quality in New York, Toronto and Beijing, according to a 2015 report by the International Gas Union (IGU). The benefits of increasing the use of cleaner-burning natural gas in the industry were acknowledged and put into force by policymakers in Northern China in 2017 where the shift from coal to natural gas in industries led to extensive reduction in GHG and air pollution. In Turkey, the industry around Istanbul, too, witnessed a reduction in air pollution as a result of switching from coal-lignite to natural gas in the early 2000s.

According to the 2019 *World Energy Outlook* special report analysis, an estimated 98 per cent of natural gas consumed today has lower life cycle emissions intensity than coal, when used for power or heat. The analysis incorporates both CO2 and methane emissions and indicates that, on an average, coal-to-gas switching reduces emissions by 50 per cent when producing electricity and by 33 per cent when used for heating purposes.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) in 2019 had assessed the potential and impact of a shift to natural gas from heavier polluting fuels among Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) units operating in Delhi-NCR. Data collected showcased the presence of thousands of MSME units operating in this region and using a variety of fuels ranging from coal to low sulphur heavy stock, light diesel oil, wood, bagasse, rice husk, other biomass fuels, high-speed diesel and natural gas. By and large, MSMEs were found to be disinclined to migrate to natural gas owing to high upfront costs such

as connection costs and security deposit, limited access to natural gas and economic viability in terms of increased unit price compared to other fuel options. To add to this, end users were also charged a conversion cost and had to bear the cost of internal piping infrastructure.

Obtaining the right of way and other clearances from State/local Government to lay natural gas pipelines also contributes to delays in setting up adequate pipeline infrastructure. Notably, micro units among MSME clusters in Delhi-NCR were found to be located in non-conforming areas and were especially not in favour of switching to alternative cleaner fuels as this would entail putting themselves under the ambit of regulatory compliances.

However, a switch to natural gas in MSMEs is not without precedent. The case of Uttar Pradesh's Firozabad glass bangle industry is a prime example of how switching from coal and wood to natural gas, coupled with the adoption of energy-efficient technologies, can reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions. Similarly, the Morbi-Wankaner area in Gujarat witnessed immediate reduction in air pollution as a result of the local ceramics industry shifting from coal to natural gas in 2019, following an NGT order the same year. The area recorded a 75 per cent reduction in PM2.5 levels, 72 per cent reduction in PM10 levels and an 85 per cent reduction in sulphur dioxide (SO2).

Further, in case of a shift to natural gas at a metal casting unit in Faridabad, Haryana, the learnings have highlighted that along with fuel switching, there is also scope for further reduction in energy consumption if MSME units follow best operating practices to improve energy efficiency. This requires understanding of technological best practices and their assimilation and adaptation to meet the needs of individual MSME units.

The provisions for upgrading and introducing new clean technologies in

MSME regulations can be capitalised in favour of natural gas augmentation in their energy mix. However, the diverse Government departments that have programmes and schemes related to enhancing clean energy measures in this sector are working in silos. It is important to achieve proper coordination among departments and link related programmes and schemes on clean energy, energy efficiency, technology upgradation, database generation, reporting and monitoring and capacity-building. This could ensure effective targeting and a confluence of actions at the intended delivery point.

There is an opportunity for natural gas penetration in the MSME sector provided the prices are rationalised, energy efficiency measures are put in place and proper regulations imposed to restrict consumption of polluting fuels. A policy directive from the Central Government to enforce the ban on usage of non-clean fuels like coal, wood and so on could be introduced in a phased manner. The city gas distribution companies could also be mandated by the Centre to completely erect the gas pipeline infrastructure in urban areas.

With the overall objective of increasing the adoption and usage of natural gas in the MSME sector, adopting a cluster-based approach would make natural gas penetration more effective. The Central and State Governments can play an important role in this area by facilitating the creation of necessary infrastructure and greener investments to ensure reliable and affordable supply of natural gas to MSMEs. Unabated consumption of one fossil fuel over another will, on its own, not offer a long-term solution to climate change, but employing less emission-intensive fuels such as natural gas can result in significant reduction in both CO2 emissions and air pollution.

(The writer is Associate Fellow, TERI)

## A major leap for science and the Corona war

The mRNA technique may mean that future pandemics can be dealt with far quickly. The vehicle is available to carry the next vaccine



GWYNNE DYER

All the usual caveats apply: Don't go out and celebrate. Don't let your guard down because it is still going to be a long haul. This winter will be "hard", warns Ugur Sahin, co-founder and CEO of BioNTech, the German company that announced the first effective COVID-19 vaccine recently. "The vaccine can't be rolled out fast enough to reduce infections much in the current wave," he says.

The publication on November 16 of positive results for a second vaccine, this time by the US company Moderna, strengthened the optimism as did the fact that the AstraZeneca vaccine is also ready to roll out, even

if it does have an average efficacy of just 70 per cent. Clearly, this Coronavirus can be beaten, and there are nine more potential COVID-19 vaccines already in the third and final stage of human trials.

But again, the riders: There will be at least half a million more COVID-19 related deaths this winter — or over a million if people don't observe the lockdowns and other restrictions like social distancing and use of sanitisers and face masks that are meant to contain the spread of the virus.

"What is absolutely essential," says Sahin, "is that we get a high vaccination rate before autumn/winter next year." That's when it could really be over. And yet there is cause to celebrate, because of the 11 vaccine candidates that were already in third-stage trials, both the front-runners are "messenger ribonucleic acid" (mRNA) vaccines, an entirely new approach that allows a much faster response to novel viral infections.

Traditionally, new vaccines took around ten years to be developed, tested

and approved for general use. For the new mRNA vaccines, it has been ten months. It's a revolutionary science at work here.

After Chinese scientists posted the full genetic sequence of the COVID-19 virus online on January 10, says Drew Weissman of the University of Pennsylvania, "we were making RNA within a week or so". Weissman then supplied that RNA to both BioNTech/Pfizer and Moderna.

RNA carries the genetic instructions from the nucleus of the cell to build whatever protein is needed, and for the past decade researchers have been trying to fabricate "messenger RNA" that could be inserted into human cells. The mRNA would then use the cell's own genetic machinery to make vaccines and other medically useful proteins.

By 2018, several companies had cracked the problem of getting the mRNA past the body's immune defences. With the full RNA sequence of the new Coronavirus in their possession, all they had to do was choose

which bit of the Coronavirus RNA to use in the vaccine.

Obviously not the whole thing, or it would rebuild the entire virus in the cell. Just a harmless segment of the virus' RNA, copied millions of times by the vaccinated person's cells, would alert the body's immune system and train it to destroy any invading virus with that sequence. Scientists chose the "spike" that the virus uses to attach itself to the human cell.

Several companies had mRNA vaccines ready for testing within two or three months, and the results have been spectacular. BioNTech/Pfizer has just reported 95 per cent efficacy for its vaccine and Moderna has reported 94.5 per cent success.

Even better, both BioNTech/Pfizer and Moderna included all major ethnic groups and a significant number of elderly people in their third-phase trials. All categories responded well to the shots (which is not always the case with trial vaccines).

Yet another mRNA vaccine in third-phase trials could be even bet-

ter because it will be far cheaper than the BioNTech/Pfizer vaccine (priced at \$2,896 for two shots) or the Moderna jab (priced at \$5,495 for two shots) if it pans out. At Imperial College in London, Robin Shattock's team is working on a "self-amplifying RNA" vaccine that may require as little as one-hundredth of the amount of vaccine.

The mRNA technique may mean that future pandemics can be dealt with far more quickly. The vehicle is already available and waiting to carry the next vaccine. Just "plug and play" for any future Coronavirus, as one researcher puts it. (We have had three new Coronaviruses in the last two decades.)

Pfizer boss Albert Boura goes even further to say: "It is the greatest medical advance in the last 100 years." Well, maybe, though a vote taken today would probably plump for antibiotics instead. But we are only beginning to see the potential of the mRNA technique. There are already trials under way for a wide variety of other illnesses.

Not just safer, more effective influenza, polio and HIV vaccines, but immunotherapies for cancer, heart conditions, cystic fibrosis and other systemic and congenital diseases.

Whether or not mRNA now becomes the preferred way to make novel vaccines, it is clear that a global health emergency on the scale of the present pandemic spurs scientific innovation at a much faster rate now. This is not just the consequence of all the resources and funding made available to those with solutions that might usually be regarded with more scepticism; it is also driven by the remarkable things that humans can achieve when thrust together by circumstances and given a common purpose.

There is a long, dark winter still ahead of us, no doubt, but miracles may await us over the horizon. And we can now be sure that the light at the end of this particular tunnel is not an oncoming train.

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



### FOREIGN EYE



#### COMBATING RAPE CULTURE IN NEPAL

The Oli Cabinet has approved an ordinance proposing stricter laws on rape. Thankfully, lawmakers have let go of their demand of incorporating regressive provisions like the death penalty and chemical castration. Such provisions, if included, would have dealt a body blow to the principles of the modern criminal justice system. (Kathmandu Post editorial)



# LVB to become DBS Bank India from Friday

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Crisis-hit Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) will merge into the Indian arm of Singapore-based DBS Bank on Friday, leading to removal of all restrictions, including withdrawal cap of ₹25,000, which the RBI had placed on the lender earlier this month.

The RBI notified the effective date of merger soon after the Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the Scheme of Amalgamation of LVB with DBS Bank India Ltd (DBIL).

All the branches of LVB will function as branches of DBIL with effect from November 27, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in a statement.

“Customers, including depositors of the Lakshmi Vilas Bank Ltd will be able to operate their accounts as customers of DBS Bank India Ltd (DBIL) with effect from November 27, 2020. Consequently the moratorium on the Lakshmi Vilas Bank Ltd. will cease to be operative from that date,” it

said.

DBIL is making necessary arrangements to ensure that service, as usual, is provided to customers of LVB, the central bank added.The RBI had superseded LVB’s board on November 17 after the private sector lender was placed under a moratorium.Meanwhile, the government issued a gazette notification which notified the Lakshmi Vilas Bank Limited (Amalgamation with DBS Bank India Limited) Scheme, 2020.

All employees of LVB shall continue in service and be deemed to have been appointed at the same remuneration and on the same terms and conditions of service as were applicable immediately before the close of business on November 17, 2020, the gazette notification issued by the Department of Financial Services said.

Earlier in the day, the Union Cabinet approved the merger of LVB with DBIL, providing comfort to 20 lakh customers of the bank which was put under the moratorium.

## Lakshmi Vilas Bank shares bounce back, jump nearly 5%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Lakshmi Vilas Bank bounced back on Wednesday after falling for almost a week, rising by nearly 5 per cent following the government approval for merger of the crisis-ridden bank with DBS Bank India Ltd (DBIL). In early trade on Wednesday, the stock had tanked 4.79 per cent to ₹6.95, its lower circuit limit as well as one-year low, on the BSE. However, it recovered all its lost ground in the afternoon trade, gaining 4.79 per cent to close at ₹7.65 -- its upper circuit limit.On the NSE, the scrip rose 4.79 per cent to close at ₹7.65. Earlier in the day, it had fallen 4.79 per cent to ₹6.95.

**New Delhi:** The Income Tax Dept has issued refunds worth over ₹1.36 lakh crore to over 41 lakh taxpayers so far this fiscal.This includes personal

income tax (PIT) refunds amounting to ₹36,028 crore and corporate tax refunds of over ₹1 lakh crore during this period:CBDT issues refunds of

over ₹1,36,962 crore to more than 41.25 lakh taxpayers between 1st April, 2020 to 24th November,2020.

PTI

# Kerala, WB accept Centre’s borrowing option to meet GST shortfall

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Kerala and West Bengal have accepted the Centre’s borrowing proposal and will get ₹10,197 crore through the special window to meet GST revenue shortfall.

These are among the states that had opposed the borrowing plan.

“Governments of Kerala and West Bengal have communicated their acceptance of

Option-1 to meet the revenue shortfall arising out of GST implementation.

The number of states who have chosen this option has gone up to 25,” the finance ministry said in a statement.

All the 3 Union Territories with Legislative Assembly -- Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir and Puducherry -- have also decided in favour of Option-1, it said.

The Centre has already

borrowed Rs 24,000 crore on behalf of the states in four instalments and passed it on to 23 states and 3 Union Territories on October 23, November 2, November 9 and November 23. Now, Kerala and West Bengal will receive funds raised through this starting from the next round of borrowings, the ministry added.

“Kerala and West Bengal will get Rs 10,197 crore

through special borrowing window to meet the GST implementation shortfall,” the statement added.

Under the terms of Option-1, besides getting the facility of a special window for borrowings to meet the shortfall arising out of GST implementation, states are also entitled to get unconditional permission to borrow the final instalment of 0.50 per cent of Gross State Domestic Product

(GSDP) out of the 2 per cent additional borrowings permitted by the Centre under Aatmanirbhar Abhiyaan.

This is over and above the special window of Rs 1.1 lakh crore.

On receipt of the choice of Option-1 from Kerala and West Bengal governments, the Centre has granted additional borrowing permission of Rs 4,522 crore to Kerala and Rs 6,787 crore to West Bengal.

## ‘Govt should incentivise production, usage of eco-friendly cement’

IAANS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government should incentivise the manufacturing and usage of eco-friendly cement, according to a stakeholder in the sector.Himansh Verma, Founder & Chairman of Navrattan Group said that the Centre, along with the cement industry, must push harder for an eco-friendly alternative to regular Portland cement.“Along with creating more public awareness, I would also suggest that the government should incentivise the manufacture and usage of such cement so as to give people more reasons to indulge in this practice,” he said. Verma was of the view that eco-friendly cement is the future of the industry. “We are at the crossroads of the future, with Covid-19 pandemic, global warming, environmental degradation, etc. The only way out of it is to go green,” said the Chairman of the green cement manufacturer.He also noted that along with incentives, the government should

reach out to the manufacturers with proper regulations.On the demand scenario of eco-friendly cements, Verma said that Indian cement industry is the second-largest producer in the world and considering that cement buying is not an “impulse-buy” commodity, its rising demand in both urban and rural milieu is a strong indicator of a robust economic activity nationally. For September and October 2020, the industry reported consecutive double-digit growth, he said.

“By 2030, the cement consumption is expected to be more than double. The present production capacity will have to work overtime to match that demand and, in doing so, it is highly likely that India will become the world’s largest producer of concrete,” he said.

He noted that India will be producing more cement than China by 2030 which may also lead to more threat of pollution. Keeping the downside in mind, he hopes that people would go for eco-friendly cement.

# Markets tumble from record highs on profit-booking

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity markets’ record run as investors pocketed gains in banking, finance and IT counters amid a mixed trend overseas.

Snapping a three-day winning streak, the 30-share BSE Sensex slumped 694.92 points or 1.56 per cent to finish at 43,828.10. The index touched a lifetime high of 44,825.37 in the opening session. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty touched a record intra-day peak of 13,145.85, before ending 196.75 points or 1.51 per cent down at 12,858.40.

Kotak Bank was the top loser in the Sensex pack, skidding 3.22 per cent, followed by Axis Bank, Sun Pharma, HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finance, Asian Paints, Bharti Airtel, Infosys and Tech Mahindra.

Only three index components closed in the green -- ONGC, PowerGrid and IndusInd Bank, jumping up to 6.25 per cent. Global equities were mixed after the US’ Dow Jones Industrial Average breached the 30,000-mark for the first time in the overnight session on COVID-19 vaccine optimism.

Reports that US President-elect Joe Biden would appoint former Federal Reserve chair Janet Yellen as Treasury Secretary also cheered investors.

“The market rally which was led by developments on vaccine and FPI inflows came to a halt today due to profit booking across sectors in the second half of the trading session.

While western markets continued its positivity, being encouraged by news on vaccine developments and ease in the US political risk.

NIFTY 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY 50	13,130.00	13,145.85	12,833.65	12,858.40	-196.75	
ONGC	77.2	81.8	77.15	80.6	4.5	
GAIL	101.35	103.7	100.5	101.95	1.65	
ADANI PORTS	396.3	404.7	384.4	397.9	5.65	
SRLIFE	846.05	864.65	844	850	11.05	
COALINDIA	123.95	126.75	123.25	123.85	0.6	
HDFCLIFE	672.45	688.5	661.85	665.1	0.95	
POWERGRID	194.5	197.45	193.55	194.6	0.1	
BRITANNIA	3,570.60	3,579.85	3,531.50	3,556.45	-5.8	
SREBEN	245.45	249.9	241.6	243	-0.85	
NTPC	94.45	94.9	92.85	93.8	-0.35	
IOC	86.5	87.1	85.5	85.65	-0.5	
TATAMOTORS	175	176.8	169.25	170.95	-1.1	
INDUSINDBK	863.6	874.9	845.25	848	-5.7	
TCES	2,729.00	2,732.95	2,688.20	2,700.00	-22.05	
RELIANCE	1,980.00	1,992.95	1,942.20	1,947.50	-16.55	
JSWSTEEL	343.5	345.9	337	338	-2.85	
M&M	732	732.95	716	722	-7.35	
ULTRACEMCO	4,899.00	4,929.00	4,801.05	4,821.20	-5.2	
HINDUNILVR	2,162.00	2,171.00	2,128.00	2,134.00	-23.35	
GRASIM	856	873.8	840.05	844	-9.25	
ITC	196	197.95	192.5	193.4	-2.15	
NESTELEIND	17,789.00	17,789.00	17,340.00	17,457.15	-220.45	
ICICIBANK	485	489.95	471.1	472.2	-4.6	
TATASTEEL	551	558.65	539.5	541	-7.3	
HDFC	2,228.00	2,252.15	2,179.30	2,186.80	-30.9	
HINDALCO	226	230	222	222.8	-3.2	
MARUTI	7,250.00	7,252.35	7,017.00	7,057.00	-101.4	
WIPRO	357.9	358.8	349.55	350.1	-5.4	
BPCL	391	393.4	381.2	383.8	-5.95	
IT	1,141.50	1,147.80	1,112.45	1,117.20	-18.3	
BAJAJ-AUTO	3,100.00	3,160.00	3,041.00	3,045.00	-50.7	
TITAN	1,331.00	1,345.00	1,300.35	1,304.80	-22.35	
HCLTECH	840.5	846	822.5	825	-15.5	
INFY	1,137.00	1,143.50	1,111.25	1,118.80	-21.25	
BAJAJFINSV	8,940.00	9,009.00	8,642.75	8,690.00	-109.7	
TECHM	875	880	855.25	860.1	-17.55	
DIVISLAB	3,567.95	3,568.90	3,450.00	3,464.85	-72.2	
CIPLA	750.1	754.55	728.2	732.75	-15.7	
BAHARTIARTL	476.5	477.9	458.65	464.3	-9.95	
UPL	428.8	430.15	417.6	418.25	-9.2	
HEROMOTOCO	3,079.50	3,094.85	3,001.00	3,007.00	-67.15	
HDFCBANK	1,451.30	1,464.40	1,397.00	1,406.50	-31.7	
SHREECAM	24,580.00	24,695.95	23,547.05	23,700.00	-543.55	
DREDDY	4,998.00	5,017.00	4,781.00	4,803.00	-112.5	
ANIANPAINT	2,197.25	2,208.70	2,150.00	2,156.00	-51.9	
BAIFINANCE	4,822.00	4,825.00	4,675.00	4,693.95	-116.7	
SUNPHARMA	521.2	536	504.15	507	-13.15	
KOTAKBANK	1,939.00	1,939.00	1,853.10	1,867.70	-57.2	
AXISBANK	625	630	596	598.35	-21.3	
EICHERMOT	2,696.00	2,727.00	2,581.25	2,593.00	-100.3	

NIFTY NEXT 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY NEXT 50	30,518.05	30,538.70	29,863.65	29,916.30	-460.85	
BANKBARODA	47.55	50.7	47.3	48.95	2.1	
PNB	36.65	37.6	36.15	37.25	0.85	
BANDHANBNK	30.62	37.495	30.15	36.735	8.6	
GICRE	138.35	141.45	137.45	139.5	2.45	
HDFCAMC	2,480.00	2,568.45	2,480.00	2,515.00	42.75	
ALKEM	2,800.00	2,815.00	2,781.00	2,809.00	33.35	
ICICIGI	1,380.00	1,397.70	1,370.85	1,384.00	11.75	
ABBOTINDIA	15,386.25	15,424.00	15,300.00	15,400.05	102.4	
PECF	105	107.6	104.7	105.25	0.5	
AMBIJACEM	255.95	259.2	255.2	255.9	0.75	
PGHH	10,575.00	10,818.70	10,575.00	10,630.00	27.05	
SBICARD	811.95	818	804.05	807.35	1.3	
LUPIN	903	907.3	883.8	894.8	-0.55	
NMDC	93.35	96.35	92.8	93.15	-0.15	
OFSS	3,035.00	3,063.55	3,010.00	3,010.75	-6.7	
NAUKRI	4,050.00	4,099.00	4,001.30	4,035.00	-12.9	
DMART	2,370.00	2,391.50	2,350.00	2,361.00	-19.25	
IGL	457.9	461.4	448.6	450.4	-3.75	
ICICIPRULI	451	459.7	442	445	-4.35	
BERGEPAINT	642	642.5	631	635.5	-6.7	
HAVELLS	825.55	833.2	812	812.05	-8.75	
HINDPETRO	214.5	215.95	210.75	211.95	-2.5	
DABUR	508.8	510.5	500.05	501.3	-6.6	
INFRATEL	220	227	214.05	216	-2.9	
PRFNET	259	261.45	253.5	254.7	-3.65	
HINDZINC	222.95	223.35	218	218.85	-3.85	
TINTPHARM	2,635.00	2,639.05	2,575.20	2,577.25	-45.4	
GODREJCP	711.7	713	692.15	696	-12.3	
MUTOOFTFN	1,140.00	1,151.05	1,115.00	1,117.05	-20.7	
ACC	1,710.00	1,716.00	1,660.00	1,664.95	-31.65	
CADILAH	431.5	432.35	419.55	421	-8.1	
BOSCHLT	13,200.00	13,783.35	12,631.80	12,715.00	-26.5	
TATACONSUM	529.25	529.4	508.4	515.95	-10.9	
MOTHERSUMI	146.85	148.3	141.75	142.3	-3.05	
SIEMENS	1,395.00	1,413.90	1,358.00	1,362.95	-29.75	
UBL	1,072.00	1,087.20	1,043.00	1,047.00	-25	
CONCOR	410.95	413.35	398.65	401	-9.95	
PEL	1,449.65	1,451.25	1,384.50	1,390.00	-35.45	
PIDILITIND	1,589.00	1,592.80	1,540.00	1,546.80	-39.6	
MCDOWELL-N	567.9	569.9	547.05	549.05	-14.35	
MARICO	378.9	379.8	367.2	368.3	-9.75	
AUROPHARMA	885	889.85	850.3	853.75	-25.5	
BIOCON	440	444	418.65	419.9	-13.65	
ADANTTRANS	382.75	385.3	344.55	368	-12.25	
COLPAL	1,564.00	1,564.00	1,498.05	1,501.65	-54.2	
INDFO	1,655.00	1,661.85	1,582.45	1,594.00	-62.3	
DLF	191.2	191.2	182.1	182.25	-7.25	
ADANIGREEN	1,205.15	1,205.15	1,144.90	1,144.90	-60.25	
BAJAJHLING	3,124.85	3,148.80	2,883.00	2,919.80	-173.1	
LTI	3,368.75	3,375.55	3,080.20	3,128.00	-207.95	

## BSE 500

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP					
RELIANCE	1980	1992	1942.3	1947.75	SPIECJET	72	72.45	68.75	69.45
ADANI PORTS	395.65	404.8	384.6	398.8	DIVISLAB	3555	3569.95	3450	3472.8
IDEA	10.25	10.35	9.64	9.72	SILFLPAMED	438	479.25	426.25	461.75
BAJFINANCE	4820	4823.7	4675.2	4689.65	ICICIPRULI	540	459.25	443.9	448
ICICIBANK	483	489.8	471.3	472.65	ACC	1708.7	1715	1660.95	1663.55
SBIN	244.2	249.8	241.65	243.15	BRITANNIA	3578.9	3579.9	3530.4	3556.2
INDUSINDBK	864	874.8	845.4	854.5	IOCL	86.8	87.1	85.5	85.75
SKTRANSFIN	1037	1087.65	1033.2	1065.55	GODRE/PROP	1120	1144.15	1075	1083.1
HDFCBANK	1450	1464	1397.25	1402.65	J&K BANK	25.5	25.5	23	23
TCES	2727	2730	2688.4	2700.7	GUJGAS	337.95	345.7	334.95	337.95
TATAMOTORS	175	176.85	169.25	171.4	APOLLOHOSP	2326.2	2353.75	2237	2241.6
TIINDIA	868	868	825.5	835.6	MOTHERSUMI	147	148.35	147.5	142.6
IBULHSGFIN	183.95	195.75	183.95	185.3	POWERGRID	194.1	197.2	193.75	195.3
TATASTEEL	548.3	558.75	539.6	541	TATAINDIA	1496	1512.8	1464.9	1483.2
FEDERALBANK	59	61.5	58.85	59.15	BATALEXSI	1563	1590	1529.35	1536.7
AXISBANK	625.9	630	596	600	TATACONSUM	530.9	530.9	508.35	514.3
DREDDY	5000	5018.7	4784	4806.45	PEL	1450	1450.8	1385.05	1388.85
TATAPOWER	60.55	63.85	60.3	61.5	TATACHEM	372.1	376.05	363.1	367
BANDHANBNK	361	374.95	361	368	PETRONET	259.8	261.3	251.5	257.45
BAJAJFINSV	8949	9005.85	8647.6	8723.5	LAURUSLABS	290.9	292.3	282.05	285.05
BSOCLTD	13150.25	13971.8	12485.35	12868.3	BALKRISIND	1672	1672	1598	1602.9
ITC	195.5	198	192.55	193.7	ESCORTS	1419.5	1420	1382.7	1394.15
HDFC	2252	2252.45	2179.45	2190.3	ICICIGI	1371.6	1397	1371.6	1380.95
KOTAKBANK	1940	1940	1853.2	1862.45	SBI LIFE	842.5	864.55	842.5	848.65
BANKBARODA	47.5	50.7	47.4	49	JUBLFOOD	2585	2585	2420	2425.7
HCLTECH	841	847.6	822.55	824.5	CADILAHC	429.5	432	419.5	421.2
RBLBANK	289	235.95	222.75	226.6	COFORGE	2431	2482.7	2410.75	2423.6
INFY	1139	1140.5	1111.7	1116.2	AMBER	2252.4	2252.4	2160.5	2171.7
MARUTI	7210	7250	7020	7054.7	GRAPHITE	259.65	259.65	236.2	239.1
BHARTIARTL	476.9	477.9	458.85	463.95	AFLE	3390	3390	3144.2	3161.4
CIPLA	751	754	728.3	731.35	DMART	2370.5	2399.5	2350	2361.7
L&THT	73.35	76.35	73.3	74.3	JSWSTEEL	344.2	345.8	337.25	338.35
PNB	30.45	32.55	30.45	31.35	IGL	458	461.25	455.15	449.9
HDFC AMC	2490	2569.45	2480.8	2512.7	MINDTREE	1439.95	1439.95	1372.15	1376.15
COALINDIA	123.5	126.7	123.25	124	PIIND	2356.1	2360.15	2192	2225.6
MUTHOOTFIN	1146	1150.65	1115.5	1118.65	WOCKPHARMA	419	421	390	394.65
ONGC	77.15	81.75	77.15	80.58	MCX	1620.1	1657	1601.65	1622.85
GRASSIM	851.25	873.7	839.75	842.55	EXIDEIND	175.95	176	170.78	171.35
NESTLEIND	1774.1	1779.95	1732.5	17526.1	PPC	105.05	107.55	104.75	105.45
ASIANPAINT	2207.6	2208.75	2150	2154.3	JKTYRE	82.25	82.25	79.3	80.75
DLF	192	192	182	182.95	NCC	43.5	44.2	42.05	42.5
VEDL	117.45	117.9	113.3	114	SBICARD	811.95	817.6	804.7	805.95
MRF	80696	80698.9	75653.25	76220.7	SIR	5346.9	5349.2	5081.5	5105.25
INDUSTALSTEL	241	247.8	232	235					
INDIGO	1660	1663.3	1582.55	1591					
HDFCLIFE	671.5	688.35	662.3	665.65					
M&M	730.45	733	716.3	719.7					
LT	1142.8	1146	1112.6	1115.7					
MANAPPURAM	164.75	172.65	162.75	167.35					
AUROPHARMA	882.5	889.1	850.65	852.65					
INFRASTAR	219	226.95	214.15	215.1					
TELELEASE	2444	2444	2370.2	2395					
WIPRO	357.55	358.5	349.55	350					
ADANIANT	408.9	411.55	393.2	399.4					
DABUR	506.1	512.5	500	509.9					
PVR	1282.35	1342.45	1281	1306.85					
ADANIGAS	338.2	341	319.7	324.75					
SUNPHARMA	521.35	526	504.5	506.35					
M&MFIN	168.95	168.95	160.3	161.1					
GAIL	101.1	103.37	100.5	102.25					
BEL	108	110.35	105.9	106.85					
LTI	3350	3347.7	3080.95	3108.4					
NTPC	94.7	94.9	92.85	93.9					
ASHOKLEY	91.25	92.1	88.1	89.55					
CANBK	94	100.8	94	96.55					
BIOCON	443	443.65	418.8	420.05					
FCONSUMER	9.11	9.11	8.83	9.11					
HEROMOTOCO	3074	3091.5	3002	3007.7					
HINDALCO	327	229.9	222.35	223.4					
IDFCFIRSTB	37.2	37.3	35.6	35.8					
UPCL	428.35	429.8	417.8	418.55					
IPCALAB	2247	2247	2080.5	2125.5					
BAIL	43.45	44.8	42.55	43.05					
SPCL	391.5	393	381.4	382.2					
LUPIN	904.5	907.65	889	894.55					
TITAN	1355	1355	1300.2	1305.4					
BAJAJ-AUTO	3091	3159.85	3040.25	3085.35					
ZEEL	188.9	193.5	187.1	188.55					
GRANULES	423	424.9	407.7	414.35					
DCBBANK	97.1	104.25	96.9	102.8					
EICHERMOT	2702	2724.9	2581.45	2595.15					
BHARATFOUR	496.5	509	493.35	495.85					
HINDUNILVR	2165	2169.9	2127.75	2134.15					
UTTRACMECO	4875	4932.05	4803.9	4823.25					
TECHM	872	872.55	855.35	862.85					
HGL	791.1	817.5	790.45	808.5					
MAL	946.95	949.9	928.5	930.2					
HEG	840	846.95	772.05	797.45					
COPAL	1557	1559.65	1498.45	1505.15					
AMBUJACEM	253.5	259.1	255.25	256.15					
GLNMARKET	485.15	484.6	464.5	466.4					
APOLLOTYRE	177.55	178.5	172.05	173.45					
NHPC	20.65	21	20.65	20.8					
BHEL	31.5	31.9	30.35	30.65					
SUNTECK	327.7	375.6	302	306.85					
RECLTD	118	119.2	115.8	116.85					
CHOLAFIN	361.25	366.6	351.9	352.9					
ALOKESTX	21.95	22.25	21	21.35					
HINDPETRO*	214.5	215.7	211	211.95					
LICHSGFIN	326	331.85	321.2	322.9					
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# Coast Guard seizes 100 kg heroin meant for terrorism

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In one of the major drug hauls in recent times with ramifications of narco-terrorism, the Indian Coast Guard seized more than 100 kilos of heroin in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday. The drug was recovered from a Sri Lankan boat which had received the consignment from a dhow in Karachi.

While investigations are on, officials said here the haul was the result of nearly nine day long operation. It ended in the seizure in the high seas south of Thoothukudi. Six crew members, reportedly Sri Lankan nations, were detained and their questioning was on, they added. Officials from various agencies were now questioning the detained crew.

Preliminary probe indicated that the crew members told the Coast Guard the contraband was transferred to the Sri Lankan vessel Shenya Duwa on the high seas near Karachi by a Pakistani dhow. The consignment was to be ferried to western countries and Australia, sources said.

It was suspected Pakistan was sending the consignment to fund terrorism in several nations. The Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) and the Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) in the past used narcotics to fund their terror campaign in Kashmir.

The search of the Sri Lankan boat also led the Coast



Guard to the recovery of five 9mm pistols and a satellite phone set. Moreover, the contraband was concealed in an empty fuel tank on the boat, officials said.

The seizure on Wednesday was carried out by Coast Guard (ICG) ship Vaibhav. Other ships of the force including Vikram, Samar, Abhivav and Aadesh and a Coast Guard Dornier aircraft were also involved in anti-smuggling operations, despite rough sea conditions.

A similar seizure was conducted by the Coast Guard last year and foiled an attempt by Pakistan to smuggle heroin worth over ₹500 crore.

The narcotics were recovered from a boat in October last year off Porbandar.

After being intercepted, the boat crew set the vessel afire and also tried to destroy the drugs. The Anti-Terrorism

Squad of the Gujarat police arrested nine Iranians from the boat, the officials said.

The Iranian boat was loaded off the Gwadar port in Pakistan. Occupants of the boat set it ablaze as the Coast Guard and ATS personnel closed in. The boat sank off the Gujarat coast near Porbandar.

The interrogation of the detained crew revealed one Pakistani national named Hamid Malek had sent the consignment, which was loaded in the Iranian boat off Gwadar port of Pakistan.

The seizure came about after the ATS had received a tip-off that an Iranian boat will make an attempt to smuggle in heroin along the Gujarat coast.

The ATS contacted the Coast Guard and the Marine Task Force of the Gujarat police to launch an operation.

## Prez, V-P, PM condole death of Ahmed Patel



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and a host of leaders including Congress president Sonia Gandhi and BJP chief JP Nadda condoled the death of senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel and hailed his contribution to his party and public life.

Kovind said he was distressed to learn that Patel is no more. "An astute Parliamentarian, Shri Patel combined the skills of a strategist and the charm of a mass leader. His amiability won him friends across party lines. My condolences to his family and friends," he tweeted and later at a public function he paid tributes in the mids of his speech.

Patel, 71, died at a Gurugram hospital in the early hours of Wednesday due to multiple organ failure more than a month after he tested positive for COVID-19. Patel, who leaves behind his wife, son and daughter, is the second senior Congress leader to have died due to COVID-related complications in two days. On Monday, former Assam chief minister Tarun Gogoi died in Guwahati.

In a statement, the Congress said party workers across the country are deeply pained by Patel's demise. As a mark of

respect, the Congress party flag will fly at half mast for the next three days, the party said.

Vice president Naidu said he was deeply saddened. "He was an able parliamentarian and always maintained cordial relations with leaders across the political spectrum," the Vice President Secretariat tweeted quoting Naidu.

Prime Minister Modi said Patel's role in strengthening the Congress will always be remembered. "Known for his sharp mind, his role in strengthening the Congress would always be remembered. Spoke to his son Faisal and expressed condolences. May Ahmed Bhai's soul rest in peace," Modi said in a tweet.

Union ministers Amit Shah, Prakash Javadekar, Rajnath Singh and Smriti Irani were among the others who condoled the death of the Congress' key strategist.

Several top Congress leaders expressed grief, with Sonia Gandhi mourning the loss of an "irreplaceable comrade" and Rahul Gandhi saying Patel "lived and breathed Congress" and stood with the party through its most difficult times.

The Congress president said in her message that Patel, who served as her political advisor for years and was AICC treasurer, had dedicated his entire life to the Congress.

"I have lost an irreplaceable comrade, a faithful colleague and a friend. I mourn his passing and I feel deeply for his bereaved family to whom I offer my sincere feelings of empathy and support," Sonia Gandhi said. "It is a sad day. Shri Ahmed Patel was a pillar of the Congress. He lived and breathed Congress and stood with

the party through its most difficult times. He was a tremendous asset," Rahul Gandhi said in his message.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra described him as not only a wise and experienced colleague to whom she constantly turned for advice and counsel but also as a friend "who stood by us all, steadfast, loyal, and dependable to the end".

The chief ministers of Congress-ruled States—Rajasthan's Ashok Gehlot, Punjab's Amarinder Singh, Chhattisgarh's Bhupesh Baghel and Puducherry's V Narayanasamy and a host of other party leaders paid tributes to the leader who always maintained a low profile.

BJP chief J P Nadda said, "Deeply anguished to hear about the demise of veteran Congress leader Shri Ahmed Patel Ji. I pray for strength to the family members and his supporters at this hour of grief. Om Shanti."

While Home Minister Amit Shah said the news about the death of Ahmed Patel who made a significant contribution to the Congress party and public life is too sad, the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Patel was a seasoned leader, who made remarkable contribution to his party and to public life. "Ahmed Bhai had friends across party lines. My thoughts are with his family and well-wishers in this sad hour," Singh tweeted.

Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Delhi Yogi Adityanath Mamata Banerjee, Hemant Soren and Arvind Kejriwal also mourned Patel's demise and admired his virtues.

## Foundation stone for new Parliament building to be laid in first half of Dec by PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The foundation stone for the new Parliament building is likely to be laid in the first half of December by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Besides, around five statues, including that of Mahatma Gandhi as well as Bhim Rao Ambedkar that are present in the existing Parliament complex, are expected to be temporarily relocated due to the construction work. The construction of the new building is likely to be completed by October 2022. The new Parliament building, which is triangular in its design, will come up at plot number 118 of the Parliament House estate.

According to sources, although December 10 is the proposed date of laying the new Parliament building's foundation stone, the final date would depend on the PM's availability.

The relocated statues will be reinstalled at prominent places within the new complex once the project is completed.

Tata Projects Limited (TPL) had won the contract to build a new Parliament building for ₹861.90 crore in

September.

As per the design by HCP, the new Parliament complex will have a total of six entrances: a ceremonial entrance for the PM and the President; a ceremonial entrance in general; one for the Lok Sabha Speaker, one for Rajya Sabha Chairperson, and MPs; another entrance for MPs; as well as two entrances for the public.

As per the plan, the new parliament building will have separate offices for all MPs and as a step towards creating "paperless offices", it will be equipped with the latest digital interfaces. The new Parliament building is a part of the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) and central government's Central Vista Project.

The Central Vista Project helmed jointly by the CPWD and the Centre also included a complete revamp of Rajpath — a 3 km long path between Rashtrapati Bhawan and India Gate. The Modi government had kick-started the process of bidding while focusing on the need of a new Parliament building earlier this year.

# Kovind urges lawmakers to engage in healthy dialogue



PNS ■ NEW DELHI/KEVADIA (GUJARAT)

President Ram Nath Kovind on Wednesday said elected representatives should engage in a healthy dialogue in Parliament and legislative Assemblies and refrain from using unparliamentary language during debates in the House. Use of unparliamentary language and indiscipline in the House by elected members hurts the sentiments of people who elect them, Kovind said addressing the inaugural session of 80th All India Presiding Officers' Conference at Tent City in Gujarat's Kevadia village, near the Statue of Unity in Narmada district.

"It is expected from elected representatives that they remain committed to democratic values. The biggest challenge for elected representatives and democratic institutions is to fulfill the expectations of people. I believe that people of this country expect that their

elected representatives to follow parliamentary norms. People get hurt when their elected representatives use unparliamentary words or indulge in indiscipline in Parliament or in the Assembly," Kovind said.

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla were also present on the occasion and addressed the session. Naidu talked about the judiciary process and cited some judgments that gave a distinct impression of the judiciary's overreach. The higher judiciary deciding on Diwali fireworks, denying the executive any role in the appointment of judges through collegiums, invalidating the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act seeking to enforce accountability and transparency were some of the instances of judicial overreach cited by the vice president.

Naidu stressed that the legislature, the executive and the judiciary are bound to work within their respective domains as defined in the Constitution.

Naidu said harmony lies in each organ doing its job, without interfering with that of the others. This warrants a spirit of mutual respect, responsibility and restraint. Unfortunately,

there have been several instances of crossing the boundaries," Naidu who is also the Chairman of Rajya Saha stated in his address at the 80th All India Presiding Officers' Conference.

Talking about the executive, the vice president said there have been cases when rules framed under the delegated "subordinate legislation" violated the provisions of the original legislation passed by Parliament. Expressing concern over the frequent disruptions in the legislatures, Naidu said the "decency, dignity and decorum" of the temples of democracy will be upheld only through adherence to three "Ds" — debate, discuss and decide.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla stressed on harmonious coordination between the legislature, executive and judiciary. Addressing the Conference, he said constitution provides the basis for the functioning of parliament and state assemblies according to people's aspirations. In a democracy, there can be a difference of opinion among institutions. But with improvement in procedures, constitutional provisions and democratic norms, solutions can be found, he said.

## Sidhu likely to be back in Punjab Cabinet



PNS ■ NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH

After months of strained relationship, cricketer-turned-politician and Amritsar MLA Navjot Singh Sidhu is likely to be back in the Punjab Cabinet. The former Lok Sabh and Rajya Sabha MP had quit his parent party BJP over differences and joined the Congress before the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, who had axed Sidhu from his cabinet early this year, invited the former Indian skipper over lunch at his official residence in Chandigarh triggering speculation that Sidhu may be re-inducted into the State Cabinet.

Both leaders have not been on the best of terms since May last year when the Punjab CM accused the former cricketer of the "inept handling" of the Local Government Department, claiming it resulted in "poor performance" of the Congress in urban areas during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Sidhu was stripped of key

portfolios in a cabinet reshuffle, after which he resigned from the state cabinet and stayed away from all Congress activities.

In between, there were also rumours that Sidhu can join Aam Admi Party which did not materialise as the famous television humorist had put conditions that he should be announced as the party's Chief Ministerial candidate when the next assembly elections in Punjab was to be announced.

According to sources close to the chief minister, both leaders spent an hour together at Amarinder Singh's residence and shared thoughts on various issues. "It was a warm and cordial luncheon meeting that saw Captain Amarinder and Navjot Singh Sidhu discuss a host of important political matters of Punjab and national interest. The two leaders spent a pleasant over an hour sharing thoughts on vital issues," said the sources.

Earlier, Sidhu had made a public appearance at a "tractor rally" against the Centre's farm laws in Moga last month where party leader Rahul Gandhi, Amarinder Singh and others were also present. Sidhu attended the "tractor rally" after AICC general secretary Harish Rawat met him at his residence in Amritsar.

## India gets two predator drones from US to boost recce along LAC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to enhance surveillance capabilities and detect movement of the adversary especially on the Line of Actual Control (LAC), India has acquired two predator drones from the US. In the months to come, 18 more such sophisticated drones will be inducted into the Indian Navy.

The two drones were made operational earlier this week by the Navy in south India. These drones have an endurance capability of more than 30 hours and can relay top quality visuals to the Navy. Besides getting deployed in the Indian Ocean region there, security establishment also plans to use these machines in Eastern Ladakh and eastern sector of the LAC covering Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, source said here on Wednesday.

They said the Predator drones were acquired through the emergency route in the wake of the nearly seven month long stand-off on the LAC in eastern Ladakh. The two drones were procured under lease agreement valid for more than a year.

A US crew was assisting the Navy in maintenance and technical issues handling the drone.

## Harsh Vardhan calls for robust Covid vaccine manufacturing, delivery module in country

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the world waits with bated breath for a vaccine to combat Covid-19, Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan, on Wednesday sought the help of innovators and industry to create a robust Covid-19 vaccine manufacturing and delivery mechanism.

In a message, delivered at the inaugural session of the Global R&D Summit 2020, organised jointly by FICCI and the Department of Science and Technology, Vardhan said research and innovation has become a way of life and their outcomes have been helping a wide of range of industries and communities to develop various solutions such as the latest delivery App to safer cars to breakthrough treatment for illnesses.

"The current pandemic has only reinforced our belief in innovation and research and development. They are not only helping in better disease management but also making our nation resilient and self-reliant," the Minister said. He cited the example of how industry in the country used the opportunity created by the Covid-19 pandemic to produce five lakh PPE kits per day from scratch.

"As the world raises to find



a cure and vaccine for Covid-19, India is looking to be self-reliant in both - vaccine and its mass production. Called as the pharmacy of the world, India has the largest capacity to produce Covid-19 vaccines," he added.

India, with second-highest coronavirus cases after the US, has at least five vaccine candidates under human trial, of which three candidates are undergoing advanced Phase-2/3 clinical trials to establish safety and efficacy.

Gururaj Deshpande, founder of Tejas Network and many other successful firms, said directed research, by universities to solve specific problems for industry, will not lead to breakthrough innovations.

"We need to find a way so that the industry seeks good thinkers, good innovators and rub shoulders with them to see how their problems can be solved. The Governments on the other hand have to reduce the friction and encourage people to make these connections," Deshpande said.

## Swami Gaud joins BJP ahead of local bodies polls

**TRS leader has met JP Nadda**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

TRS leader and former Chairman of Legislative Council Swami Gaud has joined the BJP ahead of local bodies elections in Hyderabad.

The BJP leadership was trying, for sometime, to rope in the important TRS leader to spread saffron wings in the state.

Gaud has met key central leaders including BJP president J P Nadda.

Party leaders Bandi Sanjay and union minister G Kishan Reddy reportedly had earlier met Swamy and invited him into the party.

He was made MLC and chairman after formation of separate Telangana state. His tenure as MLC from Medak-Nizamabad, Karimnagar and Adilabad constituency ended last year.

## ED files chargesheet in Bitumen scam



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday filed supplementary Prosecution Complaint (chargesheet in police parlance) against accused firm Classic Coal Construction Pvt Ltd and others under money laundering charge for confiscation of attached properties and award of punishment in connection with the bitumen scam worth several crore.

The prosecution complaint under Prevention of Money Laundering Act was filed before the Special Judge (PMLA), Ranchi against Classic Coal Construction Pvt. Ltd, Classic Multiplex Pvt Ltd and their directors Dilip Kumar

Singh and Kumar Pranav in a case of bitumen scam in Jharkhand.

"The Prosecution Complaint has been filed before the Court with a prayer for confiscation of attached properties totalling to ₹1.83 crore apart from awarding punishment to the accused persons," the ED said in a statement.

The attached assets include three immovable properties in the form of a commercial property and a residential property, both at Ranchi and a plot in Ramgarh, held in the name of the accused firms and the erstwhile Managing Director of the Company, Late Pawan Kumar Singh, it said.

The ED initiated investi-

### CBI raids locations in 2 graft cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday conducted searches at various places in Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Kerala in connection with two separate cases registered against accused including Chief Engineer (Railways), Assistant Director, India Tourism (Government of India) and

others related to possession of disproportionate assets and other case for accepting bribe.

"During searches, cash of Rs one crore (approximately), documents related to investment, jewellery etc. have been recovered at the premises of the accused, family members, other private persons/suspects," the CBI said in a statement.

gation under PMLA on the basis of four FIRs and charge sheets filed by ACB, CBI, Ranchi under various IPC sections relating to criminal conspiracy, cheating and forgery besides provisions of Prevention of Corruption Act against the accused firms, twenty two Engineers of RCD Department of Jharkhand government and two others.

"Ignoring the mandate to procure bitumen from the government undertaking Oil companies like HPCL, IOCL, BPCL, etc., the directors of the company submitted 492 fake/forged invoices pertaining to HPCL, Ramnagar, West Bengal, to the RCD Dept. showing procurement of 4630

MT of bitumen for road works and got payment in connivance with the departmental engineers on strength of these fake/forged bills to the tune of Rs. 6.88 crores, the ED said.

Investigation under PMLA revealed that this ill-gotten money was used to create assets and to meet miscellaneous expenditure pertaining to the company and its directors. After identification of Proceeds of Crime, two Provisional Attachment Orders attaching assets worth ₹2.08 crores and 1.83 crores were issued.

Earlier, a Prosecution Complaint was filed and now this supplementary complaint has been filed for conducting trial against accused.

## India's Covid-19 caseload goes past 92L with 44,376 new cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's Covid-19 caseload went past 92 lakh with 44,376 new cases reported in a day, while the number of recoveries surged to 86.42 lakh, the Union Health Ministry said on Wednesday.

The number of total coronavirus cases rose to 92,22,216 in the country, while the death toll due to the disease climbed to 1,34,699 with 481 new fatalities, said the Ministry. According to the health ministry, more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

The active caseload shot up to 4,44,746, an increase of 6,079 cases from Tuesday, even though it remained below five lakh for the 15th consecutive day, accounting for 4.82 per cent of the total cases, it added.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 86,42,771, pushing the national recovery rate to 93.72 per cent, while the Covid-19 case fatality rate stands at 1.46 per cent.

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on



August 7,30-lakh mark on August 23 and 40-lakh mark on September 5.

It went past 50 lakh on September 16, 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, 80 lakh on October 29 and 90 lakh on November 20.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), over 13.48 crore samples were tested for Covid-19 up to November 24, including 11,59,032 on Tuesday.

The 481 new fatalities

include 109 from Delhi, 49 from West Bengal, 33 each from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, 30 from Maharashtra, 24 from Kerala, 22 from Punjab and 21 from Chhattisgarh.

Of the 1,34,699 deaths reported in the country so far due to the disease, Maharashtra accounts for 46,683, followed by Karnataka (11,695), Tamil Nadu (11,639), Delhi (8,621), West Bengal (8,121), Uttar Pradesh (7,615), Andhra Pradesh (6,956), Punjab (4,653) and Gujarat (3,892).



# Pak host to largest number of UN proscribed terrorists: India

**United Nations:** India has reminded Pakistan, the “host to the world’s largest number of UN proscribed terrorists and entities”, of Abbottabad, the garrison city where al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden hid for years and was killed, in a hard-hitting response as Islamabad’s UN envoy gave a “dossier of lies” to Secretary General Antonio Guterres.

India’s Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador T S Tirumurti on Tuesday tweeted that the “dossier of lies presented by Pakistan enjoys zero credibility”. “Concocting documents and peddling false narratives is

not new to Pakistan, host to the world’s largest number of UN proscribed terrorists and entities. Remember Abbottabad!” he said.

The Indian Ambassador’s tweet was in response to Islamabad’s UN envoy Munir Akram meeting Guterres to hand over the dossier from the Pakistan government that alleged India was promoting terrorism in the country.

In his stinging tweet, Tirumurti made a reference to the Pakistani garrison city of Abbottabad, where bin Laden was hiding for years and was killed in an operation by the US Navy Seals in May, 2011.

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 Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) in Nagrota in Jammu which was foiled by security forces on November 19.

The heads of missions were provided with a comprehensive “information docket” giving the details of the incident, and also a list of items and ammunition 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.

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. India is all set to join the powerful UN Security Council as a non-permanent member for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2021.

India is all set to join the powerful UN Security Council as a non-permanent member for a 2-year term beginning January 1, 2021

## Jaishankar hails contributions of Indian diaspora in Bahrain in strengthening bilateral ties

**Manama:** External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday virtually interacted with the members of the Indian diaspora in Bahrain via video conference and appreciated their valuable contributions to the strengthening of the bilateral ties.

Jaishankar is on a two-day visit to Bahrain from November 24 to 25. It is the first leg of his six-day three-nation tour to Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Seychelles, beginning Tuesday. The visit is seen as important as it comes in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic that has wreaked havoc across the world.

“Glad to interact virtually, with members of the Indian community in Bahrain. Thank them for keeping India’s flag flying high. Appreciate their valuable contribution to the strengthening of our bilateral ties,” Jaishankar tweeted soon after the online interaction.

Earlier in the day, he visited the centuries-old Lord Sri Krishna temple at the Bahrain capital, Manama.

“Began the day with darshan at the 200 year-old Shreenathji Temple at Manama. A testimony to our time-tested and close bonds with Bahrain.

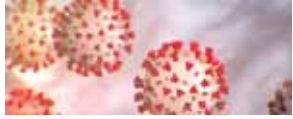
Proud of Indian diaspora’s achievements, contributions to society: Dutch PM to India’s envoy

PTI ■ THE HAGUE

Noting that the Netherlands is home to one of the largest Indian diasporas in Europe, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte has said that he was proud of their achievements and contributions to the society.

In a letter to India’s Ambassador to the Netherlands Venu Rajamony, who completes his term this month, the prime minister cited the seven-decade-long Indo-Dutch bilateral relations and said that both the countries were working together closely on different fields including water, agriculture and renewable energy.

## Russia sees record number of virus deaths again



**Moscow:** Russian authorities have registered a record number of coronavirus deaths for a second straight day. The government coronavirus task force reported 507 new deaths on Wednesday, the country’s highest daily toll.

The previous record of 491 deaths was reported on Tuesday. A total of 37,538 people have died from the coronavirus in Russia, according to the task force. Russia has been swept by a rapid resurgence of the outbreak this fall, with numbers of confirmed infections and deaths hitting new highs almost daily and significantly exceeding those reported in the spring.

AP

## Biden seeks swift Cabinet votes, but GOP Senate stays silent

**Washington:** As President-elect Joe Biden started rolling out his administrative team, one voice has been notably silent: Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

Senate Republicans will hold great sway in confirming or denying Biden’s Cabinet nominees, regardless of which party controls the narrowly split Senate after runoff elections. But key Republican senators, including the GOP leader, are keeping quiet, for now, choosing their battles ahead.

In announcing his national security team, Biden

appealed Tuesday to the Senate to give the nominees “a prompt hearing” and “begin the work to heal and unite America and the world.”

The soonest the Senate would consider the nominations is Inauguration Day, Jan. 20, when past presidents often have been able to win swift confirmation of top national security officials shortly after taking the oath of office.

But with President Donald Trump still disputing the election, McConnell is setting the tone for Senate Republicans by not publicly congratulating Biden or acknowledging

Trump’s defeat.

He wants to give the president time to contest the vote, even as Trump’s legal team has been losing most of the cases. Even if McConnell is willing to accept Biden’s choices for top Cabinet positions, the Republican leader is not expected to allow easy Senate confirmation without a political price.

He is known for driving hard bargains even on routine business, and Republicans are eager to level payback on Democrats for running out the clock with procedural hurdles to Trump’s nominees.

## Analysis: Biden prioritises experience with Cabinet picks

**New York:** President-elect Joe Biden has prized staying power over star power when making his first wave of Cabinet picks and choices for White House staff, with a premium placed on government experience and proficiency as he looks to rebuild a depleted and demoralized federal bureaucracy.

With an eye in part toward making selections who may have to seek approval from a Republican-controlled Senate, Biden has prioritized choosing qualified professionals while eschewing flashy names. Even the most recognizable pick — John Kerry — lacks the show-

manship that has defined the Trump era.

In sharp contrast to President Donald Trump, who openly distrusted the very government he led, Biden has showcased a faith in bureaucracy that was born of his nearly five decades in Washington.

Surrounding himself with longtime aides and veterans of the Obama administration, many of whom have already worked together for years, Biden has so far rolled out a team of careerists with bursting resumes and little need of a learning curve.

## Trump vents about election as agencies aid Biden transition

**Washington:** President Donald Trump insisted on Tuesday that he is not giving up his fight to overturn the election results, but across the federal government, preparations were beginning in earnest to support President-elect Joe Biden’s incoming administration.

Within hours of the General Services Administration’s acknowledgement Monday evening of Biden’s victory in the Nov. 3 election, career federal officials opened the doors of agencies to hundreds of transition aides ready to prepare for his Jan. 20 inauguration.

And on Tuesday, Trump signed off on allowing Biden to receive the presidential daily brief, the highly classified briefing prepared by the nation’s intelligence community for the government’s most senior leaders.

An administration official said logistics on when and where Biden will first receive the briefing were still being worked out.

Biden, in an interview with “NBC Nightly News,” said he was also working out a meeting with the White House’s coronavirus task force and vaccine distribution effort.

PTI

## Switzerland sets post-Brexit quota for British migrants

**Geneva:** The Swiss government says up to 3,500 migrants from Britain will be given permits to live and work in the Alpine nation next year, when Britain’s post-Brexit transition with the European Union expires. Britain’s departure from the EU means that it isn’t covered by Switzerland’s freedom of movement agreements with the 27-nation bloc.

The Swiss government said Wednesday up to 2,100 British citizens will receive long-term residency permits.

AP

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### PREPARE ROAD MAP FOR 2047, PM TELLS LU

energies. Teachers polish the academic, intellectual and physical development of the students and increase the capability of students,” the PM said.

He said the bigger issue is that we do not use our capabilities to the fullest. Citing the case of rail coach factory in Rae Bareilly, Modi said: “Investment was made years back and it was announced that rail coaches would be produced there, but only denting and painting work was carried out at the factory. In 2014, we changed the pattern and now it is working to its full capacity and will be counted as the biggest rail factory of the world.”

“The country was facing the problem of urea production and it was being imported because units producing urea were not working to their full capacity. Also, there was a lot of black marketing. We took some policy decisions under which urea was 100 percent neem-coated, which solved the problem. We had the will power to bring in hundred percent neem coating. Shortly, we will be restarting all the industries because a huge network of gas pipelines is being laid out,” he added.

Talking about the discouragement which the students are likely to face from people in their life continuously, he said they should believe in themselves and give 100 percent to what they believe. Sharing his experiences, he said he promoted khadi despite all the discouragement which he faced as the CM of Gujarat, with people calling it uncool and boring. “I organised a fashion show along with a university at Porbandar in 2002 and it was highly successful and gave the slogan ‘Khadi for nation before independence and khadi for fashion after independence,’” he added.

Recalling the words of poet Pradeep who was a student of Lucknow University, he said: “*Kabhi kabhi khud se baat karo, khud se bolo, apni nazar mein kya ho, mann ke tarazu mein tolo.*”

Talking about himself, he said he would often spend time in isolation for 5-7 days.

“One can get self-confidence only when one starts taking decisions for self. A caged mind cannot be productive,” he insisted. He urged the students to have discussions on the new education policy for its implementation.

Paying tributes to all the great personalities who emerged from Lucknow University, the PM said he has always experienced that people who have passed out from this university have given it a special place and their eyes light up when they recall their time with enthusiasm.

“It’s then only that one understands the meaning of ‘Lucknow hum par kita, hum fidaaye Lucknow’. Lucknow University carries a unique *roomaniyat*. A lot has changed but the *mizaj* of Lucknow University remains the same,” he said.

### SC UNDOES HC’S GAG ORDER ON AMARAVATI LAND SCAM FIR NEWS

“It is further directed that the news in regard to registration of FIR or in the context of the said FIR shall not be made public in any electronic, print or social media, to foist the office of a former Advocate General and also with respect to the other alleged accused persons,” the bench said in its order.

“Issue notice. Notice is not being issued to respondent no.5 (Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy) in view of the fact that the high court had not issued notice to respondent no.5,” it said.

The bench said it was not issuing notice to state’s former advocate general Dammalapati Srinivas, on whose plea the high court had passed the order, as he has appeared before it on caveat.

It allowed Srinivas to file counter affidavit in the matter within four weeks.

“We having listed the matter in the last week of January, 2021, the high court is requested not to finally decide the writ petition, in the meantime,” the bench said in its order.

The Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy government had earlier constituted the 10-member SIT, headed by a Deputy Inspector General of Police- rank IPS officer, on February 21 to conduct a comprehensive investigation into various alleged irregularities, particularly the land deals in the Amaravati Capital Region, during the previous Chandrababu Naidu regime.

The report of a Cabinet Sub-Committee on the procedural, legal and financial irregularities and fraudulent transactions concerned with various projects, including the issues related to land in the CRDA region will form the basis for the SIT probe, the government had said.

During the hearing conducted through video-conferencing, senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, appearing for Andhra Pradesh government, argued the high court could not have said that no investigation should take place in the case.

He said high court should not have given directions that no coercive action be taken and no gag order could have been passed.

“What is so special about this petition? The essence of this case is mala fide but where it is reflected in the petition,” the senior advocate said.

Dhavan argued that the writ petition before the high court is “political” and against the chief minister and is based on reliable sources.

“There is evidence in the complaint and it run into pages and pages. Now why will farmers purchase land in June and July and sell it in January. Now I ask myself whether this kind of complaint should be probed or not. There were series of transaction and whether it should not be probed,” he said.

Taking note of his submissions, the bench observed “We are of the view that the issue requires consideration and therefore we will issue notice.”

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for former advocate general Dammalapati Srinivas, said, “We have no objection and let the matter be heard.”

“It is absurd to say that someone had prior knowledge of the land being taken by state for capital. It is a public knowledge when such plans come up,” he said.

“It is worst than emergency,” Rohatgi said, adding, “It is easier to target somebody but it is tough to build reputation. A lawyer was targeted because he was advocate general for the previous government.”

Senior advocate Harish Salve, who also appeared for the former advocate general, said if the order was so wrong then state should have gone back to the high court and asked for vacating the order.

“Order was passed in September and now it is November but no reply is filed till now,” he said, adding that allegations were made against judges of the high court on social media.

“The high court had taken note of it as it knows what is happening in the state,” Salve said, adding, “Now they (state) are trying to make out a case that (former) advocate general had prior knowledge and purchased land. This is abuse of power.”

“This court should not encourage that they have no faith against the high court,” Salve said. Dhavan responded to their arguments saying the state was not against any court but a criminal case has to be investigated.

“The allegation discloses offence and it was not a knee jerk reaction. Such order cannot be passed,” he said.

### SONIA’S MAN FRIDAY PATEL SUCCUMBS TO COVID

Considered both as a crisis manager and consensus builder who never held any grudges,

Patel’s last political stroke was stitching an alliance with the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra despite the party making grave allegations against him in the past.

He was also a devout Muslim and interestingly would switch mosques every week for Friday prayers because Congress ticket seekers would queue up outside if he went to one mosque regularly.

Patel remained Sonia’s most trusted lieutenant for most of her tenure as the longest serving Congress president, standing by her side through sun and shade. Sonia said she has lost an “irreplaceable comrade, a faithful colleague and a friend”.

Patel was privy to innumerable party secrets, anecdotes and internal decision making. Patel, who kept a low profile, was the perfect organisation man who had an unflappable temperament and was a very effective crisis manager and troubleshooter.

Patel’s importance in the Congress dates back to the days of the late Rajiv. When Rajiv became Prime Minister, he did away with the post of principal secretary to the PM which his mother Indira Gandhi had created for PN Haksar and appointed three parliamentary secretaries -- Patel, Arun Singh and Oscar Fernandes.

The trio -- a photograph of them taking oath as parliamentary secretaries did the rounds on social media on Wednesday -- was famously referred to as ‘Amar, Akbar, Anthony’.

Just three months ago, in August, Patel had stepped in to quell a rebellion. His firm rejection of the public stand taken by 23 party leaders against Sonia helped the Congress Working Committee snub the demand for replacement of a Gandhi as party chief and repose faith in her presidency after she offered to quit.

### PUNJAB FARMERS ON WAY TO DELHI DESPITE CURBS

Meanwhile, the Delhi Police on Wednesday said that they have refused permission to farmers’ organisations to protest in Delhi on Thursday and Friday and that any such gathering in the national Capital will attract legal action. According to northern railways, one train has been cancelled, seven trains short-terminated, four diverted in view of farmers’ agitation in Punjab.

In a series of tweets today, Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal registered his protest against excesses against the farmers. “By stopping Punjab farmers from peacefully exercising democratic rights, the Centre is repeating 1980 when the Akalis were stopped from entering Delhi to protest. Painful history must not be forced to repeat itself,” his post read.

In another post, he condemned the actions of Haryana Government in “cutting Punjab off from the rest of the country”. “PMO must intervene to ensure that this is stopped immediately and the annadatas are not harassed and humiliated or stopped from reaching Delhi. Nation owes eternal debt to kisans and jawans,” a second post read.

According to BКУ (Ekta Ugrahan) general secretary Sukhdev Singh Kokrikalan, nearly two lakh farmers under their banner will march towards Delhi through Khanauri and Dabwali areas. As per representatives of the AIKSCC, farmers from Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and other States will move towards Delhi.

According to farmers’ leaders, hundreds of farmers from Punjab started gathering near the inter-State borders along Haryana on Wednesday morning. Restrictions have also been imposed at other inter-State border points with Punjab, including in Sirsa, Kurukshetra and Jind districts. Police have deployed additional force on Ambala-Rajpura Highway and Ambala-Chandigarh Highway and done multi-layer barricading on the highways.

# Mamata vows to win polls even from prison

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

**B**engal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said even if the saffron Government in the Centre put her behind the bars she will win the 2021 Assembly elections from jail.

Launching her election campaign quite early from Bankura district where her party Trinamool Congress conceded all the seats to the BJP in 2019 general elections the Chief Minister said BJP, which is “the biggest abhishap” (curse) on the nation is planning to put behind the bars by employing the central agencies but I dare them to do so. I challenge them to get me arrested if they have courage ... I will win the elections from inside the prison.”

Calling the BJP a “not a political party but a garbage of lies,” Banerjee said whenever the elections came they rake up the chit fund and Narada pay off issue to intimidate our leaders. “They set central agencies after her before the elections raking up the Sharada (chit fund) and Narada issues ... but I am not afraid of them and am ready to go to jail if they ... let them arrest me if they have the courage to do so ... I will win from jail,” the Chief Minister said citing how RJD patriarch Laloo Yadav maneuvered his party to near-victory in Bihar from jail.

“Though they jailed Laloo Yadav he ran his party well from inside the prison and brought to a near situation of winning,”

Banerjee said accusing the BJP of horse-trading. What was promptly interpreted by the political experts as her diminishing trust on the party colleagues Banerjee said she had not appointed district observers for her party as “I am the observer in all the districts and all the seats,” accusing some TMC leaders for being in touch with the BJP.

“There are some leaders who are with us in the day time and with the BJP during the night ... this will not be tolerated,” she said.

Accusing the Marxists of providing the support base for the BJP, Banerjee said “yesterday’s CPI(M) are today’s BJP... these CPI(M) men are joining the BJP to avoid arrest but they must understand that the BJP will never come to power in Bengal.”

The TMC displaced the Left Front in 2011 and ever since it has been in power in Bengal amid accusations of corruption, nepotism, falling law and order etc.

Reacting to Banerjee’s statements Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh wondered why the Chief Minister was afraid of going to jail.

“Can anyone put you in jail if you have done nothing. No power, no law cando that... Here she is afraid of going to jail because she is aware of her misdeeds,” Ghosh said adding “she will not have to be sent to jail because after the month of May next year she will be sent to retirement.

## Junaid Azim Mattu elected Srinagar Mayor for 2nd time

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

**J**unaid Azim Mattu on Wednesday became Mayor of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) for the second time in a row.

Mattu polled a total number of 44 votes in a house of 70 members while his nearest rival Sheikh Imran could garner only 7 votes. Nineteen other members abstained during voting. Mattu was ousted from the same post through a no-confidence motion in June 2020.

Previously associated with the Peoples Conference, Mattu contested the polls as an independent candidate with tacit support from the like minded corporators.

During the polling the rival

candidate created ruckus inside the house and prevented members from casting open ballots.

On the intervention of the election authorities and security personnel deployed for election duty the situation was contained.

Thanking his supporters Mattu said, “I am happy they have trusted me once again and voted in my favour to lead the SMC.”

Taking a dig at the National Conference for creating road blocks and preventing him from contesting the polls, Mattu said first they went to the court to stop these elections but when their plea was rejected they tried to scuttle the democratic process. He said, “I am happy I won the polls.” Democracy prevailed”, he added.



Trend

Slazer

Never forget why you started: Rao

Actor **RAJKUMMAR RAO** has shared words of wisdom in his latest post on social media. “Never forget why you started,” Rajkummar captioned an image he recently posted on Instagram. Rajkummar’s latest film *Ludo* released digitally. The Anurag Basu directorial is a dark humour anthology comprising four stories. Abhishek Bachchan, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Rohit Saraf, Aditya Roy Kapur, Pankaj Tripathi and Sanya Malhotra are also seen playing important characters in the film. He has *Badhaai Do* and *Roohi Afza* coming up.





TB continues to be one of the most devastating public health issues in our country. With just under 40 per cent of diagnosed cases in people under 30, there is an urgent need to clear misconceptions around it and drive a perception change. *MTV Nishedh Alone* Together conveys this message in a unique and impactful way.’

—Sania Mirza

Miss World 2017 **MANUSHI CHHILLAR**, who will make her Bollywood debut through *Prithviraj*, opposite **Akshay Kumar**, says she’s a vegetarian and loves it. On International Meatless Day, she said, “For me, being a vegetarian was more of a personal choice. It has been and will always be a way of life for me because my parents are vegetarians and I have inculcated this through them. However, they never forced this on me. I made my choice after I realised that it suits for me remarkably and makes me feel fitter, healthier. Plant-based diet works better for me & I am a firm believer of it.”



Bieber upset with Grammys

Singer **JUSTIN BIEBER** has earned four Grammy Award nominations for his album *Changes*, including Best Pop Solo Performance (for *Yummy*), Best Pop Duo/Group Performance (*Intentions* featuring Quavo), Best Pop Vocal Album, & Best Country Duo/Group Performance (for his feature on Dan + Shay’s *10,000 Hours*). Bieber, post announcement, wrote a letter to the Academy on Instagram, talking about how his mission to make an R&B album was not honoured properly. “To the Grammys,” he wrote, “I am flattered to be acknowledged & appreciated for my artistry. I am very meticulous & intentional about my music. But I set out to make an R&B album. *Changes* is an R&B album. Alas, it isn’t being acknowledged as that.”



Slowly but surely, India and Indianness are foraying into the world of showbiz in the West, and much of it has to do with the country’s growing presence in the OTT space. The success of Netflix’s *Delhi Crime* winning the ‘Best Drama Series’ award at the 48th International Emmy Awards is, as Shefali Shah rightly said, “a cherry on the sundae”, but Indian stories and talent of the digital space have been making a strong impact the way Bollywood or our mainstream cinema never really did.

The show becomes the first Indian programme to win an International Emmy. Writer-director Richie Mehta’s seven-episode series has Shefali Shah in the central role of DCP Vartika Chaturvedi, and narrates the story of investigation in the aftermath of the heinous Delhi gang-rape of December 2012.

“I am completely ecstatic, euphoric and all the possible superlatives in the thesaurus that I can recollect now. It’s just amazing! I feel so proud to be a part of *Delhi Crime*. This win is like a cherry on the sundae but irrespective for me, *Delhi Crime* has always been a winner since the day I started work on it. I knew that this show is a very special one. The Emmy has put us on the global

# AN INTERNATIONAL HIT

With *Delhi Crime* winning the 48th International Emmy Award, Indian stories and the talent pool on the OTT space are gradually making a strong impact globally, the way our mainstream cinema never did

platform and we feel extremely proud of the honour,” Shefali said. “This is a BIG one for us, a big one for India. Thank you for the endless love and support that has flowed our way for the show. I am so honoured to be a part of something that is so real and relevant that it put us on the global map. Thank you for the nominations and the experience, Emmys. Congratulations to the supremely deserving team behind *Delhi Crime*,” she added.

In his acceptance speech, writer-director Mehta thanked all the producers, the OTT platform Netflix that streams the show, the casting crew and the cast, with a special mention of Shefali Shah, his parents and wife, the Sundance Film Festival, and the Delhi police team headed by “Neeraj Kumar and the amazing Chhaya Sharma” that helped them bring the show alive.

“The project was led by women, it was financed and put together and released by women, this crime was solved by women, this is for the courage of those women and all the women who not only endure the violence that so many men inflict on them but then are tasked with solving the problem,” said Mehta.

He paid a special tribute to the victim and her mother. “Finally the fearless and tireless hero of all mothers and her daughter. Not a day goes by when I don’t think about you both and what the world subjected you two to. And I hope none of us ever forget that,” he said.

The fictionalised crime drama series also features Rasika Dugal, Adil Hussain, Rajesh Tailang, Avijit Dutt, Gopal Dutt, Jaya Bhattacharya, Denzil Smith and Yashaswini Dayama in pivotal roles.

“*Delhi Crime* will always be close to the heart for how the narrative examines the lives of women in a patriarchal society through (characters) Vartika, Neeti, Chandni, while reminding us that we as a society allowed a heinous crime like the 2012 rape case to happen,” said Rasika.

—With inputs from agencies

# WE’RE OUR OWN ENEMIES

Actor WINSTON DUKE talks about how the characters in the horror film, *Us*, explain that monsters are just some ghostly creatures we create in our minds, rather they’re very much like us. By TEAM VIVA

■ **What did you make of the US script?**

I thought it was really bold and creative, and the most original piece I had read around that time. I felt so privileged to even be asked to look at the material. Well, it being Jordan Peele’s was an added bonus. I have been his fan since his sketch comedy days, the early days on Mad TV, and his own show, *Key & Peele*. To see him transition into the narrative storytelling realm, I felt, ‘Of course! He’s been a genius for years. Can’t wait!’

To know it came from him, and to consume that material at the time, I sat there quiet for a few minutes, thinking, ‘I saw this, I saw that, this means that, this means this... Oh my goodness, it’s a big conversation.’ I wanted to be part of that conversation. And that is why I jumped right on to the film. More than anything else, I said, ‘I want to be a part of the conversation that this film evokes.’

‘I WANTED GABE TO SEEM THE CLOSEST TO THE AUDIENCE THROUGH HIS ABILITY TO BOTH BE IN IT AND ALSO STAND OUTSIDE IT AND MAKE IT FUNNY. HE’S ABLE TO TURN A MOMENT THAT FEELS REALLY TRAUMATIC AND TERRIBLE AND FIND SOME SEMBLANCE OF HUMOUR IN IT’

■ **Did Jordan suggest you horror or any other genre films to watch before making the film?**

I think, for each of us, we wanted something totally different out of the experience. Mine was, because I wasn’t very familiar with the genre, an aversion to horror as a genre for a while. I enjoyed the scary films, the parody ones, because I understood that. All these tropes definitely didn’t benefit people who looked like me, so I never really got attached to the genre. But after reading the script, I knew I wanted to be a part of this new world because it turned everything on its head.

■ **Was there something you wanted to bring to Gabe Wilson?**

I wanted Gabe to seem the closest to the audience through his ability to both be in it and also stand outside it and make it funny. He’s able to turn a moment that feels really traumatic and terrible and find some semblance of humour in it.

I also wanted Gabe to be the perfect avatar for the audience and a construct that reminded the audience of themselves. I wanted them to talk about Gabe when they went home and see themselves in him with a blind comfort. Gabe is so comfortable and privileged. The fact that he thinks he can solve it all with a baseball bat! It’s fascinating. He aspires to be like his friends who are so much more comfortable. It’s his ambition and tied into

his need to ascend to the American dream. Then you realise that the American dream is so flawed and insecure, their house is literally made of glass and it doesn’t protect you. You see it and you say, ‘they are us.’

■ **You also had to play another completely different character than Gabe. How did you work out the differences?**

We rarely did both on one day. I think we only did that on one or two days that I was filming because it was so taxing. Jordan made that possible with the schedule. He’d never book it for both on one day. It was really helpful to have someone in your corner supporting you with a schedule. He’d schedule certain things later in the shoot, so you have time to prepare. I think for Lupita, a lot of the climax for her happened at the end of shooting, which helped her have all the experiences beforehand, put them in her body and then demonstrate it.

■ **Do you think Jordan’s history as a performer helps him be a director of actors?**

Deeply. He understands the process, how we need it and gives us a lot of room for it. He respects it and creates space for us to do whatever we need to do. He doesn’t try to force you into his process. He’s like a gardener and he understands he has different flowers. Some need more sunlight and water, some need less.

■ **You were working with Evan and Shahadi. How were they as fellow performers?**

They were brilliant! They came prepared and ready to act, play and be daring. It was really good to just watch them be free and learn what fearlessness looks like. As kids, they’ve got nothing to be afraid of. We were all very pleasant on set so they felt comfortable. They wanted to have lunch with us everyday and most days, we did. Both Evan and Shahadi were so committed to their roles, always showing something new. It was a great collaborative effort. Jordan relied on a lot of different people to bring a lot of dimension and character to these roles. It was a cast of greatness.

■ **Filming something like this, you have a lot of intensity. Is it something that sticks with you?**

It was hard to let go. I think was I was going through a lot of stress. I went on to do two other projects immediately after this. I don’t think I shed the characters of *Us* before I went to do the other jobs to do my regular process of taking them off. I didn’t realise that until New Years, when I finally had a vacation and got to sit and meditate and realise I’d never removed Gabe from my person. I’d been walking around with so much baggage, no wonder I was so stressed! I literally have felt like I’m fighting for my life.

■ **Us loosely falls into horror. But how does it differ within the genre?**

I think there is so much commentary on it. In particular, we’ve been saying a lot about how we’re our worst enemies. It’s very interesting because our monsters aren’t creatures. They don’t have wings, they’re not ghosts or werewolves. They’re not things, they’re people. They’re your monsters. They’re not just “them.” They’re “us.”

(*Us* premieres on November 29 at 1 pm and 9 pm on Sony PIX.)

‘I have no regrets’

From the art of acting he exuded in *Paar*, *Sparsh*, *Pestonjee*, *Junoon*, *Mirch Masala* or *Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro*, to the unforgettable screen presence of mainstream roles in *Masoom*, *A Wednesday*, *Jalwa*, *The Dirty Picture* or the *Ishqiya* films, 70-year-old Bollywood veteran Naseeruddin Shah has been there, done that. The much-feted actor has been equally at home on screens big and small (some feel his role in the TV serial *Mirza Ghalib* is his best ever), and has recently forayed the OTT space with the series *Bandish Bandits*, too. In a career spanning over four decades, there have been instances when he failed to create magic on screen but he says that he has no regrets. “I don’t have a single regret in life. Yes, I have made mistakes but I have overcome them. I have put them behind me and moved on with learnings. I would be a fool to keep regrets in life. I have acted in several ghastly films. I ate some of them. I might have not enjoyed working for those films but I don’t regret having done them. Each and every decision of mine has taught me something or the other,” Shah said.



The *Dev Deepavali*, literally translates to “the Diwali of gods” or “the festival of fights of gods”, is the festival of Kartik Purnima celebrated in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. It falls on the full moon of the Hindu month of Kartika and takes place 15 days after Diwali. On this day, the gods are believed to descend to earth to bathe in the Ganges. The main rituals performed by devotees consist of the *kartik snan* (taking a holy bath in the Ganges during Kartika) and *deep daan* (offering of oil lighted lamps) to Ganga in the evening. Karmic events, recently, did the first-of-its-kind installation Glory of Benaras at Vegas Mall. They recreated the divine ‘ghats of Benaras’ in the mall. Temple structure, intricately designed carvings, pillars, water bodies, twinkling lamps and ornate bells all form a part of the huge installation. Harsh V Bansal, director of the mall, says, “Diwali on the ghats of Benaras is the most mesmerising sight to behold this year. We wanted to make sure that the Mall gives a one of a kind experience to our patrons. We invested in this enthralling structure, especially to give an unusual experience that the mall industry has never done before.” Gunwant Singh, MD, Karmic Events Pvt Ltd, says, “The temple is about 68 ft in length, 40 ft in width and 40+ ft in height. The installation was made possible because of 140 skilled artisans, who worked with dedication for 40 days and handcrafted the entire structure. The creation was ideated to make sure that our patrons feel the same spirituality and positivity they would feel on the ghats of Benaras.”





# KL 'would love to keep' in next three WCs

PTI ■ SYDNEY

India's white-ball vice-captain KL Rahul on Wednesday said he would be happy to keep wickets in the next three global ICC events if given an opportunity even though the team management has not yet spoken to him about it.

Rahul has now pipped specialist wicketkeepers Rishabh Pant and Sanju Samson as the No1 glovesman in the limited overs format. Three ICC events — two back-to-back T20 World Cups followed by the marquee ODI World Cup — are scheduled in the next three years.

The 28-year-old's keeping does provide the team the option of having an extra batsman or bowler.

"It helps the team combination a little more and it's something I would love to do...If the opportunity presents itself and I can keep in three World Cups, I would love to do it for my country," Rahul said ahead of the limited-overs series against Australia starting November 27.

Has the team management spoken to him about keeping in ICC events?

"Nothing has been told to me and we are not thinking that far as a team. Obviously World Cups are important and that is a long-term vision for every team and country," he said.

"I think for me, we are just taking one game at a time. So if I put up consistent performances with bat and gloves, it gives us an option of playing an extra bowler or an extra batter," said the stylish Karnataka batsman.

In the ODIs, Rahul has been batting at No 5 and has opened in the T20 Internationals, and he admitted



that his position in the line-up will depend on formats.

"What the team wants from me and what combination sits better," said Rahul.

"Obviously, the last ODI series (against New Zealand) that we played, I batted at No 5, it's a role that I have enjoyed and (I am) happy to play whatever role the team gives me."

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's keeping was in a different league and the way he guided spinners went a long way in India's white-ball success.

Would he be able to chide a Kuldeep Yadav or Yuzvendra Chahal like Dhoni could, if he takes upon a similar role?

"Look obviously, nobody can fill MS Dhoni's place. He has shown us the way and how wicketkeeper-batman role is performed.

"With Kuldeep, Yuzi (Yuzvendra Chahal) and Jaddu (Jadeja), we have a decent friendship and obviously I will go and give them a feedback as to what is a better length if they are doing something wrong and anybody in wicketkeeper's role will have that responsibility," he said.

Rahul loved the role of an ODI keeper against New Zealand and hopes to continue with the good work.

"I did one series in New

## I am blessed with certain skills and power-hitting is not one of them: Rahul

**SYDNEY:** The tag of being a power-hitter is quite sought after in international cricket but India's K L Rahul has no qualms admitting that he does not fit the bill and neither does he crave for it.

Known for his classical batting, Rahul said that even if he has to score at a high strike-rate of 160 to 170, he can do it minus the blitzkrieg.

"I wouldn't call my batting power-hitting, that's something I honestly feel like I have not been able to do or not what I am blessed with," Rahul said on the eve of the first ODI on Friday.

"I am blessed with certain skills and I try and play the role I feel the team requires me to play at that particular moment. If that means scoring runs at 160-170 strike rate, I try to do that to the best of my ability and if it's the other way around, I will try to do that," he added.

He hasn't played 50-over cricket regularly for India save for the past one year and is happy that he is in a situation where he has been in good form as far as white-ball cricket is concerned.

"...I have never got a long run like this. So yeah, it feels good that I am contributing to team's win and playing my role pretty well. Happy that I can put up consistent performances."

Talking about the Australian team, Rahul was all praise for Marnus Labuschagne but refused to call him an unknown entity.

"...I don't think he is unknown anymore. He is in the



top 5 and he has been getting a lot of runs in the last 12-15 months or before the Covid in the games that he played. He has been really consistent for his side.

"We have watched how Marnus played and fingers crossed hopefully, he won't score that many runs against us. We will have a plan set, we have a top quality bowling attack so it will be a good challenge for him and our bowlers as well."

Rahul also feels that his IPL teammate Glenn Maxwell is equally dangerous, terming him a great team man.

"Yes of course, he (Maxwell) will (be dangerous). That's one of the reasons why we picked him in our IPL franchise because he is a quality player."

"He is a gun fielder, he is always there to support his teammates. He will be eager to get out in Australian colours and perform for his country as well."

PTI

Zealand and quite enjoyed it and hopefully I can be better at reading the game and give

bowlers and captains some good feedback for the bowlers and the captain."

# Have great respect for Indian bowlers: Langer

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia coach Justin Langer on Wednesday said he has great respect for the formidable Indian bowling line-up but his team's batsmen have become familiar enough with their tactics to be ready for the challenge they will throw up in the upcoming series.

Langer said the contest would likely be an exciting one thanks to the two teams being evenly-matched.

"Well, we know Jasprit Bumrah, world-class bowler, (Mohammed) Shami, really good opening combination. We have great respect for that and guys have seen a fair bit of them, through the IPL and the last couple of summers," Langer said in a virtual media conference on Wednesday.

"We have played 14 ODIs against India in the last few years and it's seven all," he added.

India are touring Australia with a lethal bowling attack, led by pace-spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, and comprising Mohammed Shami, Navdeep Saini and Shardul Thakur.

The spin department features Yuzvendra Chahal along with Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja.

Langer said the Australians would be ready for the challenge.

"...Our guys have seen a lot



of each other and that's what I love about the contest, you see which teams are growing, which players are growing. We have played a bit against each other now.

"So, we have great respect, great respect for their spinners, great respect for Bumrah, Shami, their other bowlers (Navdeep) Saini.

"Our guys know they are going to be on their toes all the time in all forms of the game against the Indian bowling attack. But they are working hard, they have seen a bit now and they will be ready for it," the 50-year-old asserted.

Langer sidestepped queries on India missing star opener

Rohit Sharma and pacer Ishant Sharma due to injury, saying that it was not his concern.

Rohit and Ishant, who suffered injuries during the IPL, are in danger of missing the Test series.

"It is not our business, we have our own challenges, we will come together for the first time as a group on the morning of the game, so it's up to India who they choose," he said.

"One thing, we have zero control or say in who India picks, they can pick whoever they want, we have our own challenges, so India whoever they put out on the park, we will be ready to take them on," he added.

## Greg Barclay elected new ICC Chairman

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) head Greg Barclay has been elected as the ICC's new Independent Chairman after he comfortably defeated Singapore's Imran Khwaja to succeed India's Shashank Manohar.

The voting was carried out during ICC's annual quarterly meeting on Tuesday. The electronic voting process involved 16 board of directors — 12 from full member (Test playing nations), three associate countries and one independent female director (Indra Nooyi of PepsiCo).

"It is an honour to be elected as the Chair of the ICC and I would like to thank my fellow ICC Directors for their support. I hope we can come together to lead the sport and emerge from the global pandemic in a strong position and poised for growth," Barclay said.

"I look forward to working

in partnership with our Members to strengthen the game in our core markets as well as grow it beyond that ensuring more of the world can enjoy cricket," he added.

The Kiwi won 11-5, receiving the all important winning vote from the embattled Cricket South Africa in the second round of voting.

He had received 10 votes to Khwaja's six in the first round last week, but as per existing rules the winner needs 11 — a two-thirds majority of the 16-person ICC Board as the 17th member is CEO Manu Sawhney who is without voting rights.

Barclay, an Auckland-based commercial lawyer, has been a director of NZC since 2012. He is currently serves as NZC's representative on the board of the ICC but will step down from the position.

## Both bilateral and ICC events important: Barclay

**DUBAI:** The concept of 'Big Three' doesn't exist for new ICC chairman Greg Barclay, who firmly believes that both bilateral as well as ICC events can peacefully co-exist helping the game's ecosystem.

The 'Big Three' was a concept where India, Australia and England were supposed to earn the lion's share of global body's revenue.

In the run up to the election, New Zealand's Barclay said a perception was created that bilateral cricket gives importance to bilateral cricket over everything else but that is

far from the truth.

"There has been a lot of misrepresentation in the media around that (that I am in favour of bilateral cricket over world events. But the fact is, of course I am an advocate of bilateral cricket, it is the lifeblood of cricket in all countries..." Barclay said in a video posted on the ICC website.

"...Countries playing each other on a regular basis, sustained competitive relevant competition is what drives fan engagement. It is what drives the development pathways, it is a vital part of cricket."

But that doesn't mean that the world events are not as important, said the administrator from New Zealand who has also BCCI's backing.

"The ICC runs world class events. If you look at what happened with the women's T20 all the way through the final, the ODI World Cup last year, they were amazing events.

"They are pinnacle events no doubt about that. I would need to say they (bilateral and global events) need to work in conjunction with each other, one can't sit in isolation to the other. I am very conscious of the delicate ecosystem that crickets sits on."

Referring to game's powerful nations India, Australia and England, Barclay said he doesn't believe in the 'big three' concept.

"There is no big three as far as I am concerned. I don't subscribe to it at all. All members are important and should be treated equally."

"I do accept concerns of members could be different ... I do accept that some of those bigger countries can provide certain outcomes to the ICC along the lines of hosting and revenue so again we need to take that into account and recognise that but there is no big three," he insisted.

PTI

## Aus Open most likely to be delayed

AFF ■ MELBOURNE

The Australian Open will likely be delayed by one to two weeks, officials said on Wednesday, as talks continue over staging the tournament in Melbourne, which has only recently emerged from months of coronavirus lockdown.

A delay for a week or two to the first Grand Slam of the year, scheduled to begin on January 18, was now "most likely," said Martin Pakula, the Sports Minister of the Victoria State Government.

"I still think it's much more likely that it will be a shorter rather than longer delay," Pakula said.

The "very complex negotiations" were still under way but he remained confident it would go ahead in the early part of 2021.

Australian Open chief Craig Tiley had originally wanted players to start arriving in Australia from mid-December so they could undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine before playing traditional warm-up events.

But the plan was thrown into doubt by Victoria state Premier Dan Andrews, who reportedly will not allow players to arrive before January, which would make it all but impossible to hold the high-profile ATP Cup and other tournaments the start of the Open.

Still under discussion is whether players will be able to train or compete during quarantine.

## Juve, Barca, Chelsea, Sevilla advance in CL

### They are the first teams to make it out of the group stage, doing so with two games to spare

AFF ■ LONDON

Juventus, Chelsea and Sevilla all claimed last-gasp wins as they qualified for the Champions League last 16 on Tuesday, while Martin Braithwaite grabbed a double in Barcelona's 4-0 victory at Dynamo Kiev as they also secured a place in the knockout rounds.

They are the first teams to make it out of the group stage, doing so with two games to spare, on a night which saw Erling Braut Haaland, Neymar, Cristiano Ronaldo and Bruno Fernandes all get among the goals.

There was no Lionel Messi for Barcelona, with the Argentine rested for the trip to Ukraine, but Ronald Koeman's side got the job done to make it four wins from four in Group G.

All the goals came in the second half, with Sergino Dest opening the scoring before Danish striker Braithwaite added another and then converted a penalty to make it 3-0.

On as a substitute, Antoine Griezmann wrapped up the win on the night young centre-back Oscar Mingueza, Brazilian midfielder Matheus Fernandes and teenage American winger Konrad de la

Fuente were all blooded in the first team.

"We've achieved our objective," said Koeman. "We looked hungry and scored four goals. Important players were able to rest and the youngsters deserved their minutes."

### LATE STRIKES

Juventus joined Barcelona in qualifying from Group G but the Italian champions needed a stoppage-time header by substitute Alvaro Morata to beat Ferencvaros 2-1 in Turin and seal their progress.

Albanian international Myrto Uzuni put the Hungarians ahead but Ronaldo drilled in the equaliser before half-time, meaning he has scored in 15 consecutive Champions League seasons.

Chelsea are through from Group E after edging Rennes 2-1 in France, with Olivier Giroud coming off the bench to head in an injury-time winner.

Serhou Guirassy had cancelled out Callum Hudson-Odoi's breakaway opener.

Last season's Europa League winners Sevilla will not get to defend their trophy as they advanced to the last 16 of



Europe's elite club competition and did so with a 2-1 win over Krasnodar in Russia, in a rare game played before a sizeable crowd.

Sevilla and Chelsea are level on 10 points but Frank Lampard's side go to Spain next week, when the winner will secure top spot.

Manchester United are in pole position in Group H after a first-half Fernandes brace set

them on their way to a 4-1 victory over Istanbul Basaksehir that made up for a 2-1 defeat in Turkey last time out.

The opener by Fernandes was a thunderous strike from outside the box, while the second was a tap-in after a horrible error by Mert Gunok in the away goal.

Marcus Rashford added a penalty, but there was a fightback from the away side, with Deniz Turuc's free-kick crossing the line before

David de Gea could claw it away.

Edin Visca crashed a shot off the bar, but Daniel James made sure of the victory on the counter-attack.

### FRIGHTENING RECORD

Solskjaer's side are three points clear of both Paris Saint-Germain and RB Leipzig, after an early Neymar penalty gave the French side a 1-0 win over their German visitors.

PSG go to Old Trafford next week.

Borussia Dortmund need just one more point to qualify from Group F following a 3-0 win over Club Brugge as the prolific Haaland netted twice either side of a Jadon Sancho free-kick in Germany.

Haaland has 16 goals for the season, and has now scored 16 Champions League goals in just 12 appearances — Messi had two goals and Ronaldo none after the same number of appearances.

In the group's other game, Lazio beat Zenit Saint-Petersburg 3-1 in Rome, a result which eliminated the Russians. Marco Parolo also netted for Lazio, with Artem Dzyuba scoring for Zenit.

## Lewandowski, Messi and Ronaldo in race for FIFA best

Thiago Alcantara is the other player from European champions Bayern Munich to make the list

AFF ■ MILAN

European player of the year Robert Lewandowski is one of 10 players on the shortlist for the Best FIFA Men's Player award unveiled on Wednesday, alongside the likes of Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi, Neymar and Kylian Mbappe.

Besides Polish striker Lewandowski, one other winner of the Champions League with Bayern Munich made the list, Spanish midfielder Thiago Alcantara, who joined Liverpool in September.

The English champions also count Senegal's Sadio Mane, Egyptian Mohamed Salah and Dutchman Virgil van Dijk on the shortlist.

Paris Saint-Germain, beaten Champions League finalists, are represented by Mbappe and Neymar.

Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne and Real Madrid's Sergio Ramos complete the list. Argentinean coach Marcelo Bielsa, who led Leeds into the English Premier League, headlines a list for the men's coach award, which also features Bayern's Hans-Dieter Flick, Liverpool's Jurgen Klopp, Sevilla's Julen Lopetegui and Real Madrid's Zinedine Zidane.

Three finalists from categories also including men and



women's goalkeepers, and women's players and coaches will be announced on December 11, with the award handed out on December 17.

The list of nominees for Best FIFA Women's Player Award includes Lucy Bronze, Delphine Cascarino, Caroline Graham Hansen, Pernille Harder, Jennifer Hermoso, Ji So-yun, Sam Kerr, Saki Kumagai, Dzsenifer Marozsán, Vivianne Miedema and Wendie Renard.

In the men's goalkeeper category, the shortlisted candidates are Alisson Becker, Thibaut Courtois, Keylor Navas, Manuel Neuer, Jan Oblak and Marc-Andre ter Stegen.