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LUCKNOW, FRIDAY NOVEMBER 27, 2020; PAGES 14 ₹3



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Farmers brave water cannons for Delhi Chalo

Punjab farmers break Haryana barricades, clash with cops

PNS/PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

Farmers from Punjab faced water cannons and broke police barriers at the State's border with Haryana as they pushed towards the national Capital on Thursday on their "Delhi Chalo" march against the Centre's farm laws.

By late evening, a large group of them had reached the road toll plaza at Panipat, about 100 km from Delhi. Bhartiya Kisan Union (Haryana) leader Gurnam Singh said the protesters planned to spend the night there and will resume the march the next morning.

At the Punjab-Haryana Shambhu border, police and Punjab farmers in their tractor-trolleys were locked in a confrontation for a couple of hours in the morning.

Police made announcements on loudspeakers asking the farmers assembled on the Punjab side to disperse. But as protesters tried to push through barricades, the Haryana Police used a water cannon and lobbed teargas shells. Farmers chucked some steel barricades into the Ghaggar river from the bridge where they had been stopped.

Apart from this confrontation in Ambala district, there were face-offs between the protesters and police in Haryana's Sirsa, Kurukshetra, Fatehabad and Jind districts bordering Congress-run Punjab.

Later, Haryana Police DGP



Police deploy water cannons during a clash with farmers, as they marched towards Delhi protesting over the farm reform laws, at Punjab-Haryana border in Ambala district, on Thursday

PTI

Manoj Yadava praise the police for acted with "great restraint" against Punjab-based farmers who broke barricades during their "Delhi Chalo" march. He said the farmers took an aggressive stand and tried to disturb law and order by "pelt-ing stones" at police at many places. Some police personnel sustained injuries and police

and private vehicles were damaged, Yadava added.

Police had placed cement and steel barricades and parked trucks on the road to stop the farmers' tractor-trolleys, some of them laden with food for the planned two-day protest, which many felt could extend further. But a few hours later, at most border-points, the farmers were

let through.

At Shambhu, a few protesters initially managed to cross the barricades on foot. Later, police eased the blockade, allowing the tractors to proceed on the road to Delhi, 200 km away. But barricades were set up at other points on this Amritsar-Delhi highway that passes through Haryana.

At Karnal, there was another face-off and police again used a water cannon.

Police used water cannons also against protesters trying to enter Kaithal district, and at Khanauri border where farmers were protesting under the banner of Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta-Ugarhan).

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Delhi Police gird up to stop kisan from entering Capital

Sand-laden trucks, barbed wires, boulder barricades ready to stop marching farmers

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Ready to maintain law and order situation in view of the "Delhi Chalo" protest march by farmers against the Centre's new farm laws, the Delhi Police personnel have been deployed in large numbers in the border areas of the national Capital.

Around five sand-laden trucks were stationed at Singhu border and police were seen putting barbed wires and boulder barricades to stop farmers' trolleys heading towards Delhi.

This is the first time that the city police has stationed trucks filled with sand at border points. Police said the border has not been sealed but they are checking all vehicles entering the national Capital.

Earlier, the Delhi Police had rejected requests from various farmers' organisations to protest in the national Capital against the Centre's new farm laws on November 26 and 27. The police had on Tuesday said legal action would be taken against the



Farmers shout slogans during a demonstration against the new farm laws at Gurudwara Majnu Ka Tila in New Delhi on Thursday

Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer

protesting farmers if they come to the city for any gathering amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The farmers are scheduled to reach Delhi on Thursday through five highways connecting the city as part of their "Delhi Chalo" march call.

Delhi Police chief SN Shrivastava visited at Tikri and Singhu border to take stock of the situation.

"Regarding farmer organisations march to Delhi on November 26, 27. All the requests received from various Farmer Organisations regarding protest in Delhi on 26 and 27 November have been rejected and this has already been communicated to the organisers," the New Delhi DCP had tweeted.

"Please co-operate with

Delhi Police in ensuring no gathering in Delhi amid coronavirus, failing which legal action will be initiated as per law," it had said.

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Delhi Metro services from NCR cities to remain suspended

New Delhi: Delhi Metro services from neighbouring cities to the national Capital will remain suspended on Friday in view of the "Delhi chalo" protest march by farmers against the Centre's new farm laws, officials said. However, metro services will be available from Delhi towards the NCR sections.

CAPSULE

IMPROVEMENT IN DELHI'S AIR QUALITY LIKELY

New Delhi: Delhi's air quality was recorded in the "very poor" category on Thursday and Government agencies said it is likely to improve as the wind speed picks up. The city's air quality index was 374 at 9 am on Thursday. The 24-hour average AQI was 413 on Wednesday, 379 on Tuesday and 295 on Monday, according to the Central Pollution Control Board data. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

DRONES TO TRACK ELUSIVE LEOPARD IN GZB

Ghaziabad: The Ghaziabad administration has deployed some drone cameras in a bid to trace a leopard which disappeared in the sprawling forested area of Inghram Institute of the city three days ago.



India won't forget 26/11 wounds: PM

Modi hails security personnel for averting similar attacks; says India now fighting terrorism with new policy, process

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delivering a strong message to Pakistan on the 12th anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack, Prime Minister Naredra Modi on Thursday called it the biggest strike ever on India and said the country can never forget the wounds inflicted by terrorists from Pakistan.

Expressing gratitude to security personnel, the Prime Minister said India is fighting terrorism with new policies. "On this day in 2008, terrorists from Pakistan attacked Mumbai. Many, including foreign citizens, policemen, died. I pay tributes to them," he said. "India is now fighting terrorism with a new policy and a new process," Modi said.

The 2008 terror attack had claimed the lives of 165 people and injured about 300.

"India cannot forget wounds of Mumbai terror attacks. Today India is fighting



terrorism with new policies. I also bow down to our security personnel averting attacks like Mumbai and giving befitting reply to terrorism," the Prime Minister said while addressing the All India Presiding Officers Conference here, via video conferencing.

The PM's address made to celebrate Constitution Day, also hailed the robustness of the Indian Constitution despite "attempts made to destroy its spirit" during the Emergency in the 1970s.

"From what should be the

role of the three wings of our Constitution to its spirit, everything is enshrined in the Constitution. Though we did witness how attempts were made against the dignity of separation of power in the 1970s... but the answer for that came from the Constitution itself as decorum and separation of power is described in it," Modi said in his video conference address.

Modi said after the Emergency, the system of checks and balances has gone from strength to strength.

"All the three wings of the Constitution — the executive, legislature and judiciary - have learnt many things from that dark phase and moved on," the PM sought to say.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar for his part said India will keep the global spotlight "firmly" on cross-border terrorism and on the epicentre of the global menace, in an apparent reference to Pakistan.

2 soldiers martyred in terror attack, 1 in Pak firing at LoC

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

In a daring strike at least three car-borne terrorists, believed to be the cadre of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), targeted a quick reaction team (QRT) of the Indian Army on the outskirts of Srinagar in which two grievously injured soldiers attained martyrdom on Thursday. The attack coincided with the 12th anniversary of the Mumbai terror attack.

This is the second major terror strike along the National Highway in the last one week on the security forces.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Army initiated an "unprovoked" ceasefire along the Line of Control in Degwar, Qasba and Kirmi sectors of Poonch by

targeting forward villages with mortar shelling. A junior commissioned officer, injured during the ceasefire violation by Pakistan along LoC in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, succumbed to his injuries.

Four JeM terrorists were neutralised by the joint teams of security forces near Ban Toll Plaza along the Jammu Srinagar National Highway in Nagrota on November 19. These four JeM terrorists had sneaked inside the Indian territory via a cross border tunnel from the Samba sector.

The martyred jawans have been identified as Sepoy Ratan of 163 Battalion Territorial Army and Sepoy Deshmukh of 101 Battalion Territorial Army.

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AstraZeneca admits to a manufacturing error in its vaccine

It accidentally led to highly promising result; cloud over its efficacy now

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

British drugmaker AstraZeneca has admitted to a manufacturing error which accidentally led to a highly promising result.

After disclosing promising results from its Covid-19 vaccine trial earlier this week, AstraZeneca has now admitted to a manufacturing error by a contractor. The error came to light after AstraZeneca, which is developing the potential Covid-19 vaccine in partnership with Oxford University, revealed different efficacy results from two different dose regimens.

But that is only half of the story. As result of the error only half of the proposed dose of vaccine was administered to a group of people, while the other group was given the full dose.

In the two different dose regimens vaccine efficacy was 90 per cent in one and 62 per cent in the other.

The higher efficacy regime used a halved first dose and standard second dose. Two full doses showed lower efficacy.

In other words, said the biotechnology company, in the low-dose group, the vaccine appeared to be 90 per cent effective. In the group that got two full doses, the vaccine appeared to be 62 per cent effective. Combined, the drug-makers said, the vaccine appeared to be 70 per cent effective.

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The Pioneer family condoles death of brother of Lucknow RE

Lucknow (PNS): The Pioneer's Resident Editor (Lucknow) Vijay Prakash Singh lost his elder brother Shiv Prakash Singh to Covid-19 on Thursday. Shiv Prakash Singh, 62, was admitted to Sanjay Gandhi Post-graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Singh, a businessman, is survived by wife and two sons. Singh was tested Covid positive after Diwali and was admitted to SGPGIMS on November 16. As his condition deteriorated he was shifted to ICU where he breathed his last.

Family members said cremation will take place on Friday at electric crematorium as per the Covid guidelines.

The Pioneer family condoles the death and prays to the God to give courage to the bereaved family to bear the irreparable loss. CM Yogi Adityanath also extended condolences to the bereaved kin.

Nivar kills 5 in TN as it makes landfall on Puducherry coast

Heavy rain likely

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At least five people were killed and several others injured in Tamil Nadu as severe cyclone Nivar made a landfall around 2.30 am with winds of up to 130 kilometre per hour into the Puducherry coast on Thursday. The fierce winds uprooted trees and toppled electricity pylons while down-pour lashed parts of the region, causing flash floods in several areas in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

Airport operations, Metrorail and bus transport resumed after 14 hours. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Tamil Nadu is likely to receive another spell of very heavy rainfall as a fresh low pressure area is expected to

form in the Bay of Bengal from November 29 onwards.

Meanwhile, as the intensity of the storm weakened, section 144 of CrPC imposed in Puducherry was revoked. According to initial estimates, thousand acres of paddy crops have been destroyed in southern States. While the damage assessment is on, the State Governments said they were working on "war-footing" amid heavy rainfall and flooding in many parts.

Five people have lost their lives and several others injured due to the cyclonic storm in Tamil Nadu, whereas no loss of life has been reported from Puducherry. On its way the cyclone also damaged several houses, uprooted trees and power lines in Tamil Nadu's Cuddalore, Marakkanam and in Puducherry also.

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India suspends international flight operation till year end

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Thursday extended the suspension of scheduled commercial international flight operations to and from India till December 31 in view of the coronavirus pandemic and planes will fly only on select routes on a case-to-case basis.

The restrictions are not applicable to international cargo operations and flights approved by the DGCA.

"In partial modification of circular dated 26-06-2020, the competent authority has further extended the validity of circular issued on the subject cited above regarding scheduled international commercial passenger services to/from India till December 31, 2020," the DGCA said in a notification issued on Thursday.

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Covaxin Ph-III clinical trial begins

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The phase-three human clinical trial of Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech's indigenously developed anti-coronavirus vaccine candidate Covaxin began at the AIIMS here on Thursday. Dr MV Padma Srivastava, the chief of Neurosciences Centre at the

premier institute, and three other volunteers received the first dose. The vaccine would be given to around 15,000 volunteers at the AIIMS over the next few days. The first dose of 0.5 ml intramuscular injection was given to four volunteers. They were under observation for two hours and will be monitored for

the next few days, said an official at the AIIMS. As part of the trial application, a dose of 0.5 ml would be given on day 0 and on day 28. The phase-three randomised double-blind placebo-controlled multi-centre trial would cover 28,500 subjects aged 18 years and above.

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Covid-19 IN INDIA	TOTAL
CASES: 93,06,744	
DEATHS: 1,35,711	
RECOVERED: 87,13,257	
ACTIVE: 4,55,648	

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	18,02,365	46,813	16,68,538
Karnataka	8,79,560	11,726	8,42,499
Andhra Pradesh	8,65,705	6,970	8,46,120
Tamil Nadu	7,76,174	11,669	7,53,332
Kerala	5,83,742	2,149	5,16,978
Delhi	5,51,262	8,811	5,03,717
Uttar Pradesh	5,35,449	7,674	5,02,353
West Bengal	4,70,498	8,224	4,37,604
Odisha	3,16,645	1,757	3,08,102
Telangana	2,66,904	1,444	2,54,676
Rajasthan	2,56,947	2,237	2,27,408
Bihar	2,33,142	1,243	2,26,392
Chhattisgarh	2,29,203	2,783	2,01,744
Haryana	2,26,611	2,316	2,03,517
Assam	2,12,171	978	2,07,905
Gujarat	2,03,509	3,922	1,85,158

Police permission not required for weddings in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To contain the spread of novel coronavirus infection in the state, the Uttar Pradesh government has announced new parameters for the containment zones and has also declared that DJ would be allowed at marriage functions.

The government also clarified that police permission was not required for weddings.

According to the new guidelines, if a single case of novel coronavirus infection is found at some place, the containment zone will cover a radius of 50 metres around it. In the case of more than one positive case or a cluster, the containment zone will have a radius of 100 metres. Not only this, if more than one COVID-19 case is found in the same house, the containment zone will be determined by considering it as a single case.

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PADDY PROCUREMENT

Yogi warns against callousness

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Reiterating that the interest of farmers was paramount to the state government, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the Uttar Pradesh government was serious about making direct purchase of paddy from farmers under the price support scheme.

He also cautioned the officials concerned against any callousness in this regard and said any such thing would not be tolerated.

“Officials negligent in discharge of their duties will be identified and stringent action will be taken against them,” the chief minister said while reviewing paddy procurement at a high-level meeting convened at his official residence here on Thursday.

He said that one-and-half times more paddy had been procured so far than what was done last year.

“Despite this, the procurement process needs to be further accelerated in view of the wider interests of the farmers,” he said.

Over 4,200 centres have been set up across the state to purchase paddy from farmers on minimum support price (MSP).

The chief minister said

Every UP village to have two community service centres

Lucknow (PNS): In a major decision towards making an Atmanirbhar UP, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath declared that every village or every 10,000 population will have two community service centres (CSCs) to assist, sensitise and facilitate the locals about benefits of the government welfare schemes.

Under this plan, a target has been set to open 1.5 lakh CSCs which may employ about 4.5 lakh youth at the local level. Not only this, more than one CSC at a place will create competition which in

that if necessary, additional paddy purchase centres should be opened.

“All the paddy purchasing agencies should work with complete transparency. There should be no laxity in the paddy procurement process,” he said.

Yogi Adityanath said the paddy procurement centres should not be arbitrary and it should be ensured that they were run on time. He

turn will provide better services, according to an official.

As many as 258 services of 35 departments are being made available at the CSCs for the locals to get their benefits.

Any person wanting to avail of the services available at CSCs may access them through internet on e-district portals.

To start with, the CSCs will work for three years but the term can be extended for a further period of two years with mutual consent of District E-Governance Society (DEGS) and District Service Provider

(DSP).

Planned under the IT and Electronics department, of the Government of UP, these centres are to run on PPP model.

Rural youth entrepreneurs who run the CSCs will now get Rs 30 instead of Rs 20 as decided before. Through this, the young entrepreneurs are getting benefits of self-employment as well as economic self-reliance, the official said.

Similarly, for every financial transaction, the centre incharge will receive Rs 11 instead of Rs 4 as announced earlier.

He directed the senior officials of the Cooperative department to do intensive monitoring of the works of its officers posted in the field and take strict action against the workers showing laxity in procuring paddy.

The chief minister said that the Food and Civil Supplies department should also regularly review its paddy purchasing centres in the districts.

Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi, Medical Education Minister Suresh Khanna, Chief Secretary RK Tiwari, Infrastructure and Industrial Development Commissioner Alok Tandon, Agriculture Production Commissioner Alok Sinha, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Director General of Police Hitesh C Awasthi, Additional Chief Secretary (Finance) Sanjeev Mittal, Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue), Renuka Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary (MSME and Information) Navneet Sehgal, Additional Chief Secretary (Medical Education) Rajnesh Dube, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad, Additional Chief Secretary (Agriculture) Devesh Chaturvedi, Additional Chief Secretary (Panchayati Raj and Rural Development) Manoj Kumar Singh, Principal Secretary to CM and Information Sanjay Prasad, Principal Secretary (Animal Husbandry) Bhuvnesh Kumar, Principal Secretary (Health) Alok Kumar, Secretary to CM Alok Kumar, Information Director Shishir and other senior officials were present in the meeting.

CM: Constitution can be protected by discharging fundamental duties

PNS ■ LUCKNOW



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Thursday that the rights given to every citizen in the Constitution could be protected only when the society was conscious of its fundamental duties and discharged them.

“Every one of us talks about rights but we try to run away from the duties. The Constitution of India has given fundamental rights to every citizen, At the same time some basic duties have also been ensured and the basic objective of Constitution Day is to make every citizen aware of those fundamental duties given in the Constitution of India,” the chief minister said in a ceremony organised on the occasion of Constitution Day here on Thursday.

The chief minister said, “These duties are as important for a citizen in every situation as our personal life and family life. Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat makes us aware of our fundamental rights. Rights can be maintained only when society is conscious of its basic duties and discharges them.”

The chief minister said that Constitution Day was very

important for all of us. “We all know that the Constitution of India came into force on January 26, 1950 but it was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on this day (November 26) in 1949. This is the strength of our Constitution that India remains an ideal as the largest democracy in the world,” he said.

“Our Constitution provides inspiration to take the country together in even and odd circumstances. Even in every adverse situation, the Constitution, despite the multiplicity of caste, creed, sect, languages and food, gave the concept of Ek Bharat Shreshtha

Bharat, it has been its biggest feature,” the chief minister said.

The chief minister said that the country was grateful to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who also celebrated the anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution to commemorate the events that took place after Independence, in the life of the present generation, as an important day for the country.

Earlier, many cabinet colleagues of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, including Deputy Chief Ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and . Dinesh Sharma, read the Preamble of the Constitution.

UPCC employees stage demonstration, put lock on campus

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Already facing difficulties in reviving the party in the biggest state of the country, Uttar Pradesh Congress on Thursday faced protest by its own employees when they locked the party's state headquarters and staged a demonstration to seek redressal of their grievances.

Interestingly, UPCC officials claimed that there was no resentment among the employees but the nuisance was created by those who were illegal occupants on the campus.

The employees, besides being agitated for cuts in their salaries for the last several months in the name of coronavirus pandemic, were also annoyed with the move of the senior leaders to get their official quarters on UPCC campus vacated for expansion of the office.

Sources said that to force the employees to leave the place, the UPCC leaders had several times cut their power and water connections but had to restore them due to strong resentment.

“Uttar Pradesh Congress has enough funds and is facing no shortage of money and a glaring example of it is the massive renovation or new construction work involving several lakh rupees that is under way,” said one of the protesting employees, alleging that when it came to making payment to them, the senior leaders always claimed financial crunch.

However, UPCC administration incharge Siddharth Priya Srivastava said that the employees had no problem and the protest was made by those who were illegal occupants on the UPCC campus and had not paid electricity bills worth several lakh rupees. He said whenever a move was made to get them removed, they called the media and tried to defame the UPCC officials.

Gadkari for stamp duty exemption on toll plaza agreement in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari has called upon the Uttar Pradesh government to exempt toll plaza agreements from stamp duty in the state.

He also asked the UP government to expedite land acquisition for developing national highways as was being done in some of the states.

The minister also requested the UP government to consider reducing the Utility Shifting Supervision Charge from 5 percent to 2.5 percent on the lines of other states.

He also called for quick disbursement of land acquisition compensation for expediting the national highways projects in the state.

The Union minister was speaking after virtually inaugurating and laying the foundation stones of 16 national highway projects with a total length of over 500 kms worth Rs 7,477 crore in the state on Thursday.

The event was presided over by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in the presence of Union Minister of State Gen (Retd) Dr VK Singh, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, ministers from the state, members of Parliament, MLAs and senior officers from the Centre and

the state.

Gadkari said about 3,700 km of national highway length worth Rs 42,000 crore had been added in Uttar Pradesh in the last six years.

“Today, there are over 11,389 kms of national highways in the state and roads worth Rs 1.3 lakh crore are being constructed in UP,” he said.

Gadkari said that as much as Rs 26,000 crore had been disbursed towards land acquisition cost in the state during the last three years. He said, upgradation and development of national highways would improve connectivity to all the districts and major cities of the state.

Gadkari said CRF works worth Rs 15,439 had been sanctioned since 2014 in the state. He said Rs 4,628 crore had been released till last year under the scheme, while another over Rs 287 crore was sanctioned in the current year and the Centre had on Thursday approved releasing Rs 280 crore more.

The minister assured the government that the amount would be released soon after receiving proposals from the state.

The minister said, NH works of 2,900 km worth Rs 65,000 crore would be completed in the current year in UP and another 1,100 km length of Rs 14,000 crore was target-



ed to be awarded this year.

He said DPRs were under preparation for a 3,500 km length highway at a cost of about Rs 50,000 crore.

The minister said NH works amounting to Rs 2 lakh crore were being undertaken in UP.

He said that construction of 133 km 4-lane Greenfield project worth Rs 3,652 crore between Gazipur-Ballia-Mazhihat was under consideration and DPR was also being prepared for the 98 km 4-lane Prayagraj Ring Road costing Rs 7,000 crore. He

said the ring road would be made in three phases. Under the first phase, a 27 km Greenfield bypass from Dandapur to Sansor would be constructed at a cost of Rs 2,500 crore. This will include a 2.5 km bridge over the river Ganga.

Other projects under consideration include Sitarganj-Bareilly 74 km 4-lane road, Mathura-Hathras-Budaun-Bareilly 228 km 4-lane road, Agra-Aligarh 81 km 4-lane road, Agra-Jalesar 87 km 2-lane road with paved shoulders, Shahjahanpur-

Five people injured in celebratory firing

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Five people, including two women, sustained injuries in a celebratory firing at a wedding in Kulpahar area of Mahoba, police said on Thursday.

Deputy Superintendent of Police RP Rai said that a wedding ceremony was taking place near the bus stand in Kulpahar on Wednesday evening when several youths started firing in the air, resulting in injuries to five people. Two women, Chinki and Priyanka, were referred to the Jhansi medical college hospital as they sustained more bullet injuries while three others were discharged after being treated at a private clinic.

The DSP said that police had registered a case and started investigation.

People from the bridegroom's side have been summoned for questioning in the matter.

Those who indulged in the celebratory firing are being searched with the help of close circuit television (CCTV). Even though the high court has completely banned celebratory firing during weddings or any types of events, such kinds of incidents in the state, including Bundelkhand, continue.

Meanwhile, four people, including a minor and three women, were killed when a cement-laden truck overturned on a tempo near Kotla village in the Narkhi police station area in Firozabad on Thursday morning.

Several injured people have been admitted to the district hospital.

The tempo was en route to Firozabad when a truck coming from behind lost control in an attempt to overtake and overturned on the tempo at around 11:15 am on Thursday. Upon receiving information, the police reached the spot and five people, including a minor and three women, were taken out. However, four of them succumbed to their injuries.

Superintendent of Police (City) Mukesh Chandra Mishra also reached the spot and said that relief work was still underway.

The eye-witnesses said that there were about 10 people in the tempo at the time of the accident. The identities of the deceased were yet to be ascertained.

Girl immolate herself after being harassed by her neighbour

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 15-year-old girl succumbed to her burn injuries in Mirzapur district after she immolated herself over alleged harassment by a youth from her neighbourhood.

The girl had set herself on fire last Saturday and later died at the district hospital where she was undergoing treatment.

Surprisingly the local police swung into action only after the girl died. The police claimed to have registered a case of abetment to suicide against the 19-year-old accused and also arrested him. ‘On November 23 (Monday), a complaint was filed by the grandfather of the girl that she was being harassed and teased on the way to her house by a youth.

Due to the constant harassment, the girl set herself on fire. She was taken to the district hospital where she died on Monday evening.

“We have arrested the accused named in the FIR,” Mirzapur SP Ajay Kumar Singh said.

The local SHO said the houses of the accused and the girl were on the opposite side of a road. ‘The girl, who studied in Class IX, used to attend coaching classes. On Saturday evening, she and her friends were talking outside her house when the accused made a remark that led to an altercation between them. Half an hour later, she set herself on fire in her home,” the SHO said.

Meanwhile, an eight-year-old girl allegedly hanged herself from a ceiling fan at her home in Muzaffarnagar district on Wednesday.

The family members claimed that she took the extreme step after being refused by her mother to accompany her to a wedding ceremony. According to Station House Officer of Chauthawal police station, Dharmendra Singh, by the time the police reached the spot for investigation, the family members of the girl had buried the body.

The incident took place in Nirdhana village. According to the villagers, the girl locked the door from inside and hanged herself.



NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of all concerned that my ICSE Statement of Marks and Pass Certificate UID-6524359 year 2017 of Dr. Virendra Swarup Memorial Public School, Kanpur School has actually been lost somewhere. TARIQ ZUMAIR.

NOTICE

Be informed that my St. Paul's School Cantt Lucknow High School ICSE Board Index Number-T / 783 / 012 is the year 2001 marksheet actually lost somewhere. Manas Naresh S/o Naresh Gurnani, BCC Tower, Flat No. 501 Sultanpur Road, Arjunanj, Lucknow.



French envoy visits Gorakhnath temple

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Ambassador of France to India Emmanuel Lenain, who is on a two-day visit to Uttar Pradesh, worshipped Baba Gorakhnath at the Gorakhnath Temple amidst Vedic chants in Gorakhpur on Thursday.

During his stay at the temple for over an hour, the French envoy learned about this world-renowned temple and went to the cow shelter where he fed jaggery to the cows.

Mesmerised by the beauty of the Gorakhnath temple, Lenain went round all the shrines located on the temple premises.

While touring the temple, he interacted with Maharana Pratap PG College Principal Dr Pradeep Rao and learned about the specialities of this world-famous temple.

He also took photographs at Bhim Sarovar and other places.

The French ambassador was informed about all the schemes and campaigns run by Chief Minister and Gorakshpithadhiswar Yogi Adityanath for the protection of cows. He was presented with the religious and cultural books of Geeta Press and Gorakhnath Temple published in English and French by the Gorakhnath temple management as a farewell gift.

Lenain was welcomed in the city by District Magistrate Vijayendra Pandian on Wednesday.

On the first day of his visit, Lenain met Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow and had a fruitful discussion of further strengthening the ties between France and India. France desires to promote new partnerships, welcome more students from UP and have more French companies to invest in UP, he said.

It May be mentioned here that Emmanuel Lenain was accompanied by principal priest of Gorakhnath, Yogi Kamal Nath, secretary Dwarka Tiwari, director of Guru Gorakshanath Hospital, Brigadier (Retd) KPB Singh and media in-charge Vinay Gautam of the Gorakhnath temple premises.

Preps for vaccination expedited

348 more test +ve

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Health department's preparations for the Covid-19 vaccination process in the Lucknow district have picked up pace. Various activities are being carried out in the preparatory phase even Covid-19 vaccine is expected only next year. However, a health official said that by November 28, they would have the list of health workers to be vaccinated. "By December 15, we will prepare our logistic area and thereafter, we will also start the training of staffers who will be administering vaccine to people. We are preparing the list of health workers who will help us carry out vaccinations," he said.

On Thursday, 348 persons tested positive for coronavirus in Lucknow while 188 patients recovered. The death toll stands at 978 deaths while the total number of patients who have recovered is 65820. Besides, there are 3730 active cases in the city.

The new patiens included 28 from Indiranagar, 26 from Gomtinagar, 21 from Alambagh, 20 from Chowk, 18 from Rae Bareilly road, 17 from Vikasnagar, 16 from Mahanagar, 15 each from Jankipuram & Aliganj, 14 from Aminabad, and 13 from Thakurganj.



A health official said that by November 28, they would have the list of health workers to be vaccinated

Across the state, 2,237 persons tested positive, including 138 in Kanpur, 172 in Ghaziabad, 102 in Varanasi and 199 in Meerut, taking the UP tally to 5,35,499. There were 30 deaths in the state, including four in Meerut, three in Lucknow, two each in Varanasi & Moradabad, and one each in Kanpur, Ghaziabad, Prayagraj, Gautambuddh Nagar, Saharanpur, Lakhimpur Kheri, Hardoi, Bulandshahr, Etawah, Basti, Rae Bareilly, Farrukhabad, Pilibhit, Bahraich, Fatehpur, Mainpuri, Lalitpur, Sambhal & Amedkarnagar, taking the

toll to 7,674. Besides, 1,518 patients recovered, taking the total recovery figures to 50,2353. There are still 25,422 active cases in the state.

Dr Tanmay Ghatak from SGPGI said the Covid-19 recovery rate at the hospital is good. Talking about children who tested Covid positive, he said since they have a lesser number of ACE receptors, the viral load is less and thus they recover faster.

"Adults have more ACE receptors, hence the viral load is more in them as compared to children," he added. Secretary, Organised

Medicine Academic Guild (OMAG), Dr Ishwar Gilada said the strategy of screening and testing people at the entry points, stations, bus stands and airport does not help too much. "It has been established that temperature screening is useless, at best a myth, and people with temperature can always dodge by taking paracetamol beforehand. Besides, more than 80% Covid patients are asymptomatic. Up to 50% of antigen tests are false negative. Old people, pregnant women, children and follow-up patients with non-Covid conditions coming from different places are put to

a lot of inconvenience. A safe state is a myth. Yesterday's safe states are today's hot states. Situation may change tomorrow," he said.

Meanwhile, UNICEF in support with the state government, organised a media orientation workshop on Thursday in which experts gave details of how a proper home isolation should be ensured. The experts said an asymptomatic patient should not panic and follow home isolation by remaining quarantined in a separate room. "Only a young member of the family can take up the task of carrying meals for the patient while wearing a mask and gloves so as to ensure prevention from infection," an expert said.

"Masks of patients should be disposed of properly and a home isolation kit should be maintained to check fever and oxygen level," he said.

Meanwhile, FSDA is carrying out a hygiene rating of the hotels in Lucknow. A senior official said: "We have already carried out hygiene rating in 50 hotels, which was followed by an audit by a team of FSSAI. It was found that 26 hotels had a satisfactory hygiene condition," he said. He added that with FSDA carrying out inspections of kitchens at Covid hospitals, complaints regarding the quality of food have decreased to a considerable level. "We are now getting complaints from doctors on Covid duty regarding food facilities at the quarantine centres and it will be looked into," he said.

Police official, three others injured in Baghpat clash

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Four people, including the incharge of a police outpost, were injured when the kin and supporters of a former gram pradhan, who is involved in a property related dispute, pelted stones at the cops in Nivada village of Baghpat, police said on Thursday. The police inspector who sustained serious head injuries during the stone pelting was admitted to the district hospital.

The police have started investigation after registering a case against 10-12 people, including the former gram pradhan. Three people have been arrested in connection with the incident.

Additional Superintendent of Police Manish Mishra said that there was a ruckus following a land dispute between former gram pradhan Arjun Kashyap and the group of Sunita, who is the daughter-in-law of former MLA Chandar Singh, in the Nivada village on Wednesday evening. The Nivada police outpost was informed about this by the former MLA's side.

Acting on the information, Nivada outpost incharge Subhash Chand reached the spot and tried to solve the dispute. It is alleged that Arjun Kashyap and the men and women from his side started behaving indecently with the policemen. They also engaged in a brawl after which they pelted the cops with stones, resulting in injuries to Subhash Chand, Sunita and two children. Upon receiving information, Inspector Novendra Sirohi reached the spot and brought the situation under control and admitted the injured to the district hospital.

The Kotwali police have registered a case against 10-12 people, including former gram pradhan Arjun Kashyap, on charges of lethal attack, obstructing government work and under other serious sections of the Indian Penal Code.

Kotwali incharge Novendra Singh Sirohi said that investigation had been initiated and raids were being conducted to nab those involved in stone pelting and three persons had been arrested so far.

Woman killed, 56 hurt as bus hits car

Lucknow (PNS): A woman was killed while 61 others, including 56 bus passengers, were injured after a roadways bus hit a car in Itanuja on Thursday. As per reports, the bus driver, ferrying the passengers to Lakhimpur district, applied brakes on seeing a biker who appeared from somewhere all of a sudden near Itanuja toll tax plaza. Eyewitnesses said the bus driver swerved the vehicle towards his right and came on the other side of the road, thus hitting a car which had six occupants. Monu Singh of Kanpur, who was also sitting in the car, was rushed to KGMU Trauma Centre where she was declared brought dead. Another member of her family, Shalini aka Shalu, was said to be in critical condition.

Eyewitnesses told the police that the bus and the car overturned following the collision and rolled over several times. The police said there were 56 passengers in the bus and all of them suffered injuries. The injured were admitted to a hospital. The mishap led to a 2-km-long traffic jam on the highway which cleared in about two hours.

LU gets notice for violating norms of social distancing

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The office of chief medical officer (CMO) has served a notice on Lucknow University for violation of social distancing norms during the centenary year celebrations. A senior health official said that the university flouted the social distancing norms as huge crowd gathered for the celebrations. "We asked them to follow Covid-19 protocols and also gave them a copy of rules. We have asked them to carry out mass sanitisation of the whole area on a regular basis," he said.

Lucknow 2nd most polluted in country with AQI at 375

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow was the second most polluted city in the country on Thursday with an AQI of 375. The most polluted was Kanpur with an AQI of 390. Recently, the air quality had improved after Diwali after rains but the pollution levels increased again with the drop in the temperature.

A senior scientist of IITR said the primary cause of pollution is PM 2.5. "There was a time in the city when the dust raised by movement of vehicles would settle down but now the condition has reached such a stage that dust does not settle down," he said. He added that during

the winter season, the Himalayan cold front hits the northern parts of India and the night temperature falls down quickly due to cold weather and calm wind conditions.

"Therefore, pollution does not disperse easily and the pollutants slowly come down to the ground level, breathing zone because of gravitational force. Further, during the night hours, pollutants absorb air moisture and condense other particles to increase its density, thus reducing its buoyancy, and gradually pollutants settle down over night," he explained.

Experts said that air pollution creates a series of significant health problems including pre-

mature death, aggravated asthma, acute respiratory symptoms and decreased lung function in the form of shortness of breath and chronic bronchitis etc.

"Many epidemiological studies have established the fact that an increase of particulate concentration is directly associated with mortality and hospitalisation for respiratory and cardiovascular diseases and increase of respiratory symptoms and decrease of lung functions. There are several published research reports suggesting that the gaseous pollutants are related to respiratory diseases and reproductive and developmental effects even at low concentrations," the experts said.

Unable to pay back loan, grocer ends life

Lucknow (PNS): A grocer ended his life after failing to pay back the loan he had taken from different persons in Hazratganj. Pramod Kumar Nag (25) of Ram Teerath Marg in the locality was found hanging from the ceiling with a rope tied around his neck at his house around 11:30 pm on Wednesday. He was rushed to a hospital where doctors declared him brought dead.

A police spokesman said Pramod ran a small grocery shop in the area. A suicide note was recovered from the room in which Pramod stated that he was taking the step due to inability to pay back loan, the spokesman said. Pramod also wrote that no one should be held responsible for his extreme step.

STF nets kingpin of gang of frauds

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The STF nabbed the kingpin of a gang that had duped several innocent investors on promising attractive refunds. The accused was identified as Harinam Singh Yadav of Jankipuram. He was arrested from Jankipuram Extension.

Harinam is a native of Sitapur and he forayed into this business a few years ago. Harinam, along with his colleague Sharad, opened marts in different cities and also in some cities in Bihar. The

accused floated different schemes of attractive refunds against investment in the marts. During demonetisation, the number of new investors dwindled and the accused were in pressure. They floated another scheme promising to pay the arrears to their old customers and added new investors. However, the scheme did not work well due to the coronavirus pandemic and they stopped payment to their investors. A complaint was lodged against Harinam and his aide. Harinam owned his crime

and disclosed that he floated impractical schemes and duped several unsuspecting investors of crores of rupees.

EXTERNED

Lucknow police on Thursday externed four criminals for a period of six months from the jurisdiction of the city invoking provisions of UP Goonda Control Act. The accused were identified as Irfan of Kaisergebagh, Pintu aka Akhilesh Singh of Banthra, Anand Pandey of Para and Akhilesh Kashyap of Sarojiniganar.

BTC student found hanging

Lucknow (PNS): A 24-year-old BTC student was found hanging at his house in Thakurganj police station area on Wednesday. Shivam Mishra of Hardoi, along with his relative Kamal Kant Tiwari, was staying at a house in the locality. Tiwari said he was at his workplace while Shivam was all alone in the house. "When I returned home on Wednesday evening, I found the doors bolted from inside. As Shivam did not respond to calls, I peeped inside through the window and found him hanging from the ceiling with a rope tied around his neck," Tiwari told police.

Meanwhile, a bag containing gold ornaments was stolen from a wedding venue in Gudamba on Wednesday night. As per reports, Ram Naresh Dubey of Auraiya organised a function on the occasion of his son Raj Dubey's marriage at a guest house in the locality. During 'jaimal' around 10:30 pm, a boy came and sat among omen members of Dubey's family. In view of his age, no one objected to his presence. A little later when Dubey asked for the jewellery box, it was found missing. The boy who was sitting among the women was also missing.

Several programmes mark Constitution Day

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Constitution Day was celebrated at educational institutes and government departments on Thursday. District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash administered a pledge to the staff for performing their fundamental duties, as mentioned in the constitution.

An international webinar on 'Fundamental duties under Indian Constitution: Importance and Implementation' was organised by the Law department of BBAU. Vice-Chancellor Sanjay Singh said: "The university has been named after Babasaheb, who has written this great constitution and we are moving forward with his ideals. Everyone has the right to equality, all religions and ideas are respected. Such is our ancient tradition in which the rights, duties of all are well described and all the creatures, trees, vegetation have been given a place of worship. Our tradition promotes the spirit of fraternity which is enshrined in our constitution," he said.

The chief guest on the

occasion was additional legal advisor, Governor's Secretariat, Kamesh Shukla, who said: "Our duties are well written in our religious books and our rights are protected only by performing our duties. We will not have to fight for our rights when we discharge our duties honestly. The interpretation of these duties is also found in our constitution. When we follow the rules with the right mind and thinking, it will be welfare for all."

Member of UP Higher Education Commission Service Harbansh Dixit said the preamble reflects the dreams and objectives. "People of India have strengthened the sovereignty of the country and equal opportunities have been given to all in this socialist system. The country has been running smoothly for the last 70 years because of the constitution," he said.

The keynote speaker was Ali Mahmood Yahya from the department of Law, Imam Azad University, Baghdad (Iraq), stated that the Constitution of the Republic of India was ready on November 26 in 1949 and implemented on



Officials being administered a pledge on Constitution Day at Raj Bhawan in Lucknow on Thursday

Pioneer

January 26, 1950. "Nearly 65 years later, in 2015, it was decided by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to celebrate this day as Constitution Day when the constitution was officially accepted. When this constitution was officially accepted, there was no provision for fundamental duties. The basic duty of the citizens was added to the constitution by the 42nd amendment, on the recommendations of the Swarn Singh Committee constituted

by the government in the year 1976," he said.

Meanwhile, Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture organised a lecture and interaction programme in the committee room of the institute. Maintaining the protocols of Covid-19, many of the staff members participated in the programme online. The staff participated in the reading of the preamble to the constitution together with the President of India.

Addressing the staff of the institute, director Shailendra Rajan highlighted the objectives of the Constitution Day and the fundamental principles of the constitution. He exhorted the audience to observe the constitutional duties as prescribed for all the citizens of India.

Besides, branches of SKD Academy celebrated Constitution Day. Students presented engrossing speeches and also enacted a skit representing Right to Constitutional Remedies.

Constitution Day was also celebrated by RDSO on Thursday. Director-general Virendra Kumar read the preamble in the mini-conference hall. ADG Ramesh Pinjani was also present with other officials. Similar programmes were held at various directorates and all field units.

A webinar on 'Constitution and its fundamental duties' was also organised on the occasion. Law officer Akhilesh Upadhyay gave a lecture on the fundamental duties conferred by the constitution. The fundamental duties were also promoted through social media.

TENDER NOTICE

No.SSA/CW/KGBV-VI to X/254/2020/ 3250

Dated - 26/11/2020

The Mission Director, SSA, Assam, invites fresh bids for the following work from registered contractors [Class-I (A, B & C) under A. P. W. D. (Building) Assam, having experience of similar nature of work.

Details of the bid may be seen at e-procurement portal website i.e. www.assamtenders.gov.in and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours from 26/11/2020(04:30 PM) to 16/12/2020 (2:00 PM)

The bidders must be enrolled in www.assamtenders.gov.in

Name of Work	Package No	Place	Approx. Value of Work	Time of completion	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	E.M.D. to be drawn in favour of	Tender Cost
CONSTRUCTION OF KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYA (CLASS VI TO X) (ACADEMIC BLOCK ASSAM TYPE WITH RCC HOSTEL BUILDING (G+2) (KGBV-TYPE-II), SSA, ASSAM	1M	Mairabari, Morigaon	Rs.1,91,28,900.00 [Per site]	12 (twelve months)	Rs.3,82,578.00 (for General) Rs.1,91,289.00 (for reserved Category) [PER SITE]	The Mission Director, SSA, Assam, Guwahati-19	Rs.5000.00



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Janasanyog /CF/2914/20

BARODA U.P. BANK					POSSESSION NOTICE
Regional Office: 117/N/26, Kakadeo, Kanpur					
Whereas the undersigned being the authorised officer of Baroda U.P. Bank under the SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTIONS OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 And in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 8 of security interest (Enforcement) rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the borrower to repay the amount in 60 days from the date mentioned in the said notice .					
The owner of below mentioned property and others having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower/guarantors in particular and the public in general that the undersigned has taken constructive possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with the rule 8 of said rule.					
The borrowers/guarantors in particular and public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property, and any dealings with the property will be subject to the first charge of Baroda U.P. Bank. The borrowers/guarantors will be required to hand over actual vacant possession of the under mentioned properties as and when demanded by the authorised officer in the case the borrowers/guarantors fails to handover actual vacant possession as and when demanded, the authorised officer will proceed for actual and vacant possession with the assistance of District Magistrate/C.M.M. under section 14 and for further action under other provisions of the act .					
Sl. No.	Name of Address Borrower	Owner of the Property	Description of the Mortgaged Property	Outstanding Dues Rs. Demand Notice	Date of symbolic Possession
CHAUBEYPUR BRANCH					
1.	1. Anupam Dixit 2. Vikas Dixit 3. Prashant Kr. Dixit All S/o Late Vishambhar Dayal Dixit R/o Vill. Bahrapur, Post Nigoh, Kanpur Nagar	Late Vishambhar Dayal Dixit Alias Vishambhar Nath S/o Radha Krishan Dixit	Non AG Land Arazi No. 279, Vill. Bahrapur, Tehsil Billihaur, Kanpur Nagar Total Area: 0.256 hectare Boundaries: East-Rest Part of Arazi No. 279, West-6mtrs. Kachha Road, North: Land of Gram Samaj South: 6mtrs. Kachha Road	Rs.3,20,842.00 (Intt. upto 30.09.2019) Demand Notice 27.08.2020	21.11.2020
2.	M/s. Guru Kripa Namkeen Udyog, Prop. Mr. Bhoreyal Lal Gupta S/o Mr. Seeta Ram Gupta & Mr. Bhoreyal Lal Gupta S/o Mr. Seeta Ram Gupta R/o Chaubeypur Kalan, Post Chaubeypur, Kanpur Nagar	Mrs. Renu Gupta W/o Mr. Bhoreyal Lal Gupta	House constructed on Gata No. 519, Chaubeypur Kalan, Tehsil Billihaur, Kanpur Nagar Area: 0.20 hectare Boundaries: East-Land of Dhruv Shankar West-Land of Ram Nares, North: Kachha Rasta South: Plot of Babil	Rs. 8,21,763.80 (Intt. upto 29.02.2020) Demand Notice 02.09.2020	21.11.2020
Date: 26.11.2020				Authorised Officer, Baroda U.P. Bank	

97 more test positive in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 97 new COVID-19 patients have been detected in the district on Thursday, increasing the total number of cases to 18,797. The day saw two more deaths, increasing the toll to 302. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 32 and all of them have been recovered from home isolation, increasing the number to 14,790. As none of the patients has been discharged from any of the hospitals, the number remained at 2,860. The total

number of patients who have been recovered so far is 17,650, leaving 845 active cases. The recovery rate is 93.89 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, 51 positive patients were found out of 3,255 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 4,07,612 and the results of 2,550 are awaited. Out of them, 3,88,861 were negative, while 18,751 positive. The total number of

samples collected was 4,29,158. Earlier, a female aged 76 and a male (55) from Bhullanpur and Sigra respectively succumbed to COVID-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU). With the addition of eight new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,474 including 220 red zones. Three green zones have been converted into red zones again. There are 2,254 green zones with a new one.

Under the ongoing mass-group antigen tests, the pas-

sengers were tested at both Varanasi Junction (Cantt.) and Manduadih railway station but all the 235 and 229 tests were found negative there respectively. Besides, all the 271 tests at Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura, 197 at Government Women's Hospital, 78 at CHC Shivpur, 82 at Swami Vivekanand Government Hospital, Bhelupur and 119 at LBS Hospital, Ramnagar were also found negative but two out of 123 have been detected positive at SSH BHU.

Strike hits banking services

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In response to the call given by several trade unions except Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) and other independent federations, the employees of most of the nationalised banks went on one-day strike here on Thursday in protest against the anti-people and anti-labour policies of the Central Government. However, the working in the biggest public sector State Bank of India (SBI) and all the private sector banks continued as usual. Besides, some associations of postal, power, insurance and other units also joined the strike. The bank employees under the banner of UP Bank Employees Union (Varanasi Unit) in response to the call given by All India Bank Employees Association (AIBE) remained on strike and after closing their offices, the employees staged protests at the zonal offices of Punjab National Bank, Bank of India, Canara Bank, Union Bank of India, UCO Bank and Indian Bank. They held a meeting at Nadesar. Addressing the meet-



Bank employees staging protest during strike in Varanasi on Thursday

ing, UPBEU president RB Choubey said that the bank staff went on strike in protest against the rigid attitude of the Central Government and in Varanasi only about 1,500 employees of 300 branches of national banks remained on strike and due to this cash transaction, RTGS and other working was badly affected and about 1,400 cheques worth ₹ 400 crore could not be cleared. He warned the government that if the demands of the employees were not met soon, they would intensify their agi-

tation. Among those who were also present were Pramod Dwivedi, SK Seth, Arun Saigal, Imran Ali, Santosh Kumar Yadav, Sheela Dubey, PK Ghosh, Vijay Kumar, Kamal Rai, Rajneesh Mehrotra, Pradeep Dwivedi, Anand Kumar, Arun Tiwari and Arun Ojha.

Meanwhile, the post office employees under the banner of Akhil Bhartiya Dak Karmachari Sangh (Tritiya Varg) and other associations staged a protest at gate of Head Post Office, Visheshwarganj, in

response to the call given by CCGEW and NEPE in support of their 12-point charter of demands including stoppage of process of privatisation and restoration of old pension scheme. The meeting was addressed by president of Varanasi Eastern Region unit Jagdish Shadaja, secretary Sushant Jha, Ram Ratna Pandey, Shatrughan Narayan Singh, Gopal Singh, Satish Gupta, Basant Sharma and many others.

Besides, the spokesman of Vidyut Mazdoor Panchayat, UP, Ankur Pandey claimed that about 15 lakh power employees and engineers of different states had extended their full support to the nationwide protest.

The office-bearers of Vidyut Karmachari Sanjukt Sangharsh Samiti said that during the coronavirus pandemic, some state governments are trying to privatise their power sector units and with this motive, the Electricity Amendment Bill, 2020 was introduced. They said that power employees would continue to oppose all such moves of privatisation.

Constitution Day celebrated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

President of India Ram Nath Kovind read the Preamble of the Constitution with Railway officers and employees through video link from New Delhi on the occasion of Constitution Day on Thursday and all the Railway staff pledged to respect the Constitution. At DRM's Office of North Eastern Railway (NER), Divisional Railway Manager Vijay Kumar Panjiar, along with all officers and employees, read the Preamble of the Constitution which was repeated by the present Railway officers and staff. Expressing their commitment to the Constitution of India, all officers and employees also signed a signature plaque. On this occasion, Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Infra) Praveen Kumar, Senior Divisional Personnel Officer

Sanath Jain, Chief Medical Superintendent Dr MS Nabial, Senior Divisional Operations Manager Rohit Gupta, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Sanjeev Sharma and many other officers were also present.

Constitution Day was held at Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) on the direction of Railway Board. General Manager (GM) Anjali Goyal read and signed the Signature Wall and administered the pledge of Fundamental Duties while reading the Preamble of the Constitution. The event was held at Administrative building in which the officers and employees of BLW. Apart from this, the signing on the walls was also held at Engine Division, Loco Division, Block Division, TOT Building, Design Department, Maintenance Department, Technical Training Centre and

Central Hospital. In another programme, a competition on constitutional values and fundamentals of the Indian Constitution was organised under the guidance of Chief Vigilance Officer Pramod Kumar Chaudhary.

In Banaras Hindu University (BHU), on the instructions of Education Ministry (Higher Education department), the day was observed at Committee Room No. 1 at Central Office which was presided over by the Vice-Chancellor Prof Rakesh Bhattacharya while it was also attended by Registrar Dr Neeraj Tripathi and many other senior officers of the university. Later, all the members signed the pledge letters which was submitted to the office of Registrar (General Administration).

Similar programmes were also organised at different institutes, faculties and colleges. In

Law Faculty, former V-C of Barkatullah University Dr Nisha Dubey was the chief guest, while Prof Rakesh Kumar Mishra of IIT-BHU was guest of honour. Dean Prof RP Rai welcomed the guest and highlighted the importance of Preamble and Fundamental Duties mentioned in Indian Constitution. In the Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Director Prof Ramesh Chandra administered the pledge in institute premises while Mahila Mahavidyalaya (MMV) Principal Prof Inu Mehta administered the pledge.

Constitution Day was celebrated at the 95th Battalion Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Pahadia Mandi. Chief guest was Commandant Narendra Pal Singh who administered the oath to all the personnel and highlighted the importance of the day.

CM to take stock of preparations going on for PM's visit to Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will come to the city on Friday to take stock of preparations going on in the view of the visit of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the auspicious occasion of Dev Deepawali on November 30.

According to information, the CM will reach the helipad in Khajuri late afternoon on Friday by helicopter from Gorakhpur where he will take stock of preparations going on regarding the visit of the PM and he will thereafter go to Domri and Ganga Ghats. He will hold a meeting with the officers at Circuit House in the evening and depart for state capital at night.

Meanwhile, the district administration is yet to receive the protocol about the PM's visit to the city but the district administration has intensified preparations regarding this. The BJP leaders also became active in view of the PM visit. As per the information received here till now, the PM will lit the first diya of Dev Deepawali celebration at RajGhat and a stage is being erected there for the purpose. But there will be no



presence of anyone at ghat at that time and the people could watch the PM programme on big LED screens to be installed at other ghats. The PM may also deliver a brief speech and the people could hear through the loud speakers installed at other ghats. Earlier, the PM will address a public meeting at Khajuri and thereafter, will reach Domri by helicopter. He will reach Ram Ghat and from there, will reach Raj Ghat by boat.

There is a target to light 15 lakh diyas along the both sides of the holy river within half-an-hour after the PM will light the first diya with an aim to

enlighten the entire area surrounding the ghats. The PM is also to have a glance of grandeur of the Dev Deepawali by boat from Raj Ghat to Ravidas Ghat. Thereafter, the PM will go to Samarth by road where he will have a glance of light and laser show. It is also said that the PM is also likely to watch the laser show at Chet Singh Ghat to be held by the Tourism department. From there, the PM will reach the airport in Babatpur by road and depart for the national capital at night. The security at ghats will be under 12 magistrates on the auspicious occasion. And for the other arrangements at

ghats, as many as 22 officers will be appointed. The NDRF personnel will also be deployed in the river to avoid any untoward incident.

In the meantime, the hectic preparations are going on at Khajuri and other places where the PM is likely to visit. The senior administrative officers including the District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma also visited the ghats to take stock of preparations and issued some directives regarding the works to be completed properly. The dividers of the routes through which the PM will pass, are being painted on war-footing.



Hindu devotees feed Siberian migratory birds in the Yamuna river on a foggy day in Prayagraj

Pioneer

88 new Covid cases in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Prayagraj reported a total of 88 new corona infection cases in the last 24 hours. A total of 5,373 people were screened during the day. 99 people got infection free after beating the deadly virus. One patient died during treatment on the same day.

According to CMO Dr GS Bajpai, the number of infected people has increased on Wednesday compared to the last two days. At the same time, the percentage of healthy people has increased. 32 people were discharged from Covid hospitals. So far, 6,235 patients have been sent home after being freed from hospitals. At the same time, the number of people who have completed home isolation has reached 18,533.

According to the CMO, with the death of an infected on Wednesday, the number of

deaths from Covid has reached 341. As of November 25, the total number of infected has increased to 26,200. A total of 114 patents are admitted in L3 SRN Hospital and 31 in Beli Hospital and 31 in United Medicity who are being treated.

Meanwhile, the Allahabad High Court has directed strict monitoring to mandate the rule of wearing masks in the six districts most affected by the corona infection. The court has said that in these districts, surveillance should be done with drone cameras round-the-clock, seven days a week. The order not to sell food and drinks will remain in force for the next six weeks. The court has directed intensive monitoring for at least the next 30 days.

A bench comprising Justice Siddharth Verma and Justice Ajit Kumar, which is monitoring the government's preparedness to deal with the corona

infection, said that the campaign to monitor and mandate wearing masks in crowded areas should be conducted for at least 30 days.

A similar campaign should be conducted in Prayagraj and most affected in Lucknow, Ghaziabad, Meerut, Kanpur and Gautam Budh Nagar and monitored round-the-clock with available drone cameras. SSP Prayagraj, who appeared on the court's order, said that a team of four constables has been formed for continuous monitoring.

The SSP has also instructed other officers of the district to hand over at least four hours of monitoring report in their respective areas daily to the concerned station incharge. The court has asked all the Advocate Commissioners to monitor the list of constables through the mobile numbers written on it.

The court has directed

Additional Advocate General Manish Goyal to present the report of surveillance on the next hearing. The Advocate Commissioner informed that the food shops on the side of the road are not following the rule of not selling goods in the open. The court said that the local Food and Drug Administration department should ensure that the food items are sold only in the packing.

No one should sell food items in the open. This rule will continue for another six weeks. The court has sought a report on December 3 for the next hearing on this issue.

The court spoke to ICMR Dr Nivedita Gupta through video conferencing regarding availability of the corona vaccine. She informed the court about the progress of the vaccination programme and assured that the corona vaccine will be available in the near future.

Preamble reading ceremony held at NCR

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The 71st Constitution Day was celebrated over North Central Railway on Thursday. Adopted by the Constituent Assembly of India on November 26, 1949 and effective from January 26, 1950, the Constitution of India is Supreme Law in country. The document lays down the framework demarcating fundamental political code, structure, procedures, powers, and duties of government institutions and sets out fundamental rights, directive principles, and the duties of citizens. It is the longest written constitution of any country and forms the backbone of the biggest democracy on the earth. The Constitution declares India a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic, assuring its citizens justice, equality and liberty, and endeavours to promote fraternity.

The 71st Constitution Day celebrations started with Preamble reading ceremony organised at HQ office, three divisions and other units of North Central Railway. To mark this occasion this year Preamble of Indian Constitution was read out by

officers, staff and supervisors of North Central Railway following live telecast of Preamble reading by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind. Followed by this pledge on fundamental duties for citizens of India was administered to officers and staff at HQ office by PCPO NCR Nand Kishore and similar pledge taking functions were organised by divisions and other units of North Central Railway. Besides reading out Preamble and pledge on 11 fundamental duties, many other programmes commensurate to the occasion including online quiz, webinar, talk, and signature campaign on Constitution of India were organised over North Central Railway. Posters and banners related to Constitution Day, Preamble, fundamental duties were displayed at stations, offices and other places. Extensive use of social media platforms also done to circulate messages related to constitution day among railway employee and public at large.

It may be noted that since last year's Constitution Day observed on November 26, 2019, a year long celebration was observed on North Central Railway under which following

activities were organised — Brochures, Banner, Posters, Standees, flyers etc. related to Constitution of India provided/ planned at prominent locations of offices, service buildings, stations; Awareness campaign focused on Citizen Duties including fundamental duties carried out; rallies, walks, runs etc. on the theme of Constitution of India shall were organised; talk, conference, seminar, quiz, debates etc. on Constitution of India with main thrust on fundamental were also organised; and stickers on Constitution of India with focus on fundamental duties were provided in coaches. Flyers related to Constitution of India were distributed among passenger.

CORE: The Preamble of the Constitution was read over by the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, from Kevadia, Gujarat, on Thursday, at 11 am, with his reading, General Manager of Central Organisation for Railway Electrification (CORE), Yashpal Singh, Prayagraj, and the Heads of all the departments also read the Preamble of the Constitution, following the President's speech.

Under the leadership of the

General Manager, all officers and employees were administered oaths at the office of the CORE, Prayagraj, at 11:30 am to perform fundamental duties under Constitution Day.

It may be noted that on November 26, 1949, the Constitution was adopted. In his memory, Constitution Day is organised on November 26 every year.

The Constitution has an important role in making the nation sovereign and fulfilling people's aspirations. To make people aware, knowledge of fundamental rights and fundamental duties provided in the Constitution is very important. To fulfill these requirements, Constitution Day was organised.

On this occasion, all the Heads of the departments included Arun Kumar, Chief Administrative Officer, Suresh Kumar, Principal Chief Telecom and Signal Engineer, Ashutosh, Principal Chief Engineer, Akmal Wadud, Principal Chief Personnel Officer, Harish Gupta, Principal Chief Content Manager, DK Gupta, Principal Finance Advisor and other senior officers and employees were present.

Azam, his son's bail plea rejected

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Allahabad High Court on Thursday rejected the bail plea of the Samajwadi Party MP from Rampur Mohabbad Azam Khan and his son Abdullah Azam in the case of fake age certificate and related Adhar, PAN, and passport.

After hearing both the parties Justice Sunit Kumar of the Allahabad High Court had reserved his order on November 19 which was pronounced on Thursday. Azam Khan and his son are languishing in Sitapur jail at present. BJP leader Akash Saxena had lodged an FIR against the SP MP and his son regarding a fraud committed by them in getting a fake age certificate. On the basis of this age certificate they managed a fake Adhar card, PAN card, and passport.

ROAD MISHAP: Two youths were killed in the accident on Phaphamau Ganga bridge when the unknown

vehicle knocked them down, killing them on the spot in the accident. On the receipt of information, the Soraon police reached the spot and reviewed the situation.

After identifying the documents found from the pockets of the deceased, informed the family members. They reached the spot weeping and wailing. The family members said that Sonu is married while Honey was still unmarried. Incharge Inspector Soraon Sheeshpal Sharma said that the vehicle causing the accident is being traced through CCTV cameras.

SMUGGLED LIQUOR SEIZED: A joint team of Jethwara police and Crime Branch claimed to have busted a racket involved in the smuggling of Indian made foreign liquor (IMFL) and country-made liquor near Derwa Bazar area and seized 147 cartons of IMFL and 10 cartons of the

countrymade liquor bottles worth ₹ 12 lakh. The police also arrested two men on the charges of smuggling of illegal liquor bottles from Haryana.

The arrested persons have been identified as Abhay Singh and Sunny Srivastava and are residents of Sangipur and Ramgarh Derwa respectively. Police are also on the lookout for their accomplice identified as Dharendra Singh alias Bengali, a resident of Kunda who managed to give a slip to a police party. SP (Pratapgarh) Anurag Arya said a joint team of Jethwara police and Crime Branch acting upon a specific tip raided a godown located near an English wine shop near Derwa Bazar area where illegal and smuggled liquor from Haryana was stored. Meanwhile, SP has also been suspended incharge of Derwa police outpost Satish Yadav on the charges of dereliction of duty.



The Divisional Commissioner, Mr Raj Shekhar carried out a surprise visit of Collectorate on Thursday.

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DC concern over decline in mining revenue collection

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar made a surprise inspection of Kanpur collectorate on Thursday. He first administered oath to all the officials on the Constitution Day and directed District Magistrate Alok Tiwari to ensure that the weeding out of records was completed in the next four months as per the guidelines and orders of the Board of Revenue. He also directed the district magistrate to monitor the work on a weekly basis and to ensure the removal of encroachments on all water bodies by March 31, 2021 so that water bodies like ponds, lakes, rivers, streams could be rejuvenated in the larger pub-

lic interest and in the interest of environment. The divisional commissioner said the revenue collection from mining in Kanpur Nagar was decreasing every year since the last four years and this was a cause of concern. He said it was shocking that the mining inspector had failed to carry out surprise checks and regular field inspections of the mining permitted areas. He then issued warning letter to the district mining officer. He also directed the district magistrate to get the four new proposals of mining lease executed in the next two-three months so that revenue recovery was speeded up. Shekhar also directed the proper utilisation of funds

worth several crores lying idle in the District Mining Fund (DMF) on the appropriate works in the next four months. He expressed shock and concern as weeding out of the records was not carried out in the collectorate for the past 40 years. He said several unwanted and unnecessary files and documents were piling up in the collectorate record room since the past several decades. ADM (LA) (incharge of records room) assured divisional commissioner that the pending works would be completed in the next four months. Shekhar also inspected the combined office, arms section and IGRS section as well. He expressed satisfaction over the IGRS performance in the district and directed the district magistrate to ensure

that one copy of the disposal details was sent to the applicant if the grievance was given by hand or submitted in collectorate. He said the arms section needed a lot of homework to do on updating the records, field verification of the same and appropriate follow-up action and gave three months' time to update each and every licence details on the website and verify the same on the ground. He also advised that foolproof mechanism be developed for timely updating the data and safety and security of the same. The divisional commissioner was accompanied by additional commissioner, ADM (City), ADM (Finance), ADC (CS), ADM (LA), and all SDMs and ACMs of Kanpur Nagar.

KDA seals 11 illegal constructions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The enforcement squad of Kanpur Development Authority sealed 11 illegal construction on Wednesday. It may be recalled that after the sudden collapse of three houses due to adjacent deep digging of basement in Coolie Bazaar a few days ago, Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar had directed KDA Vice Chairman RK Singh and the superintending engineer of Awasthi Vikas to send him a report and video recording of the illegal basement digging going on in the city. This made the KDA's



Illegal construction of Apartment sealed by KDA.

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illegal construction drive on Wednesday. The squad found basement being dug up in Tarang Singh's building in Pandu Nagar, Kakadeo, without following any safety measures. It was immediately sealed by the squad. Likewise, illegal basement and building construction was going on in Gutaiya (house of Arvind Tandon), Acharya Nagar, Raipurwa, Shastri Nagar (Manohar Lal's three-storeyed building), Navin Nagar, Kakadeo (Ram Pal Singh Katiyar's apartment), Govind Nagar (Shiv Builders and Rajesh Chandra).

enforcement squad come out of its slumber and carry out anti-

Packaging industry growing at a robust pace: Rajesh Sikka

KANPUR (PNS): Packaging is an important aspect in deducing the perceived value of a product. Every year the industry comes up with newer trends and has been constantly evolving. Flexible packaging will soon be joined by bio-packaging and the sector will witness extensive use of augmented reality in times to come. Initiatives such as Make in India have given a further thrust to consumption and export of Indian products resulting in the growth for the packaging sector. This was stated by CII Western UP Chairman Rajesh Sikka while addressing the 2nd CII Packaging Summit held over virtual platform on Thursday. He said packaging was the fifth largest sector in India's economy and was one of the highest growth sectors in the country. He said with the rising requirement for packaging across sectors, especially in view of the current pandemic, with traditional businesses preferring to package products, and the retail and e-commerce growing rapidly, the industry



The Vice Chairman of the CII, Kanpur Zonal Council, Akash Goenka, addressing the second CII Packaging Summit.

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was growing at a robust pace. CII Kanpur Zonal Council Vice-Chairman Akash Goenka noted that when the world will emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, packaging companies will need to raise their performance in multiple ways like balance sustainability goals with stringent hygiene requirements, step up their e-commerce games, and compete in a novel customer landscape while facing strong cost pressures. He added that to navigate these choppy waters and stay ahead of the competition, pack-

aging companies must rethink how to move to their next normal. DIC India Ltd CEO and Managing Director Manish Bhatia said food packaging was a significant contributor to the overall packaging industry, more so during current times where takeaways and home deliveries were being preferred over in-house dining. He said pre-pandemic, the sector was seeing a growth of 18-20 percent and it had been recording robust growth even during the pandemic. He also highlighted the need for striking cohesive partnerships, redefining sustainability and focus on safety for growth of the industry. He shared that the organisation had launched a digital initiative — DIC Connect — to train factory personnel on how to eliminate fire instances at factories as well as printing press. He further added that incentivising the sector will give it a boost to adopt sustainability and manage waste. Modi Enterprises COO and Godfrey Philips India Ltd

COO and Director Sharad Agarwal said that the packaging industry was one of the fastest growing industry in the country and currently stood at around US \$ 900 billion. He identified the top trends in the sector as sustainability and innovation, product hygiene and safety and e-commerce readiness and adoption of technology. He also highlighted that fibre foam had made inroads in India and could prove to be a viable alternative to thermocol. Clearpack Automation Pvt Ltd Director (Engineering) Vishnu Puranik said that the reason for automation adoption by industries had gone beyond cost reduction. He said smart packaging had evolved to focus on components that had been added in packaging material and creation of exquisite outcomes. He also pointed out that dark factories would be the future of the industry where just the raw material would go into an automated set-up and the finished product would emerge from the other end.

111 more test positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar reported 111 more coronavirus positive cases on Thursday evening. Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 111 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Wednesday evening and Thursday evening taking the tally of confirmed cases to 30,243 cases. He said that 9 cases were discharged from hospital. He said three COVID-19 deaths in the city were reported till Thursday evening keeping the death toll to 776. The CMO said at present 1285 active cases were undergoing treatment. Dr Mishra said 4622 samples were sent for testing in the city.

Fire in battery scrap recycling factory

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A battery scrap recycling factory caught fire in Panki Industrial Area late Wednesday night. Three fire engines immediately reached the spot and controlled the flames. Factory owner Jagannath Jaiswal of Ratanlal Nagar said the unit recycled battery scrap. Late Wednesday night, when workers informed him about the fire, he immediately reached the spot. Meanwhile, fire engines were pressed into service that they took over an hour to extinguish the fire. Jaiswal said battery scrap worth around Rs.2.50 lakh was gutted in the fire. Fire Station Officer Kailash Chandra said the fire broke out from an electric short-circuit. Estimates of loss were being worked out. He said when the factory workers failed to control the fire with the help of fire extinguishers, they called the fire brigade. Besides, a house in the densely populated Coolie Bazaar under Anwarganj police station also caught fire due to short-circuit on Thursday morning. Fire tenders from the nearby Latouche Road Fire Station reached the spot and extinguished the fire after half-an-hour. FSO Surendra Chaubey said he received information about the fire in the first floor of Ram Kumar Katheria's house around 4:30 am and fire-fighters were immediately sent to the spot and they, with the help of local residents, controlled the fire. All the family members were safely rescued. Estimates of losses were being worked out, he added.

Symposium on Mission Shakti

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A symposium and awareness programme on Mission Shakti was organised at the Atal Behari Vajpayee auditorium of Kanpur Development Authority on Wednesday. Additional Secretary Gudakesh Sharma and OSD/nodal officer and Chairperson of Mission Shakti Renu Pathak of KDA chaired the programme. All the female employees of the KDA were present in the event. Tehsildar Archana Agnihotri apprised the gathering of the Mission Shakti campaign and described the use of different helpline numbers introduced by the government. These include 1090 Women Powerline, 181 Woman Kalyan Vibhag Helpline, 112 Ekikrit Helpline, 1098 Child Helpline etc. A group of female employees comprising Priya, Komal and Priti presented Saraswati Vandana while presentations were given by Ruchi Tewari, Madhu Yadav, Poonam, Jyoti, Dr Alka Gupta, Sidra Naushad, Vineeta Tewar and Pratishtha who also shared their views on the subject. The proceedings were conducted by Lekhni Sachan who highlighted different schemes run by the Central and state governments.

SP inspects police station

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR



SP Ajay Kumar Singh inspected Padari police station on Wednesday. During the inspection the SP saw the condition of barracks, kitchen, store room, computer room, lock-up room, residential houses, armoury, lavatory along with police station premises and expressed satisfaction over the arrangements but also directed to make them better. Inspecting the records he directed the SHO to dispose of the complaints on time and ensure that petty disputes were settled at the initial stage. He directed the authorities to keep a close watch on those too who had come from the jail recently and those who had been involved in crime in the past but at present were less active. For effective policing he made it clear that the top five criminals, gangsters, touts etc should be kept on the radar of the police. About the traditional way of patrolling the SP said that it should be intensified and the beat system should be strengthened. The SP inspected the women's help desk and directed the cops that aggrieved should be treated politely, their problems should be heard and grievances should be redressed under the provisions. In view of Covid-19 he said that the norms should be fol-

lowed strictly because the safety of the cops was a must for performing the duties properly. During the inspection the SP was accompanied by PRO and SHO Venkatesh Tiwari was also present along with his team. **FEARED DROWNED:** Two brothers were feared drowned in the Ganga under Katra Kotwali on Wednesday. As per the reports, Ritesh (15) and Gaurav (12), sons of Rama Shankar Maurya, a resident of Lallaghat under Katra Kotwali, had gone to bathe in the Ganga when they slipped and went into the area where the water was deep. On getting information the police reached the spot and launched a search for them but no avail at all. **NABBED:** The Katra Kotwali police arrested Shahid Ali, son of Mukhtar, a resident of Hathiya Phatak, for posting a derogatory comment on social media. On the other hand, the Jigna police invoked Gangster Act against two desperadoes. Reports said to maintain law and order the police invoked Gangster Act against Paras, son of Mohan, a resident of Libipur Gaura village under Jigna police station and Kapil, son of Dinesh, a resident of Lachhiya Ka Pura under Jigna police station.

Kathgodam-Jaisalmer spl from Nov 28

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration keeping the convenience of passengers in mind will run the 05014/05013 Kathgodam-Jaisalmer-Kathgodam daily special train and 05314/05313 Ramnagar-Jaisalmer-Ramnagar link daily special train from Kathgodam/Ramnagar from November 28 and from Jaisalmer from November 30 until further notice. All coaches in this train will be of reserved category and passengers traveling in them will have to follow the Covid-19 prevention guidelines, CPRO PK Singh said. **KATHGODAM-JAISALMER SPL:** The 05014 Kathgodam-Jaisalmer daily special will leave Kathgodam at 20.35 hrs, Haldwani at 20.52 hrs, Lalkuan at 21:34 hrs, Rudrapur City at 22.10 hrs, Bilaspur at 22.29 hrs, Rampur at 23.07 hrs, the second day Moradabad at 00.35 hrs, Ghaziabad at 03.00 hrs, Sahibabad at 03.13 hrs, Delhi at 04.30 hrs, Delhi Sarai Rohilla at 04.46 hrs, Delhi Cantt at 05.05 hrs, Gurgaon at 05.23 hrs, Pataudi Road at 05.46 hrs, Rewari at 06.32 hrs, Bawal at 06.49 hrs, Khairthal at 07.15 hrs, Alwar at

07.41 hrs, Rajgarh at 08.09 hrs, Bandikui at 08.34 hrs, Dausa at 08.56 hrs, from Gandhinagar Jaipur at 09.50 hours, Jaipur at 10.20 hrs, Kishangarh at 11.36 hrs, Ajmer at 12.35 hrs, Beawar at 13.17 hrs. Marwar at 15.05 hrs, Pali Marwar at 15.33 hrs, Bhagat ki Kothi at 16.30 hrs, Jodhpur at 17.05 hrs, from Rai Ka Bagh at 19.13 hrs, Phalodi at 19.05 hrs, Ramdevora at 19.46 hrs and reach Jaisalmer at 22.15 hrs. During the return journey the 05013 Jaisalmer-Kathgodam daily special will leave Jaisalmer at 02.55 hrs, Ramdevora at 04.42 hrs, Phalodi at 05.36 hrs, Rai ka Bagh at 07.49 hrs, Jodhpur at 08.25 hrs, Bhagat ki Kothi at 08.33 hrs, Pali Marwar at 09.28 hrs, Marwar at 10.45 hrs, Beawar at 11.49 hrs, Ajmer at 13.15 hrs, Kishangarh at 13.43 hrs, Jaipur at 13.35 hrs, Gandhi Nagar Jaipur at 15.46 hrs, Dausa at 16.26 hrs, Bandikui at 16.52 hrs, Rajgarh at 17.13 hrs, Alwar at 17.54 hrs, Khairthal at 18.13 hrs, Bawal at 18.39 hrs, Rewari at 19.20 hrs, Pataudi Road at 19.40 hrs, Gurgaon at 20.03 hrs, Delhi Cantt at 20.20 hrs, Delhi Sarai Rohilla at 20.40 hrs, Delhi at 22.05 hrs, Sahibabad at 22.31

hrs, Ghaziabad at 23.02 hrs, Hapur at 23.39 hrs, Moradabad at 01.48 hours, Rampur at 02.22 hrs, Bilaspur at 02.50 hrs, Rudrapur City at 03.06 hrs, Lalkuan at 03.50 hrs, Haldwani at 04.23 hrs and reach Kathgodam at 04.55 hrs. A total of 14 coaches, including two of general second, seven of sleeper, one each of AC second and of AC third and two of SLR/D will be attached. **RAMNAGAR-JAISALMER SPL:** The 05314 Ramnagar-Jaisalmer Express daily link special will leave Ramnagar at 22.20 hrs, Kashipur at 22.55 hrs and reach Moradabad at 00.02 hrs on second day. During the return journey the 05313 Jaisalmer-Ramnagar daily link special will leave Moradabad at 02.32 hrs, Kashipur at 03.35 hrs and reach Rampur at 04.15 hours. A total of seven coaches, including two coaches of general second class, two of sleeper class, one of AC third, one of AC second-cum-third class, and one of SLR/D will be attached in the train. The rakes of train No 05014/05013 and 05314/05313 will be attached and detached in Moradabad.

DRM inspects progress of projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI



Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Vijay Kumar Panjari inspected Saidpur Bhitari-Sagarparli-Ballia-Rasra-Dullahapur railway section under Varanasi-Ballia Rail Block Development Project to review safety norms and progress made in various ongoing projects in this part of Varanasi Division of NER on Wednesday. Along with it he also made in-depth inspection of progress works of Saidpur Bhitari electric loco shed and tower wagon apart from seeing the progress in under-construction tower wagon sheds at Sagarparli, Ballia, Rasra and Dullahapur stations. Panjari first reached Saidpur Bhitari station through his special inspection vehicle and after seeing the passenger facilities, inspected the under-construction electric loco shed. He instructed the officers concerned to expedite the construction work while reviewing the progress. According to him, due to electrification and doubling the track works in Varanasi division, number of electric locomotives is increasing steadily and in such a situation, it is very necessary to have electric loco shed working soon. After this the DRM reached Sagarparli. He inspected the railway station seeing the passenger amenities and various works of development, including upgra-

dation of platform and extension work going on at the station. He also gave instructions to the officers concerned. Later after reaching Ballia, Panjari inspected the tracks, goods lines and under construction washing pit till the cross over point zone of Bansdih side. He instructed the officials concerned to expedite the work. The DRM then reached Rasra station and inspected the passenger facilities. Finally Panjari reached Dullahapur station via Phephna-Rasra-Indara-Mau where after inspecting the passenger facilities he saw the progress made at tower wagon shed and insisted on completing the pending works of shed construction with complete quality within the time limit. During his hectic inspection, he was accompanied by Senior Divisional Operations Manager Rohit Gupta, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Sanjeev Sharma, Senior Divisional Engineer-II Manoj Kumar Singh, Senior Divisional Engineer-III Atul Tripathi, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (Electrical Traction) Pankaj Kesharwani, Senior Divisional Signal and Telecom Engineer Trimbak Tiwari, Senior Divisional Safety Officer Virendra Kumar Yadav and senior officials of Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) and other construction firms.

Lko Jn-CSMT spl to run as per revised timetable

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration has decided to run 02533/02534 Lucknow Jn-CSTM-Lko Jn special as per the revised timetable from December 1. The 02533 Lucknow Jn-Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (Mumbai) superfast special train will leave Lucknow Jn at 21.30 hrs, Unnao at 22.32 hrs, Kanpur Central at 23.15 hrs, the second day Orai at 00.45 hrs, Jhansi at 03.05 hrs, Lalitpur at 04.11 hrs, Bhopal at 07.10 hrs, Habibganj at 07.23 hrs, Itarsi at 09.00 hrs, Khandwa at 12.00 hrs, Bhusaval at 13.55 hrs, Manmad at 16.20 hrs, Nashik Road at 17.25 hrs, Kalyan at 21.25 hrs and reach Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) at 22.45 hrs. The 02534 CSMT (Mumbai) - Lucknow Jn superfast special will leave CSMT at 08.25 hrs, Kalyan at 09.15 hrs, Nashik Road at 11.45 hrs, Manmad at 12.45 hrs, Bhusaval at 15.10 hrs, Khandwa at 17.15 hrs, Itarsi at 19.35 hrs, Habibganj at 21.00 hrs, Bhopal at 21.25 hrs, the second day Lalitpur at 00.05 hrs, Jhansi at 02.00 hrs, Orai at 03.42 hrs, Kanpur Central at 07.00 hrs

and Unnao at 07.24 hrs and reach Lucknow Jn at 08.40 hrs. The rake composition of these trains will remain as notified earlier. **Meanwhile the 05159 Chhapra-Durg special will depart from Chhapra at 07.10 hrs, from Suraimanpur at 07.43 hrs, from Revti at 07.57 hrs, from Sahatwar at 08.10 hrs, from Ballia at 08.45 hrs, from Chitbaragan at 09.09 hrs, from Karimuddinpur at 09.26 hrs, from Yusufpur at 09.42 hrs, from Ghazipur City at 10.08 hrs, from Aunrihar at 10.50 hrs, from Sarnath at 11.27 hrs, from Varanasi City at 11.56 hrs, from Varanasi Jn at 12.30 hrs, from Bhadohi at 13.08 hrs, from Janghai at 13.42 hrs, from Phulpur at 14.06 hrs, from Prayag at 15.00 hrs, from Prayagraj Jn at 15.36 hrs, from Naini at 15.46 hrs, from Shankargarh at 16.13 hrs, from Dabhora at 16.34 hrs, from Manikpur at 17.45 hrs, from Satna at 18.55 hrs, from Maihar at 19.30 hrs, from Amdara at 20.00 hrs, from Katni at 20.45 hrs, from Birsinghpur at 22.37 hrs, from Sahdol at 23.25 hrs, from Burhar at 23.43 hrs, from Amlai at 23.54 hrs, from Anupur at 00.15 hrs, from Pendra Road at 01.00 hrs, from Uslapur at 03.05 hrs, from Bilaspur at 03.50 hrs, from**

Bhatpara at 04.38 hrs, from Tildenevara at 05.00 hrs, from Raipur at 06.00 hrs, Bhilai Power House at 06.33 hrs and reach the Durg at 07.05 hrs. The 05160 Durg-Chhapra Express special will leave Durg at 20.25 hrs, Bhilai Power House 20.36 hrs, Raipur at 21.10 hrs, Tildenevara at 21.43 hrs, Bhatpara at 22.05 hrs, Bilaspur at 23.20 hrs, Uslapur at 23.36 hrs, Pendra Road at 01.02 hrs, Anupur at 02.05 hrs, Amlai at 02.18 hrs, Burhar at 02.29 hrs, Sahdol at 03.05 hrs, Birsinghpur at 03.39 hrs, Katni at 06.15 hrs, Amdara at 06.50 hrs, Maihar at 07.15 hrs, Satna at 08.15 hrs, Manikpur at 09.45 hrs, Dabhora at 10.06 hrs, Shankargarh at 10.28 hrs, Naini at 11.43 hrs, Prayagraj Jn at 12.45 hrs, Prayag at 12.58 hrs, Phulpur at 13.33 hrs, Janghai at 14.10 hrs, Bhadohi at 14.40 hrs, Varanasi Jn at 16.30 hrs, Varanasi City at 16.10 hrs, Sarnath at 16.53 hrs, Aunrihar at 17.20 hrs, Ghazipur City at 18.07 hrs, Yusufpur at 18.26 hrs, Karimuddinpur at 18.43 hrs, Chitbaragan at 19.00 hrs, Ballia at 19.30 hrs, Sahtwar at 19.51 hrs, Revati at 20.16 hrs, Suraimanpur at 20.41 hrs and will reach Chhapra at 21.35 hrs. The rake composition of these trains will remain as notified earlier.

Mumbai airport creates zones to carry out Covid tests for Delhi flyers

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In line with the Maharashtra Government's directive making it mandatory for passengers arriving in airports in Maharashtra to carry RT-PCR negative reports with them or undergo tests at the airport, the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) in Mumbai has created a dedicated zone for domestic passengers arriving from Delhi, Goa, Gujarat and Rajasthan who are required to undergo the RT-PCR test upon arrival at the airport.

"Passengers will be directed to the test zone located near the baggage carousel to undertake the test before exiting the airport," a statement released by CSMIA said here on Thursday evening.

"In keeping with the latest edict from the State of Maharashtra, passengers arriving from CSMIA from Delhi, Goa, Gujarat and Rajasthan are required to provide proof of a negative RT-PCR test prior to boarding their flight or undertake the test upon arrival at Mumbai," the statement said.

"Since the implementation of the new directive from November 25, CSMIA has tested over 200 passengers who have arrived from these earmarked regions, of which none have tested positive for COVID-19," the statement said.

The break-up of flights that arrive in Mumbai airport is as follows: Goa 12, Gujarat 15, Rajasthan 11 and Delhi 26.

"The Airport has capacity of conducting 3000 RT PCR tests a day and it can be scaled up to 5000. The Airport began offering RT PCR tests for domestic and international passengers from Sept 6. Till November 10, 8000 passengers had used the facility and 100 were found positive. We offer the RT PCR test at the price of Rs 1400 per test," CSMIA spokesperson said.

It may be recalled that amid a fear of a second Covid-19 wave gripping Maharashtra in the wake of increasing incidence of Covid-19 New Delhi, Ahmedabad and Surat, the Maharashtra government had on November 23 put in place a mechanism to prevent the passengers carrying Covid-19 virus from entering Maharashtra from Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa.

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

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

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

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

MAHA INFECTIONS CROSS 18-L MARK

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra breached a grim milestone of 18 lakh Covid-19 infections on Thursday, as the State recorded 65 fresh deaths and 6,406 new infections.

A day after the State logged 65 deaths and 6159 new infected cases, the Covid-19 deaths remained static at 65 for the second consecutive day, while the infections rose marginally to 6406.

With 6406 fresh infections, the total number of infected cases in the state crossed 18 lakh mark, as the cases jumped from 17,95,959 to 18,02,365.

With 65 new deaths, the Covid-19 toll in Maharashtra climbed from 46,748 to 46,813.

As 4815 more people were discharged from various hospitals the number of people discharged from the hospitals on Thursday after full recovery since the second week of March this year went up to 16,68,538.

The recovery rate in the state dropped marginally from 92.64 to 92.57 per cent.

Of the 65 deaths reported, Mumbai accounted for a maximum of 15 deaths, followed by 9 deaths in Pune, 6 each in Satara and Nagpur, 4 in Chandrapur, 3 each in Thane, Kolhapur and Parbhani, 2 each in Palghar, Nashik, Solapur, Beed and Bhandara and one death each in Jalgaon, Jalna, Nanded and Gondia.

In addition, two persons from outside the state died in Maharashtra.

With 15 fresh deaths, the pandemic toll in Mumbai climbed from 10,725 to 10,740, while the infected cases went up by 1147 to trigger a jump in the total infections from 278,597 to 279,744.

Meanwhile, the number of "active cases" total cases in the state went up from 84,464 to 85,963. The fatality rate in the state stood at 2.60 per cent.

Pune district, which continued to be the worst-affected city-district in Maharashtra, saw the total number of cases increase from 3,48,814 to 3,49,792, while the total number of deaths in Pune increased from 7304 to 7313.

Thane district remained in the third spot -after Pune and Mumbai - after the total number of infections rose from 2,37,180 to 2,37,984 while the total deaths mounted from 5439 to 5442.

Of the 1,05,47,333 samples sent to laboratories, 18,02,365 have tested positive (17.09 per cent) for COVID-19 until Thursday. Currently, 5,28,690 people are in home quarantine while 6634 people are in institutional quarantine.

Ahmed Patel laid to rest in native village; Rahul attends funeral

Gandhinagar: Amid thousands of well wishers, the Congress veteran and party's ace troubleshooter Ahmed Patel's mortal remains were laid to rest in his native village in Gujarat's Bharuch district, following the Covid-19 guidelines. Many top national leaders of the party, including Rahul Gandhi, were present during the funeral to pay their last respects.

The last rites were carried out at the Sunni Vohra Muslim Jamaat graveyard in the Piraman village, Patel's ancestral village. As per his wish, his dead body was buried beside his parents' graves and due Covid-19 guidelines and protocols were followed during the funeral.

Ahmed Patel passed away on Wednesday morning due to post-Covid issues, according to his son Faisal. He was admitted in the Medanta hospital in Gurugram from where his body was flown to Vadodara and from there to Ankleshwar hospital, where it was kept till Thursday morning. After a brief 10-minute stop at his residence, his mortal remains were brought to the graveyard. After performing the final Namaz for the deceased, Ahmed Patel's dead body was buried by his family members, relatives and friends, most of them attired in Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). Thousands thronged at the graveyard, trying to catch a last glimpse of their leader. The police were seen requesting them to follow the Covid-19 guidelines and at one point at a place, the police had to use mild force to control them.

Many of the top national Congress leaders remained present during the funeral, including Rahul Gandhi, who had flown to Surat airport Thursday morning. Besides him, the party spokesperson Randeep Surjewala, the former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath, Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel, the Gujarat in-charge Rajiv Satav, senior leader Madhusudan Mistry, Raja Sabha member Shaktisinh Gohil, were also at the funeral.



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कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
विद्युत परीक्षण मण्डल, गोण्डा।
ई-टेण्डरिंग निविदा सूचना

अनुमती फर्मों/टेकदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु सीलबन्ध निविदायें दो भागों में दिनांक 07.12.2020 को 14.00 बजे तक आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। (1) अल्पकालिक ई-निविदा संख्या 64 / ईटीएसीओ(गोण्डा) / 2020-21 : विद्युत परीक्षण खण्ड, गोण्डा के अन्तर्गत 132 केवीओ उपकेन्द्र इटियाथोक (गोण्डा) के परिवर्तन सम्बन्धी कार्य। धरोहर राशि रु0 28000.00 निविदा भाग-1 खुलने की तिथि 07.12.2020 को 15.00 बजे, निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य रु0 3304.00 (कर सहित)। निविदा प्रश्न शुल्क (नान रिफ़ंडेबिल) एवं ईएमपीडीओ अधिशाली अभियन्ता, विद्युत परीक्षण खण्ड, गोण्डा के बैंक खाते में बैंक का नाम-पंजाब नेशनल बैंक, खाता सं- 01810021001020697, आईएफएससी कोड- PUNB0018100) आरटीओपीएस / एम्प्टीफ़ीट के माध्यम से निविदा की अंतिम अपलोड तिथि से एक दिन पूर्व तक जमा की जायेगी एवं जमा की गयी धनराशि अधिशाली अभियन्ता, विद्युत परीक्षण खण्ड, गोण्डा के बैंक खाते में निविदा की अंतिम अपलोड तिथि से एक दिन पूर्व तक क्रेडिट होना अनिवार्य होगा तथा बैंक में जमा किये जाने का साक्ष्य यथा योग्य यूट्यूबीओआर सं, खाते का नाम निर्गतकर्ता बैंक अधिकारी द्वारा हस्ताक्षरित एवं निविदादाता द्वारा प्रतिलिपि-सहित पे इनस्टीप की स्क्रीनशॉट, ईएमपीटी के लिए बैंक गारण्टी की स्क्रीनशॉट कापी, जारीकर्ता बैंक के कम्प्लेक्समेंटेल की प्रती भी निविदा प्रश्नों के साथ इलेक्ट्रॉनिकली साफ व पठनीय अपलोड की जायेगी, अन्यथा कि स्थिति में निविदादाता द्वारा प्रस्तुत निविदा को स्वतः निरस्त समझा जायेगा। साथ ही निविदा के भाग-1 में तकनीकी बिड (पैन कार्ड, इन्कम टैक्स रिटर्न, जीओएसटीडी पंजीकरण की स्वयं प्रमाणित छायाप्रति एवं तकनीकी अनुभव इत्यादि), संलग्न करना अनिवार्य है। धरोहर राशि / निविदा शुल्क जमा न होने अथवा किसी प्रकार की त्रुटि होने पर निविदा का भाग-2 जिसमें दरे दी जानी है, नही खोली जायेगी। भाग-2 में दरे एवं वाणिज्यिक नियम व शर्तें होनी चाहिये। तथा हार्ड कापी कार्यालय में जमा करने की आवश्यकता नही होगी। किसी भी स्थिति में निविदा के Retender होने पर निविदा की निविदा शुल्क (नान रिफ़ंडेबिल) एवं धरोहर धनराशि पुनः जमा की जानी अनिवार्य होगी, अन्यथा कि स्थिति में निविदादाता द्वारा प्रस्तुत निविदा को स्वतः निरस्त समझा जायेगा। निविदा का भाग प्रथम एवं द्वितीय : (प्राइज बिड दरे एवं शर्तें) दिनांक 07.12.2020 को 14.00 बजे तक www.etender.up.nic.in पर अपलोड की जा सकती है। निविदा का प्रथम भाग दिनांक 07.12.2020 को 15.00 बजे एवं भाग-2 (प्राइज पाटी) निविदा शुल्क एवं धरोहर धनराशि प्राप्ति की पुष्टि होने के पश्चात सार्वजनिक रूप से खोली जायेगी। निविदा खुलने की तिथि पर अवकाश होने की स्थिति में निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस पर निर्धारित समय पर खोली जायेगी। निविदाओं को बिना कोई कारण बताये निविदा / निविदाओं को अस्वीकार/विभाजित करने का अधिकार अन्धोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के पास सुरक्षित रहेगा। धरोहर/निविदा राशि रहित व सशर्त निविदायें स्वीकार नही की जायेगी। कृपया विस्तृत जानकारी, डाउनलोड, अन्य संशोधनों एवं निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के दिनांक तक विस्तार आदि के सम्बन्ध में कृपया www.etender.up.nic.in की वेबसाइट पर लॉगआन करें। अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत परीक्षण मण्डल, गोण्डा। संख्या : 2302 / विभागाध्यक्ष/गोण्डा/ई-टेण्डर नं० - 64 / 2020-21, दिनांक 26.11.2020 "राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचाय"

NIVAR EFFECT

Andhra: 164 places receive more than 60 mm rainfall

Amaravati: In the past 24 hours till Thursday morning, 164 places in Andhra Pradesh witnessed a rainfall of more than 60 mm as the very severe cyclonic storm Nivar lashed the whole state.

According to the Meteorological department, five places in Nellore district registered the highest rainfall - APFT Colony (302.7 mm), Boggulamitta Ward (272.7 mm), MPP School (264 mm), Summer storage tank (242.7 mm) and Thatipatri (239.5 mm).

Chittoor district Collector Narayan Bharat Gupta said an average of 8.6 cm rainfall lashed a few places in the district on Wednesday.

"Varadaiyapalem, Yerpedu, Srikalahasti, Satyavedu, Nagulapuram, Vijayapuram and Narayanavanam mandals witnessed rainfall more than 12 cm," said Gupta.

Due to heavy inflow, he said the gates of the major reservoirs were being opened to release water. Advising caution to the public, the Collector said people should not attempt to cross the roads even if the water flow is less.

"We request you to stay at home safely for one or two days, until the situation gets better," said Gupta. He said the district administration shut roads in K.V. Puram and Pichapuram because of the heavy outflow of rain water.

Such is the severity of Nivar that most parts of West Godavari district have been witnessing rainfall since Wednesday night.

It has been continuously raining from around 9 p.m. on Wednesday night in Bhimavaram and several villages in its vicinity such as Seesali, Bondada, Kalla, Kallakuru, Doddanapudi, Chinnapulleru and others.

It did not rain in these places during the day time on Tuesday, but it was windy and mildly sunny only for a short time.

Assam ex-CM Tarun Gogoi cremated with full State honours

IAN S ■ GUWAHATI

Assam bade an emotional send-off to its longest serving Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi on Thursday, as his funeral were marked by the presence of thousands of men and women and performed with full state honours at the Nabagraha cremation ground in Guwahati.

Amidst the chanting of solemn hymns and gun salute and band played by the Assam Police, the mortal remains of Gogoi were consigned to flames by his son Gaurav Gogoi, a Lok Sabha member, in presence of thousands of people, many of them were emotionally charged.

Wearing the traditional "Chelleng Sador" (a shawl) and 'dhoti' (men's garment) along with a face mask Gaurav lit the pyre after performing the rituals. The veteran Congress leader's wife septuagenarian Dolly, daughter Chandrima, daughter-in-law Elizabeth and other family members placed sandalwood pieces on the pyre before it was lit by Gaurav. The 86-year old three-time chief minister (2001-2016), twice Union Minister and six-time Lok Sabha MP, died on Monday.

Bandh call gets mixed response in Bengal

Kolkata: The bandh called by the Left and Congress trade unions against a number of policies of the Central Government found mixed response in Bengal. Even as the State Government issued directives making attendance compulsory a day before most of the Government offices witnessed near full attendance.

In other sectors like jute mills and other industrial belts of Durgapur-Asansol there was partial cease work, sources said. Half-empty Government buses were seen plying on the streets while private buses were far less in number in Kolkata.

Though there was rush in Howrah and Sealdah stations local train services got disrupted after the bandh supporters blockaded the tracks at various places in Hooghly, Burdwan, Jadavpur and other places.

Bandh found good response in Siliguri, Alipurduar and Coochbehar where buses were torched. Tea gardens sources said adding all the banks and financial institutions were shut down hitting business and leading to a corresponding shut down in the business districts of burrabazar and parts of Howrah.

CPI(M) politburo member Biman Bose later claimed that the bandh was successful "considering the fact that both the Trinamool Government and the BJP united against us to foil it by using the government machinery and the police. This only proves that they are involved in ashadow fight."

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee however said that her party never supported bandh as a policy.

"We support the issues that were raised by these parties but we do not back bandh as a policy and hence we issued directives to the government employees to attend office."

Wrong to stop farmers from protesting, says Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has criticised Haryana and Centre for stopping the farmers from protesting. Kejriwal on Thursday said preventing farmers from holding peaceful demonstrations against the Centre's new farm laws is absolutely wrong.

Haryana put up road barricades along its border with Punjab on Wednesday as farmers in the adjoining state massed with their tractor-trailers for their "Delhi Chalo" march to protest against the laws. Water cannons were used at least twice to disperse them and stop them from going to Delhi.

Taking to Twitter, the Delhi chief minister said peaceful demonstration was a constitutional right of the farmers.

"All the three farming bills of the central government are anti-farmer. Instead of withdrawing them, farmers are being prevented from holding peaceful demonstrations, water canons are being used on them. This is absolutely wrong. Peaceful demonstrations are their constitutional right," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

The Haryana government on Thursday completely sealed its borders with Punjab. Police personnel have been deployed in large numbers along the state's borders with Delhi as well.

The BJP-ruled Haryana government has suspended bus services to Punjab.

The three laws -- the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, the Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020 -- took effect from September 27 after President Ram Nath Kovind's assent.

Protesting farmers have expressed apprehension that the Centre's farm laws would pave the way for dismantling of the minimum support price system, leaving them at the "mercy" of big corporates.



Ranjan Dhir / Pioneer

The government has maintained that the farm laws will bring farmers better opportunities and usher in new technologies in agriculture. Farmers' protest: Vigil stepped up in Delhi's bordering areas, vehicles being checked

Meanwhile, following the Delhi Chalo call by Punjab farmers, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) services suspended its services till further orders from neighbouring cities to the National Capital. However, metro services were available from Delhi towards the NCR sections after 2 PM.

Earlier, DMRC in a tweet stated, "From 2 pm onwards Metro services are available from Delhi towards the NCR sections. However, services from NCR sections to Delhi still continue to remain suspended due

to security reasons till further notice."

The commuters from Noida, Gurugram, Faridabad and Ghaziabad had a tough time as train services between Delhi and NCR Metro stations on seven corridors were closed till 2pm due to the protest on Thursday. "The step was taken following the request of the Delhi Police to avoid overcrowding in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. From morning till 2 PM, Metro services on various corridors will be regulated," said a DMRC official.

On Wednesday, the DMRC had said trains would not cross borders of the national capital on Thursday till 2 pm due to farmers' protests.

The farmers planned to reach Delhi on Thursday through five highways connecting the national capital as part of the protest.

The Delhi Police, however, said they have rejected all requests received from various farmer organisations regarding the protest and warned of legal action against them if they came to the city to hold any gathering amid the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. Delhi Police personnel have been deployed in large numbers in the border areas of the national capital and all incoming vehicles were being checked in view of the protest.

The All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC), Rashtriya Kisan Mahasangh and various factions of the Bharatiya Kisan Union have joined hands and formed a 'Samyukta Kisan Morcha' to press the Central Government to scrap the three new farm laws.

Directorate of Cottage & Rural Industries
Place-U.P.Khadi & Village Industries Board
8-Tilak Marg, Lucknow

Ref No. 1085 Dated 26.11.2020

Short Term Tender Notice

Sealed Tenders are invited from registered manufacturing firms registered in the GST and Income Tax Department for the purchase of Agarbatti Making Machine under the skill development training scheme for the purpose of providing employment to women groups trained in Agarbatti training in Prayagraj district upto 6:00 PM on 17.12.2020.

S.No.	Equipment	Specifications	Qty.
1.	Agarbatti Making Machine	Speed 320-330 Stroke/Min., Production 110-120 Kg/8 hr., Machine weight 130Kg., Power Range 1 or 2 HP Single Phase, Length of Incense Stick 8" to 12" with high accuracy	5 No.

The complete details are available in RFP document which can be downloaded from the UPKVIB portal <https://upkvib.gov.in> from 01.12.2020 for the payment of Rs. 500/- (Five hundred only - Non Refundable) Bank Draft & Earnest Money Rs. 10000/- (Ten thousand only) in the form of FD or Bank Guarantee, in favour of 'Uttar Pradesh Khadi and Village Industries Board', Lucknow, submission will be mandatory.

The UPKVIB reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-bids or bidding process without assigning any reason.

UP-157286 Date : 26.11.2020 (Navneet Sahgal)
यह विज्ञापन www.upgvic.in पर उपलब्ध है। Chief Executive Officer

Three PDP leaders quit party

Jammu: The popular support base of the Peoples Democratic Party, carefully nurtured by the party patron Mufti Mohd Sayeed here in Jammu suffered another dent as three more leaders quit the party, two days ahead of the maiden elections of the district development council, on Thursday. In a joint letter issued to media houses, former state general secretary PDP Dhaman Bhasin, state secretary Fallail Singh and ex-district President Doda, Pritam Kotwal alleged that the PDP has become the "B team" of the National Conference (NC).

Both Bhasin and Singh were counted among the close aides of Mufti Mohd Sayeed and were also the founding members of the PDP from Jammu.

Feeling suffocated in the party for a long time these leaders even claimed the PDP has abandoned Mufti Mohammed Sayeed's vision and that "unscrupulous, communal elements with mysterious character" have taken over. "Putting our political career at stake, we joined PDP -- from the very first day of its formation -- with an aim to provide a secular alternative to corrupt and dynast NC as late Mufti Mohammed Sayeed had a vision to frustrate evil designs of communal and parochial elements but the party leadership has, unfortunately, abandoned Mufti Sahib's agenda to become B team of NC," the letter, signed the three, read.

PNS

Delhi records 91 more Covid-19 deaths

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At least 2,455 deaths due to coronavirus have been reported in the national Capital since October 28, when the daily rise in infections breached the mark of 5,000 cases for the first time. Amid a surge in Covid-19 cases and deaths, 91 more fatalities on Thursday pushed the city's total death toll due to the disease to 8,811.

The city reported 98 deaths on November 19, 118 on November 20, 111 on November 21, 121 each on November 22 and 23, and 109 fatalities on November 24, according to official data.

While 131 Covid-19 related deaths were recorded on November 18, the highest till date, Delhi registered its highest single-day spike of 8,593 cases on November 11.

On Thursday, Delhi had recorded 7,546 cases, followed by 6,608 on Friday, 5,879 on Saturday, 6,746 on Sunday, 4,454 on Monday, 6,224 on Tuesday, 5,246 on Wednesday and 5,475 on Thursday according to the government data.

The total number of coronavirus cases in Delhi climbed to 551,262 on Thursday, of which 50,371 have recovered from the virus, the data shows. Late hospital admissions leading to Covid-19 cases turning critical, shortage of ICU beds, unfavourable weather and rising pollution are among the factors experts attribute to the spike in Covid-19 deaths in Delhi, health experts have said.

Amid a spurt in the infection tally in the city, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had Wednesday requested experts to audit Covid-19 death cases and suggest measures to reduce fatalities in the national capital.

6 States report half of total Covid infections in 24 hrs



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Six States Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh besides Kerala accounted for more than half of the 44,489 fresh cases of the Covid-19 reported in the last 24 hours with the Southern State topping the list taking the tally to 92,66,705, while the death toll climbed to 1,35,223 with 524 new fatalities.

The Union Health Ministry said that 60.50 per cent of the 524 latest fatalities are concentrated in six States and Union territories—Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

The recoveries surged to 86.79 lakh while Covid-19 active caseload has risen to

4,52,344, an increase of 7,598 cases from Wednesday, even though it remained below 5 lakh for the 16th consecutive day.

The active cases comprise 4.88 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

According to ICMR, over 13.59 crore samples have been tested for Covid-19 till November 25, with 10,90,238 samples being tested on Wednesday.

The 524 new fatalities include 99 from Delhi, 65 from Maharashtra, 51 from West Bengal, 42 from Haryana, 31 from Punjab, 29 from Uttar Pradesh and 26 from Kerala.

A total of 1,35,223 deaths reported so far in the country includes 46,748 from

Maharashtra followed by 11,714 from Karnataka, 11,655 from Tamil Nadu, 8,720 from Delhi, 8,172 from West Bengal, 7,644 from Uttar Pradesh, 6,962 from Andhra Pradesh, 4,684 from Punjab and 3,906 from Gujarat.

The Ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

Kerala leads the fatalities tally with 6,491 new Covid-19 cases registered in a span of 24 hours, while Maharashtra has reported 6,159 new cases followed by Delhi with 5,246 new cases. Delhi with 99 deaths reported the maximum new fatalities. Maharashtra saw a fatality count of 65 followed by West Bengal with 51 deaths, the Ministry said.

India to offer incentive to makers for efficient solar modules: Modi



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said production-linked incentives similar to those for electronic manufacturing will be offered for high-efficiency solar modules to boost the generation of electricity from renewable sources which has the potential to generate an annual business of USD 20 billion.

Speaking at the RE-Invest 2020 conference, he invited global investors to join India's renewable energy journey.

"There are huge renewable energy deployment plans for the next decade," he said, adding that these are likely to generate business prospects of the order of around USD 20 billion per year.

"Today, India's renewable power capacity is the fourth largest in the world. It is growing at the fastest speed among all major countries," he said.

Renewable energy capacity will rise to 220 GW by 2022 from the current 136 Giga Watts (GW), he added.

Renewable energy capacity at present is about 36 per cent of India's total electricity generating capacity.

Modi said that after the success of Production Linked Incentives (PLI) in electronics manufacturing, "we have

RENEWABLE ENERGY CAPACITY WILL RISE TO 220 GW BY 2022 FROM THE CURRENT 136 GIGA WATTS (GW): PM

decided to give similar incentives to high-efficiency solar modules."

He, however, did not elaborate. Stating that ensuring 'ease of doing business' was the utmost priority, he said a dedicated project development cell has been established to facilitate investors.

"In the last six years, we increased our installed renewable energy capacity by two and half times," he said. "Our annual renewable energy capacity addition has been exceeding that of coal-based thermal power since 2017."

Even when it was not affordable, investments were made in renewable energy. Now, investments and scale are bringing costs down, he said.

Noting that in the last six years, India has been travelling on an unparalleled journey, Modi said, "we are expanding our generation capacity and network to ensure every citizen of India has access to electricity to unlock his full potential".

Only 0.37 pc paramilitary forces personnel succumbed to Covid-19



RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

BSF REPORTED 13,747 CASES OF WHICH 13,153 HAVE RECUPERATED AND 43 PATIENTS DIED DUE TO COVID-19 DISEASE

only 320 are active cases presently.

Likewise, BSF reported 13,747 cases of which 13,153 have recuperated and 43 patients died due to Covid-19 disease. As many as 551 patients continue to be active in the BSF ranks.

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) reported a total of 9,963 cases of infection. The number patients

cured is 8,933 and the casualties stand at 39 in the CISF which has the maximum active cases with a tally of 996.

The Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has reported 5,235 cases including 4,987 cured patients, 13 casualties and 235 active cases.

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has reported 4,521 cases of which 4,303: patients have been cured, 12 personnel died and there are currently 206 active cases.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) reported 628 cases of infection of which 608 patients have been cured, one personnel died and only 19 men are active.

The National Security Guards (NSG) reported 324 cases of infection including 309 cured patients, zero casualty and just 15 active cases now.

CBI books Customs Deputy Commissioner



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a case against Deputy Commissioner of Customs CS Pavan and others and conducted searches on Wednesday at eight places including Mumbai, Pune and Delhi at the premises of public servants and private persons including Importer & Custom Broker.

The searches yielded ₹9 lakh (approximately) and incriminating documents, offi-

cials said.

A case was registered against Deputy Commissioner of Customs and others including Appraiser Group, Appraiser Shed, Examiner Shed and private persons, the CBI said in a statement.

"It was alleged that said Customs officials while posted at Air Cargo Complex, Sahar, Mumbai during 2016-17 entered into a conspiracy with others including proprietors of private companies

and fraudulently cleared the consignments which were declared 'Metal Toy Gun' under CTH 95030030 instead of CTH 93039000 and also, there was undervaluation of the goods in violation of the Import Policy as mandated in the Compulsory Customs Requirements (CCRs), thereby causing the pecuniary advantage to the importer and loss to the Government of India," the agency said, adding investigation is continuing.

The accused persons include CS Pavan, Deputy Commissioner, KSN Reddy, Appraiser Group, Gangadhar Goud, Appraiser Shed, Santosh Anaji Shelar, Appraiser Shed, Lalit Singha, Examiner Shed, Amit Kumar, Examiner Shed,

Sagar K Pitalwar (Importer), Proprietor of Balaji Automotives Solutions, Vinay Singh, proprietor of Ocean Waves (Custom Broker) and unknown persons.

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A Thane Special Court on Thursday granted bail to 54 tribals arrested in connection with the lynching of two Sadhus and their driver by an irate mob near Kasa town in Maharashtra's Palghar district in April this year.

Special district court judge P P Jadhav released 54 accused on bail against a surety bond of Rs 15,000 each.

Those granted bail included eight persons who were arrested immediately after the shocking crime that took place on April 16 this year. The remaining 46 were those who were arrested subsequently by the State CID during the course of the investigations in the case.

Advocates Amrut Adhikari and Atul Patil, who appeared before the court for the accused, argued that their clients had no role to play in the incident and had been arrested merely on grounds of sus-

picion.

While Special public prosecutor Satish Maneshinde appeared for the prosecution, Advocate PN Ojha appeared for the family of the deceased sadhus.

The special court will hear the bail applications of the other accused on December 5.

Earlier this month, the court had granted bail to four accused, including a man and his two sons, in the case.

Of the 366 accused in the case, 28 adults and 9 juveniles were released on a default bail as the CID charge sheet did not specify their exact involvement in the crime owing to lack of evidence.

On July 16, this year, the state CID filed a comprehensive charge-sheets against the accused before a Dahanu court in connection with the April 16, 2020 Palghar lynching incident.

In its charge sheet – running into 4955 pages -- filed

before the court of Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) at Dahanu in Palghar district, the CID sleuths named 126 accused in connection with the incident that took place on the night of April 16.

The investigation team, led by Deputy Superintendent of Police (CID) Vijay Pawar, filed the charge-sheet after examining 808 suspects and 118 witnesses to collect strong evidence against the accused.

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

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

The deceased ---identified as Chikne Maharaj Kalpavrukshagiri (70), Sushilgiri Maharaj (35) and driver Nilesh Telgade (30) were travelling to Surat. Of them one was the driver, while two are residents of Kandivli in north Mumbai. The place where the incident took place is approximately 120 km from Mumbai.

In their charge-sheet, the investigators have said that the incident had taken place amid rumours that child-lifters were roaming in the area during the lockdown. The villagers allegedly suspected the three deceased to be child-lifters.

The accused arrested in connection with the incident have been charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for murder, armed rioting and using criminal force to prevent a public servant from doing his duty and relevant provisions of several Acts.

Book WB Guv under IPC, asks TMC MP

Kolkata: The ongoing tussle between Trinamool Congress and Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar reached new heights with senior TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee on Thursday launching a scathing attack on the latter for being in touch with the criminals. Banerjee also a senior advocate accused Dhankhar of saving the corrupt and criminals and asked the police administration to file a criminal complaint against him. "Here is a Governor who is saving the corrupt and is in regular touch with the criminals... he should be proceeded against by the police... I request the police administration to file a complaint under the IPC against this man," Banerjee said alleging how he was trying to protect Govind Agarwal and Sudipta Roychowdhury both of who were accused and were being investigated by central agencies.

Dhankhar has been at logger heads with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee ever since he joined office in 2019.

Govt set to roll out HealthID, DigiDoctor across country

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After successful implementation of the National Digital Health Mission in a pilot mode in six Union Territories, the Government is now all set to roll out the digital initiative envisaging HealthID, DigiDoctor, Health Facility Registry, eHospital, Patient and eHealth Records across the country.

This was stated by Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan after he took stock of the implementation of the flagship health protection mission, Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) and National Digital Health Mission (NDHM).

"The NDHM will digitalize healthcare by creating a country-wide digital health ecosystem that will enable patients to store, access and consent to share their health records with doctors and health facilities of their choice," said the Minister. The six union territories where the mission was rolled out through a pilot launch are Chandigarh, Ladakh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and

Lakshadweep.

Dr Harsh Vardhan said that one of the most remarkable aspects of NDHM is that it takes into account the lived realities of Indians spread across the digital divide. "The NDHM will empower millions of citizens without smartphones or those in remote tribal areas facing connectivity issues to still avail healthcare through its offline modules."

The ambitious NDHM was unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 15 under which every Indian will get a health ID that will ease access to medical services. The National Health Authority (NHA), the apex agency responsible for the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (ABPMJAY), has been given the mandate by the government to design, build, roll-out and implement the NDHM in the country.

The health ID will contain information about medical data, prescriptions and diagnostic reports and summaries of previous discharge from hospitals for ailments. The mission is expected to bring efficiency and transparency in healthcare services in the country.

Advocacy, engagement crucial for ending TB by 2025: Harsh Vardhan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With Covid-19 casting shadow over success achieved last two years under the Tuberculosis (TB) elimination programme when higher case findings were registered, the Union Ministry is now banking on its partners to reach its goal of ending the deadly disease by 2025.

As per the Government data, there is an 18 per cent and 12 per cent increase in case finding under National Tuberculosis Elimination Program in 2018 and 2019 respectively. In private sector, there is 77 per cent increase in the notification from 3.8 lakhs in 2017 to 6.8 lakh in 2019. However, Covid-19 is throwing spanner in the government's efforts to contain the TB.

"At a time, when Covid is taking prioritised attention, we should not lose the sight of the goal to eliminate TB by 2025. Advocacy and engagement are a way to move forward, Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Health Minister said as he called for a Jan Andolan - A People's Movement to combat the deadly disease.

"The fight against TB needs to be made into a Jan Andolan, a people's movement. An effective communication strategy is needed which would focus on reaching the maximum popula-

tion; complement with preventive, diagnostic and curative aspects of TB management; work towards demand generation; ensuring regular high visibility mass-media coverage; and also focus on community ownership and mobilization," Minister enlisted various measures at a meeting with various developmental partners working in the field of TB care and management in India.

The Union Health Minister urged for a joint collaborative platform where all the partners could join hands and forces together in elimination of Tuberculosis by 2025 from the country.

He also highlighted the importance of strong political and administrative commitment from all States/UT Governments. "Partners can take a lead in galvanizing political commitment from the various political leaders locally," he pointed out. The Minister also asserted the need to address stigma in a huge way "as it is one of the biggest barriers and hinders people from coming forward for reporting the diseases and availing of the treatment." Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary, (Health) noted that the aim is to leverage the capacity of UN agencies, international bodies, NGOs and all other partnership to work toward eradicating the disease.

SC dismisses Skoda Volkswagen's plea to quash FIR for alleged use of emission cheat device in car

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Thursday dismissed a plea by Skoda Auto Volkswagen India challenging an FIR registered in Uttar Pradesh by a customer over the alleged use of "cheat device" in its diesel car by the company to manipulate emission norms.

A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian pronounced the verdict and dismissed the plea by the German car maker.

On November 4, the top court had reserved the verdict on the plea saying as to why the investigation should not go on in the case.

A 'cheat' or 'defeat device' is a software installed in auto engines to manipulate pollution emission tests. Volkswagen was accused of the malpractice globally a few years ago.

During the hearing the automobile maker argued that in December, 2015 the complaint was made in the National Green Tribunal (NGT) and in March, 2019 a penalty was imposed on it which was stayed by the apex court.

An FIR was also lodged in UP and the company moved the high court seeking its quashing, it said.

The apex court passed the order on the appeal filed



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

by Skoda against the Allahabad High Court order refusing to quash the FIR and dismissing its plea.

The high court had said that whether a cheat device was installed in the vehicles is a matter of investigation and it cannot be interfered with by the court on an erroneous interpretation of the interim order of the top court.

The top court had earlier restrained the Centre from taking any "coercive" step against the company for non-submission of Rs 500 crore fine imposed by the NGT for damaging environment through use of "cheat device" in its diesel cars in India.

The green panel had directed the car maker to deposit the amount within two months with Central Pollution Control Board.

The tribunal had enhanced the compensation amount of Rs 171.34 crore,

which was recommended by a NGT-appointed committee, to Rs 500 crore as a means of "creating deterrence".

The auto maker, however, had said that it did not violate the BS-IV norms and that the test results were based on "on road testings" for which there were no prescribed standards.

Volkswagen India had in December 2015 announced the recall of 3,23,700 lakh vehicles in India to fix the emission software after ARAI conducted tests on some models and found that their on-road emissions were 1.1 times to 2.6 times higher than the applicable BS-IV norms.

The automobile giant had admitted to the use of 'defeat device' in 11 million diesel engine cars sold in the US, Europe and other global markets to manipulate emission test results.

Tomar invites farmers for talk on Dec 3



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid farmers' march to Delhi over new farm laws, Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Thursday appealed to farmers to stop the protest and invited them for talks on December 3 to resolve differences. Appealing the farmers to not agitate, the Union agriculture minister assured that the talk will have a positive outcome.

"I want to appeal to our farmer brothers to not agitate. We are ready to talk about issues and resolve differences. I am sure that our dialogue will have a positive result," Tomar said. "The new farm laws were the need of the hour. In the coming time, it's going to bring revolutionary changes. We have spoken at the secretary level in Punjab to dispel wrong notions of our farmer brothers there. We will talk on December 3," he added. "I'm sure that our dialogue will have a positive result," Tomar added.

Farmers' protest

Had the Government chosen consensus-building over confrontation with regard to the farm Acts, things wouldn't have come to such a pass



The big question is could the farmers' march, as it manifested through the dramatic visuals of a surge of protesters fighting teargas, demolishing barricades and facing water cannons, have been avoided in COVID-stressed times? Would they have been driven to such desperation if the Government had given them a decent listen and the Agriculture Minister had not absent-ed himself from a conciliatory meeting on the recent farm Acts? And at a time when stubble burning is compound-ing the pollution and pandemic crisis across Delhi-NCR, should not that have been the point of discussion first? Honestly, the Government could have managed this bet-

ter, considering that it was well aware of the farmers' grievances and should have attempt-ed to reassure them. Instead, in its stubbornness to show it can push necessary reforms, it refused to engage with them and gifted the Opposition an agenda to beat it with. It may want to show the farmers and the Opposition in a poor light but beyond political point-scoring, who gained what, except for being exposed to a large super spreader risk? For the Government may claim that these laws will help farmers get better prices for their crops and allow them access to wider markets but the latter are wary of the corporatisation implic-it in these Acts and argue that they could be cheated out of a fair price. Yes, structurally, the laws may seem to streamline agricultural processes but the farmers are not willing to give up their right to exist on their terms. Worse, they fear that these could ultimately reduce the current system of open-ended FCI procurement by the State. Besides, they feel that entering into contracts with corporations would willy-nilly give the latter negotiating rights and greater control. And that although the older system would continue, as a weakened parallel mechanism, it would ultimately crumble before emerging monopolies. They cite how contract farming failed in the sugarcane sector with farmers chasing dues that are owed to them in crores. Of course, there's the case of PepsiCo suing farmers in Gujarat that showed the latter's vulnerability in the face of big corporations. State Governments like Punjab are obviously upset that access to another market would dry up their own revenue from their Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) *mandis* and are see-ing this as an affront to federal controls. The fear that market yards would be abolished is largely unfounded though, considering the eNAM platform connects thousands of them across 18 states and three Union Territories (UTs). But then the Government has also not tried to be educative but is confrontational. It is the devil in the detail that has our farming community up in arms. For example, a licence won't be required to trade in farm produce and anyone with a PAN card can now buy directly from the farmers "outside" their geo-graphical area. Farmers want clarity on what "outside" means and contrary to perception that they want the middlemen out, they actually have a trusted bond with their existing commission agents as the latter's licence is proof enough of credibility and delivery abil-ities, and they would not want to experiment with an untested model. Besides, they want direct payment and not through banks, which could deduct amounts as loan recovery.

The opposition to farm laws could have been avoided had the Government preferred a Standing Committee scrutiny over pushing the law unceremoniously with a voice vote in the Upper House. A GST-like consensus involving Centre and States would have helped. But there was no attempt at consensus-building, no dialogue with the farmers' unions, State Governments or the Opposition parties. Since agriculture-related issues come under the State List in Schedule VII of the Constitution, the Centre should have consulted federal governments. One just had to look at the playbook of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government on the contentious issue of contract farming, which was envisaged in the National Agriculture Policy, 2000. Instead of bringing a Central law, it circulated a Model Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) Act to the States for adoption in 2003. The ensuing UPA-I govern-ment continued the policy. Contract farming was included as an option in the National Farmers' Policy, 2007. By August the same year, 15 States had brought amendments in the APMC (Regulation) Acts based on the model legislation. The intransigence on the farm Acts is in contrast with the Government's handling of the recently enacted labour codes. Although these had some controversial provisions too, since they reduced 29 existing labour laws into four legislations, there was not much hue and cry as they were vetted by the depart-ment-related Standing Committee of the Lok Sabha. Yes, there is a need to reform agri-cultural marketing in the time of food surplus. But care should be taken to ensure that the farmers are legally protected in what is still an unequal deal. If only the Acts came with the caveat that no trade transactions would take place below the notified MSP, the farm-ers could have been easily pacified. Many experts would argue that it is easy enough to push reforms in a sector that anyway makes a very small portion of our GDP. But farmers make up 60 per cent of the country's population, a voter base that no political party can ignore. Certainly not States like Punjab and Haryana, which are heavily dependent on procurement at MSP.

In the hands of God

Diego Maradona, one of the greatest to ever kick a football on the pitch, is no longer with us. The legend lives on



The British-Indian filmmaker, Asif Kapadia, rose to fame after his superb documentary on Brazilian motorsports legend Ayrton Senna, which he fol-lowed with an equally brilliant film on British singer Amy Winehouse. But his magnum opus (so far, at least) was the movie he made on Argentine footballer Diego Armando Maradona, simply titled *Maradona*. It was the first of his documentaries where the subject was still alive to give his version of events but Kapadia's brilliance was that he pulled no punches. The documentary, which looked at Maradona's time in the southern Italian city of Naples, where he played for the local football team

Napoli, shows him warts and all. He was a genius on the field and many of us in India might remember him for his spectacular performances for *La Albiceleste*, as the Argentine football team is known, not least for that match against England during the 1986 World Cup in Mexico where he produced not one, but two of the most memorable goals in foot-ball history — the first the notorious "Hand Of God" and the second where he literally ran rings around the entire English team.

Maradona was a superstar in Argentina but it was in Naples where he was a God. The city, sitting in the shadow of Vesuvius, was downtrodden and felt crushed by the eco-nomic and social success of northern Italian towns such as Milan and Turin, also home to Italy's most successful football clubs, AC Milan, Internazionale and Juventus. Into all this came Maradona from Barcelona, where he almost single-handedly lifted the football team and the city into a different sphere. The documentary explores how Maradona's suc-cess also saw his downfall. He fathered an illegitimate son and quickly found himself court-ed by the local mafia who got him hooked onto drugs. But it took a football match dur-ing the 1990 World Cup, where Maradona's Argentina beat the home team Italy in Naples, for the city to fall out of love with him despite all the success he brought. Maradona's post-football life was also extremely colourful. A visit he made to the eastern metropolis of Kolkata, where he unveiled a statue of himself in 2010, and a tour of the southern state of Kerala, where he inaugurated a jewellery shop, have gone into popular legend in these football-mad states. Maradona's goal beating the English, whom Indians dislike almost as much as the Argentinians, will be considered a goal scored for the "little guy," which he was. He was not perfect, far from it, but because he never pretended to be perfect, he will always be considered a legend. He will be missed.

opinion08

Faulty message

The official COVID awareness campaign is not targetted at real life situations that have arisen post lockdown. This has undermined preventive measures

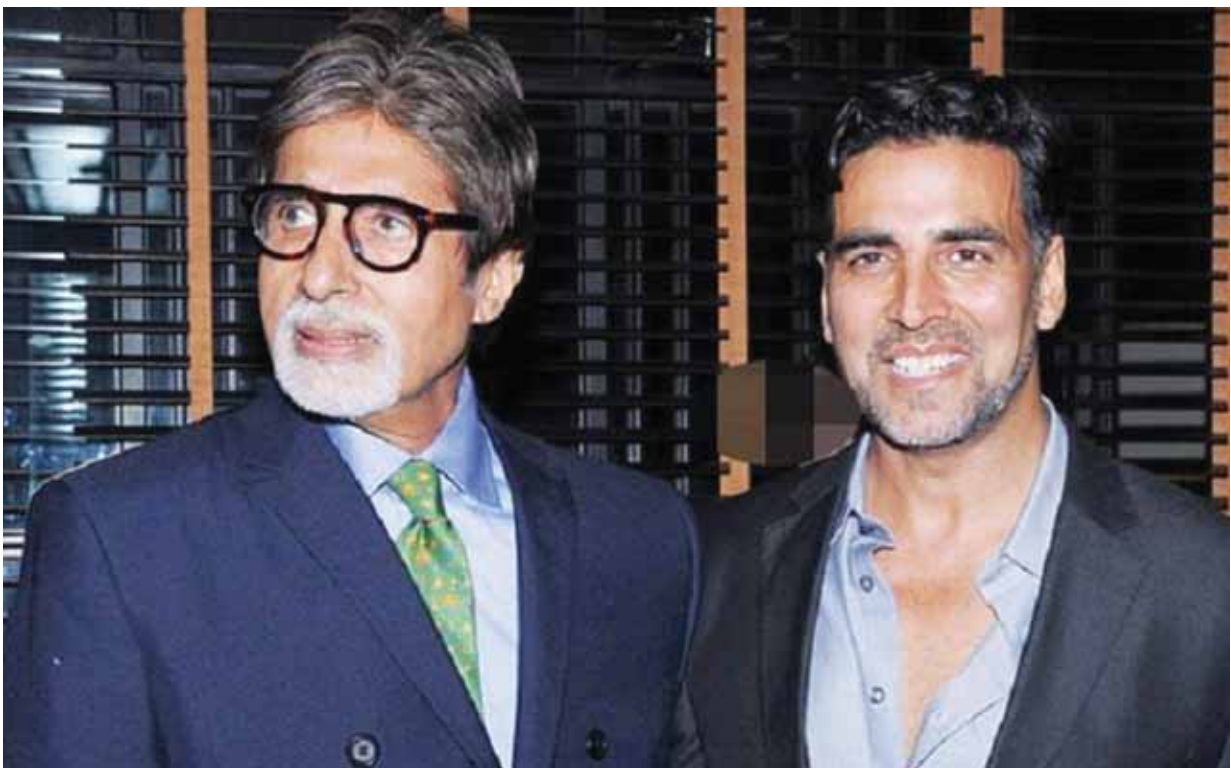


PRIYADARSHI DUTTA

A Supreme Court Bench recently reprimanded the Government on its COVID-19 containment measures and asked the Centre as well as the worst-affected States to file status reports. What's still going wrong when the national recovery rate is at an all-time high of 93 per cent plus and the number of new infections has dipped to below 40,000 per day, down from 80,000 during September? However, when the Supreme Court notes that the scenario is grim, it implies that win-ter could undermine the gains made so far, with the COVID-19 awareness campaign in the unlock period being one of the weakest links in the chain.

On October 7, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar announced that posters, banners and stickers about COVID prevention would come up at pub-lic places, metros, auto rickshaws and public transport soon. Though this writer's world has shrunk dur-ing the last eight months, being con-fined mostly to home, still he has not noticed any such outdoor publicity material being put up in his mod-est South Delhi locality. The aware-ness campaign, since the beginning of the outbreak, is confined mostly to electronic media. Print media advertising lost its reach after many readers unsubscribed newspapers, fearing they might be Corona-infected. The other medium is mobile phone, where the COVID caller tune is frankly about force-feeding. Existing campaigns were perhaps helpful until May 31, when the total lockdown was in force. As the Unlock 1 phase began on June 1, new interactive situations began to multiply. The rate of infections got accelerated on expected lines. The awareness campaign, however, remained dated by refusing to take new situations into consideration. It, therefore, came to resemble a ser-mon and sounded preachy.

Amitabh Bachchan is the face of the Government's COVID aware-ness campaign like he had been for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. It happens only in India that a Padma Vibhushan awardee can appear in an ad campaign for gold loans and pulse polio drops with equal zeal. Ideally, he should have been removed from the campaign after he himself contracted COVID in July. Alternatively, he should have been re-launched with a new ad script, depicting him as a COVID survivor.



However, that did not happen.

Another TV spot featuring Akshay Kumar for Doordarshan (on precautions in the Unlock era) is more appalling. It shows the actor encouraging a senior citizen to go to work by wearing a mask. This clearly militates against the Government's adviso-ry for senior citizens to avoid ven-turing outdoors. Akshay further states that the Government had made sufficient arrangements for people even if they had con-tracted COVID. This affirmation is completely out of sync with reality in most States. The cam-paign ambassador perhaps implied only the Modi Government. However, the sub-ject of public health and sanita-tion, hospitals and dispensaries is covered by the State List under the Seventh Schedule (Article 246). It is also covered under the Panchayat List under Article 243G. Broadcasting, being part of communications, is placed on the Union List under Seventh Schedule. Thus Doordarshan failed abjectly to develop a State-specific COVID awareness cam-paign reflecting local realities. While the publicity drive seems to be run by Mandi House man-darins, by employing Mumbai denizens like Amitabh Bachchan, Akshay Kumar and Sachin Tendulkar, they forgot that the brunt of healthcare is left to the States.

As Unlock phases progressed from June 1, it was expected that the awareness campaign would become more localised. An end-to-end information campaign could have helped reduce the case load. While many COVID sur-vivors volunteered to donate

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”

plasma to save the lives of other patients, they could have helped more by sharing the lessons learnt. It would have helped if we could have produced an informa-tion bank, albeit maintaining strict confidentiality, about how possibly those patients contract-ed COVID. For instance, what percentage of newly-infected people observed protocols or were negligent about them. How many think they got it by using public transport, venturing out in a market place or eating out in the company of strangers at resta-urants and so on.

The Government was admittedly in a left stick situa-tion. It had to decide between containing rising cases and re-viving the economy. Emphasising one could hurt the prospect of the other. The cold season knocked earlier than usual this year and the NCT of Delhi is one of the worst-affected regions with pollution picking up. The fall-winter is also the season for festivities and weddings when the business picks up post-mon-soon. In order to replenish their depleted revenue coffers, the Centre as well as the Delhi Government chose to look the other way on a containment drill such conditions warranted. The result was the quadrupling of infections in Delhi. When Governments wrestle against their conscience, they usually win. An example of conflict between commercial and public health interests could be seen in the Delhi Government's decision to reverse its order within 24 hours on closure of Punjabi Basti market and Janata market in the Nangloi area for flouting

pandemic norms. With all large markets in Delhi open for busi-ness, the disease protocol is hardly being followed anywhere.

By November 24, India had conducted a total of 13.3 crore (13,36,82,275) tests in its 2,134 laboratories. The number, though large, represents only 10 per cent of India's estimated population. There is a strong chance that a significant segment of the untested population acts as asymptomatic carriers. A majority of people tend to feel that seemingly healthy people – whether they are colleagues, neighbours or relatives – are dis-ease-free. They tend to socialise with them even without mini-mally protective face masks. At fast food eating joints, many don't hesitate to eat (naturally without masks) alongside com-plete strangers. It hardly occurs to them that the other person could either be an asymptomatic carrier if not passing through the incubation period. The Government ad campaigns have failed to educate them upon this aspect. They have even failed to educate people on immunity-boosting methods as prescribed by the AYUSH Ministry. Taking up real-life situations in cam-paigns could have helped in stalling this surge. One could eas-ily have used animation or clay-mation if actual shooting involv-ing human beings was problem-atic. Till we drill the risk factors graphically in the common man's mind, a Bollywood star cannot do much.

(The writer is an author and independent researcher based in New Delhi. Views expressed are personal)

SOUNDBITE

It's a sad irony that on Constitution Day, the constitutional right of farmers is being oppressed in this manner. Let them pass Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar. Let them take their voice to Delhi peacefully.



Punjab Chief Minister
—Captain Amarinder Singh

Love jihad is a hoax. It is part of a majoritarian agenda. Interfaith marriages are allowed under the Indian law, it is even encouraged by some governments.



Former Home Minister
—P Chidambaram

I believed that India wanted to bring out and talk about societal issues openly. I'm fortunate that the audience loved my brand of cinema and engaged with my beliefs.



Actor
—Ayushmann Khurrana

I think staying away from our families for nearly four months now is going to be worthwhile in the future because we are sacrificing a lot to do well in the Olympic Games.



Indian hockey midfielder
—Hardik Singh

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dangerous idea

Sir — One is amused by the oxymoronic ring of the phrase, "love jihad", which has recently been popularised by certain Right-wing groups. It is designed to denote a communal conspiracy in which Muslim men marry women from a different community after "entrap-ting them" in love affairs. As if the women are flying blind. There is nothing wrong with other inter-faith marriages, so they aren't subjected to scruti-ny. But Right-wing groups with vested interests project any incident of a Muslim man marry-ing a non-Muslim woman as part of a larger conspiracy aimed at converting our women to Islam. This leads to dramat-ic polarisation in the country, which some Hindutva groups take advantage of.

In the process, the Government is trying to inter-fere in the personal freedoms of individuals that have been guar-anteed in the Constitution of India. It is trying to solve a con-trived problem with bad legis-lation for political gains of appealing to its voter base. In reality, the love jihad law, once passed, will give societal vigilan-

Rest in Peace Argentina's 'golden boy'

Football fans have suffered a big loss in the untim-ely death of Diego Maradona at the age of 60. Undoubtedly the best football player ever, whose wild swings in fortune came to personify the flux of his home nation Argentina, he died too early. Maradona suffered a heart attack in Tigre, Buenos Aires, after undergoing surgery to remove a blood clot from his brain earlier this month. He led Argentina to the 1986 World Cup and won league championships in Italy and at home, granting him the sort of iconic status normally reserved for war heroes.

After retiring from football, Maradona developed heart problems caused by cocaine addiction, and he endured wild weight and fitness swings that seemed to reflect his do-or-die attitude to both, the game and life. Argentina's "golden boy" is best remembered for the two goals that threw England out of the 1986 World Cup. The quarter-final in Mexico City was eagerly antici-pated, coming as it did just four years after the Falklands War between the UK and Argentina. Maradona made sure it was a game few would forget. Six minutes into the second half, England's Steve Hodge miscued a clear-ance, sending the ball high into his own penalty area. Maradona, at five foot five inches, leaped above the six



foot high England goalkeeper Peter Shilton as he tried to punch the ball clear. Replays showed that Maradona fisted, rather than headed, the ball into the net, a foul the referee missed. The Argentine No. 10 dedicated the goal to the "hand of God." While that goal has become one of the most infamous in football history, Maradona's second in the game was voted the best of the 20th cen-tury in a 2002 vote held by FIFA, the sport's ruling body. Argentina won 2-1 and Maradona, its captain, went on to lift the World Cup after a 3-2 victory over West Germany in the final. May his soul rest in peace.

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

Courts must be pithy

Sir — Courts of the country give very lengthy judgments, which at times run into hun-dreds or thousands of pages. For instance, the 2019 verdict in the Ram Jannabhoomi case was so lengthy that there is a major

possibility that it was not read by the litigants themselves. It was surely beyond the under-standing of the common man.

Such interminable court orders are for libraries and are read only by researchers and select lawyers. There is a dire need for short and precise ver-

dicts so that citizens and liti-gants do not have to depend on lawyers to know their salient features. Things will improve a lot if India also adopts the practice followed in many coun-tries, where there is a limit on the number of pages in a judg-ment, the limits being different for the Supreme Court, High Courts and trial courts. Or else every lengthy verdict exceeding 50 pages should be compulso-rily accompanied by a summa-ry of the order, with a limit of say 50 pages, to be issued and posted on the court website on the date of the judgment itself.

Madhu Agrawal
Delhi

Big loss for football

Maradona's scoring prowess and skill in slaloming past opponents vaulted him into the hall of fame. But the player struggled to cope with the adu-lation and his battles with addiction became regular glob-al news. Sad that the football great left this world so early.

Ashmit Aaron
Noida

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Read the RCEP fine print

It leaves the regulatory door ajar for each country to force hard, localisation rules for data without being subject to scrutiny at the multilateral platform



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The world has seen a major economic negotiating bloc getting “next to a done deal” in the last fortnight, in the form of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a free trade agreement (FTA) between 10 ASEAN countries and China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. This pact, when ratified, will come to represent 30 per cent of the world’s GDP, impacting almost half of the global population. Most significantly, it is a multilateral trade agreement where China is a leading party. The RCEP has been at the negotiating table since 2012 before it went stagnant in recent years as India resisted opening its industrial and agricultural sectors to increased international competition. Subsequently, given the rise of an “abrasively ambitious and technology-aided” China, India had also pressed for localising data of each country’s citizens, unless the participating nation granted its outbound transfer. India formally withdrew from the RCEP in 2019 due to domestic demands. However, despite the November 15 agreement on the trade deal, New Delhi still has the option to join RCEP.

A post-pandemic world economy gasping to revive, a new regime in the US soon with a strong possibility of rejoining multilateral platforms for trade and strategic cooperation and the vision of a new India are some of the paradigms to be kept in mind before passing any judgment on what works best in our favour at this juncture. New Delhi not joining the RCEP has been received with mixed responses domestically, with those opposing the Government’s stance stating that an isolated India in South East Asia and our sensitivity to China’s imports may be more out of geopolitics than economic realisation. A study found that between 2007-2008 and 2015-16, India’s import of Chinese semi-finished goods and heavy machinery has had a positive impact on our industries, creating jobs and increasing competitiveness. Those who support the Government’s moves of withdrawal have equally strong positions on how importing these goods from China leads to job losses for the unskilled. In the post-pandemic economy, a huge chunk of jobs has to be created for this unskilled category.

The broad tenets of the RCEP agreement aim to achieve zero tariffs on over 90 per cent traded goods between partner countries in 15 years. The economic impact may be dulled by the knowledge that most of these trading partners already have bilateral FTAs in place. However, the geopolitical impact, given a heavy Chinese presence and an ambition to create a counter bloc to the US-led Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), can’t be overlooked. It is often said that China has a huge knack for reverse mastering/engineering the skill sets developed in any successful economy and, therefore, without any significant costs of indigenous development, it can scale up and produce similar goods and services at half the rates offered by original creators. The wordings of the RCEP, in terms of borrowed texts from the CPTPP chapters and approach, seem like a similar exercise. It is here that key emerging technology policy topics like e-commerce, data localisation, as envisaged in the RCEP agreement, have to be studied carefully before India makes any decision.

Electronic commerce, an evolving area of friction on bilateral and multilateral platforms, has found a chapter in the RCEP agreement document. It borrows heavily from the CPTPP. However, on execution, it has bleaker chances as the clauses (at least in their wordings) are less enforceable, ambiguous and too tight-jacketed. The dispute resolution mechanism in case of conflict must be referred to the RCEP joint committee if all other channels of negotiations fail. The contentious issues of source code disclosure requirements, data flows across trading partners and location of data centres and computing facilities have been left for future consultations and agreements. India and the rest of the world economies, including Europe, would be watching this space closely to get cues, before trying to make any overtures. The global policy space is currently staring at tonnes of ideas being floated to control the flow of data beyond sovereign boundaries, thereby acknowledging and equating data as a physical commodity to be traded as a chip on the high tables of multilateral agreements. It would take tonnes of space to argue and potentially arrive at a middle path between different approaches to data regulation globally, except, suffice it to say, this year has been the beginning of national data colonisation policies.

Staying on with data regulations, the text for cross-border data flows and location of computation facilities in the RCEP document leave ample room for subjective and aggressive interpretations. The bloc leaves the regulatory door ajar for each country to force hard, localisation rules for data without being subject to scrutiny at the multilateral platform. This clause may seem to be played to the galleries domestically for each partner but has its own repercussions on global cooperation. India for the time-being has chosen to call for an adjournment on the multidimensional chessboard of multi-lateral trade/strategic pacts, which is a wise move. It is always better to sleep over the problem and come back with a fresh perspective before going for Sicilian defence or the Queen’s gambit.

(The writer is a policy analyst)

OUR PARTY’S STRUCTURE HAS COLLAPSED. WE NEED TO REBUILD IT AND THEN IF ANY LEADER IS ELECTED IN THAT STRUCTURE, IT WILL WORK.

—CONGRESS LEADER
GHULAM NABI AZAD



MR AZAD IS A CWC-NOMINATED MEMBER WHO CAN JUST PICK UP THE PHONE AND CALL ANYBODY IN THE PARTY INSTEAD OF SPEAKING PUBLICLY.

—CONGRESS SPOKESPERSON
PAWAN KHERA

Dynamic rulebook

While criticising the Constitution for the failure of those who are responsible for maintaining its sanctity, we are doing injustice to both, the founders and the text



ANURAG TIWARY

November has by and large been an important month in history. On November 26, 1940, Nazi Germany began walling off the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw. In November 1941, the Japanese 1st Air Fleet, also known as the *Kido Butai*, in a surprise military move, left the Kuril Islands to strike Pearl Harbour during World War II. In November 1944, a German rocket hit a Woolworth’s shop in London, killing 168 people. Simultaneously, on the same day, Himmler, a leading Nazi soldier, ordered the destruction of the Auschwitz-Birkenau crematoria. World politics was in a state of turmoil. Populist leaders, who were born from democracy, and their obsession with expansionism were being severely criticised and held accountable globally.

Back in India, the Hindu-Muslim tension and the differences between the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Muslim League (ML) were growing at an alarming rate. After a failed attempt at the Shimla Conference to mediate between the INC and the ML, the Cabinet Mission Plan was released by a three-member committee set up to decide the fate of an independent India by the Labour Party heading the Government in the UK. Since the Cabinet mission had rejected the demands made by the ML, the league was miffed and had declared the infamous “Direct Action Day”, which had led to widespread violence all across the country.

Among all this chaos, on November 26, 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India formally adopted a Constitution for an independent and democratic country. After hours of debates, discussions and discourses that were held for close to three long years by more than 350 men and women of astute credibility and a proven track record, the Constitution was adopted.

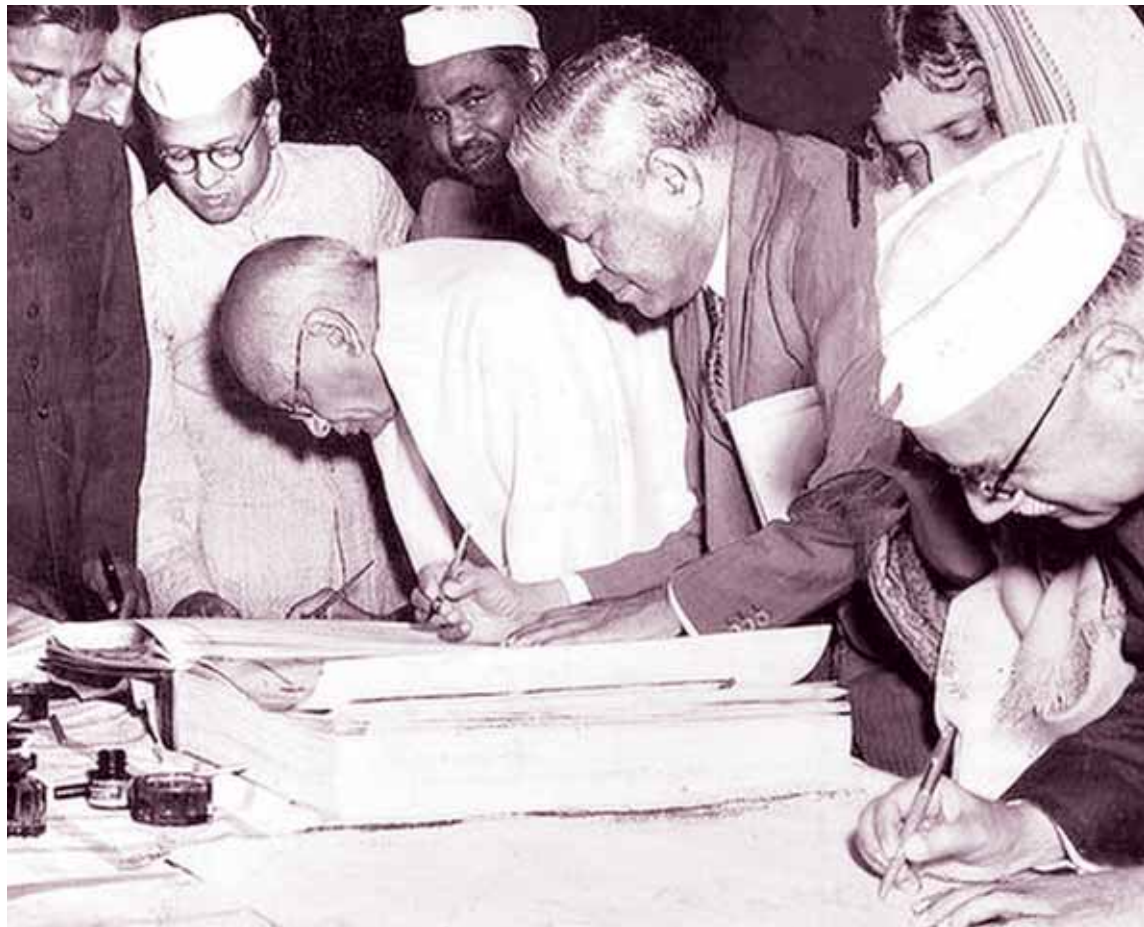
This was not an ordinary moment in India’s socio-political and constitutional history. For a majority of Indians, this was a “break from the past” moment. However, for the founding fathers, the task of framing a Constitution was far more sensitive. They had a dual role. On one hand, they had to justify to the world and future generations reading the text that India was the better of the two nations (the other being Pakistan) that were formed as a result of the Partition and on the other, they had to draft a Constitution that reflected the struggle of the founders. This second role, as Abhinav Chandrachud points out in his book, *Republic of Rhetoric*, had two competing goals — one was to transform India and the other was to keep things the same. Continuity and change were the two important aspects that rationalised the Constitution-making mandate of the Assembly. Granville Austin points out that the Constitution sought to bring about a “social revolution” while at the same time “trying to preserve national unity and stability.”

The founders were fairly optimistic Indians. They framed a Constitution that wasn’t just ahead of its time but was also a positive and radical intervention in the Indian political scene. For instance, it abolished untouchability, made it unconstitutional for anyone to be granted titles and made a provision for affirmative action for those who had been historically marginalised by society. It granted universal adult suffrage to everyone, irrespective of their religion, caste, creed, gender or race and ensured a fundamental right to equality to every citizen of this country.

All this at a time when the world was still not ready to accept these changes. For example, in the US, despite it being one of the oldest constitutional Republics around the world, it was only in 1954



THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION IS A LIVING DOCUMENT AND IT IS GOING TO SURVIVE AND WILL CONTINUE TO STAND FOR THOSE WHO ARE VULNERABLE, DOWNTRODDEN AND HAVE BEEN HISTORICALLY SIDELINED BY A CACOPHONIC PARLIAMENT. LET’S PROMISE TO SHAPE A NATION THAT AIMS TO BUILD ON FROM WHERE THE FOUNDERS LEFT OFF



in the Brown vs Board of Education case, when the “separate but equal” clause was held to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Black women were allowed to vote only in 1965 under the Voting Rights Act and Affirmative Action for Blacks and Browns was held to be constitutional very recently in 2003 in the Grutter vs Bollinger case. The US Supreme Court made inter-racial marriage constitutionally permissible in 1967 and gave students the right to free speech in 1969 in the Tinker vs Des Moines case.

Even as a proud India celebrated Samvidhaan Diwas yesterday, little do we know that the Assembly that framed the most egalitarian and forward-looking Constitution of its times was also criticised by several quarters. There were two kinds of criticisms that were levelled against the founders — moral and legal. The moral criticism was that the Assembly was anti-Gandhian and wasn’t a democratic one. Mahatma Gandhi had espoused the concept of village republics and had stated that power should be vested in the hands of the panchayat whereas the Constitution had followed a highly centralised top-bottom approach to governance.

The Assembly was also stated to be non-representative because a majority of its members were Hindus and members of the INC, too. It was also argued that a colonial mindset prevailed in the Assembly whereby it followed a cut-copy-paste model of framing the Constitution. The legal shortcomings rest on the argument that the Assembly’s functioning was against the State paper and the Indian Independence Act of 1947. Many also felt that the Assembly laid the foundations for a non-secular India. However, there is no doubt that these criticisms had little to no bearing on the sanctity of the document. One-half of the Constitutions across the

world don’t even get to see their 20th year. At the least, these criticisms show that dissent was very much a part of the Constitution-making process and virtually every leader in the Assembly had at one point of time or the other registered his/her concerns on issues that they felt strongly about. The Constitution was indeed adopted based on popular support and sovereignty that the Assembly enjoyed from every strata of the society. Today, the document enjoys the status of a holy book for all those who believe in its dreams for this great country.

This is not to say that we have been equally successful in curbing the menace of discrimination, inequality and religious intolerance in India. Arguably so, we might have failed, and the founders would not be very happy with the state of affairs that exist today. Gender inequality, caste-based discrimination, religious fundamentalism, lack of quality public education, criminalisation of politics, corruption, increased blue and white collar crimes, hunger, poverty, population, unemployment, climate change, stifling of dissent and increased populism in politics are concerns that continue to haunt us and our Constitutional framework even today.

But before we hold the Constitution responsible for all that pervades in our socio-political landscape today, let’s take a step back and understand the role that this text is and was supposed to be playing in democracies like the one that exists in our country. Constitutions are inherently symbolic documents and all that they do is reflect the minds and hearts of the people. This is not to say that they include all that is not morally permissible. Constitutional texts assert and reiterate the dreams that a nation saw for itself.

Seventy one years ago, our founders

dreamt of a nation that would be free from all kinds of prejudice, hate and stigmatisation. We haven’t achieved this goal. But while criticising the text for its supposed failure we forget that our anger is misplaced. This is precisely because the Indian Constitution places an extremely huge amount of trust on whom it applies, in this case the citizens of this country. While holding the Constitution accountable for the failure of the people, we are doing injustice to the text that works best only when “We, The People” act with complete honesty and uphold principles of Constitutional idealism.

The reason why Samvidhaan Diwas is important is fairly simple, it tells you a story. The story of the rising sun in the history of India’s Constitutional journey. It tells you that the Constitution was drafted by appreciating dissent and favouring intellectual discourse. It tells you that the document was framed at a time when the dynamics of global politics was being reconsidered. It tells you that even in the face of criticism, the Assembly was successful in framing a document that was forward-looking, optimistic and has until now survived the wrath of several populist governments and authoritative leaders. It tells you, most importantly, that the criticism of the Constitution is misplaced and that the failure of those who are responsible to ensure its sanctity does not necessarily mean the failure of the text itself.

The Indian Constitution is a living document and it is going to survive and will continue to stand for those who are vulnerable, downtrodden and have been historically sidelined by a cacophonous Parliament. Let’s promise to shape a nation that aims to build on from where the founders left off.

(The writer is from the National Law University, Visakhapatnam)

Love jihad is an excuse for inefficiency

Amid issues of national importance, a false narrative has been created that women are deceived and forcibly converted to Islam for marriage



MARKANDEY KATJU

There is a lot of talk of “love jihad” these days in the country. The Uttar Pradesh (UP) Government has approved an Ordinance against it, providing for long jail sentences as well as heavy fines, and a Bill called the UP Prohibition of Unlawful Conversions Bill, 2020 is proposed to be introduced in the UP Legislature shortly. The hilly States of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand already have such laws and the Madhya Pradesh Government, too, has said that marriages to enable “forcible religious conversions” would invite an imprison-

ment of up to 10 years, extending the proposed period of maximum punishment for the alleged offence from the five years announced earlier. There is also a requirement to take the District Magistrate’s permission for converting to marry in UP. The Haryana Government, too, is proposing to bring a law against it.

The expressions “love jihad” and “forced conversion” are vague and liable to any number of interpretations. India is largely a conservative country, and most parents want their children (particularly women) to marry within their own religion. So, when the latter fall in love with someone who belongs to another religion, the parents often file a police report, alleging that their daughter was beguiled and abducted.

Whatever the term “love jihad” may mean, my experience as a lawyer for 20 years and a judge for another 20 is that in most cases, there is no such thing as a “forced conversion.” In many of the cases which came before me as a Supreme Court judge, the FIR

was usually filed by the family or the father of the woman alleging that the woman/daughter had been duped and hoodwinked, and/or abducted and forced to marry by a man from a different religion. But when I summoned the woman (and I was satisfied that she was above 18 years of age) she invariably told me that she had married the young man of her own free will and there was no coercion.

It is alleged by Right wing elements that “love jihad” is different from love marriage. According to them, a love marriage takes place because the couple genuinely love each other, whereas “love jihad” is not motivated by love but is a conversion conspiracy by Muslims. It is alleged that Muslim men often conceal their names and other particulars and beguile and dupe girls from different religions, particularly Hindus, into marriage with false allurements. To my mind, this is a bogus claim and never in my judicial experience have I found any basis for it.

I submit that “love jihad” is only

a gimmick, intended to divert public attention from the steep decline in India’s economy, appalling rise in child malnourishment, steep rise in prices of foodstuff and fuel, continuing farmers’ distress, rapes, acid attacks, rise in other crimes, corruption, pollution, major issues on the country’s borders vis-a-vis the stand-off with China and frequent skirmishes with Pakistan. Amid all these pressing issues of national importance, a false narrative and hue and cry has been created that young women are deceived, enticed and forcibly converted to Islam for marriage. There may be a few such stray instances (though not to my knowledge), but my belief, on the basis of my long judicial experience, is that almost all inter-religious marriages are voluntary love marriages. Also, no data is given of Muslim women marrying Hindu men, which is of course regarded as “ghar wapas” (a homecoming)."

I need not go into the legal validity of such “love jihad” marriages though the Supreme Court in the

Shakti Vahini vs. Union of India case (2018), the Arumugam Servai vs. State of Tamil Nadu case (2011), Lata Singh vs. State of UP case (2006), and in the recent Division Bench decision of the Allahabad High Court, held inter-religious marriages valid.

But the big question is how many of such marriages take place in the country? In India’s population of 138 crore people, one can count them on one’s fingertips. So it is not that hordes of Hindu girls or women from other communities are clamouring to tie the knot with Muslim men. It is not as if such marriages are threatening to change India’s demography and make it a Muslim-majority country, as is portrayed by some people.

The real issues before the country right now are widespread poverty, starvation deaths, the raging pandemic, almost total lack of proper healthcare and good education for the masses, record, rising unemployment, lack of opportunities and so on. Since the Government has no idea how to resolve these, it does what all

other populist governments have done in the past. It seeks to divert public attention and create a bogeyman, resorting to gimmicks and stunts. “Love jihad” is the latest one (the earlier ones being abrogation of Article 370, the Citizenship Amendment Act and so on.)

This bogey has the advantage of further polarising society on religious lines, which admirably serves some vested interests and also translates into votes for others. It gives a handle to vigilante groups to harass and attack couples. “Honour killings”, which are already a menace, will become more common as the days go by.

The Roman emperors used to say, “If you cannot give the people bread, give them circuses”, and Queen Marie Antoinette of France reportedly said, “If the people do not have bread, let them eat cake.” Our own emperors say, “Since we cannot give the people bread or employment, we must give them the apparition of ‘love jihad’.”

(The writer is a former judge of the Supreme Court of India)



FOREIGN EYE



IT IS BETTER TO BE SAFE THAN SORRY

China sees the testing and disinfection of imported products as necessary to keep the virus at bay. While that will inevitably cause delays in custom clearance, such measures are necessary under the current circumstances, especially when Corona is still wreaking havoc around the world, causing thousands of deaths each day. (China Daily editorial)

Ops at PSU banks partially hit due to strike

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

Banking services across the country were partially impacted on Thursday as some unions of public sector banks participated in a one-day nationwide strike called by Central trade unions.

Operations such as cash deposit and withdrawal and cheque clearances were hit. Bank unions claimed that in the clearing grids, about 20 lakh cheques worth about Rs 18,000 crore could not be sent for clearance due to the strike. Even ATMs in some parts of the country went dry.

However, the country's

largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) and private sector banks were functional.

The All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA), All India Bank Officers Association (AIBOA) and Bank Employees Federation of India (BEFI) participated in the strike.

Another bank officers' union — All India Bank Officers Confederation (AIBOC) — did not participate but extended "fraternal support" to the strike, its General Secretary Soumya Datta said.

The unions have launched the nationwide protest against the proposed move of the gov-

ernment for privatisation of public sector banks, he added.

The recent report of the RBI's Internal Working Group on allowing large corporates to enter into the banking sector seems to be a sinister design to provide another opportunity to loot deposits of savers of the country, he added.

It is an open secret that the current problem of non-performing assets (NPAs) is because of fraud and fund diversion by corporates, he further said.

Ten central trade unions, except the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, observed the nationwide general strike to protest

against various policies of the central government.

AIBEA, which has four lakh members from various public, private and some foreign banks, in a release claimed banking transactions were affected in states like Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala and Bihar.

In Tamil Nadu, banks were closed in 16 districts as the government declared a holiday due to cyclone Nivar.

In Maharashtra, 30,000 bank employees joined the strike and demonstrated before their

respective branches. In Mumbai, around 200 bank employees formed a human chain at Horniman Circle, Fort area.

Many lenders had intimidated their customers in advance to use digital channels such as internet/ mobile banking and ATMs for their banking transactions. Bank employees protested against privatisation of banks and outsourcing and contract system in jobs in the sector. They also demanded adequate recruitment in the sector, stern action against big corporate defaulters, increase in rate of interest on bank deposits and reduction in service charges.

Unions in the Life

Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC) also participated in the strike.

The 10 central unions, including the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), All India United Trade Union Centre (AIUTUC), Trade Union Coordination Centre (TUCC) and Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), called for the general strike against the new farm and labour laws, among others.

Economic recovery stronger than expected; rising cases downside risk to growth: Das

PTI ■ MUMBAI

After the 23.9 per cent GDP contraction in the April-June quarter following the Covid-19 pandemic, economic recovery momentum has been stronger than expected, Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Thursday.

Das, however, said that we need to be watchful of the demand momentum sustaining after the festivities as well, and also warned of downside risks to growth coming from a rise in virus infections in select pockets. The heavy contraction in Q1 was attributed to the near-complete chilling of all economic activity in the wake of one of the strongest lockdowns enforced anywhere in the world.

The RBI, which has introduced many unconventional measures to aid recovery apart from cutting key rates by 1.15 per cent, expects the economy to shrink by 9.5 per cent in FY21.

"After witnessing a sharp contraction in the economy by 23.9 per cent in Q1 and a multi-speed normalisation of activity in Q2, the Indian economy has exhibited stronger than expected pick-up in momentum of recovery," Das said, speaking at the annual day event of Foreign Exchange Dealers' Association of India (FEDAI).

"We need to be watchful

about the sustainability of demand after festivals and a possible reassessment of market expectations surrounding the vaccine," he added.

Analysts at Icmr, a rating agency, had earlier this week raised doubts over the sustainability of demand and attributed the spurt to pent-up requirements following the lockdowns and also the festivities.

In what can assuage some concerns following the inflation over-shooting the upper end of the RBI's target band for many months, Das reiterated the rate-setting panel's resolve to "see through temporary pressures" on price rise.

"The monetary policy guidance in October emphasised the need to see through temporary inflation pressures and also maintain the accommodative stance at least during the current financial year and into the next financial year," he said.

Das said a comfortable external balance position, wherein India's forex reserves have risen to USD 572.7 billion as of November 13 or sufficient to cover a year's imports, have been a key source of resilience in recent months, adding that the government's production-linked incentives scheme to up India's share in global supply chains can also leverage on it.

Huge renewable energy plans lie ahead for next decade: PM

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday announced that there are huge renewable energy deployment plans for India for the next decade which are likely to generate business prospects of around \$20 billion per year.

In his address after inaugurating the 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo (RE-Invest 2020), through video conferencing, he invited investors, developers and businesses to join India's renewable

energy journey. He said that after the success of Performance Linked Incentives (PLI) in electronics manufacturing, the government has decided to give similar incentives to high efficiency solar modules, as per an official statement.

Stressing that ensuring ease of doing business' is their utmost priority and dedicated Project Development Cells have been established to facilitate investors, he said that in the last 6 years, India has travelled on an "unparalleled journey".

The Prime Minister noted

that India's renewable power capacity is the fourth largest in the world and is growing at the fastest speed among all major countries. The renewable energy capacity in India is currently 136 Giga Watts, which is about 36 per cent of its total capacity. He said that India's annual renewable energy capacity addition has been exceeding that of coal based thermal power since 2017, and that in the last six years, India has increased installed renewable energy capacity by two and half times.

Central government extends credit guarantee scheme to 27 sectors

New Delhi (PTI): The government on Thursday said it has extended the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) to the health sector and 26 other sectors identified by the Kamath Committee.

The National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) has issued the operational guidelines for implementation of ECLGS 2.0 scheme, the finance ministry said in a statement. The scheme was announced by the government earlier this month as part of the Rs 2.65 lakh crore Atmanirbhar

Bharat 3.0 package. "Under ECLGS 2.0 entities with outstanding credit above Rs 50 crore and not exceeding Rs 500 crore as on February 29, 2020, which were less than or equal to 30 days past due as on February 29, 2020 are eligible," the statement said.

The loans provided under ECLGS 2.0 will have a five-year tenor, with a 12-month moratorium on repayment of principal, it said. "These entities or borrower accounts will be eligible for additional funding up to 20 per cent (which could be fund based or non-fund based or both) of

their total outstanding credit (fund based only) as a collateral free Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL), which would be fully guaranteed by NCGTC," it added. In addition to ECLGS 2.0, where no annual turnover ceiling has been prescribed, it has also been decided to extend ECLGS 1.0 to entities under ECLGS which had a total credit outstanding (fund-based only) of up to Rs 50 crore as on February 29, 2020, but were previously ineligible owing to their annual turnover exceeding Rs 250 crore.

NIFTY 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY50	12906.45	13018.00	12790.40	12987.00	128.6	
JSWSTEEL	338.5	362.2	336	362	23.75	
TATASTEEL	546	571.1	541.25	569.4	28.15	
GRASIM	850.2	881	847.05	880	36.9	
BAFINANCE	4655.00	4854.00	4640.00	4850.00	160.25	
SHERCEM	23949.00	24600.00	23700.00	24473.70	774.9	
BAIJAHINDO	3053.00	3150.00	3053.00	3145.00	93.75	
HINDALCO	2242	231.25	220.35	2302	6.75	
ADANIPOORTS	400.8	413	395.65	410.45	11.5	
HDPCF	2197.15	2245.00	2187.65	2242.70	51.35	
HDPCBANK	1,491.50	1,432.00	1,387.00	1,431.90	29.1	
DRESDAY	4,810.00	4,929.30	4,773.80	4,905.00	98.7	
DIVISLAB	3,485.50	3,565.00	3,465.00	3,540.00	70.55	
HCLTECH	824.1	845	819.6	841.2	16.5	
TITAN	1,316.95	1,333.00	1,308.15	1,333.00	26.05	
AXISBANK	602.25	618.2	594.05	611.5	11.65	
TATAMOTORS	171.6	175	171.05	174.65	3.2	
WIPRO	351	364.4	347.2	355.85	28.5	
KOTAKBANK	1,875.00	1,900.05	1,850.05	1,889.95	17.5	
NESTLEIND	17,599.00	17,839.00	17,280.00	17,750.00	229.8	
BAIJAHNSV	87,400.00	88,420.00	86,710.00	88,310.00	1,132.5	
SUNPHARMA	506	513	502.3	512.75	6.55	
M&M	722	736.8	720	729	9.05	
CIPLA	734	741	726.5	740.75	7.1	
SRIN	244	246.25	240.15	245.75	2.75	
BHARTIARTL	468.7	469.65	460.1	469	4.9	
TCS	2,686.00	2,730.95	2,680.00	2,730.00	28.7	
HINDUNILVR	2,140.00	2,162.00	2,122.55	2,158.15	22.3	
POWERGRID	195.15	199.15	192.85	197.3	2	
COALINDIA	124.6	125.35	123.35	125.2	1.25	
ICICIBANK	475.1	477.2	465.8	477	4.3	
HEROMOTOCO	3,008.00	3,049.65	3,010.10	3,030.00	21.25	
GAIL	102.3	103.45	101.6	102.95	0.65	
UPL	418.6	423.45	414.15	421.2	2.6	
NTPC	93.95	94.8	93.4	94.5	0.55	
ULTRACEMCO	4,822.00	4,873.90	4,791.55	4,848.00	28.15	
ITC	195.1	195.85	192.55	194.95	1.1	
RELIANCE	1,953.05	1,965.00	1,930.05	1,957.00	9.2	
SBIIFE	853.3	856.65	848.3	852.9	3.85	
LT	11,300.00	11,349.95	11,01.55	11,119.20	3.2	
ASIANPAINT	2,160.00	2,177.45	2,117.15	2,160.00	5.7	
INFY	11,119.95	11,119.95	10,983.30	11,118.00	2.35	
BRITANNIA	3,569.80	3,572.90	3,490.00	3,560.00	4.2	
INDUSINDBK	857	860.8	835	854	-1.05	
IOC	85.9	86.25	84.55	85.65	-0.1	
TECHM	866.5	867.95	846.7	858	-4.25	
ONGC	81.15	81.5	79.45	80.3	-0.5	
HDCLIFE	668	675.4	658.15	660.8	-4.3	
BPCPL	383.7	384.8	375.05	379.5	-2.55	
MARUTI	7,080.00	7,098.00	6,903.00	7,004.00	-51.7	
EICHERMOT	2,610.00	2,613.00	2,522.50	2,554.45	-40.65	

NIFTY NEXT 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY NEXT 50	29,906.15	30,235.65	29,809.05	30,186.05	269.75	
SIEMENS	1,405.00	1,533.90	1,396.15	1,532.95	168.7	
ICICIGI	1,394.00	1,468.00	1,390.00	1,468.00	85.15	
BANKBARODA	49.1	51.5	48.25	51.3	2.25	
PFC	105.6	109.7	105.05	109.3	3.85	
NMDC	93.5	96.65	92.85	96.45	3.35	
NAUKRI	4,035.00	4,196.95	4,010.95	4,180.00	138.2	
BAIJAHLDNG	2,990.00	3,075.00	2,940.00	3,024.95	95.8	
PNB	31.4	32.2	30.9	32.15	0.8	
PNL	1,395.00	1,428.05	1,376.05	1,420.65	32.1	
CONCOR	402	409	393.3	408	8.35	
INFRAELIT	21.6	221.35	215.4	219.5	4.3	
ACC	1,668.35	1,700.00	1,654.00	1,697.30	32.55	
AUROPHARMA	856.5	873.25	850	868.5	15.65	
AMBUJACEM	257.7	262.6	253.55	260.7	4.5	
BIOCON	422.45	427.9	418.25	427	6.85	
ICICIPRULI	447.5	456.8	447.15	454.5	6.7	
WIPROOFTIN	1,122.00	1,136.00	1,108.65	1,133.15	14.65	
COLPAL	1,504.90	1,523.55	1,492.45	1,520.90	19.6	
HDPCAMC	2,530.00	2,554.90	2,505.95	2,546.00	32.6	
MCDOWELL-N	552	559.45	550.55	557.25	7.05	
CADILAHAC	422	426.68	418.1	426.8	5.3	
MARICO	369.95	376.35	368.15	373.5	4.2	
GODFREYCP	693.5	704	689.35	704	7.8	
TATONATH	516.5	523.6	505.05	520	5.2	
TORNTPHARM	2,597.75	2,624.00	2,587.50	2,610.15	25.35	
DLF	183.95	186.45	179.65	184.5	1.65	
ALKEM	2,815.00	2,846.95	2,790.00	2,822.00	23.9	
HINDZINC	220.6	221.9	219.05	221.25	1.85	
HINDPETRO	212.45	213.85	208.1	212.8	1.75	
MOTHERSUNI	142.65	146.3	142.4	143.75	1.1	
DABUR	501.8	505	494.05	504.1	2.8	
LUPIN	897	906.95	893.3	899.6	5.05	
DMART	2,353.00	2,396.90	2,343.20	2,373.45	12.65	
PGHIL	10,675.75	10,726.70	10,540.75	10,721.00	57.25	
BERGEPAINT	636.05	641	626.2	639	2.95	
SBICARD	809	815.7	806.45	809.15	3.05	
IGL	452	454.4	437.25	450.5	0.4	
OFSS	3,020.00	3,045.05	3,008.00	3,021.00	2.5	
UNIL	1,043.90	1,078.60	1,033.20	1,046.00	-0.15	
ABBOTINDIA	15,450.00	15,450.00	15,306.00	15,379.90	-15.1	
BANDHANBNK	369.9	370	357.5	367.35	-0.8	
PIDILITIND	1,549.00	1,562.45	1,523.55	1,538.50	-5.6	
PETRONET	256.75	256.9	250.7	255.8	-1.2	
BOSCHLTD	12,716.00	13,355.95	12,540.00	12,860.00	-65.8	
GICRE	141	141.4	137.35	138.1	-1.4	
LDI	3,134.00	3,179.95	3,032.80	3,075.00	-33.4	
ANADITRANS	369	369	357.1	360.05	-4.1	
HAVELLS	813	817.4	798.4	806.1	-9.35	
INDIGO	1,569.00	1,575.00	1,522.00	1,550.00	-40.65	
ADANIGREEN	1,087.70	1,143.85	1,087.70	1,100.05	-44.85	

BSE 500

Ripart	Open	High	Low	LTP	PCALAB	2122	2156.95	2085.1	2158.50
BAIJANFINANCE	4686.95	4855	4639.7	4827.85	COLPAL	1501	1523.8	1492.15	2130.00
RELIANCE	1950.05	1964.85	1930.4	1953.8	DDFCFIRSTB	35.8	36	35.1	35
IDEA	9.69	10	9.62	9.95	JUBLFOOD	2440	2506.66	2393.7	2496
HDPCBANK	1415.65	1432	1387.15	1426.45	DMART	2351	2396	2347.2	2372.2
SBIN	244.4	246.1	240.3	245.45	CHOLAFIN	356	361.35	350.65	360
ADANIPOORTS	400.1	413.05	395.7	410.35	HINDANILVR	2134.15	2162.1	2123.15	2153.00
TATASTEEL	547.8	571	541.5	568.9	LICHSHG	323.05	327.2	321.3	325
AXISBANK	601	618	594.1	612.8	TRIDENT	7.89	8.5	7.75	8.0
INDUSINDBK	859	861.05	835	850.45	AMARAJABAT	865	899	862.5	894.3
SIEMENS	1445	1534.05	1396.55	1520.9	MOTHERSUMI	143	146.15	142.45	143.2
INFY	1118	1119	1098.65	1113.65	LAURUSLABS	294.9	298.8	289.4	292.2
ICICIBANK	474.2	477.05	465.95	475.4	VRKANGREE	31.05	35.7	31.05	34.7
MARUTI	7120	7120	6904	6993.25	ADANIS	324.8	324.8	310.1	316.4
BAJAJFINSV	8759.9	8845.35	8666.9	8817.15	BALKRISHNA	1609.6	1632.75	1579.6	1606.4
HDPCF	2190	2244.25	2188	2238.55	PVR	1319	1329.05	1282.25	1312
DRREDDY	4824	4927	4775.5	4898.8	TATACONSUM	5198.5	523.2	505.05	519.7
HCLTECH	825	845	802	842.35	CHALET	153	153.75	149.6	150.2
KOTAKBANK	1862.45	1900.75	1850.1	1889.8	GODREJPROP	1110	1122	1091.25	1106.9
LT	1129.9	1134.95	1102.25	1119.45	WOCKPHARMA	383.05	434.1	383.05	434
BOSCHLT	12998.95	13350	12548.9	12771.4	ULTRACEMCH	157.35	164.55	156.2	161.6
POWERGRID	194.1	198.95	192.8	197.7	BALRAMCHIN	4819	4870.15	4792.3	4833.5
TATAMOTORS	171.7	174.9	171.05	173.75					
GRASIM	856.85	881.4	848.9	877.75					
HINDALCO	223.55	231.1	220.5	229.8					
M&M	719.75	736.75	719.75	729					
RBLBANK	228.5	229.7	219.75	222.35					
SRTRANSFIN	1064.8	1068.4	1025.65	1051.7					
ADANIGREEN	1087.55	1142.5	1087.55	1104.3					
BHEL	30.95	31.6	30.6	31.45					
MRF	7670.1	77488.7	74381	75982.1					
MUTHOOTFIN	1118.65	1135	1108.8	1132.05					
GRAEVESCOF	73.7	78.15	73.7	76.5					
CIPLA	732.1	741	727	738.05					
ONGC	81.25	81.55	79.45	80.2					
ITC	195.4	195.9	192.55	194.8					
TATAPOWER	62.2	62.7	61.15	62.35					
TCS	2686.65	2729.95	2681	2720.85					
BIOCON	41.05	42.81	41.85	42.95					
ICI	114.5	119.1	113.25	118.8					
ICICIGI	1384.8	1467.85	1384.8	1459.15					
ASIANPAINT	2156	2176.75	2116.6	2156					
INDUSGFIN	187.7	187.7	181.3	185.7					
DABUR	1562	1574.15	1522.7	1543.95					
INDIGO	501	504.95	494.4	504.15					
JSWSTEEL	338.5	362.92	336	359.1					
HDCLFICE	669.75	674.95	658	660.7					
SUNPHARMA	505.3	512.95	502.5	511.6					
EICHERMOT	2602.3	2621.1	2523.15	2550.3					
POWERINDIA	991.4	1074	961.5	1052.3					
BPL	383.7	384.65	375.35	378.1					
LTI	3111.05	3176.6	3025.35	3084.6					
APOLLOHOSP	2240.15	2319	2240.15	2301.55					
JINDALSTEL	235	250.95	232.45	249.6					
L&T	74.6	78.8	73.85	78.35					
BHARTIARTL	475	475	460.75	468.3					
GOAL	102.8	103.45	101.6	102.75					
CALINDIA	124.15	125.25	123.35	125					
ADANIENET	400.95	411.4	399.25	401.65					
LUPIN	899	906.75	893.7	899.45					
WIPRO	350.4	356.15	347.25	355.05					
BANKBARODA	49	51.45	48.3	51.1					
M&MFIN	162.95	168.25	158.9	167.25					
CANBK	96.9	100.45	96.3	100					
BEL	107.5	109.25	106.85	108.9					
ALOKEIT	21.4	22.4	20.8	22.4					
BANDHANBANK	370	370.1	357.5	366.4					
BHARATFORG	499.8	517.3	499.8	513.4					
MANAPPURAM	167.4	173.55	165.2	172.7					
SAIL	43	46.8	42.8	46.55					
INDIACEM	149.5	163.75	146.6	156.25					
PNB	31.4	32.2	30	32.05					
TECHM	865	867.95	847	857.25					
TITAN	1313.3	1333.8	1309.75	1327.1					
BAJAJ-AUTO	3093.95	3150	3061.1	3129.95					
RECILTD	116.9	122.95	116.9	122					
INFRATEL	216	221.05	215.4	218.65					
ASHOKLEY	89.95	90.2	87.8	88.9					
FORTIS	147.05	149.95	145	148.05					
AUROPHARMA	854.7	872.85	850.05	870.5					
NESTLEIND	17490	17834.95	17280.3	17752.65					
DLF	183.6	185	179.65	184.4					
GODREJAGRO	506	512.45	506	511.1					
HONAUT	30806.8	30779.65	30758.65	32343.9					
TATACHEM	368.55	385	365.4	383.35					
HAVELLS	816.8	816.8	798.45	803.35					
PFC	105.9	109.7	105.1	109					
TATAELXSI	1541	1546.15	1503	1508.35					
DIVISLAB	3509.75	3556	3466.15	3545.35					
JCHAC	2137.9	2180	2133.65	2174.5					
BEML	702.15	720.4	693.8	713.25					
IOC	86	86.25	84.55	85.6					
ZEE	188.95	191.1	187.15	189.85					
ESCORTS	1386	1400.8	1353.15	1388.15					
ACC	1650.05	1704.45	1650.05	1695.15					
BRITANNIA	3557.15	3569.45	3490	3548.35					
GLNMARK	468.45	474	460.45	468.75					
MINDTREE	1380	1400	1349.25	1393.75					
HEROMOT	3010	3044	2977	3023.3					
PEL	1388	1427.4	1376.5	1423.15					
FEDERALBNK	60	60.1	58.5	59.9					

26/11: US says it stands with India

Remains resolute in fight against terrorism

Washington: Asserting that it stands with India and remains resolute in the fight against terrorism, the US said it is committed to hold the perpetrators of the heinous 26/11 terror attacks accountable to ensure justice for the victims.

November 26 marks the 12th anniversary of the terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

“Through the Rewards for

Justice programme, we seek to ensure that all those responsible for this heinous attack face justice,” US State Department deputy spokesman Cale Brown said on Wednesday.

“On the 12th anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai attack, the US reaffirms its commitment to holding the perpetrators accountable and ensuring justice for the victims, including six Americans. Standing alongside our Indian partners, we remain resolute in the fight against terrorism,” Brown said.

Ten terrorists of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)

carried out 12 coordinated shooting and bombing attacks lasting four days across Mumbai. At least 166 people, including six Americans and nine terrorists, were killed and over 300 others were injured in the attacks which began on November 26, 2008.

The Taj Mahal hotel, the Oberoi hotel, the Leopold Cafe, the Nariman (Chabad) House and the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus train station were some of the locations targeted.

The Rewards for Justice programme is offering a reward of up to \$5 million for infor-



mation about the individuals responsible for these attacks. Key members of this heinous plot remain at large and the investigation remains active and ongoing. This reward offer extends to any individual who bears responsibility for this act

of terror, the State Department said. The six US citizens killed during the 26/11 attacks were Ben Zion Chroman, Gavriel Holtzberg, Sandeep Jeswani, Aryeh Leibish Teitelbaum, Alan Scherr and his daughter Naomi Scherr. **PTI**

Pak must bring perpetrators of 26/11 attacks to justice: Consul Gen Jaiswal

New York: Perpetrators of the “ghastly” 26/11 Mumbai attacks must be brought to justice by Pakistan, India’s Consul General in New York Randhir Jaiswal said, emphasising that combating terrorism requires strong global cooperation as he, along with top Israeli diplomats, paid homage to the victims of the 2008 terror strike.

November 26 marks the 12th anniversary of the terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

“It is important for the world and the global community, for us and for justice that those responsible are brought to book. Pakistan must do

what is required to bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice,” Jaiswal said, addressing a virtual commemoration event on Wednesday.

Ten terrorists of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) carried out 12 coordinated shooting and bombing attacks lasting four days across Mumbai. At least 166 people, including six Jews and nine terrorists, were killed and over 300 others were injured in the attacks which began on November 26, 2008.

At the event organised by The American India Public Affairs Committee and

American Jewish Committee, Jaiswal described the 26/11 attacks as a “ghastly attack unknown in the annals of history”. He said terrorism is one of the greatest threats confronting the world.

“As in the (time of) COVID19, the world has come together to fight this pandemic, we must all come together to fight terrorism, a global problem, tooth and nail. Let us remember on this occasion those who fell to the barbaric and bloody bullets of insanity and inhumanity. And those who sacrificed life to save our tomorrow, to save our today,” he said. **PTI**

Israelis pay respects to victims, demand justice for them

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

Israelis are holding ceremonies to pay respects to the victims of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, demanding that the perpetrators of the carnage be brought to justice and condemning “Pakistan-sponsored terrorism”.

Israelis, and Indian students and caregivers paid respects to the victims in Jerusalem, Rehovot and Tel Aviv on Wednesday and ceremonies are planned in Beersheva and Eilat on Thursday.

A virtual ceremony on Zoom is also planned for Thursday at 8 PM Israel time (11:30 PM IST). Hundreds have registered to take part in the event.

“Israel opposes every country that provides financial and logistical support to terrorists. Peaceful countries should come together to boycott diplomatically and financially those countries that support terrorism. This will help deter acts of terror,” Isaac Solomon from the southern Israeli coastal city of Eilat told PTI.

India, Nepal agree to advance ties

Kathmandu: India and Nepal on Thursday agreed to step up efforts to advance mutual cooperation as Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla met Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli and held “productive” talks with his Nepalese counterpart on a wide range of issues, including the border problem.

Shringla was accorded a warm welcome on his maiden visit to Nepal at the invitation of Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal, amid a strain in bilateral ties following a bitter border row. He paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Oli during which they discussed a wide range of issues, including the border problem, PM’s Foreign Affairs Advisor Rajan Bhattarai said.

He said the Indian foreign secretary had come with a positive message from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to move forward Nepal-India relations. “Nepal and India

enjoy multi-dimensional relations, though there are some problems,” he quoted Prime Minister Oli as telling Shringla.

Nepal is in favour of resolving problems through dialogue with a view to taking the friendly relations to a new height, said Oli, who is also the defence minister. “There are some unresolved issues left by history, and I am confident that we can settle them through dialogue to move forward our relations,” Oli said.

Sources said the foreign secretary’s discussions with Prime Minister Oli included a candid review of the state of the bilateral relationship, and the potential for bringing India and Nepal ever closer. Discussions took place on specific measures that could be taken to finalise key projects at the earliest, including the Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project, as well as launch new economic initiatives, sources said. **PTI**

London, most of England, to move to high Covid 19 alert level after lockdown

London: The UK capital of London along with most regions of England will move into Tier 2 of a three-tier Covid-19 restrictions system and remain at a high alert level at the end of the complete stay-at-home lockdown on December 2, the UK government announced in Parliament on Thursday.

Other regions such as Manchester, Birmingham, Hull, Newcastle and large parts of the north of England are set to face the toughest coronavirus restrictions with only three areas – Cornwall, the Isle of Wight and Isles of Scilly – placed into the lowest Tier 1 or the medium restrictions category.

Under the highest Tier 3 alert level, there is a complete ban on mixing of households except in limited outdoor settings. For Tier 2, the rule of six applies with up to six members of different households allowed

to meet outdoors and under Tier 1, the rule of six applies both indoors and outdoors.

Unlike before, gyms and close-contact beauty services like hairdressers will be able to open in all tiers but government guidance says that people in all tiers who can work from home should continue to do so. UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock told the House of Commons these are incredibly hard decisions but urged the public to “dig deep” in order to help bring the rate of infection, or R number, below one.

“Hope is on the horizon but we still have further to go. So we must all dig deep,” said Hancock.

“Thanks to the hard work and sacrifice made by people up and down the country, we are able to move out of national lockdown and into more targeted local, tiered restrictions,” he said. **PTI**

Nepal, China to announce revised height of Everest soon

Kathmandu: Nepal and China will jointly announce the revised height of Mt Everest, the world’s highest peak, probably during the upcoming visit of the Chinese defence minister to the Himalayan nation, according to media reports on Thursday.

The Nepal government aimed to measure the exact height of the mountain amid debates that there might have been a change in its height due to various reasons, including the devastating earthquake of 2015.

According to the measurement done in 1954 by Survey of India, the height of Mt. Everest is 8,848 metres, The Rising Nepal newspaper reported.

In 1975, Chinese surveyors measured Mt. Everest as 8,848.13 metres above sea level, according to China’s official Xinhua news agency.

A survey in 2005 found the summit’s rock height at 8,844.43 meters and its ice-

US will appeal order barring expulsions of migrant children

Houston: The US government on Thursday appealed a judge’s order barring the expulsions of immigrant children who crossed the border alone, a policy enacted during the coronavirus pandemic to deny the children asylum protections.

Judge Emmet Sullivan issued a preliminary injunction on November 18 sought by advocates for immigrants that barred expulsions of unaccompanied children under public health laws.

The Justice Department filed a notice of appeal Wednesday night to the US Court of Appeals for the District

of Columbia Circuit. It also asked Sullivan to issue a stay of the injunction pending appeal, a request he previously denied.

Since March, border agents have expelled 200,000 immigrant adults and children citing the pandemic and a need to prevent the spread of the virus, even though Covid-19 is spreading broadly through border communities and the country at large.

Sullivan’s order only covered children who cross the border without a parent and not adults or parents and children. At least 8,800 unaccompanied children have been

expelled without having a chance to seek asylum protections or speak to a lawyer.

Most people have been expelled within hours or days, though the Trump administration detained hundreds of children for weeks in hotels near the U.S.-Mexico border for days or weeks at a time until another judge barred that practice.

President-elect Joe Biden has said he will reverse several of President Donald Trump’s immigration programs when he takes office in January. Biden has not stated whether he will stop expulsions of immigrants. **AP**

We’re at war with the virus, not each other: Biden in Thanksgiving address

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President-elect Joe Biden has reminded Americans that they were at war with the coronavirus and not against each other, as he called for an end to the “grim season of division” in the country.

In a Thanksgiving address ahead of the holiday, he urged fellow

Americans to forgo high-risk holiday traditions, as cases of the virus continue to surge in the US, the worst-hit nation with over 262,100 deaths.

“I know the country’s grown weary of the fight. But we need to remember, we’re at war with the virus, not with one another. Not with each other.”

“This is the moment where we need to steel our spines, redouble our efforts and recommit ourselves to the fight,” Biden said, speaking from his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware.

“Let’s remember: We’re all in this together,” the 78-year-old Democrat said on Wednesday.

Trump pardons former NSA Michael Flynn

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order granting pardon to his former national security advisor Michael Flynn, who had been charged with making false statements to the FBI over possible collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia during the 2016 presidential polls.

Trump signed the executive order on Wednesday.

Europe signs \$102M deal to bring space trash home



Berlin: The European Space Agency says it is signing a 86 million-euro (USD 102 million) contract with a Swiss start-up company to bring a large piece of orbital trash back to Earth. The agency said Thursday that the deal with ClearSpace SA will lead to the “first active debris removal mission” in 2025, in which a custom-made spacecraft will capture and bring down part of a rocket once used to deliver a satellite into orbit.

Experts have long warned

that hundreds of thousands of pieces of space debris circling the planet — including an astronaut’s lost mirror — pose a threat to functioning satellites and even the International Space Station. Several teams are working on ways to tackle the problem.

The object being removed from orbit is a so-called Vespa payload adapter that was used to hold and then release a satellite in 2013. It weighs about 112 kilograms (247 pounds). **AP**

FARMERS BRAVE...

“It is condemnable that Haryana Police is using such measures to suppress an assembly of peaceful protesters. We are protesting in a peaceful manner, but they want to prevent us from using our democratic right to protest,” a Punjab farmer told reporters earlier at Shambhu.

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal were among the opposition leaders who slammed the Haryana Police action at Shambhu.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh and his Haryana counterpart Manohar Lal Khattar exchanged words over Twitter.

The Congress veteran asked Khattar why his Government was stopping farmers, and the BJP leader told him to stop “inciting” them. Shiromani Akali Dal leader Sukhbir Singh Badal too criticised attempts to thwart the protest. “Today is Punjab’s 26/11. We are witnessing the end of the right to democratic protest,” he tweeted.

The Haryana Police said they acted with restraint and nobody was seriously hurt during the day. No farmer was arrested, they said. Ahead of the protest, Haryana had announced sealing its borders with Punjab to prevent farmers from entering the state on their way to Delhi.

2 SOLDIERS...

According to the Inspector General of Police, Kashmir range Vijay Kumar, “Car borne terrorists on Thursday afternoon opened indiscriminate firing on the road opening party of the Indian Army on the outskirts of Srinagar near Khushipora.” He said, we have scanned the CCTV footage to identify the real culprits. He, however, added

the terrorists could be members of the JeM or LeT in Kashmir Valley.

Official sources claimed, the security forces are also working on the leads to establish whether the group of terrorists eliminated in these two encounters belonged to the same batch and had infiltrated in two different batches inside the Indian territory.

INDIA SUSPENDS...

The DGCA had earlier extended the suspension of international flight operations till November 30 and similarity allowed planes to fly on select routes.

However, special international flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May and under the bilateral “air bubble” arrangements with selected countries since July.

India has formed air bubble pacts with around 20 countries, including the US, the UK, the UAE, Kenya, Bhutan and France. Under an air bubble pact between two countries, special international flights can be operated by their airlines between their territories.

Earlier, Union Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri had said regular international flight services could be resumed when the domestic traffic would reach about 50-60 per cent and other countries would open up to international traffic without present conditionalities.

NIVAR KILLS 5...

A total of 101 houses, including thatched huts and tiled houses were damaged by cyclone. From Andhra Pradesh, news is coming of one death. Hundreds of trees were uprooted and water-logging was also reported from several areas of the affected regions. Heavy rains caused waterlogging in these States.

More than two lakh people were evacuated to safety in the two coastal States that had been bracing for the cyclone the fifth-strongest category on India’s scale of seven storm types. Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday spoke to Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and assured them of all possible help from the Centre in the wake of severe cyclonic storm Nivar. “We are closely monitoring the situation in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry in the wake of cyclone Nivar. Have spoken to CM Edappadi Karuppa Palaniswami and CM V Narayanaswamy and assured all possible help from the Centre. NDRF teams already on the ground to help people in need”, Shah tweeted.

“Operations have resumed at #AAI #ChennaiAirport at 0900hrs,” the Chennai Airport tweeted and it also tagged domestic arrival and departure schedule and requested passengers to check with airline operators for updates. After resumption of airport operation at Chennai, a British Airways flight from Heathrow was the first to land at the airport after the cyclone at 9 am. Limited suburban train services were also resumed. A car lies buried under an uprooted tree after heavy rain following the landfall of Nivar in Puducherry.

Under its influence, some of the significant rainfall recorded are (in cm): Chengalpattu-31; Pondicherry-30; Cuddalore-28; Shollinganallur- 22; Kavali, Vanur and Nellore- 14 each; Tirupathi-13; Poondi and N u m g a m b a k k a m - 1 2 ; Vandavasi-11; and Vellore-8. Police rescued a drunk man and his pet cat from a house whose front portion was collapsed during rain in Chennai on Wednesday night.

According to the IMD, the very severe cyclone ‘Nivar’ that

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

hit the Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts during the small hours of Thursday weakened two rounds into a cyclone the same afternoon, and was expected to weaken as a deep depression and further into a depression into the night.

It is currently lay centered over north coastal Tamil Nadu , about 85 kms north-northwest of Puducherry and 95 west-southwest of Chennai. Parts of Puducherry and Tamil Nadu witnessed heavy rains through the night. The danger “is not over yet as some part of the cyclone is still over the sea though center is over the land,” the IMD tweeted. Initially classified as a “very severe cyclonic storm” as it swirled in the Bay of Bengal, Nivar weakened after landfall into a “severe cyclonic storm”, the IMD said.

According to IMD, a low pressure area will likely be formed over south Bay of Bengal around November 29. This is expected to become more marked and move in a westwardly direction towards south Tamil Nadu.

Normal life was thrown out of gear as heavy to extremely heavy rainfall ranging from 6 cm to 30 cm battered at least half of Andhra Pradesh under the influence of cyclone Nivar, leaving one dead. Another farmer was feared washed away while NDRF personnel rescued two others from a reservoir in Chittoor district

DELHI POLICE GIRD...

Delhi Police PRO Eish Singhal had said, “Various farmer organisations have requested for permission for protest in Delhi on November 26 and 27. We have conveyed to them in writing and through various media also that the protest is not permitted in view

of the latest DDMA guidelines.”

“When the condition is good, they can seek due permission and exercise their right to protest in Delhi. For now, they are requested to cooperate with Delhi Police and not indulge in any kind of protest. If despite our appeal they turn up to Delhi, the required legal action will be taken against them,” Singhal had said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (east) Jasmeet Singh had said, “The main focus of our will be on Ghazipur border, Chilla border and DND. Heavy deployment of police personnel is already there and the checking will take place round the clock. The paramilitary force is also placed.

Police will also check the other small borders of the district.” Police said all border pickets have been made active.

“We have deployed heavy force at the bordering areas of the district. Eight companies of paramilitary will be assisting police at the borders,” Deputy Commissioner of Police (south-east) RP Meena had said.

The All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC), Rashtriya Kisan Mahasangh and various factions of the Bharatiya Kisan Union have joined hands and formed a “Samyukta Kisan Morcha” to press the Central Government to scrap the three farm laws.

A seven-member committee has also been formed to coordinate the operations of the Morcha.

Farmers have expressed apprehension that the new laws would pave way for the dismantling of the minimum support price system, leaving them at the “mercy” of big corporates. They have been demanding that the laws be repealed.

“Jantar Mantar at central Delhi has been blocked with the barricades. There is traffic at the borders as police teams are checking vehicles. However, the borders are not being sealed,” said a senior police official. Police have also deployed drones for security purposes. On Thursday morning, cemented barricades and cranes were seen at Delhi’s Badarpur border to halt the farmers’ protest march. Along with Delhi Police personnel, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawans have also been deployed at the Badarpur border.

Earlier in the day, there were some demonstrations at Delhi’s border with Ghaziabad in UP, and traffic jams at the Gurugram border. Taking to Twitter, the Delhi Chief Minister, Arvind Kejriwal said peaceful demonstration was a constitutional right of the farmers. “All the three farming bills of the central government are anti-farmer. Instead of withdrawing them, farmers are being prevented from holding peaceful demonstrations, water canons are being used on them. This is absolutely wrong. Peaceful demonstrations are their constitutional right,” he said in a tweet in Hindi. Punjab farmers, representing over 30 farm bodies, have announced they will go to Delhi through several routes -- Lalru, Shambhu, Patiala-Pehowa, Patran-Khanauri, Moanak-Tohana, Ratia-Fatehabad and Talwandi-Sirsa. Tension was escalating at all the border points.

ASTRAZENECA...

But the way in which the results were arrived at and reported by the companies has led to pointed questions from experts. In India, this vaccine is being manufactured within the country by the Serum Institute of India in Pune.

AstraZeneca made a key

“mistake” in the vaccine dosage received by some volunteers only after disclosing the preliminary results, according to a report in the New York Times on Wednesday.

This raised questions about whether the vaccine’s efficacy rate derived from the interim analysis of the Phase 3 trial will hold up under additional testing, said the report. Around 3,000 people had already been given the shot.

AstraZeneca revealed the interim results after Pfizer and Moderna had earlier reported late-stage data for their Covid-19 vaccine candidates.

The company said that it reported the positive results from an interim analysis of clinical trials of the “AZD1222” vaccine in the UK and Brazil.

It further added that it continues to engage with Governments, multilateral organisations and collaborators around the world to ensure broad and equitable access to the vaccine at no profit for the duration of the pandemic.

COVAXIN PH-II...

It would be conducted in around 25 sites across 10 States. The trial has already started at a few sites like Gujarat.

The Bharat Biotech has been given the permission for conducting phase-3 human clinical trials of the Covaxin from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).

The safety and immunogenicity data of the phase one and two trials were submitted to the Central drug regulator. The pharma firm, while applying for phase-three trial, stated that the vaccine was well-tolerated in all dose groups and no serious adverse events have been reported.

The most common adverse event was pain at the injection site, which resolved transiently, the drug maker had said.

Bharat Biotech said that the World Health Organisation (WHO), United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA), and India’s Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) approves respiratory disease vaccine if it was at least 50 per cent effective. Now, the company is aiming only a little higher, announcing that the trial data shows the vaccine is at least 60 per cent effective.

POLICE PERMISSION...

Earlier, as per the instructions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the maximum number of people in group activities like marriage, functions and religious work was fixed in the state. All social, educational, sports, entertainment, cultural, religious, political events and other group activity outside the containment zone at any point of time has to be 50 per cent of the total capacity of a closed space such as a hall or room, but it cannot exceed a maximum of 100 persons. Face masks, social distancing, thermal scanning and sanitiser and hand wash will be mandatory in all such programmes.

Not only this, in open spaces like grounds, the number of people to be allowed will be less than 40 percent capacity of the area of such places.

Along with these orders, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has also given strict orders not to disturb the houses where wedding ceremonies are underway in the grab of guidelines.

He made it clear that playing music and DJ was allowed at wedding functions.

“There is a misconception that permission from the police is required for weddings. One should just give information about it to the local police station. Permission as such is not required for organising weddings,” an official said.

Trend Slazer

Priyanka preps for Text For You shoot

Actor **PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS** has started preparation for her next romantic drama, tentatively titled *Text For You*, co-starring Grammy-winner Celine Dion and actor Sam Heughan.

Through her Instagram stories, Priyanka also revealed that she will start shooting for the project on Friday.

She shared several pictures from her prep mode, in which she is seen getting her hair and nails done before she begins work.

The photographs showed Priyanka wearing a mask while getting a manicure. Her hair is covered in plastic sheets, hinting at new hair colour. "Prep... starting text for you on Friday," she wrote with the photos.



'One of the interesting parts about expectation and pressure is that these things motivate

me. I have a lot of gratitude for that because it is just the beginning of my career, I am just a few films old and I have managed to build a fan following. When I go to public events people come and ask me for a dialogue or selfie.'
—Ananya Panday

VIR DAS is all set to make people laugh. The comedian's lockdown special — *Inside Out*, is set to release on Netflix worldwide.



Intended to collect funds for charity, the 50-minute long showreel pieced together from 30 virtual live shows he did during the lockdown, he drives home the most crucial of the lockdown as it's the only time the entire world is going through the same thing at the same time.

He said, "I never planned for another comedy special this year. But since when does 2020 care about our plans? We started 2020 together on Netflix, let's end this crazy year together too."

Jennifer bares it all for next single

Singer-actress **JENNIFER LOPEZ** is slaying fans with oomph at 51. She has posed completely nude for the cover of her forthcoming single, *In the morning*.

J.Lo shared the cover art of the single on Instagram that shows her naked. She bends over to strike a pose, with a hand on her knee. The singer only wears the engagement ring from fiancé Alex Rodriguez.

"Surprise! Here's the official cover art for *#InTheMorning* Single drops Friday," she captioned the picture.



GET THAT PERFECT GLOW

With restrictions imposed on public movement, including at beauty parlours and spas, brides are stressed about a healthy skincare regime to adopt before their wedding day. Here are some skin care tips. By TEAM VIVA

The first thing that comes to mind when you hear wedding bells is a beautifully bedecked bride, glowing gorgeously, in her newfound bliss. Everything at a wedding is centred on her. However, that glistening, smooth, blemish-free skin and vibrant glow takes a lot of discipline and a strict regime to achieve. Every bride's first concern is how she is going to look on the best day of her life. Healthy skin is the first step towards a confident self, which makes for a proud bride on the D-day.

As the pandemic has turned our lives upside down, even weddings are a restricted affair these days. The kind of restrictions imposed on public movements, including in work areas like beauty parlours and spas, brides stressed about the absence of help regarding a healthy skincare regime to get ready before their wedding day.

For the brides-to-be, Sandeep Gupta, Chief Executive Officer of e'clat, superior suggests skincare tips to glow on your wedding day.

DERMATOLOGIST VISIT

A visit to a good dermatologist is an auspicious start because it is important to know where your skin stands in terms of skincare. Experts suggest that you need to plan for this visit as early as two months before your D-day. If you plan early enough, you will be able to discuss in detail your skin concerns and it will also give you time to address those concerns. Skin issues like acne, scars, pigmentation, pim-



ples etc trouble an average bride more often than not. Though doctors suggest starting skin treatments at least six months prior, two to three months' time can also give you the necessary head start. Even if you are not troubled by the aforementioned skin issues, bringing on that necessary glow to your face or uplifting the skin is a task that a would-be bride cannot do single-handedly.

THE RIGHT START

After your meeting with the dermatologist, you can focus on specific skincare treatments like anti-pigmentation, tanning and removal of dullness. Services like Q-switch laser are becoming



increasingly popular among brides preparing for their wedding. Such services give you an even-toned skin, improved texture and de-pigmentation. The beauty of these treatments is that you can customise them as per your personal requirement but, of course, under the able guidance of your dermatologist. In addition to the specialised skin treatments, a would-be bride also requires regular morning and night skincare routine.

ULTIMATE MORNING ROUTINE

If you are already following healthy and complete night-time skincare, you can start your day with just cleansing your face with water. Using a Konjac

sponge or natural clays on your face will give you all the benefits of gentle exfoliation. After skin cleansing, using a hydrosol or toner adds a water barrier to your skin and helps in providing a good foundation for the rest of the routine. The next thing to add to your routine would be serums. Till a few years back, serum was not a part of a skincare regime in India. However, with the introduction of products like the facial serum, the average Indian woman has become aware of its importance in achieving a bright, correct skin. Some experts even call a facial serum "the doer" for the amount of change its regular use can bring to you.

Now moving on to moisturising your skin with the help of facial oil or a face balm. Most experts ask brides to refrain from using creams in favour of plant-based products, which have minimal chance of side effects. Towards the end of your skincare routine, you must apply sunscreen, a non-nano mineral sunscreen being an ideal choice. If you are one of those women who believe that sunscreen is only to be used if one is travelling outdoors, you are far from the truth. Present-day experts suggest using sun protection regularly every morning, whether you are going out or staying indoors.

IDEAL NIGHT-TIME REGIMEN

At the end of the day, your skincare routine shouldn't be much different from the one in the morning. Start with cleansing your skin of make-up or any other residual material, giving the skin time to breathe after making you

look good the whole day. Pamper your skin some more by applying a good serum. A suitable serum can save your skin from headaches like acne, hyper-pigmentation and anti-ageing. Then comes the time to quench the thirst of your skin with a good hydrating agent or toner, which is a watery product containing beneficial ingredients like antioxidants or humectants. Would-be brides, who follow this routine religiously, see a notable improvement in the greasy feeling on their skin. At the end, a good moisturiser helps your skin settle in for the night, and getting up fresh and happy the next morning.

FACIAL — THE NEW LIFELINE

Amidst the pandemic, organising a wedding can be a hectic job to do. You may also have to miss out on salon treatments as well, owing to myriad reasons. In such a scenario, facial steaming relaxes your skin while detoxifying it as well, leaving it glowing and clean. Humectants like honey and glycerine or hydrating aloe vera gel also give you supple skin, in absence of professional beauty care. In case you have uninterrupted access to a beauty spa or parlour, experts also suggest new-age treatments like Hydra Facial MD and O2-derma facials to de-stress your skin in the run-up to the wedding day.

Every woman dreams of waking up with beautiful skin as a bride. But apart from the beauty sleep, your skin needs a lot to get wedding-ready. With the help of these skincare steps, you will definitely be the most gorgeous bride ever.

Insanity has a physical form (or two)

Sometimes, it is best not to ask why. Because sometimes there is no logical answer to why



Logic should dictate that no car should have an engine producing "600" horsepower. Let me put that number in a bit of perspective for you. The two top-selling cars in India for the month of October were the Swift and the Baleno from the Maruti stable. They both feature the venerable K12M engine that produces 82 horsepower. So both crazy cars that I am featuring here produced seven times more power than India's best-selling cars. There is no logical reason for the Audi RSQ8 and the BMW X5M Competition to exist. But they do, and my god, are these two cars utterly, butterly maniacal.

First, let us look at the Audi RSQ8, which is definitely the best looking vehicle in Audi's line-up right now and when Audi's crazy engineers at the RS division got their hands on it, they made it into a vehicle that is as comfortable on the ramp as she is in a fighting cage. A stunner that can crush your windpipe in a MMA bout — not someone to be messed with. The twin-turbocharged four-litre V8 engine spits out 600 horsepower onto the asphalt, but could quite as easily hum along on the highway as well. It won't be an economical drive, but that is what you get when, well, logic doesn't apply.

Then again, the RSQ8, even with its unique paints compared to the regular Q8 is what you'd call a "sleeper", sure the 23-inch wheels are a bit of a giveaway but Audi's RS cars have never really tried to stand out from the normal. Until you press your right foot down, the RSQ8 moves. It can touch 100 kilometres per hour from a standing start in just 3.8 seconds and if you take the performance pack, this car can touch in excess of 300 kilometres per hour (it is limited to 250 kmph in regular trim). Although there is nowhere you can do that legally in India, the Buddh International Circuit's straight is too short and unless you can access Delhi Airport's newer 4,000-metre runways, doing so in this coun-



try is nearly impossible. Actually, for that matter, hitting 300 anywhere in the world is rather impossible other than some small select stretches of German autobahns (controlled-access highway systems in Germany). The price for this insanity — just ₹2.07 crore ex-show-room. But tell what, this is cheaper than other vehicles with a similar amount of power, almost a crore cheaper than its slightly more powerful Italian cousin, the Lamborghini Urus and much less of a show-off.

But the RSQ8 is not cheaper than another rival from Germany, the BMW X5M Competition. The X5M may not have the looks of the Audi. Think of the BMW as Stipe Miocic and the Audi as Valentina Shevchenko, sorry for my UFC references here, but both these cars are like UFC fighters are to the normal human population. Actually, the BMW goes just fast even though it has a teen-

The RSQ8 can touch 100 kilometres per hour from a standing start in just 3.8 seconds and if you take the performance pack, this car can touch in excess of 300 kilometres per hour



KUSHAN MITRA



Bollywood keeps Maradona alive in memories

The Indian film fraternity on Thursday mourned the death of football legend Diego Maradona on social media. Maradona passed away at 60 of a massive cardiac arrest two weeks after being discharged from hospital. He underwent surgery for a blood clot in the brain.

Actor Shah Rukh Khan said that it was Maradona, who made football beautiful. "Diego Maradona... you made football even more beautiful. You will be sorely missed and may you entertain and enthral heaven as you did this world. RIP" SRK wrote.

Malayalam icon Mohanlal called him a legend. "Rest in Peace Legend #diegomaradona #Legend," he tweeted.

Actor Ranveer Singh was heartbroken as he shared a picture of Maradona along with a heartbreak emoji and the hashtag #diegomaradona.

While actor Abhishek Bachchan called Maradona "Greatest Of All Times" (GOAT), actor Kareena Kapoor Khan wrote, "Rest In Power."

Veteran actor Anupam Kher said there will never be another like the footballer. "There will never be another #DiegoMaradona. His game and his story was inspirational. Especially during my early difficult days in Mumbai," Anupam said.

Actor Karisma Kapoor shared a picture along with Maradona. She wrote, "Had the honour of meeting this legend. RIP #diegomaradona."

Filmmaker Asif Kapadia, who made a documentary on the life of the footballer, wrote, "Can't quite believe DM has gone. Hard to process. He always seemed indestructible. I had 10 hours with the man! I touched his left foot. We did our best to show the world the man, the myth, the fighter he was. The greatest legend #DiegoMaradona @MaradonaMovie #Diego #maradona"

While actor Riteish Deshmukh said, "GOAT #DiegoMaradona #Rip Legend"; actor Kunal Kemmu just shared a heart-break emoji.

Actor Randeep Hooda said, "Adios Maradona."

Filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar said that football has lost one of its greatest icons, he wrote, "A true legend. RIP #diegomaradona." Filmmaker Boney Kapoor bid his adieu to the "god of football."

—IANS

BEYOND THE KITCHEN

The pandemic has changed culinary education. Chef ARVIND RAI shares the necessary skills that must be included in the new curriculum

The entire world has been shook by the massive impact of the unprecedented events taking place this year due to the pandemic. With the initial lockdown across the world, industries, corporates or even small businesses and lives attached to them have felt the tremor, which has brought upon a big change to how the world functions. Likewise, the operations and executions in businesses post lockdown have also gone through a great deal of transformation, keeping in mind the new normal.

During the pandemic, as schools and colleges were shut, it had pushed educators to redesign the mechanism of imparting lessons. 'Digital learning' emerged as a saviour to many, and it is no longer limited to just online classes but also the entire content has been curated to make it suitable for remote learning with the help of technology.

Hospitality is a service business and irrespective of the digital endeavours, the human touch cannot be replaced. The pandemic has left an impact on hospitality education as well, hence, it is of paramount importance that the curriculum be updated with the changing times. The overall industry is heading towards a change, which the educators also eventually need to adopt. They are the pillars who shall be training the workforce of the future, and hence, need to keep students abreast with the latest changes in the industry, and evolution of industry requirements. The one size fits all solutions are things of the past. For sustained growth in the hospitality industry, there are three pillars that

one need to follow — adherence to health and safety protocol, all-round training and mental training.

The key focus, currently, has been directed to health and safety protocols, which should be followed to ensure all the operations are compliant with the protocols. It is vital that students are well-versed with the changing times and the importance of following hygiene protocols. It should form a key aspect of restaurant training including vocabulary and measures used by the industry such as "clinically clean" and "sanitised cleaning". There is also a need for developing newer technologies, which can help the students in being safe in their training procedure.

Providing guests with contact-less services, especially during food servicing and preparation is very important. To ensure protocols and social distancing are being followed, the whole kitchen area can be divided into smaller segments — critical operation area, non-critical area and pre-preparation area. We also need to educate students on usage of 100 ppm chlorine for sanitising non-vegetarian items and 50 ppm chlorine for vegetarian items, cost management during crises period and shift towards self-service features via latest technologies.

COVID-19 has highlighted how quickly the demand for online ordering accelerated, and kitchens are getting smaller in order to follow social distancing norms. With practically every restaurant adopting some form of online food delivery, it is important for culinary students to emerge as all-



'CURRENTLY, THE KEY FOCUS HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS. IT IS VITAL THAT STUDENTS ARE WELL-VERSED WITH THE CHANGING TIMES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOWING HYGIENE'



rounders with training in front and back management of restaurants, operations, guest relations and kitchen operations.

With changing times, high touch points such as no contact services, the preparations using hygienic cookery utensils, new SOPs while guest room making, front desk operations while maintaining social distancing guidelines need to be included in the curriculum. It is crucial for educators to make sure a holistic understanding of not only core revenue operations but the understanding of allied departments such as revenue management, audits should be given to the students. They should be able to connect the dots and make the best out of each situation. It is also

advisable for culinary schools to adopt short term courses which gives the students the required know-how of all segments which is needed in today's times.

There needs to be an increased focus on digital courses as well, which can help the students venture into a space beyond hospitality. The services industry is large, and with the right kind of training, the students can opt for courses in sales and marketing, customer relationships and reputation management as well.

Last, but not the least, the third aspect is mental training. As the country continues to battle against the novel Coronavirus, there is a growing crisis among young adults struggling with mental health

problems, including anxiety and depression. We all know that hospitality is one of the most challenging industries, and to work in these stiff times, it is crucial for one to be mentally fit. Hence, it would be a wise idea to include mental health training and exercises in the curriculum.

It has indeed become crucial for the curriculum to go through complete rework to operate in the new normal. There should be a special emphasis on how to work under crisis, since the pandemic is far from over. The workforce of tomorrow shall be trained to work under situations that warrant to act out of their comfort zone. The pandemic has propelled us to move towards adopting a format of new

learning, which focusses on the concept of applicability of new learnings which are relatable, driven by results and are extremely interactive. This step is much needed in hospitality education. The time has come for the educators to stand against all odds, keep the momentum going and always keep the smile alive no matter what the situation is.

To sum up, if you are a student who aspires to walk on this road, my advice would be to toughen yourself up, both physically and mentally. The focus should be on developing your skills as this can be a challenging profession.

(The writer is the senior executive chef at The Ashok Hotel, New Delhi.)

R E C I P E S



JAMESON SPICY HOT TODDY

WHAT YOU NEED

- Jameson Irish
- Whiskey: 1 part
- Water: 3 parts
- Honey: 0.25 parts
- Lemon: 0.5 parts
- Sriracha: 0.5 parts
- Ginger (sliced)

METHOD

- Add water, honey, sriracha and sliced ginger pieces to a small saucepan and bring to a low simmer, stir to combine.
- Let simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Add Jameson and lemon juice and simmer for an additional three minutes.
- Pour into mugs and add a lemon slice, garnish with a thin ginger slice.

Courtesy: Pernod Ricard India.

DAHI AUR ANJEER KE KABAB

WHAT YOU NEED

- Hung curd: 100 gm
- Cottage cheese (grated): 50 gm
- Fresh basil (cut into strips): 1 tbs
- Black peppercorn (crushed): ½ tsp
- Salt to taste
- Refined oil

For stuffing:

- Fig (chopped): 10 gm
- Ginger (chopped): ½ tsp
- Black salt

METHOD

- Take hung curd in a mixing bowl; add all the above mentioned ingredients (except salt) and mix them with gentle hands.



- Add salt and keep it aside to cool for half an hour.

- Take small quantity of the hung curd mix on your palm and flatten it.
- For the filling, mix chopped fig, chopped ginger and black salt.
- Place the stuffing onto the flattened patty and make into a sphere. Flatten it again in to a patty shape.
- Shallow fry to perfection.
- Then serve with a dip of your choice.

Courtesy: Rubal Pupneja, Jr Sous Chef at The Samrat Hotel.



CREEPY COFFEE

WHAT YOU NEED

- Smirnoff Espresso vodka: 60 ml
- Lime juice: 10 ml
- Coke: 150 ml
- Orange and lime wedge (to garnish)

METHOD

- Fill a tall glass with ice cubes.
- Add Smirnoff espresso vodka to the glass and stir.
- Top up with cola and garnish.

Courtesy: Diageo India.

A smarter tomorrow

Almost half a dozen schools run by the Municipal Corporation in the city will be made smart schools soon. In all these schools, the details of all the activities related to the studies of the students will be kept through the schooling education app. The login details of the app will be with the concerned school principal. In the app, the data of all the students studying in the school will be fed and complete information about the status of their studies will also be available from the website. The special feature is that when a child's performance falls his information will be there in the app and the details of what steps the teacher has to take for qualitative improvement in that child will also be available.

In the marathon meeting held by Mayor Asha Sharma and Municipal Commissioner Mahendra Singh Tanwar with the principals of these schools in the municipal auditorium, the issue of implementing this app was discussed and it was decided to implement



this app for qualitative improvement in education. The municipal administration feels that government schools should also be smart so that parents admit their children in these schools instead of private ones.

Talking with the principal in the meeting, Asha said that the modern era demands teaching with new technology. Now new education system will be used and smart

class will be run in all corporation schools. The teachers working in these schools will be trained with new teaching methods. Computer labs will be made in all schools and children will be taught through lab tabs. It was also said in the meeting that a list of children who have smart phones should be prepared and linked to the school app. Only children from class six to twelve will be linked with

this app.

The mayor promised to provide all the facilities so that students passing out from these schools can take the name of Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation high. She said that there is no dearth of talent here, we have to motivate them to achieve their goal. Additional Municipal Commissioner RN Pandey was also present during the meeting.



New NCR experience

A ground plan of night market under the *Madhuban Bapudham Yojana* is ready. By A NIRWAN

The road map of vehicle free zone night market has been prepared in NCR's *Madhuban Bapudham Yojana*, which is going to be developed in GDA's 1234 acre area. It is also preparing to open other types of commercial centres in this market besides street food dishes.

The market will also serve as a picnic for those who don't get enough family time as they reach home late. Due to this, plans to open a special type of night market by 11 pm are also being considered. The model is taken from Gangtok where markets are opened till late night for picnics and food. They also plan to build 198 shops and 25 kiosks to promote small shopkeepers. Apart from this, a commercial centre named Central Plaza will also be

built on 150 acres of land.

GDA Secretary, Santosh Rai said that entry of any vehicle in this market will be prohibited so that people are roam around freely without any hindrances. Police will look after the law and order. In this regard, the police administration will be urged to create a checkpoint keeping safety in mind. Madhuban Bapudham police station has already been activated. A budget of ₹100 crore has been made for the construction of roads so that there is no problem for the people coming to this area. Parking for 400 vehicles will also be made. Apart from this, food corners will be developed and a separate wedding zone is being created for street food. Auditorium and conference hall will also be constructed there.

Faculty of SRM-AP recognised by Stanford University



Dr Imran Pancha from the Department of Biology, SRM university-AP is recognised among the top two per cent scientists/researchers across the world by Stanford University researchers.

Recently, an article has been published in PLOS Biology by Stanford researchers on the highly cited researchers in 22 different fields and their subfields. In the biotechnology field, 1,074 scientists/faculty members were identified and Dr Imran is one amongst them. From India, only 77 scientists/faculty members could achieve this honour.

This is an admirable achievement for a young faculty. Dr P Sathyanarayanan, the President of SRM University-AP honoured Dr Imran for bringing this scientific laurel to the university.

Overall, of the top 1,60,000 scientists from different fields of Science & Technology, India hosts 2,313 scientists/faculty members. This list comprises of the prominent and illustrious scientists from India.

Dr Imran's primary research focus is to produce renewable energy from microalgae. His team is trying to develop integrated microalgal bio-refinery to produce high-value compounds like phycobilliproteins, carotenoids along with biofuel and bio-fertilisers from microalgae. Apart from this, he is also interested to understand algal-bacterial interaction, particularly isolate and characterise the microalgae associated bacteria and finding their role in growth enhancement and inhibition in microalgae.

Rohit-less India take Oz challenge

Back in Blue for first time since coronavirus enforced break, Virat & Co venture into unknown against mighty hosts

Australia vs India
Live from 9:10am IST
SONY TEN 1, 3 & SIX NETWORK

PTI ■ SYDNEY

A new world and a different shade of retro blue awaits a circumspect Indian cricket team which re-enters the international arena without a white-ball colossus in Rohit Sharma, facing the might of a menacing Australia in the first ODI at Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday.

The absence of an injured Rohit Sharma will certainly leave a gaping hole at the top of the order, something that skipper Virat Kohli wouldn't have fancied at the onset of a gruelling two-month tour.

Kohli's men, who had been on a Covid-enforced international break since the disastrous away series against New Zealand that ended early March, now kick-start their international calendar in a series where a lot of probing questions are expected to be asked.

For those who believe in superstition, the return of the 1992 World Cup's navy blue jersey isn't a good omen as one of India's worst performances (7th in 9 teams) happened in that particular edition.

For the more pragmatic, it will be more about how Kohli's men get their combination right in the absence of Rohit, whose injury has been a topic of national debate.

Whether it's the young Shubman Gill or the slightly more experienced Mayank Agarwal, whoever partners an in-form Shikhar Dhawan, the challenge of facing a Mitchell Starc or a Pat Cummins first up will still be an onerous one.

So 'King Kohli' again has his task cut out as he gears up to combat a high quality pace attack, which is likely to be complemented by the wrist



Mohammad Shami and KL Rahul chat during India's training session at Sydney Cricket Ground

BCCI/Instagram

spin of Adam Zampa, who has at times been the Indian captain's nemesis.

Facing an Australia team in their own backyard with a Steve Smith, who is getting back his rhythm, an eternally hungry David Warner and a future great in Marnus Labuschagne isn't the best of propositions and thus some priorities will be tested.

For the next two years, 50-over cricket is the least impor-

tant format, so will it be a "win-at-all-costs" approach by Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri or a more easygoing mindset keeping the Test series in mind.

For starters, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami could both start but the team management may have to rest one of the two alternately, keeping in mind their importance in the more traditional format.

Hence Shardul Thakur and Navdeep Saini need to up their respective games by a few notches if one of the two seniors are rested.

But do they have the wherewithal to trouble a world class Australian top-order, which can be destructive on most days?

Then there will be an acid test in store for KL Rahul, a stylish batsman, who will have to find those gaps with ease,

expect his skipper to have a ear for his suggestions and take those tricky DRS calls while successfully reading Yuzvendra Chahal's googlies behind the stumps.

An enviable template has been set by "that genius from Ranchi" and Rahul, of all people, will be the first to admit that his position is an unenviable one.

It's an inspired move to ensure an extra batting or bowling option that will lend the necessary balance to side, something that has been compromised a bit because of Hardik Pandya's inability to bowl due to an earlier case of stress fracture.

If it is Pandya's explosive hitting at No 6 or 7 that will give his captain the confidence to play two spinners, Shreyas Iyer's show at No 4 during the last tour remains a feel good factor for the visitors.

Chahal could be the man that the Australian middle-order, especially the likes of Marcus Stonis, Glenn Maxwell and Alex Carey, would be wary of.

But in the absence of a steady death bowler like Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Bumrah will once again be expected to carry the maximum workload.

The premier slinger wouldn't mind if rival skipper Aaron Finch once again find him in his nightmares.

The three ODIs will be followed by as many T20 Internationals before the Test series beginning December 17.

The series will see a return of the in-stadia crowds with Cricket Australia approving occupancy of 50 per cent of the available seats. CA had stated that the tickets have been sold out.

Shami, Bumrah might be rotated, hints Kohli

PTI ■ SYDNEY

ODI.

The workload of premier fast bowlers Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami is of paramount importance to India captain Virat Kohli and he said it will be closely monitored and managed during the white-ball series against Australia to keep them in good shape for the Tests.

It is expected that Shami and Bumrah, in the absence of an injured Ishant Sharma, will have to carry the bulk of the burden during the Test series and they will be rotated during the ODIs and T20 Internationals starting from Friday.

"It's a no-brainer. They have gone through a full IPL. It will be important to monitor their workload," Kohli said on the eve of the first

"You want to see how people react to different situations. There is a fine balance that you need to maintain, something we have managed to do for the last few years," Kohli said.

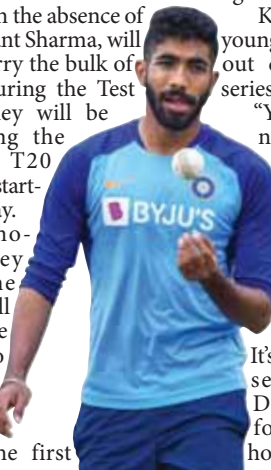
"That is why our bowlers have been fit and available for the important matches most of the times for us. It is an important factor for me as a captain.

It is going to be crucial." Kohli said that youngsters will be tried out during these two series.

"Yes, we have definitely discussed those things. There are a lot of young players in the squad.

"It is a great opportunity for them to realise something new about their game. It's a very important series for them.

Definitely looking forward to seeing how they shape up."



'Lack of clarity, confusion over Rohit's injury'

PTI ■ SYDNEY

India captain Virat Kohli on Thursday didn't hide his displeasure at the Rohit Sharma injury saga stating that "confusion and lack of clarity" has led to the team management playing a "waiting game" on his availability which is not ideal.

Answering media queries online ahead of the ODI series, Kohli said Rohit was said to be unavailable before the selection committee meeting earlier this month.

"Before the selection meeting, we got a mail that he is unavailable, that he has picked up an injury during the IPL. It said that the pros and cons of the injury were explained to him and he understood and he was unavailable," Kohli said.

The Indian captain's view did open a Pandora's box about



whether he and his white ball deputy have been communicating on various sensitive issues pertaining to the team.

Rohit, who is nursing a left

hamstring injury is doing is rehab at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru and is still three weeks away from full match fitness but a 14-day hard quarantine (without training) would rule him out of the Test series, starting December 17.

He played in the IPL in days of being left out of the Australia tour before being subsequently added to the Test squad.

"After that (the selection meeting) he played in the IPL and we all thought he would be on that flight to Australia and we had no information on why he is not travelling with us. There has been no information, there has been lack of clarity," Kohli said.

"We have been playing the waiting game," he added.

Kohli said that Rohit's next assessment at the NCA will

happen on December 11 and right now it's a waiting game for the team sitting in Australia.

"The only other information we got is that he is in NCA and he is being assessed and he will again be assessed on 11th December. It's not ideal at all. It's been very confusing and a lot of uncertainty and lack of clarity around the situation," the skipper's irritation was palpable.

In fact, Kohli just like it has been reported, said that now Rohit and pacer Ishant Sharma, who is recovering from a side strain, arriving in Australia is not certain given the strict 14-day quarantine enforcement here.

"Right now, there is so much uncertainty and whether they are going to make it and if they are going to make it at all or not."

India have quality player in Mayank to replace Rohit: Finch



PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australian skipper Aaron Finch on Thursday said India have enough quality in their ODI squad to replace a great batsman like Rohit Sharma, who is back home nursing a hamstring injury.

The in-form Mayank Agarwal is likely to open with Shikhar Dhawan in Rohit's absence in the ODI series.

"He is obviously a great player and someone who has had quite a bit of success

against us in the past. It (Rohit's injury) is unfortunate," Finch said in a virtual media interaction ahead of the series opener.

"You want to play against the best players all the time but whoever he is going to replace him, possibly Mayank, he has been in great form as well. So you take away a lot of experience but you also bring in another quality player."

Finch was Virat Kohli's teammate at Royal Challengers Bangalore during the IPL and was asked if he noticed in weaknesses in India skipper's game.

"He doesn't have too many to be honest. If you look at his record it is second to none. We have to keep looking get him out. When you go away from that and look to contain players you can sort of miss a trick there," Finch said.

"There are not too many chinks in his armour, he is probably the best one day player of all time."

6 Pak cricketers test Covid +ve

CHRISTCHURCH: Six touring Pakistan cricketers have tested positive for Covid-19 here, New Zealand Cricket announced on Thursday, alleging a breach of the bio-secure protocol by the visitors who have been asked not to train in quarantine and issued a "final warning".

A jumbo 53-strong Pakistan squad, led by Babar Azam, arrived in New Zealand on Tuesday and is serving a mandatory 14-day quarantine period as per Covid-19 protocol.

"Two of these six results have been deemed 'historical'; four have been confirmed as new," NZC said in a statement without revealing the names of the players who have tested positive for the dreaded virus.

All six members of the squad will be moved to the quarantine arm of a managed isolation facility. Pakistan are here for three T20 Internationals and two Tests. The series begins December 18 in Auckland. PTI

Atalanta stun Liverpool at Anfield

AFP ■ MUNICH/LIVERPOOL

Robert Lewandowski set Bayern Munich on the way to a 3-1 Champions League win over Salzburg on Wednesday as the holders joined Manchester City in qualifying for the last 16 with two group games to spare, while Liverpool went down to defeat and Marseille are now the owners of an unwanted record.

On a night when clubs marked news of the death of Diego Maradona by holding a minute's silence in memory of the Argentine before all Champions League games, Bayern eased to a record-extending 15th straight win in the competition.

Six-time European champions Liverpool are not yet sure of progressing to the next round after going down 2-0 to Atalanta at Anfield.

Three weeks after beating the same side 5-0 in Italy, Liverpool struggled with a weakened starting line-up, and Josip Illicic put Atalanta in



Papu Gomez, right, celebrates with teammates following Atalanta's win

AP

front on the hour mark before German international Robin Gosens got the second goal.

"A deserved defeat in a difficult game," was how Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp summed up the game.

Liverpool are top of Group D on nine points, two points clear of Atalanta and Ajax, who were 3-1 winners at home to Midtjylland.

Ajax go to Liverpool next week.

For Bayern, Lewandowski scored the opener just before half-time at an empty Allianz Arena, his 14th goal of the season and also his 71st altogether in the Champions League, leaving him level with Real Madrid great Raul in third place on the all-time list behind Cristiano Ronaldo (131) and

Lionel Messi (118).

Kingsley Coman scored Bayern's second and then crossed for Leroy Sane to head in their third, before Mergim Berisha pulled a goal back for the Austrian champions.

Marc Roca was sent off for Bayern, but they have a maximum 12 points and are guaranteed to advance as Group A winners, while Atletico Madrid sit second but continue to toil in Europe this season after being held 0-0 at home by Lokomotiv Moscow.

Pep Guardiola's City earlier secured progress as Phil Foden swept in from a Raheem Sterling back-heel to secure a 1-0 win away to Olympiakos in Greece, their fourth win out of four in Group C.

Second-place Porto are on the brink of joining them in qualifying after a 2-0 win at Marseille, which was the French side's 13th consecutive defeat in the competition stretching over three cam-

paigns going back to 2011-12.

Meanwhile, Inter Milan are on the brink of being eliminated in the group stage after Arturo Vidal was sent off as they went down 2-0 at home to Real Madrid.



Eden Hazard gave the visitors an early lead from the penalty spot at San Siro for his first Champions League goal in a Real shirt, and Vidal was sent off before the break after seeing two yellow cards for dissent in quick succession.

A Rodrygo shot went in off Achraf Hakimi in the second half to make it 2-0, and Real are now on course to qualify from Group B after losing 3-2 at home to Shakhtar Donetsk in their first game.

Shakhtar lost 4-0 to Borussia Muenchengladbach, with Lars Stindl scoring a penalty and Nico Elvedi, Breel Embolo and Oscar Wendt also on target to keep the Germans on top of the group.

Diego Maradona's India connection: Playing football with Ganguly in Kolkata, now a statue in Goa

The Argentine legend was 57 when he came to Kolkata in 2017 and showed glimpses of his deft left foot and sweated it out with a bunch of school children

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI

His promise to bring "big-time" football to India remained unfulfilled as Diego Maradona died on Wednesday at the age of 60 after cheating death more than once, leaving a cricket-mad nation devastated in an appropriate reflection of his immortal status.

Many will remember the way he swayed, slithered and slalomed during his epochal World Cup triumph in 1986 in Mexico. A lot many in the 'City of Joy' will recall how a little bulky version of Maradona huffed and puffed during a charity football game in Kolkata three years ago.

He played against Indian cricket great Sourav Ganguly, who reacted to his death by saying that he lost his hero.

Shock and disbelief gripped football-crazy Kerala as fans recalled the iconic footballer, who had visited the southern state for two days in October 2012 for a private event.

The Argentine legend, who



Diego Maradona (2nd right) gestures as former Indian cricketer captain Sourav Ganguly in Kolkata

AFP/File Photo

was 57 when he came to Kolkata in 2017, had managed to dribble, show glimpses of his deft left foot and even crooned Spanish songs, as he sweated it out with a bunch of school children and bid them adieu with a promise to "bring football" to India.

In another tribute, the Goa government will install the life-

size statue of late Argentine football legend Diego Maradona in the coastal belt of North district by early next year, a senior minister said.

Maradona's statue is already under making with a Maharashtra-based artist working on the mould, Calangute MLA and state Ports Minister

Michael Lobo told PTI.

In December 2017, he turned up in shorts in Kolkata, enjoyed every bit of the maddening attention even though the gruelling session literally drained him as he was seen drenched in sweat, pouring water on his head.

But he had no complaints

and was eloquent in his three-minute Spanish speech.

"I'm here for football... It is a big step, that we take to uplift football in India," he said about his three-day private trip which was co-sponsored by a local politician among others, nearly nine years after his first visit to the city.

"The country really has good players and a football school of boys. Football wants India and India wants football. Together with the people we will bring football. I have always been very well received in India. Thanks and kisses!" he had signed off, never to come back again.

He also obliged his many die-hard fans with photographs and did not mind sitting on the pitch for that perfect frame.

He then headed straight near the packed galleries and wowed his fans with shooting some footballs in the air. Cheered on by a delirious crowd, Maradona then hummed a couple of songs.

It was not for nothing that India reacted with shock, anger

'Childhood hero' Maradona inspired me to take up football: Bhutia

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Former India captain Bhaichung Bhutia on Thursday said Argentine football legend Diego Maradona was his inspiration behind taking up the 'beautiful game' as a career option.

Paying his tribute to Maradona, who died at the age of 60 in Buenos Aires on Wednesday night following a cardiac arrest, Bhutia said from young age he always aspired to play like the football legend.

and sadness after his heart stopped beating on Wednesday.

For the football-mad fans of Kerala, 2012 was a god-sent opportunity as they could catch a glimpse of their hero from close quarters in Kannur. Such was the craze for the 1986 World Cup winner that fans had started converging at the stadium

"He (Maradona) has been one of the most inspirational players for me since the time I started watching football. I've grown up watching him and wanted to be like him," the Sikkimese Sniper told PTI.

"It was just because of him I got up early in the morning to play in those wet and muddy grounds. I was all inspired by Maradona because I wanted to play like him. Definitely he had a big impact in my career."

The Indian football legend had a chance to meet his child-

hood hero on the sidelines of an exhibition match at the Saltlake Stadium during Argentine's visit to Kolkata in December 2008.

"We just shook hands. I was very, very nervous. My heart was beating fast. To meet my childhood hero whom I had worshipped would remain as was one of my best memories," Bhutia said.

"It's the biggest loss for world football. There will be no other big player to have played the game than Maradona in this era of world football."

Maradona in Kannur stadium," he said.

Antony was lucky as he got another opportunity to meet Maradona, in Kolkata, and sing before him. "I feel his love for music is as important as football in his life," Antony said. "He was so humble and meeting him was an unforgettable experience."