

WORLD 6

NZ PM ARDERN WINS
2ND TERM IN LANDSLIDE

MONEY 7

INDIA IS GRADUALLY MOVING TOWARDS
AN ECONOMY BASED ON CLEAN ENERGY

SPORT 8

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USUAL SUSPECTS
SWAPAN DASGUPTANo need to rewrite
Jinnah's history

Every election generates a controversy that is at variance with the main issues concerning the electorate. Last week, during the campaigning for the Bihar Assembly election next month, there was a flutter of excitement over a charge levelled by Union Minister Giriraj Singh against a Congress candidate in Darbhanga district. The outspoken Minister who has courted controversy many times in the past, described the Congress candidate as a "sympathiser" of Mohammed Ali Jinnah. This, indeed, was the report in the Indian Express (Delhi edition) of October 17.

Since the charge levelled by the Minister was in translation, I can only guess that he meant 'Jinnah bhakt' or something more pointed than 'Jinnah admirer'. Whatever the actual usage, the charge invited a sharp response from Shahid Siddiqui, a Muslim editor who has travelled through both the Bahujan Samaj Party and Samajwadi Party. In a twitter intervention he wrote: "LK Advani is a Jinnah fan, not Indian Muslims. We regard him as a destroyer and divider of Indian Muslims. He was an egoistic leader who knew he had failed in his last days. Pakistan was his greatest blunder."

Siddiqui's attack on Jinnah was emphatic and clear. There is a body of Muslims who are insistent that Jinnah's separatism lowered the collective clout of the Indian Muslims and handed over India to Hindu supremacy. This, they feel, would never have happened had Pakistan and Bangladesh been part of a united India.

Siddiqui's point is interesting, but it belongs to the realms of counterfactual history and part of the what-if games all of us love to engage in occasionally. The reality was however different. From the pages of history two things are apparent and beyond contradiction.

First, that at least till the Partition plan was announced by Lord Mountbatten in early-1947, Mohammed Ali Jinnah was unquestionably the supreme leader of Indian Muslims. True, he may not have been the only leader and had some challengers. But in terms of popular support he was head and shoulders above all those leaders who were sceptical of the movement to create Pakistan — a homeland for Indian Muslims.

Secondly, it is also clear that the initial support for the Pakistan movement and for Jinnah — between, say 1939 and 1946 — came from Muslims living in those areas that are today a part of India. Aligarh Muslim University was the intellectual hotbed of the Pakistan movement and the Muslim League was dominant in the Muslim reserved seats of Bihar, United Provinces, Central Provinces and the Bombay and Madras Presidencies. In Punjab, Sind, NWFP and Bengal, the Muslim League had powerful challengers. This means that at least until the awkward reality of Partition confronted them, the Muslims of Bihar and UP at least were enthusiastic supporters of Jinnah. They constituted the core of the Pakistan movement, as has been documented by historians.

It is also a fact that a substantial body of Muslims from Bihar, UP and the erstwhile States of Bhopal and Hyderabad migrated to both wings of Pakistan, till 1965 at least. The Muhajirs may today be politically marginalised and alienated from the politics of contemporary Pakistan. But it is undeniable that they were the most enthusiastic supporters of Pakistan at the time of its creation. Moreover, till 1971 at least, they were a privileged community in the country that Jinnah created.

It is also undeniable that the creation of Bangladesh, following the War of Liberation, led to a fundamental reassessment of the past. The views proffered by Siddiqui may well be true today, but that view is essentially a post-1971 phenomenon.

Historical memory tends to play tricks on peoples and communities. There is a wealth of studies in Germany that indicated how a substantial body of Germans went into denial over the country's Nazi past after the defeat in 1945. Historians have recorded comments such as "we didn't know" and "no one in my family was a Nazi" that proliferated after 1945 and persisted till the 1970s. Today's Germany has abjured Hitler and his legacy. But that reassessment is in hindsight.

In India too there is historical amnesia over facets of British rule. The rule of a vast country could not have happened by a tiny minority of Britons. British rule depended on collaboration by locals and particularly local elites. Yet, after 1947, there is a veil of silence over the past.

A British historian once jokingly told me that hadn't met any Indian whose family was a Raj loyalist. Of course he hadn't. That is because, like in the case of the Indian Muslims, the past had been reformed to suit the exigencies of the present. Overnight, the Muslim Leaguers of yesterday became supporters of the Congress after 1947.

It is not for me to say whether the Congress candidate in Darbhanga district is a Jinnah admirer or not. Frankly it is of no consequence. But that is no reason to rewrite history.

Covid cases, daily count drop sharply

India's daily cases down to 70K; PM cautions against complacency; virus is genetically stable

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

For the first time in the last one-and-half months, the number of active coronavirus cases in India has dropped below the 8-lakh mark. However, reviewing the pandemic situation in the country on Saturday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi cautioned against any complacency even as experts have warned that the onset of winters and the forthcoming festivals could lead to a spurt in the cases as has happened in Kerala after Onam.

With 70,816 patients recovering in the last 24 hours, India's tally of active cases dropped to 7.95 lakh. Though India continues to report the highest number of new cases in the world, the daily surge has come down from over 90,000 fresh daily cases in mid-September to about 70,000 since the past week.

Decline in cases in Maharashtra has contributed in the overall decrease, even as the sharp surge in daily Covid-19 cases in Kerala, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal has worried the Central Government, which has rushed high-level teams of experts to help control the pandemic there.

Chairing the meeting to review the Covid-19 pandemic situation and the preparedness of vaccine delivery, distribution, and administration, the Prime Minister noted a

steady decline in the daily cases and the growth rate but he insisted on continued social distancing and Covid-appropriate behaviour such as wearing the mask, regularly washing hands and sanitation, especially in the wake of the upcoming festival season.

"The Prime Minister directed that we should make use of experience of successful conduct of elections and disaster management in the country. In a similar manner, vaccine delivery and administration systems should be put in place. This should involve the participation of States/UTs/district-level functionaries, civil society organisations, volunteers, citizens, and experts

from all necessary domains. The entire process should have a strong IT backbone and the system should be designed in such a manner so as to have a lasting value to our healthcare system," a PMO statement said.

The meeting was attended by Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, Principal Secretary to PM, Member (Health) NITI Aayog, Principal Scientific Adviser, senior scientists, officers of PMO, and officials from various other departments.

The PMO said two pan-India studies on the Genome of SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19 virus) in India conducted by ICMR and Department of



A health worker collects a nasal swab sample to test for Covid-19 at a Government hospital in Jammu on Saturday PTI

BioTechnology (DBT) suggest that the virus is genetically stable and there is no major mutation in the virus.

The PMO said three vaccines are in advanced stages of development in India, out of which two are in Phase II and

one is in Phase-III and Indian scientists and research teams are collaborating and strengthening the research capacities in neighbouring countries such as Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

There are further requests from Bangladesh, Myanmar, Qatar and Bhutan for clinical trials in their countries. To help the global community, the PM directed the health authorities that India should not limit its efforts to its immediate neighbourhood but also reach out to the entire world in providing vaccines, medicines and IT platforms for vaccine delivery system.

Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL	
CASES: 74,91,974	
DEATHS: 1,13,844	
RECOVERED: 65,93,809	
ACTIVE: 7,83,127	

COVID-19 IN MADHYA PRADESH		
Dists	Total Cases	Fresh Cases
Bhopal	22,167	231
Indore	31,408	312
Gwalior	11,807	49

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	15,86,321	41,752	13,58,606
Andhra Pradesh	7,79,146	6,406	7,35,638
Karnataka	7,58,574	10,427	6,37,481
Tamil Nadu	6,83,486	10,586	6,32,708
Uttar Pradesh	4,52,660	6,629	4,11,611
Kerala	3,34,229	1,140	2,36,989
Delhi	3,27,718	5,981	2,98,853
West Bengal	3,17,053	5,992	2,77,940
Odisha	2,66,345	1,174	2,44,227
Telangana	2,20,675	1,265	1,96,636
Bihar	2,03,060	990	1,91,515
Assam	2,00,391	865	1,71,081
Rajasthan	1,71,281	1,735	1,48,291
Madhya Pradesh	1,59,158	2,753	1,42,707
Gujarat	1,58,635	3,629	1,40,519
Chhattisgarh	1,55,987	1,425	1,26,869

Global Hunger Index: India
at 94th among 107 nationsFares poorer than
all its immediate
neighbours; put in
'serious' category

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has been ranked 94th among 107 nations worldwide in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2020, faring poorer than all its immediate neighbours and being put in the "serious" hunger category.

Neighbouring Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan too are in the "serious" category but ranked higher than India in the latest GHI. While Bangladesh ranked 75, Myanmar and Pakistan are at the 78th and 88th position. Nepal at 73rd and Sri Lanka at 64th position are in "moderate" hunger cat-



egory. In the region of south, east and south-eastern Asia, the only countries which fare worse than India are Timor-Leste, Afghanistan and North Korea.

Last year, India's rank was 102nd among 117 countries. China, Belarus, Ukraine, Turkey, Cuba and Kuwait, fig-

ure among the top 20 with GHI scores of less than five. The Global Hunger Index is a peer-reviewed annual report, jointly published by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at the global, regional, and country levels.

Kangana, sister booked
for 'creating hatred'On Bollywood casting
director Sayyed plea,
court orders probe

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Mumbai Police on Saturday registered an FIR against Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut and her sister Rangoli Chandel following an order by metropolitan magistrate court for allegedly promoting enmity between different communities.

Kangana found herself in the dock as the Mumbai court directed the Banda police to investigate a complaint alleging that she and her sister Rangoli Chandel through their tweets had tried to create "hatred" and "communal tensions" between Hindus and Muslims.

After hearing a complaint filed against Kangana and her sister Rangoli Chandel by Bollywood casting director and fitness trainer Munawwarali alias Sahil A



Sayyed, Metropolitan Magistrate Jaidev Ghule of Bandra 12th court ordered investigations under section 156(3) of CrPc into Sayyed's complaint alleging among other thing that both Kangana and Rangoli had tried to create "hatred" and "communal tensions" between Hindus and Muslims and that Kangana had tried to lower the image of Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and created disaffection among the people against the Maharashtra Government.

9.9 lakh lt liquor seized in
dry Bihar ahead of election1,139 illegal guns,
drugs recovered in
election-related
raids and searches

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Despite prohibition imposed in the State, over 9.89 lakh litres of liquor have been seized in Bihar so far ahead of the first phase of polls for 71 Assembly seats. And not just booze, authorities have also seized 1,139 illegal guns from across the State, known for its illegal gun factories.

While more than 2.54 lakh people having criminal background have been put on notice, there has been a seizure of ₹16.81 crore of unaccounted money, including about 90 lakh Nepalese currency. Raids and checks have also yielded a huge quantity of contraband drugs including 956.625 kg poppy,

106.825 kg hashish, 10.5 kg poppy rolls, 40 packet smacks, 150 gram brown sugar. The revelation was made in a seizure report of the Election Commission (EC). Over 200 "expenditure sensitive pockets" have also been identified by the EC in the State, which shares its borders with Nepal.

The flying squads, static surveillance team and other agencies have seized 9,89,973 litres of liquors including "mahua" (Madhuca indica) made liquor from different locations, mostly rural areas.

This is the first assembly polls in dry Bihar. "The liquor mafia in the dry State has suddenly become

more active

in smuggling alcohol as it is often used

by politicians to lure voters", officials added.

"The drug consumption has significantly increased after a statewide ban has been imposed on alcohol. As a result, an increase in the secretive supply and sale of narcotics like brown sugar has been observed," officials said.

The income tax flying squad has recovered ₹16,81,29,023 unaccounted money, of which about 90 lakh are Nepalese currency notes.

The special surveillance team and field surveillance unit has recovered about ₹11.72 crore during checking of vehicles from different locations.

"More than 2,100 gun licences have been cancelled," said an EC official. About 2,56,447 having criminal backgrounds or bad characters have been put on notice across the State.

This means if anything happens, they would be behind bars.



Devotees carry an idol of Goddess Durga for installation at a puja pandal on the first day of the beginning of the Navratri festival in Bhopal on Saturday Pioneer photo

CAPSULE

9 KILLED IN PILIBHIT
JEEP-BUS ACCIDENT

Pilibhit: At least 9 people lost their lives and more than 30 were injured in a collision between a jeep and an Uttar Pradesh roadways bus in Pilibhit on Saturday, police said. The accident occurred in Purnapur Police Station area of the district, a senior police official said.

BENGAL WOMAN LYNCHED
ON 'THEFT' SUSPICION

Canning: A group of people beat a 41-year-old woman to death and injured her husband in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district on suspicion that they were thieves, police said on Saturday.

BJP LEADER SHOT IN
UP AHEAD OF BYPOLL

Firozabad (UP): A local BJP leader was shot dead by bike-borne assailants in Firozabad district of Uttar Pradesh ahead of the November 3 Assembly bypoll in the area, following which three people were detained, police said on Saturday.



HOME THEATRE

Must watch for dog parents

PUP ACADEMY 2
Netflix
***ing: Don Iake, Christian Convery, Aria Birch, Gabrielle Miller**
Dog Voice Over: Riley O'Donnell, Chance Hurstfield, Dylan Schombing, Brian George
Rated: 6/10

There is something inherently cute and sweet when one watches movies that have animals especially dogs. Remember *The Call of the Wild*, *Benji* and *Marley & Me*? While not all animal movies have a happily ever after, but it doesn't take away the aww factor from them and *Pup Academy* that dropped its second season on the OTT platform is no different. It goes without saying that the pups are adorable, sweet and cute and if one has ever had a dog before, a need to have another one is going to be tough to resist.

If you are not a dog lover, this



series that takes off where the first one ended — a street pup — Boxer being thrown out of pup academy for bringing in other street dogs into the academy who then wreaked havoc may have a change of heart.

In the meantime, why not have fun and watch the little pups get up to no good, get into trouble and do what pups do best — shower love on their master.

But then the show is not about the story as much as it is about the bond between a human and pup and how much it affects the dog if he doesn't have this bond with his chosen human. The adage: Dog is man's best friend couldn't have had a better setting than this show. So much so that there is a dog named D.O.G. Couldn't be cuter than this.

However, if one is looking for a story that stimulates the brain, this is not a show to watch. The story is simple and banal and take-off from Season 1 — a bunch of wolves, instead of dogs — who want to take over the running of the academy their way.

The good part is that it is family-friendly and a perfect watch for all dog parents and kids of all ages.

— Shalini Saksena

Real emotions are revealed

BLACKPINK: LIGHT UP THE SKY
Netflix
***ing: The band members: Jisoo, Jennie, Rosé, and Lisa**
Rated: 5.5/10

K-pop made its presence felt back in 2012 when Psy released his single — *Gangnam Style*. The song had gone viral and propelled Psy into instant stardom. Since then K-pop has become a must-listen for all music lovers. So it is not surprising that when the all-woman band came into the scene with their debut album *Square One* after a gap of seven years launched by YG Entertainment,

the group won its first award during a musical programme for Whistle at Inkigayo, becoming the girl group that won the award the fastest. Since then the album's tracks have since surpassed 1.73 billion streams worldwide.

This and much more is revealed in *Black Pink: Light Up the Sky*, a documentary that follows the lives the girl group and how they reached where they are today given that each one of them came from a different background.

But the thing binding them was and is their love to perform and sing.

The documentary introduces

the girls collectively and individually which gives us a little peek into what makes them tick. But the real emotions come into play when their guards are down and they talk about missing their family and experiences that a 15-16-year-old would normally be part of.

The whole, now that we are so successful, how do we live up to the expectations of the fans is real. Where they will be when they are 42-44 — married with kids? How long will this success last? It gives a glimpse of real fears and reiterates that all that glitters is not gold.

— Shalini Saksena

Plan Your Day

A delightful Navratra Menu specially curated for your Festive Indulgence! at Select CITYWALK. **Falahari Malai Paneer Tikka** (Fresh Cottage Cheese chunks in vrut special creamy marinade of cashew nut, cream & cardamom; Cooked in tandoor)

Price: ₹310 plus GST
Navratra Special Thali (Malai paneer tikka two pcs, kuttu puri two, paneer makhani/shahi, falahari kofta, aloo tamatar subzi, samvat pulao, salad, raita, sarudana papad, vrut wale aloo/banana chips & sweet)

Price: ₹440 plus GST





DIRECTORATE OF TOURISM, JAMMU



Celebrate Navratras Festival at Katra, Jammu



Mata Vaishno Devi

17th - 24th
October, 2020



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- **Wear Mask.**
- **Keep your surroundings clean.**
- **Wash hands frequently with soap.**
- **In case of any symptoms contact the doctor.**



Patnitop



Jai Valley

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Welcome your favourite bahu

Star Plus is all set to roll out the Season 2 of the much awaited show Saath Nibhaana Saathiya from tomorrow. MUSBA HASHMI speaks with DEVOLEENA BHATTARCHARJEE aka Gopi Bahu about how excited she is to be back on screen and how the character changed when she stepped into the show

Watching one or the other daily soap is our guilty pleasure. There is no denying that it makes for a good watch if one wants to take a break from the reality of their lives. Of late, daily soaps are so in trend and the one which tops the charts is *Saathiya*. Not because the storyline is something out of the box, but because Yashraj Mukhate decided to mix a scene from the popular show and it went viral within no time.

Even Rupal Patel, who played Kokila Ben couldn't help but appreciate Mukhate's take on the popular scene. Now that the show has already received it's share of admiration from the audience, it is just the right time for the makers to launch *Saath Nibhaana Saathiya 2* on Star Plus tomorrow.

Devoeena Bhattarcharjee, who was seen in *Bigg Boss 13* is all set to play Gopi Modi once again. If one is to ask what Season 2 has on offer for the audience, it's a no-brainer that they have to give it a watch.

"I can't give out the story for Season 2, because we are also not told about the whole story, we just shoot as per our director's direction. Also there are frequent changes during the shoot. But one thing is for sure, that the entertainment quotient will surely be high and with a message of women empowerment. There will be a new love angle between Gehna and Anant. I am sure audience will love it," Bhattarcharjee tells you.

Ask her about how excited she is to be back on screen as Gopi and she is quick to answer — that her excitement has no bounds. "I am super excited. I never imagined that I will be coming back on TV as Gopi. It gives me a different feel. Most of the times when there is a Season 2 of a show, the character remains the same but the actors change. But I am getting to play Gopi again and it is nothing short of a gift to me," she tells you.

A new season, she says, come with a lot of new challenges. "With a second season, the expectations of the audience are high. So it is challenging that way. To bring a second season of a hit show is risky in itself, because of the high expectations. But I think, we have proved ourselves and now the responsibility lies on the newer lot and it's their chance to prove themselves. Having said that, it doesn't mean we

First six months in the show were challenging. Things were not falling in place. I got to know that people felt that this was not my cup of tea. I felt bad. But I am a very stubborn person, if I take up a job, I do my best to make it happen



don't have any responsibility, it is just that they have a larger part of play in it," she explains.

If one is to remember, the infamous scene of the show where Gopi washes off Ahem's laptop with soap and water and hang it to dry, one would remember Giaa Manek, who was then replaced by Bhattarcharjee. Ask her if it is challenging to step in to the shoes of an already established character, she says that for her the role was as new as it can be.

"I never thought that I am replacing someone. If I had would have focused about these things, I would have not been able to pull that off. My focus was on to do justice to my character. That's all. I saw it as a new role," she says.

Initially, Bhattarcharjee struggled with the character, so much so that people told him that she won't be able to play it. "First six months were challenging. Things were not falling in place. I got to know that people felt that this was not my cup of tea. It felt bad. There were talks that the show might get off air after Giaa's replacement. People expected me to act like Giaa, but that's not possible. I have a different personality and I will act in my way, I can't copy someone. But despite all this, I am a very stubborn person, if I take up a job, I do my best to make it happen. So was with Gopi. I fought for my character. I did things in my own way. I just didn't let it go. I put in all my efforts and hard work and eventually it did work. And when the audience accepted me, Gopi's character was changed quite a bit. She was shown as a progressive woman. Even her style was changed," she tells you.

She tells you that she has a lot of fun memories from the sets of the previous season. "I was like the queen on the sets. I shared a good rapport with everyone. We did so much fun. Some days were exciting, some were good and some were bad. I laughed, cried, got angry and what not. We were like a big family and we enjoyed every bit of it," Bhattarcharjee recalls.

Daily soaps are always tagged as over dramatic and over the top, Bhattarcharjee has a say on that. "That's not true. The reason people love daily soaps is that they find a connection with it. Everything that has been show happens with us at some point of time. It's just that we modify it as per the need of the story. Otherwise it is not over dramatic, it is just a reflection of the society," she opines.

Cong to introduce ‘Gaudhan Nyay Yojana’



Madhya Pradesh State Congress President Kamal Nath, along with Congress Rajya Sabha MP Dignvijay Singh, releases party's manifesto 'Vachan Patra' for upcoming bypolls in the State, at his residence in Bhopal on Saturday

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Besides repeating old promises made during the Vachan Patra (election manifesto) released in year 2018 Assembly polls, Congress party on Saturday issued the manifesto for bypolls announcing to introduce Gaudhan Nyay Yojana on the lines of neighbouring Chhattisgarh.

For aiding farmers and cattle owners, the Chhattisgarh Government early this year has introduced Gaudhan Nyay Yojana under which the State Government will buy cowdung from farmers and cattle owners

Gwalior-Chambal region being in the helm of bypolls got slew of announcements including conversion of barren land in the region into agri land, events at educational institutions to amrk the valour of queen Laxmibai, new schools and sporting facilities in Gwalior-Chambal region, efforts for rapid industrialisation of this region, industrial clusters on either sides of Chambal highway and so on.

Since Jyotiraditya Scindia left to join BJP, Congress party has been engaged in paying special attention to Rani Laxmibai's heritage and MPCC chief Kamal Nath had paid a visit to Laxmibai's tomb in Gwalior.

The party as against 954 points in Vachan Patra in 2018 assembly polls had added 52 new points in the documents for bypolls..

As local vachan patras sent to constituencies had no pics of Rahul Gandhi, the party this time included pictures of Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi among others on the Vachan Patra.

"The public is with the Congress party and with the help of our Vachan Patra, we will return to power and start working for fulfilling our promises," said Kamal Nath on the occasion.

at ₹2 per kg.

Congress party has tried emulating the scheme in Madhya Pradesh by announcing it in the election manifesto.

Among old announcements, the party has promised to restart Jai Kisan Yojana for farm loan waivers, to continue ₹100 per 100 units of electricity, re-introduction of ₹51,000 monetary assistance under Kanyadan yojana, resumption of Shuddh ke Liye Yuddh against adulteration, social security pension to be hiked upto ₹1,000 per month and State Government will pay fee of the youths appearing in competitive exams and so on.

Congress demands High Court judge to investigate poisonous liquor scandal

STAFF REPORTER ■ UJJAIN

The SIT team constituted by the State Government has come to investigate the case of the death of 12 people due to drinking spurious liquor in the city, the committee constituted by the government cannot be trusted at all, the matter should be investigated by a high court judge who The demand has been made by the Congress party.

Congress spokesperson Vivek Soni said that 12 poor people died due to drinking fake alcohol sold under the patronage of police personnel in the BJP government, which is the official figure. The Congress alleges that according to the city and reliable sources, around 20 to 25 people have died due to drinking of spurious liquor, who were burnt to an unknown condition by name of death from heart attack and other dis-

eases. The Congress party demands that all these unknown bodies should be identify and their names should be publicly disclosed to the public. Senior Congress leader Dr. Batukshankar Joshi City Congress President Mahesh Soni District Congress President Kamal Patel State Secretary Chetan Yadav Hafiz Qureshi said that the team of the SIT, set up by the government and sent for the Ujjain probe, cannot be trusted at all, which will work on the instructions of the government itself and may try to rediscover the matter.

Action was taken against some policemen and other government people by the higher authorities in connection with this matter, due to which the officers are working to confuse the public.

The main people are being saved from this case.

Investigations can be effected by taking action on small health workers, while the Government is saving big officers by indulging in this matter, which should have taken strict action yet, the party demands that the investigation of this serious matter

It should be done by a High Court Judge so that a fair investigation can be done, whoever the officers and employees are involved in this case the Government should take action against them, the SIT's investigation is expected to give no justice to the families of the deceased and the administration should immediately give them 10 lakh assistance.

If the victims did not get justice in this case and action was not taken against other officials, then the Congress party would stage a large-scale movement, responsible governance and administration.



Devotees carry an idol of Goddess Kali for installation at a puja pandal on the first day of the beginning of the Navratri festival in Bhopal on Saturday

Two booked for sexually assaulting their 36-yr-old sister

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Misrod police has booked two persons for sexually assaulting their 36-year-old sister while her parents were booked for assaulting her. The victim was earlier booked

for extorting money from mother in the past, police have started investigation.

The victim in her complaint stated that her two brothers have raped her in the month of February on the occasion of her birthday and her parents have assaulted her.

A case was registered after complaint was lodged by the victim with the Misrod police stating that the victim was at home when her two brothers raped her after their parents locked her inside her room and later the four thrashed her brutally.

ASP Zone 2 Rajesh Singh Bhadoria said that there is old dispute between the brothers and victim woman and the victim has been booked for extortion after her mother lodged complaint. The brothers have provided whatsapp messages of demanding money by the vic-

tim and based on the evidences investigation would be done.

During the investigation it was found that the victim is out on bail in the extortion case. The victim married second time after the first marriage failed and after marriage she used to demand money from her parents and family members. In the month of August she pressurized her parents for money and annoyed over the threatened they lodged complaint with the police.

Meanwhile, a 27-year-old girl was sexually exploited for the past two years by three accused who used to blackmail her using video of victim.

According to the police, the victim was sexually assaulted by the accused, Dharmendra Singh Chouhan by sedating her and making her video.

Rahul, Priyanka to campaign in MP bypoll



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Unlike BJP that relied on regional leaders for bypoll campaigning in MP, Congress party has roped in national leaders like Rahul-Priyanka Gandhi, and neighbouring Chief Ministers including Ashok Gehlot, and Bhupesh Baghel.

The Congress party issued list of 30 star campaigners on Saturday which features EX-AICC president Rahul Gandhi, AICC general secretaries Priyanka Gandhi and Mukul Wasnik, former Rajasthan Dy CM Sachin Pilot, noted cricketer Navjot Singh Siddhu, former Maharashtra CM Ashok Chavan and firebrand leader Sadhna Bharti.

Congress already has planned to use Pilot, a good friend of Jyotiraditya Scindia, in Gwalior-Chambal region where Gurjars (a caste represented by Pilot) in good numbers on several seats.

As BJP is persistently questioning absence of Dignvijay Singh from campaigns, the



Congress has already planned to use Pilot, a good friend of Jyotiraditya Scindia

Congress has also named him among star campaigners. Acharya Pramod Krishna too has been named in the list.

Most of the senior leaders of the State including MPCC chief Kamal Nath have been named in the list of star campaigners.

BJP reacting to the list questioned the presence of large numbers of national figures in bypolls. "It's now evident that Congress can't win these polls with the help of Kamal Nath-Dignvijay Singh which is evident by the presence of national leaders and CMs of neighbouring states in the list," BJP spokesperson Rajneesh Agrawal said.

IN BRIEF

CM GREETES PEOPLE ON OCCASION OF NAVRATRA

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has extended hearty greetings to the people of the State on the pious occasion of Navratra. Chief Minister Chouhan has wished that may Mata Rani shower her blessings on all and ease the difficulties of all the people of the state .Along with Madhya Pradesh and country, may love and harmony prevail in the whole world. Chief Minister Chouhan has prayed for the happiness and prosperity of all the citizens.

CHOUHAN CONDOLES JOURNO DEATH

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan expressed deep grief over the untimely demise of senior journalist Gopal Awasthi and paid tributes to him. Awasthi, editor of Dainik Bhaskar Singrauli edition, was not keeping well since a few days. Chief Minister Chouhan has prayed to God to grant peace to the departed soul and strength to the bereaved family to bear the grief.

CM CONDOLES DEATH OF JOURNALIST ZAHEER ANSARI

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed grief over the demise of senior journalist Zaheer Ansari of Jabalpur. Paying homage to the departed soul, CM Chouhan has prayed to the Almighty to give strength to the bereaved family to bear the loss.

CHOUHAN GRIEVES OVER IPS OFFICER'S DEMISE

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed profound grief over the demise of Sanjeev Kumar Singh, senior IPS officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre. Chief Minister Chouhan said Sanjeev Kumar Singh discharged his duties efficiently. Chief Minister Chouhan has prayed to the Almighty to grant peace to the departed soul and strength to the bereaved family to bear this loss.

Voters are being motivated to cast their votes through various SVEEP activities

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Under the Assembly By-Elections 2020, voters are being motivated to cast their votes in 28 assembly constituencies of 19 districts of the State through various SVEEP (Systematic voters Education and Electoral Participation) activities. Various activities are being organised for voter awareness, following the guidelines of Covid-19 in the by-election assembly constituencies.

Joint Chief Electoral Officer Mohit Bundas said that with the aim of motivating voters to cast their votes, publicity is being done by Jagrukta Rathis, short films, wall writings, hoardings, posters, banners etc.

Awareness message is also being given to voters to cast their votes by putting a flex behind the auto-rickshaw. Special emphasis is being laid to educate voters on how to vote while protecting themselves from Corona infection.

Various competitions are also being organized under the SVEEP activities in the by-election constituencies. Street plays, folk songs, rangoli, mehndi competitions are also being organised by the district administration.

The importance of voting is being explained by Kalapathak teams. Cooperation of various organizations including N.C.C., N.S.S. is being taken in voter awareness campaign.

Video of TI and SI of Badnagar district goes viral

PNS ■ UJJAIN

The video of TI and SI of Badnagar district is becoming viral on social media for asking money in the name of leaving the car of the victim who sold the car to Ratlam based person.

In this case, the TI Archana Nagar and SI Jeevan Didore taking money from the victim, to clear the case. After the police put more psychological pressure on the victim, the victim created a set of audios and made them viral on the social media, which exposed the TI and SI publicly.

In the case, the victim also complained to the SP through

application. After which the SP immediately took cognizance of the case and attached the line to TI Archana Nagar and SI Jeevan Didor with immediate effect and started investigation.

It is worth mentioning that on July 21, Om Rathore, of village Chirola Kala, in Badagar, sold his Bolero MP 13 CA 1059 to Ashok on July 21 on condition of filling the installment. Later, he complained to the police for not filling the installment and threatening him. The police summoned Ashok to the police station with the vehicle, but TI Nagar and SI Didor demanded ₹ 35,000 from Om for returning his vehicle.

Women of Nirbhaya Woman Shelter Home made aware of police functioning

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A programme was organised to make women aware of Nirbhaya Woman Shelter Home in Bhopal, in which the women of the shelter home were made aware of the functioning of the Police by the former Ratibad TI Sub-Inspector Kanchan Rajput. Informed about the history of the police, he said that the need of women in the police came when the incidents of kidnapping and rape in the post-independence riots started increasing rapidly.

During this time there was a two-way migration of Hindu-Muslim people, due to which a large number of women refugees entered India. This mobility of women refugees led the Government of India to face many troubles, which some women were recruited into the police in 1948 to control. Although women were made part of the police in some

states even before independence, their number was negligible. But as crimes against children and women increased in independent India, the need for female police personnel to record and interrogate them increased.

Similarly, the work of searching female criminals started being done by women police personnel. Today, there is a woman police station in every district which is in charge of women itself and this department investigates cases like domestic violence, child marriage, dowry harassment. On this matter, he said that both men and women are selected in the police department, and physical efficiency is different for both.

Besides, there is relaxation in different physical skills according to the reserved category in the police. Women have to complete 2.5km race time within 15 minutes. Women should have a length of

145cm. Different qualifications are required for different posts in Police Department. To become a police, you have to pass 12th, only then you can appear in the police entrance exam.

Students of Arts, Commerce and Science can participate in this exam. If you want to become a constable constable, then you can become a constable to give the exam of 12th. For this you do not need to do a degree or graduation. If you want to become an Inspector of Police, then it is mandatory for you to complete graduation.

On this occasion, the director of Nirbhaya Swadhar Greh, Samar Khan told the women that even today there are a large number of women in our country who are illiterate, but are unaware of their rights, they do not know the constitution and laws of the country. How many laws have been made for them in the system.

Congress worker booked for molesting his 35-yr-old niece

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Mahila police station has booked a Congressman and owner of a petrol pump for molesting his 35-year-old niece at Salamatpur farmhouse.

The accused, identified as Aziz alias Tanki, is an active Congressman and has provided land on lease to his niece's husband who does agriculture work on the land at Salamatpur. The accused had molested his niece four days ago 11 late in the night.

At the time of the incident ,the victim was with her husband at the farm and after accused was found molesting victim's husband opposed but was threatened of life.

The victim returned home

and later reported the incident with the Mahila thana and based on the complaint after the preliminary investigation a case molestation was registered.

The victim in her complaint stated that the accused is her uncle and her husband had taken land on lease which she had gone to visit and stayed in the night at it was too late to return and late in the night she was molested by her uncle.

On the other side accused claimed that he suffer from several diseases and never stay at night at other place than house and the complaint was lodged due to dispute with the victims over the rent of the leased land to them.

Meanwhile, Baghsewania police have booked a miscreant for molesting a 22-year-old girl at Surendra Palace in the night on Friday. The victim approached Baghsewania police and lodged a complaint against the accused who remained unidentified.

In her complaint the victim stated the accused passed lewd comment while she was passing near the building. The victim opposed after which the accused and victim started verbal spate and later escaped the spot.

Based on the complaint and after the preliminary investigation, the police registered a case under section 354 IPC and have started search for the accused.



A health official collects a swab sample for COVID-19 test at a fever clinic at Government JP hospital in Bhopal on Saturday. India has the second highest total of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the world

Three drug peddlers held, drug worth ₹4.5L seized

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Gautam Nagar police has nabbed three drug peddlers near Union Carbide factory and recovered drugs worth ₹4.5 lakh from their possession. They were loading the consignment in an auto rickshaw in the night on Friday.

Police said that acting on a tip-off regarding three men carrying drugs in a loading auto rickshaw near Union Carbide factory and when the rickshaw was checked Cannabis was recovered.

The three miscreants were identified a Anwar Ali (40),

Khurshid Khan (50) and Zoyab (20). The drugs were weighing 61.5 kg which was in the loading auto rickshaw.

After the initial investigation police have registered a case under relevant sections and when the accused were grilled they confessed that the main accused behind the illegal drug trafficking is Shammi alias Shameer Uddin of Nariyalkheda.

Shammi provided the nabbed accused with drugs and loading auto rickshaw and drugs were scheduled to deliver near Union Carbide factory. Based on the details of

the main accused his house was raided but accused managed to escaped and is still absconding.

Police said that after the arrest of the accused the nexus in area and nearby areas of the district could be unearthed. The accused also revealed that Shammi has provided the loading auto rickshaw with fake registration number.

The three have confessed that the customers were Kuchbandiya and they were searched in Nariyalkheda, Gautam Nagar and Itwara areas after accused revealed the details.

3 miscreants nabbed, mobile phone, bike recovered

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Habibganj police has nabbed three miscreants and recovered one mobile phone and a motorbike used in the robbery. The accused have been booked for 16 crimes in different places in the State capital.

According to the police, acting on a tip off, regarding three miscreants with a stolen mobile phone and nabbed the three and when they were questioned they were not able to provide the details of the mobile phone and later confessed robbery of mobile phone.

The three miscreants were

identified as Nakul Aarke alias Monty (19), Dhur Lokhande (19) and Sumit Jadhav(20) of Kamla Nagar area.

Police said that the miscreants used to target the victims at the park and who used to come alone and would rob mobile phone from them.

Siel Financial Services Limited
(CIN No.: L65999MP1909PLC007674)
Regd. Office : Soni Mansion, 12-B,
Ratlam Kothi, Indore - 452001 (M.P.)

NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of Regulations 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, Notice is hereby given that a meeting of Board of Directors of the Company will be held on Friday, the 23rd October, 2020 to take on record the Unaudited Financial Results of the Company for the quarter ended on 30.09.2020.

The information contained in this notice is also available on the website of the stock exchange at www.bseindia.com.

By Order of the Board
For Siel Financial Services Limited

Sd/-
(Madhu Vrat Kaushik)
Whole Time Director
DIN-072971518

Place : New Delhi
Date : 16.10.2020

1L Govt posts to be filled on merit basis in next 4 yrs: Haryana CM

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Stating that in the last six years, recruitment of about 85,000 Government posts has been done on merit basis in the State, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday said that recruitment of more than one lakh Government posts will be done on merit basis in the next four years.

Addressing a news conference at Haryana Niwas here, Khattar said that in the last six years, several initiatives have been taken to bring transparency in the government machinery and radical changes in the system by using information technology. While all these efforts have certainly proved fruitful be it conducting recruitment on merit basis or implementing teacher transfer policy. These initiatives taken by Haryana to bring about reforms have been appreciated at national level.

The Chief Minister expressed confidence that the employees who are recruited on the basis of merit will surely meet the expectations of the public and will stay away from corrupt practices.

Responding to a question, Khattar said that to speed up the pace of development in rural areas, separate District Municipal Commissioners have also been appointed in Urban Local Bodies after

appointing a separate Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Zila Parishad. This is also helping to augment financial resources of these institutions.

He said earlier, Urban Local Bodies used to remain dependent on the fact that they would get a grant from the Central Finance Commission or the State Finance Commission for their budget. Now they are mobilizing their own resources. He said that public participation in the bodies will too be encouraged.

The Chief Minister said that there is a link between distilleries and liquor contractors who operate in different states. Although there is no distillery in Chandigarh, there are many bottling plants, from where liquor is supplied in other states, he added while responding to a question regarding the liquor scam.

Khattar said that CCTV cameras have been installed in the distilleries of Haryana. Also, the joint patrolling teams of the Police and the Excise and Taxation Office monitors the supply of alcohol.

He informed that in the year 2014-15, Excise revenue was Rs 3,200 crore which has so far increased to Rs 6,400 crore in the year 2020-21 and it is estimated that it will be Rs 7,000 crore. The increase in revenue indicates that the State Government has certainly



reformed the systems.

Responding to another question, the Chief Minister said that even after lockdown, revenue of Rs 338 crore has been received from GST, VAT and Mining, which was Rs 330 crore last year.

PROCUREMENT OF KHARIF CROP SMOOTH

The Chief Minister said that the State Government has made all necessary arrangements to ensure that the procurement process of Kharif crops is done in a smooth and systematic manner. For the first time, Government procurement of maize is being done at the Minimum Support Price (MSP). Earlier, the purchase of millet was also done at MSP. So far, Rs 1,000 crore have

been released by the Government as procurement payment for paddy and other crops, he said.

Khattar said every single grain of farmers' crops will be procured. The interests of the farmers of Haryana are paramount for the State Government and for this, procurement of the crops brought by the farmers of the State is being done in the state mandis on priority. Farmers of other states will have to get their crops registered before bringing it to the state mandis of Haryana, whether it is through Arhtiyas or at their own level, said the Chief Minister.

He said the Punjab and Rajasthan Governments should also procure crops at MSP so that the farmers of these two states do not have to come to Haryana. Khattar said that

New DTOs in each district to check corruption, says Khattar

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday announced that new District Transport Officers (DTOs), in place of RTA Secretaries will be appointed in every district to ensure that Regional Transport Authority (RTA), which is said to be a corruption hub, too works in a transparent and corruption free manner. Addressing a news conference, Khattar said that on Navaratri, he had pledged to eradicate corruption in every government department after ensuring implementation of Zero tolerance against corruption in RTAs.

Khattar said this is the second initiative of the State government as per which separate DTOs will be appointed in the RTA offices. Earlier HCS officers were appointed as the Chief Executive Officers of Zila Parishad. He said that the DTOs will be appointed within the next two days and now all 22 districts in the State will have DTOs instead of Regional

Transport Authority Secretaries (RTAs).

The CM said after ensuring the elimination of the role of 'Undesirable Contact Men' in Tehsil offices, now the general public will also get rid of the problem of middlemen in RTA offices, be it for making driving licenses or getting vehicles passed. Furthermore, after Rohtak, six more Inspection and Certification Centres to inspect and check fitness of vehicles will be opened at six more districts including Ambala, Karnal, Hisar, Gurugram, Faridabad and Rewari, said Khattar.

He said automated driving test tracks will be set up in 11 districts namely Kaithal, Bahadurgarh, Rohtak, Faridabad, Nuh, Bhiwani, Karnal, Rewari, Sonapat, Palwal, and Yamunanagar, where driving skills will be tested and the entire test process will be computerized. As a result of this people will not have to approach any middlemen for getting their licenses made. He said that a provision of Rs 30 crore has

been made for this and these centres will be opened within a period of one year.

Similarly, to keep a vigil on overloading of commercial vehicles, which is also a major reason behind corrupt practices, the state government has decided that portable scales will be installed on the roads and even the drivers will not get to know when the weight of their vehicles has been measured. He said that 45 such portable scales have been bought by the State Government and after the success of this experiment, more such portable scales will be installed in the entire state, shared the Chief Minister. He further said that body cameras will be worn by vehicle inspectors going for checking and passing of commercial vehicles, so as to ensure that recording of the entire checking process is done and its monitoring will be done at headquarters.

The CM added the problem of overloading is usually found in mining vehicles, therefore the 'e-RAVANA' software has already been pre-

pared by the Mining Department but now this software will be integrated with the 'VAHAN' software of the Transport Department.

Khattar said at present the number of registered commercial vehicles in RTA office is around 1.25 lakh and the number of employees in the RTA offices is only 627. More recruitment will be done within a period of one year for smooth functioning of these offices. The CM said the Deputy Commissioners will also be made aware of this decision of the state government. He said that it is not necessary that the DTO officer will be of IAS or HCS rank, but for this, any class-I officer or an IPS or HPS officer or any officer on deputation can be appointed as DTO. The main aim behind all this is to curb corruption.

The Chief Minister also indicated that after RTA, he will select some other departments as well where there is a high probability of corruption and action on checking such corruption will be taken soon.

arrangements have been made to make the payment of paddy procurement to the farmers within seven days. After the

Form-I is generated and approved, payment is being made within three days. Transport Minister Mool

Chand Sharma, Principal Secretary, Transport Department, Anurag Rastogi, and Director General,

Information, Public Relations and Languages Department, PC Meena and other officers were also present on this occasion.

Amarinder, Rahul virtually launch 2nd phase of smart village campaign

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, along with Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh, on Saturday kickstarted the second phase of Punjab's Smart Village Campaign (SVC) with the virtual launch of a Rs 2,775 crore campaign to power the state's complete rural transformation.

While Rahul launched the campaign from New Delhi, the Chief Minister and Punjab ministers, officials and Sarpanches, joined in from a total of 1500 digital locations, paving the way for execution of 48910 works across the State.

Expressing happiness on Rahul being a part of the momentous occasion, the Chief Minister said the scheme would lead to the creation of enormous rural infrastructure to raise the living standard and quality of life by capitalising on technological advances, as part of his government's Rural Transformation Strategy. He assured of adequate allocation for the schemes to be undertaken under the second phase, which has been kickstarted on the successful culmination of

Phase I, which was launched in 2019 for the execution of 19,132 works at a cost of Rs 835 crore.

Underlining the importance of villages to keep the nation's foundations strong, Rahul said any weakening of the rural structure would impede the nation's progress. He stressed the need to strengthen these foundations for a better India, pointing out that protecting the villages and the people living there would help protect the cities and the country. The Congress MP appreciated the work being done by the Captain Amarinder government to improve the rural infrastructure. The money being spent in villages is the sweat and blood of the people of the state, and every penny of this money should reach the beneficiaries without corruption obstructing the process, he said.

The Congress, said Rahul, believed in working at the grassroots and Congress governments started programmes only after taking the views of the Panchayats into account. Since the schemes under SVC have been envisaged after delib-



erations at the ground level, they will deliver the desired results, he said.

Capt Amarinder said the 1st phase of the campaign had focused on core areas like Renovation of ponds, street lights, parks, Gymnasiums, Community Halls, Drinking Water Supply, Model Anganwadi Centers, Smart Schools and Solid Waste Management, thus making villages in Punjab self-sustaining by providing enabling environments.

For the second phase, adequate funds had already been transferred to all 13,264 Gram Panchayats in Punjab,

the Chief Minister said, adding that his government intends to give assistance to those homeowners who are living in houses having temporary roofs. The intention is "Har ghar pakki chhat" i.e. to provide the rural poor with better housing facilities. While doing so, focus shall be on 'inclusive' growth, i.e. to include households such as Women Headed Households, persons with disabilities, critically ill persons, families of martyrs, scheduled castes, etc, he said.

In addition, 750 Stadiums are being taken up for development in Rural Areas for 2020-21. For this purpose, a

target of minimum of 5 Stadiums per block has been allotted for this purpose. New designs of 4 acres, 2 acres and 1 acre playgrounds have been developed.

Capt Amarinder further said that as a part of 550th Birth Anniversary of Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji, 550 plants per village i.e. 77 lakh saplings had been planted and around 22000 Van Mitras had been appointed to nurture and maintain them. As a result, the overall green cover of the State had increased by 11363 hectares since 2017.

Listing some of the path-breaking and people friendly initiatives of his government, the Chief Minister said 15.32 lakh jobs/employment opportunities had been given to youth under 'Ghar Ghar Rozgar' programme, while 1 lakh government jobs would be provided by 2020-22. He pointed out that his government had recently provided 33% reservation for women in direct recruitment in Government jobs as a major step towards empowerment of women.

Referring to Mahatma Gandhi Sarbat Vikas Yojana

launched by the state government, Captain Amarinder said that nearly 11.05 Lakh persons had been provided relief/benefits to ensure inclusive growth of the distressed sections of the society.

Speaking on the occasion, the Rural Development & Panchayats Minister Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa lauded the Panchayats for taking keen interest in the execution of development schemes under SVC in a time-bound manner. This, he said, had encouraged the state government to provide a 3-fold hike in the capital outlay in the 2nd phase.

Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal said though Punjab was passing through financial crisis, the development tempo, in both rural and urban sectors, continued to be high.

PPCC President Sunil Jakhar said the Smart Village Campaign would go a long way in transforming the rural scenario in line with the dream of Late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Jakhar also complimented the Chief Minister for ensuring 50% reservation in PRIs and Urban Local Bodies.

Shaurya Chakra awardee Balwinder Singh Sandhu cremated

Amritsar: A large number of people turned up on Saturday at the cremation of Shaurya Chakra awardee Balwinder Singh Sandhu, who was shot dead by two unknown assailants in Punjab's Tarn Taran district.

Earlier, the family had refused to cremate the body unless the accused were arrested, but then agreed to conduct the last rites after an assurance was given by the Tarn Taran district administration about prompt action in the case. The administration also assured them about their request for a government job for one family member.

The cremation was also attended by Khemkaran assembly constituency MLA, Sukphal Singh Bhullar.

The police department has provided three gunmen as security cover to the family.

The 62-year-old Sandhu, who fought terrorism in Punjab, was shot dead in the district on Friday, months after the government withdrew his security cover. The motorcycle-borne man pumped four bullets into him when he was at his office adjoining his home at Bhikhiwind.

Earlier, Sandhu's wife Jagdish Kaur Sandhu, had told reporters, "The family would not cremate him unless the killers are arrested."

She had also demanded security cover for her family. "All the family members — I, my late husband, his brother Ranjit Singh Sandhu and his wife Balraj Kaur Sandhu — are Shaurya Chakra awardees and this award was given by the

Centre for our fight against militancy."

"Both the state and central governments are accountable for the intelligence failure that resulted in the killing of my husband at the hands of terrorists," Sandhu's wife had said. She also said if the state government failed to provide security to the family, then it was the responsibility of the Centre to do the needful.

Sandhu had fought against terrorism in the state for years, facing scores of terror attacks during the height of Khalistani militancy. His security cover was withdrawn by the state government a year ago on the recommendation of Tarn Taran police, his brother Ranjit had said, adding that their entire family had remained on the hit list of terrorists.

Jagdish Kaur had on Friday said it was the "handiwork of terrorists", maintaining that their family did not have any personal enmity with anyone.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh had condoled Sandhu's death and set up a special investigation team headed by Ferozpur Deputy Inspector General of Police to probe the killing. The chief minister said the SIT will probe the killing, taking all possibilities into account. The guilty will not be spared, he had said.

The Tarn Taran braveheart had also featured in some documentaries. Inspired by Sandhu and his family, many people followed him and defended themselves from terror attacks.

He was awarded Shaurya Chakra in 1993. **Agencies**

Farmers hold protests across Punjab over new farm reform laws

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH/PHAGWARA

Farmers under banners of different organizations held protests across Punjab and burnt effigies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as they accused the BJP-led Government at the Centre of maintaining a "stubborn attitude" towards the agitators' demand of revoking the newly enacted farm laws.

On Saturday, protests were held at many places, including in Phagwara, Muktsar, Amritsar, Patiala and Bathinda which led to a disruption of vehicular traffic. Farmers assembled at Phagwara-Hoshiarpur road and held a march. They then burnt the effigy of prime minister alleg-

ing that their leaders were "disrespected" during a meeting with Agriculture ministry officials in Delhi.

Representatives of several farmers' bodies had on Wednesday walked out of a meeting held in Delhi to discuss the farm laws with the Union agriculture secretary after finding no Union minister present at the meeting. Addressing the protesters in Phagwara, BKU (Doaba) General Secretary Satnam Singh Sahni said, "We have been agitating against these farm laws for the last three months. But the Centre has turned a deaf ear to our demands."

Refuting reports about fissure among agitating farmer



bodies, he asserted that they were all united in their fight against the "anti-farmer" laws.

Another farmer leader Manjit Singh Rai said, "If PM Modi shows sincerity in the matter and himself intervenes and invites the agitating farmers, we will go for such parleys."

CMOs asked to focus on 3Ts during festive season: Haryana DG Health

3Ts are tracing, testing and treatment for early detection

MANOJ KUMAR ■ CHANDIGARH

Taking serious note on warning and alert issued by the Union government and Health experts that the ongoing festive season and winter months would lead to another wave of corona virus especially during December and January, Haryana Director General of Health Services Dr Suraj Bhan Kamboj on Saturday asked all district chief medical officers to be alert and take all the precautions

regarding Covid-19 protocol in their jurisdictional limit.

Talking to *The Pioneer* over the phone, Kamboj said that the new recoveries have been more than new cases over the last two weeks. New cases being reported in the last 14 days are lower than previous highs of around 2500 cases per day in the last month.

Active Covid-19 cases have decreased to around 10,000, while the recovery rate has been at above 91 per cent. As the numbers of new cases are declining so the current situation of availability of beds and ventilators is satisfactory. Many of the beds are vacant but we are prepared if there is a need to scale up the facility, he said.

"Despite decline in Covid-19 cases, the State health department would continue to

lay emphasis on 3Ts — tracing, testing and treatment for early detection, treatment of Covid-19 patients in view of upcoming festive and winter seasons in the State," DG Health added. He said that the State Government has issued guidelines on physical distancing and the use of sanitisers, face masks to curb community spread of the disease and everyone should follow it strictly.

Asked the Union Government as well as Health experts have warned that the winter months, as well as opening up of most activities after lockdown restrictions, would lead to another wave of coronavirus during December and January, he said that the district chief medical officers have been asked on the need to be alert and aware of the situation.

Dr Kamboj further said that Covid-19 cases may increase due to festivities and reopening of various activities including schools, colleges, malls, cinema halls during unlocked-5 and inter-district movement of people. "We would advise caution over optimism. The virus is new. It starts waning and then suddenly shoots up. Everything is open now and we may face something harsher. We have to follow the SMS approach—social distancing, masks and sanitisation—with utmost diligence," he added.

Two things have to be done to handle the second wave, DG Health said, adding that the first one is to keep the basic infrastructure ready, and second is to ensure the spread is restricted by creating public

awareness on preventive steps.

Dr Dhruva Chaudhary, who is the nodal officer for Covid-19 in Haryana, said that from the past three weeks, active cases have started to decline in the State as daily recoveries are surpassing new cases. The State is witnessing a declining trend with 6.38 per cent growth rate, fatality rate at 1.10 per cent while recovery rate at 91.84 per cent.

He said, "We have to stick to the standard protocol for keeping epidemic surge at bay, especially during the winter season, as respiratory viruses thrive better in cold weather and low humidity conditions. If precautions are not taken, the situation can go out of hand with the sudden rise of Covid-19 cases. Besides, people need to be extra cautious during the

festive season and practice social distancing."

Chaudhary further said, "In the absence of any vaccine, a mask is the only inoculation. People should wear masks all the time. For any change in season, the viral infection is common among people. How the virus behaves in winter needs to be seen, but there is already a second wave in other countries and a similar trend can be expected here too." He further said that the lockdown rules have been eased and various activities have been allowed, as there is no alternative, but proper and cautious behaviour of local residents is the best preventive measure. The general public has been advised to maintain social distancing while shopping and wear masks properly.

ISIS CONSPIRACY

15 convicted for bid to set base in Delhi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Special NIA court in Delhi has convicted 15 accused persons in connection with the ISIS Conspiracy case.

The case pertains to criminal conspiracy hatched by the ISIS to establish its base in India by recruiting Muslim youth for ISIS, a proscribed terrorist organisation by using different social media platforms.

The case was registered at Police Station NIA, New Delhi on December 9, 2015 under section under provisions of the Indian Penal Code and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

During investigation, searches were conducted by the NIA in various cities across the country and 19 accused persons were arrested.

It was revealed that the accused persons had formed an organisation styled as Junood-ul-Khilafa-Fil-Hind (a group seeking to establish Caliphate in India and pledging allegiance to ISIS/ISIL) to recruit Muslim youth to work for ISIS and commit acts of terrorism in India at the behest of one Yusuf-Al-Hindi alias Shafi Armar alias Anjan Bhai, who was based in Syria and was purportedly the media chief of ISIS.

"This case had a huge impact on the like-minded people who were likely to join ISIS. After the arrest of the ISIS terrorists, their activities were



After completion of investigation, the NIA had filed chargesheets against 16 accused persons in 2016-2017

minimised and their other associates were identified and questioned to unravel their further plans," the NIA said in a statement.

Several ISIS sympathisers, who had gone to join ISIS, were intercepted at various locations in the Middle East and were deported to India. The investigation conducted by the agency stopped the facilitation of the ISIS members in India as well as abroad, it said.

After completion of investigation, the NIA had filed charge-sheets against 16 accused persons in 2016-2017.

On Friday, 15 accused were convicted and sentenced with

rigorous imprisonment (RI) and fine.

The convicted terrorists include Nafees Khan, 10 years RI with fine of ₹1,03,000, Mudabbir Mushtaq Sheikh, 7 years RI and fine of ₹65,000, Abu Anas, 7 years RI and fine of ₹48,000, Mufti Abdus Sami, 7 years RI and fine of ₹50,000 and Azhar Khan, 6 years RI with a fine of ₹58,000.

Others convicted include Amzad Khan, 6 years RI with ₹78,000 fine, Mohd. Shariff Moinudeen, 5 years RI with ₹38,000 fine, Asif Ali, 5 years RI and fine of ₹38,000, Mohd. Hussain, 5 years RI and fine of Rs 38,000 and Syed Mujahid, 5 years RI and fine ₹38,000.

The five others convicted are Najmul Huda, Mohd. Obedullah, Md. Aleem, Md. Afzal and Sohail Ahmad for five years and a fine each of ₹ 38,000.

This case was first of its kind in which an extensive terrorist conspiracy involving online radicalisation was hatched on cyber space.

Cong launches Smart Village Campaign

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress on Saturday kick-started the Smart Village Campaign (SVC) with the virtual launch of a ₹2,775 crore campaign to power the complete rural transformation of the State in Punjab.

The smart village concept is to focus on core areas like renovation of ponds, street lights, parks, gymnasiums, community halls, drinking water supply, model anganwadi centers, smart schools and solid waste management, thus making villages self-sustaining by providing enabling environments.

While doing so, the focus shall be on 'inclusive' growth, i.e. to include households such as women-headed households, persons with disabilities, critically ill persons, families of martyrs, scheduled castes, etc, he said.

Party sources said that the same is to be replicated by all the Congress ruled States in way to showcase a better format of the Modi government's Adarsh Village concept which has not shown much enthusiasm.

Launching the campaign virtually from the national Capital, former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi said the scheme would lead to the creation of enormous rural infrastructure to raise the living standard and quality of life by capitalising on technological advances, as part of his government's Rural Transformation Strategy.

Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh, officials and Sarpanchs, joined in from



a total of 1,500 digital locations, paying the way for execution of 48,910 separate works across the state.

Singh assured of adequate allocation for the schemes to be undertaken under the second phase, which has been kick-started on the successful culmination of Phase I, which was launched in 2019 for the execution of 19,132 works at a cost of ₹835 crores.

Underlining the importance of villages to keep the nation's foundations strong, Rahul Gandhi said any weakening of the rural structure would impede the nation's progress. He stressed the need to strengthen these foundations for a better India, pointing out that protecting the villages and the people living there would help protect the cities and the country.

Congress' ruled other states of Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Puducherry is also studying the project initiated by their counterpart in Punjab.

Rahul said the Congress

believed in working at the grassroots and Congress governments start programmes only after taking the views of the Panchayats into accounts. Since the schemes under SVC have been envisaged after deliberations at the ground level, they will deliver the desired results, he said.

Adequate funds in Punjab had already been transferred to all 13,264 Gram Panchayats in Punjab, the Chief Minister said, adding that his government intends to give assistance to those house-owners who are living in houses having temporary roofs. The intention is "Har ghar pakki chhat" i.e. to provide the rural poor with better housing facility.

In addition, 750 stadiums are being taken up for development in rural areas for 2020-21 in Punjab. For this purpose, a target of minimum of 5 stadiums per block has been allotted for this purpose. New designs of 4 acres, 2 acres and 1 acre playgrounds have been developed.

VP Naidu calls for building equitable society on Int'l Day for Eradication of Poverty

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Saturday called for building a more equitable society on International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

The theme for the Day this year addresses the challenge of achieving social and environmental justice for all,

according to the United Nations.

"Today, let us strive together for the uplift of the downtrodden & build a more equitable society. We need to address the root cause of poverty in all its dimensions, be it economic, social, legal or environmental," the Vice President Secretariat tweeted quoting Naidu.

SCBA condemns Andhra CM's allegation against sitting judge of apex court

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Supreme Court lawyers' body has condemned Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's action of writing a letter to Chief Justice of India S A Bobde in which allegations have been levelled against a sitting judge of the top court.

The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) said in its resolution that "such action by constitutional functionaries is opposed to conventions causing serious inroads impacting the independence of the judiciary as enshrined in the Constitution of India".

The SCBA resolution was passed days after another lawyers' body, Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association (SCAORA), had condemned the "unwarranted" release of the letter written by Reddy saying "it tends to scandalise and breach the independence of judiciary".

The resolution of SCBA said

that its executive committee, at a meeting on October 16, strongly condemned the action of the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh in releasing his letter to the Chief Justice of India (CJI) making allegations against the sitting judge in the public domain.

A similar resolution was also passed earlier this week by the Delhi High Court Bar Association (DHCBA) stating that the "ill-founded" letter "unfairly and without reason casts aspersions" on the conduct of the apex court judge and judges of the Andhra Pradesh High Court.

The DHCBA said the October 6 letter is an abject and uncalled for

interference in the due administration of justice by the high court judges.

In an unprecedented move, the chief minister wrote the letter to the CJI, alleging that the Andhra Pradesh High Court was being used to "destabilise and topple my democratically elected Government.

GADKARI TO MAHA GOVT

Form State Water Grid to tackle flood crisis



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari has requested the Maharashtra Government to take initiative for preparation of detailed project report (DPR) for formation of the State Water Grid to overcome the recurring flood crisis in the State. This would help the Government to ensure the availability of the water in drought prone areas and save the resources to manage the flood crisis. In a letter dated 14th October, 2020 to Chief Minister Udhav Thackeray, his cabinet colleagues and Sharad Pawar, MP, he has sought early decision of the State Government on this issue, followed by actions thereon.

Gadkari has drawn the attention of the Chief Minister in this letter towards the serious issue of heavy loss of lives and property that occur in the state of Maharashtra every year due to floods. He has added that the floods create and trigger serious problems in different parts of the State and there is an urgent need to chalk out a plan to manage this natural disaster that becomes grave because of other man made factors.

The Union Minister has suggested to the Government of Maharashtra to take up the ambitious project of formation of the State Water Grid on the lines of the National Power Grid and Highway Grid. The idea is to divert the flood water from one river basin to the other river basin in the drought prone area of the state. The areas with shortage of the water, scanty rainfall can get relief by the Grid. This would help to increase the area under irrigation, while bringing significant reduction in the numbers of suicides of farmers. The letter goes on to say that various studies have shown that the incidents of the farmers' suicide have come down in the areas where the irrigation cover is more than 55%.

The Minister mentioned that this would also help to increase agriculture produce

and strengthen the rural and national economy. The diverted flood waters would relieve the stress on the local resources. Transportation of goods and passengers through rivers (Water Transport) can be commenced in near future. Fishing and other businesses can flourish alongside and major employment can be generated if such project is taken up as an essential infrastructure.

Gadkari has informed that his Ministry is doing water conservation by using the soil/murum from water bodies, drains and rivers for construction of Highways.

This synchronisation of N.H. construction and water conservation results not only in increasing water storage capacity but saving environment. Initially this activity was done on large scale in Buldhana district as pilot project and hence named as 'Buldhana pattern'. With this activity in Maharashtra, around 225 lakh cubic meter of material from water bodies, drains and rivers has been used in Highway

works with a result of increase of 22500 TCM (Thousand Cubic Meter) of water storage capacity at 'No cost to State Government'. This has charged ground water table. Due to deepening and training of river, drains, etc, the floods have reduced, which otherwise spreads in nearby field due to reduced discharge capacity of rivers and drains. This convergence has been appreciated and accepted by NITI Aayog, which is in the process of forming policy based on this work done.

The Minister further informed that the Tamaswada Pattern adopted in Wardha and Nagpur districts is another effort towards Rain Water Harvesting, Conservation and Ground Water Recharge.

These works are done on the basis of Scientific and Complete Development of Mini-Micro Watersheds based on study of HydroGeology, Topography and Civil Engineering. Work is done essentially in the direction from Ridge to Valley. Tamaswada Pattern is most helpful to create augmented Surface rain and Ground Water storages. It creates Flood free as well as Drought free situation in treated Watershed. These type of works are resulting in Preservation and Conservation of Traditional natural water bodies.

Gadkari informed that his Ministry is doing water conservation by using the soil/murum from water bodies, drains and rivers for construction of Highways

Peace and tranquillity along LAC 'deeply disturbed': Jaishankar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is "deeply disturbed" and this is obviously impacting the overall relationship between India and China.

Jaishankar made these comments against the backdrop of the over five-month-long border standoff between India and China in eastern Ladakh where each side has

deployed over 50,000 troops.

The Sino-India boundary question a very "complicated" and difficult issue, he said at a webinar on his book 'The India Way', giving a historical perspective to development of the relationship between the two neighbouring countries in the last three decades.

The external affairs minister said the relationship between India and China, which was "very difficult", was normalised since late 1980s through a plethora of



initiatives like trade, travel, tourism, and societal activities on the premise of peace and

tranquillity along the border.

"It is not our position that we should solve the boundary question. We understand that it is a very complicated and difficult issue. There have been many nego-

tiations at different levels...That is a very high bar for a relationship," Jaishankar said.

"I am talking about a much more basic bar which is that there must be peace and tranquillity along the LAC in the border areas and that has been the case since the late 1980s," he added.

"Now, if peace and tranquillity is deeply disturbed, then obviously there will be an impact on the relationship and that is what we are see-

ing," he said referring to the border situation in eastern Ladakh.

Jaishankar said both China and India are rising and assuming "bigger" role in the world, but the "big question" is how the two countries find an "equilibrium".

"That is the basic case I addressed in my book," the minister said, adding he completed the manuscript of the book in April, before the border row erupted in eastern Ladakh.

Govt issues SOPs for cultural functions, programmes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Culture Ministry has issued detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for 'culture functions and programmes' on preventive measures to control the spread of Covid-19, according to which, no cultural activities will be allowed inside containment zones.

According to an official from the Ministry, these SOPs have to be followed by the management of theatres and performance spaces, as well as the entertainment/creative agencies, artists and crew or any other persons who hire the auditoria or any other open/closed performance spaces, whether on payment or gratis.

"Comprehensive guidelines have been issued for artists and crew, management of green rooms, stage management, costume and makeup trials, sanitization of the venue including stage, open area seating etc," the official added.

Further, State/UT Govts may consider proposing additional measures as per their

field assessment.

Guidelines issued by the Union Home and Health Ministries shall be strictly complied with during all activities and operations, said the official.

Social/ academic/ sports/ entertainment/ cultural/ religious/ political functions and other congregations have already been permitted with a ceiling of 100 persons, outside containment zones only.

In closed spaces, a maximum of 50 per cent of the hall capacity will be allowed, with a ceiling of 200 persons.

Wearing of face masks, maintaining social distancing, provision for thermal scanning and use of hand wash or sanitizer will be mandatory, while in open spaces, keeping the size of the space/ground in view, strict observance of social distancing, the mandatory wearing of face masks, provision for thermal scanning and hand wash or sanitiser has to be followed.

"State/UT Govts will issue detailed SOPs, to regulate such gatherings and strictly enforce the same," said the official.

BJP hits out at PC over his call for restoration of Article 370



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday came down heavily on the Congress for its unequivocal support for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status and the opposition party to include the restoration of Article 370 as a promise in its Bihar polls manifesto.

In a sharp riposte to Congress leader and former Union finance Minister P Chidambaram's comment on restoring article 370, BJP president J P Nadda alleged that the opposition party was subscribing to a "Divide India" agenda. Another senior BJP leader and union I & B Minister Prakash Javadekar sought to dare the Congress to put their promise of bringing back article 370 in the party's poll manifesto for Bihar.

In August 2019, a presidential notification along with the passage of requisite legislation in Parliament resulted in Article 370 becoming redundant and the state of J&K splitting into two- J & K, Ladakh- Union Territories.

Nadda drew a link between former Congress president Rahul Gandhi's recent praise for Pakistan and Chidambaram's pro-Article 370 statement.

Chidambaram had welcomed the formation of the 'People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration' and called for the people of J&K to be given back their rights that existed before August 5, 2019. Terming the Centre's decisions as "unconstitutional", he said that mainstream parties, as well as people of J&K, should not be perceived as "anti-national".

Javadekar pointed out that the Congress knew very well that the people of the entire country had endorsed the decision to scrap J&K's special status.

"Congress leaders P Chidambaram and Digvijaya Singh are saying that the decision to abrogate Article 370 was wrong and so, Congress will take it back. Can the Congress include this in the Bihar poll manifesto? They know very well that the people of Jammu, Kashmir,

Ladakh and the rest of the country welcomed the move to abrogate Article 370. They have seen the kind of progress in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in the past one year. But Congress is echoing the language of the soft separatists," said the BJP leader.

Alleging that Congress was endorsing the agenda of soft separatists, he regretted that the opposition party repeatedly went against the mood of the people.

The Union Minister accused Sonia headed BJP of praising China and Pakistan. Maintaining that Article 370 was always temporary in nature, Javadekar listed the various benefits secured by the people of J&K and Ladakh in the last one year.

"Congress is continuously adopting positions that go against the sentiments of the people of this country. Rahul Gandhi also praises Pakistan. They like to praise Pakistan and China on any issue.

The Constitution also stated that Article 370 is for a limited period, after which it will go.

Separatism has ended and all the vulnerable sections of the society got the benefit of reservation.

Many welfare laws were implemented in Kashmir," said the Union Minister.

Union Fisheries Minister Giriraj Singh also expressed 'outrage' at Congress' stance and questioned whether the party wanted to sever J&K from India.

All original Gupkar Declaration signatories barring for J&K Congress chief GA Mir came together for the first time on Thursday since the abrogation of Article 370. The Gupkar Declaration was a resolution passed by National Conference (NC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Congress, CPI(M), JKPC and ANC on August 4, 2019 (a day before the abrogation of article 370), pledging to protect the 'identity, autonomy and special status' of J&K.

After the meeting, NC president Farooq Abdullah announced the formation of the 'People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration' and called for the restoration of J&K's special status.

AS US ELECTION NEARS Virus surges in key battleground States

Madison: Rising coronavirus cases in key presidential battleground states a little more than two weeks before Election Day are the latest worry for election officials and voters fearing chaos or exposure to the virus at polling places despite months of planning.

The prospect of poll workers backing out at the last minute because they are infected, quarantined or scared of getting sick has local election officials in Midwest states such as Iowa and Wisconsin opening more early voting locations, recruiting backup workers and encouraging voters to plan for long lines and other inconveniences.

Confirmed virus cases and deaths are on the rise in the swing states of Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Wisconsin broke records this week for new coronavirus cases, deaths and hospitalisations, leading to the opening of a field hospital to handle COVID-19 patients. Gov. Tony Evers said he plans to activate the Wisconsin National Guard to fill any staffing shortages at election sites.

While holding a competitive presidential election during a pandemic is “tricky business,” the governor said, “People are ready to have this election over, and I think it will be a successful election with very few hiccups.”

In Iowa, Scott County Auditor Roxanna Moritz opened additional early voting sites in and around Davenport, the state’s third-largest city, to try to reduce the number of people casting ballots on Election Day and to keep the virus from spreading in large precincts.

“We have to remember that there is this thing called COVID,” Moritz said. “Our numbers aren’t getting any better. The more people I can get to early vote, the better.” The pandemic’s recent trajectory close to home has some voters reconsidering a lifetime habit of entering a voting booth on Election Day.

Tim Tompkins, a welding engineer in Iowa, took the day off work to cast an early ballot at the Bettendorf Community Center. Tompkins, 62, said he and his wife, Pat, were afraid of coronavirus exposure in Election

Day crowds but determined to vote, so they brought their own sanitizer to the community center Friday.

“We’d go through a vat of boiling COVID to get the current president out of office,” Tompkins said.

In some states, voting early still has carried health risks. Voters in Georgia, Texas and elsewhere encountered hours-long lines that required congregating with hundreds of other people this week. In Georgia, nearly a quarter of the workers in a warehouse where Fulton County’s election supplies are kept and voting equipment is readied tested positive for COVID-19.

The positive test results for 13 of the preparation center’s 60 workers shouldn’t delay election operations, county elections director Rick Barron said. Barron said Georgia’s most populous county is working to hire replacement staff and to implement additional safety measures, including daily rapid testing.

Voters in several Midwest states contested by U.S. President Donald Trump and his

Democratic challenger, former Vice President Joe Biden, encountered lines when they went to cast early ballots on Friday. Some described the decision to vote this year as one that

required deliberation and even courage.

Robert Baccus, 52, an independent contractor from Columbus, Ohio, was among hundreds in line at the Franklin

County Board of Elections early voting center. He said he doesn’t trust voting by mail, so early voting was his best option for casting a ballot while trying to safeguard his health. **AP**

Biden warns Trump wants to scrap health law

Washington: Joe Biden is warning Michigan voters that President Donald Trump wants to strip health insurance from tens of millions of Americans with preexisting conditions.

Campaigning outside Detroit on Friday, the Democratic nominee said Trump promises to protect the insurance eligibility of all Americans but in reality wants to scrap the 2010 Affordable Care Act.

That law for the first time set a federal standard that requires insurers to offer health insurance to customers regardless of their health history.

Biden says Trump “can only see from his penthouse” in Manhattan and doesn’t see most Americans’ daily struggles.

A 2017 study from the Department of Health and Human Services found that as many as 133 million Americans could be defined as having a “preexisting” condition by the standards insurers used before the 2010 law.

Biden noted that the number could rise in the wake of the pandemic. **AP**

Obama to campaign for Biden, Kamala

Macon: Former US president Barack Obama will campaign for Democratic party presidential candidate Joe Biden in Pennsylvania next week, the Biden campaign has said.

President Donald Trump, however, told his supporters here that Obama was an “ineffective” campaigner and this was good news for him as in 2016 “they did a lousy job and that’s why I’m your president”. Biden, 77, was the vice president during Obama’s two terms. While Obama has endorsed Biden and his running mate Harris by making online campaigns for them, this would be the first time that the 59-year-old former president would be campaigning in person.

Four years after he left the presidency, Obama because of his oratory skills, still remains the biggest crowd puller for the opposition Democratic party. “On Wednesday, October 21, (former) president Obama will travel to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to campaign on behalf of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris,” the Biden campaign said in a statement on Friday afternoon. **PTI**

Armenian missile killed 13, wounded over 50: Azerbaijan

Baku (Azerbaijan): Azerbaijan on Saturday accused Armenia of striking its second-largest city with a ballistic missile that killed at least 13 civilians and wounded 50 others in a new escalation of their conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Armenian Defence Ministry denied launching the strike, but the separatist authorities in Nagorno-Karabakh put out a statement listing alleged “legitimate” military facilities in the city of Ganja, although they stopped short of claiming responsibility for the attack.

Azerbaijani officials said the Soviet-made Scud missile destroyed or damaged about 20 residential buildings in Ganja overnight, and emergency workers spent hours searching in the rubble for victims and survivors.

Scud missiles date back to the 1960s and carry a big load of explosives but are known for their lack of precision.

In a televised address to the nation, Azerbaijan’s president,



Ilham Aliyev, denounced the missile strike as a war crime and warned the leadership of Armenia that it would face responsibility for that.

“Azerbaijan will give its response and it will do so exclusively on the battlefield,” Aliyev said.

While authorities in both Azerbaijan and Armenia have denied targeting civilians, residential areas have increasingly come under shelling amid the hostilities that have raged for three weeks despite Russia’s attempt to broker a cease-fire.

Stepanakert, the regional capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, came under intense shelling overnight, leaving three civilians wounded, according to separatist authorities. **AP**

NZPM Ardern wins 2nd term in landslide

Auckland: New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern won a second term in office on Saturday in an election landslide of historic proportions.

With most votes counted, Ardern’s liberal Labour Party was winning 49% of the vote compared to 27% for its main challenger, the conservative National Party.

Labour was on target to win an outright majority of the seats in Parliament, something that hasn’t happened since New Zealand implemented a proportional voting system 24 years ago. Typically, parties must form alliances to govern, but this time Ardern and Labour can go it alone.

In a victory speech in front of hundreds of cheering supporters in Auckland, Ardern said her party had gotten more support from New Zealanders that at any time in at least 50 years.

“This has not been an ordinary election, and it’s not an ordinary time,” she said. “It’s been full of uncertainty and anxiety, and we set out to be an antidote to that.” Ardern promised not to take her new supporters for granted and to



govern for all New Zealanders.

“We are living in an increasingly polarized world, a place where, more and more, people have lost the ability to see one another’s point of view,” she said. “I think in this election, New Zealanders have shown that this is not who we are.” A record number of voters cast early ballots in the two weeks leading up to the election.

On the campaign trail, Ardern was greeted like a rock star by people who crammed into malls and spilled onto streets to cheer her on and get selfies with her.

Her popularity soared earlier this year after she led a successful effort to stamp out the coronavirus. There is currently no community spread of the virus in the nation of 5 million and people are no longer required to wear masks or social distance. **AP**



Pro-democracy protesters gather during a protest in Bangkok on Saturday

TRANSIT SHUTDOWNS FAIL TO DETER THAI PRO-DEMOCRACY PROTESTS

Bangkok: Pro-democracy activists in Thailand staged a fourth straight day of high-profile protests in the capital on Saturday, thwarting efforts by the authorities to stop them, including a shutdown of the city’s mass transit systems.

Unlike protests a day earlier, which saw police using water cannons to keep the protesters at bay, Saturday’s demonstrations were peaceful, with no reports of any clashes by the time participants started heading home in the evening.

The protesters are calling for Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha to leave office, the constitution to be amended to make it more democratic

and the nation’s monarchy to undergo reform.

All stations of Bangkok’s elevated Skytrain transit system were closed Saturday afternoon to try to keep protesters from gathering. The underground MRT system was also shut, and police blocked off several roads.

Protesters met anyway as planned at the Skytrain stations, where they held small impromptu rallies, in effect establishing a temporary but active presence across the city. **AP**

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SOURA EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL, SKIMS MC&H, BEMINA & SKIMS, SOURA, SRINAGAR Tel: 0194-2402617 Ext: 2159, email: mechanicalskims@gmail.com

Re- 01 Notice Inviting E-tenders
Gist of NIT NO. 48 OF 2020-21 Dated. 15.10.2020
For and on behalf of the **Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS, Soura, MC&H Bemina Srinagar**, invites online e-bids in **two (02) cover systems** from Original Lift Manufactures or their Authorized Dealers/authorized Representatives/ registered and reputed firms having experience in installation of lifts in Govt. Institutions/ departments, detailed in the tender document for the following works:

Sr#	Name of the work	Estimated Cost (in lacs)
1.	Design, Supply, Installation, Testing, Inspecting and Commissioning of various types lifts along with CMC for 03-years at New Maternity Hospital, SKIMS.	175.00

The complete tender document is available at website **http://jktenders.gov.in**. Interested bidders/tenders may view, download the e-bid document, seek clarifications and submit their bids online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below. Tender Document contains qualifying criteria for bidders. Specifications, Bills of Quantities, & Terms and conditions of the contract and other relevant details.

i.	Date and time of downloading/Sale of tender documents (Starting Date)	17.10.2020 from 11:00 Hours
ii.	Date and time of Bidding Queries/clarification/pre-bid meet	28.10.2020 at 11:00 Hours
iii.	Last Date & Time of Bid Uploading	06.11.2020 up to 16:00 Hours
iv.	Date of submission of hard copies. (Only Original EMD/DD for Document Fee	07.11.2020 up to 14:00 Hours
v.	Date & Time of Commercial/technical Bid (Cover-I) opening	09.11.2020 11:00 Hours (or next convenient day)
vi.	Date & Time of Financial Bid (Cover-II) Opening of the qualifying Bidders	Shall be intimated separately
vii.	Cost of e-bid Document	Rs. 8700/- (Rupees Eight thousand & seven hundred only)
viii.	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit (CDR/FDR)	Rs. 350000/- (Rupees Three lacs & fifty thound only)
ix.	Completion Time	Six (06) months from the date of issue of LOI or Allotment Order.
x.	Budget Head	Ongoing works for the year 2020-21

No: SIMS 139 EX/MECH/2020-21/2485-95-5484-87
Dated: 15.10.2020
Sd/- Executive Engineer Mechanical, SKIMS

European nations to many nations around the world who share these concerns.

Canada’s opposition Conservative leader said the Chinese ambassador should apologize or be expelled from Canada.

“The Chinese ambassador has decided to engage in beligerent rhetoric unbecoming of his office,” Conservative leader Erin O’Toole said in a written statement.

“To be clear, this was a threat to the 300,000 Canadians in Hong Kong. And a barely veiled one at that. It was of the kind of tone and tenor one would expect from someone seeking protection money — not someone who is the official emissary of a member of the United Nations Security The government should also swiftly set up a “path” for political refugees to come to Canada from Hong Kong and impose sanctions on Chinese officials over the national security law,

O’Toole added.

Protests against the Hong Kong and mainland Chinese governments swelled last year, and Beijing clamped down on expressions of antigovernment sentiment in the city with a new national security law that took effect June 30.

The law outlaws subversive, secessionist, and terrorist activity, as well as collusion with foreign powers to interfere in the city’s internal affairs. The U.S., Britain and Canada accuse China of infringing on the city’s freedoms.

Trudeau also said China is engaging in coercive diplomacy by imprisoning two Canadian men in retaliation for the arrest of a Chinese Huawei executive on an American extradition warrant. In December 2018, China imprisoned two Canadian men, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, and charged them with undermining the country’s national security.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE			
Northern Railway Central Hospital, New Delhi for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders through www.ireps.gov.in for the following items. For detail information please log on to webs/e site www.ireps.gov.in			
Tender No.	Description	Qty.	Tender Opening date
83201029A	Rate contract for inj. Cetusimab 500 mg	100	13.11.2020
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE			2264/20

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY KANKE, RANCHI-834006 (JHARKHAND)

NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR OUTSOURCHING OF AGENCY FOR HOUSEKEEPING SERVICES AT CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY, RANCHI

Sealed tenders are invited from the eligible bidders for the outsourcing of agency for ‘**Housekeeping Services**’ at Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi. Tender documents can be purchased from the Establishment Section of Central Institute of Psychiatry, Kanke, Ranchi-834006 by submitting tender fee (Rs. 300/- Rupees Three Hundred) in the form of Demand Draft favoring Administrative Officer, Central Institute of Psychiatry, Kanke, Ranchi-834006 or by submitting Cash Rs. 300/- (Rupees Three Hundred Only) in the Cash Section of Central Institute of Psychiatry, Kanke, Ranchi-834006 w.e.f. 19.10.2020 to 09.11.2020 between 10.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. The tender documents can also be downloaded from the website free of cost. The last date of submission of tender is **10.11.2020 upto 3.00 P.M. (Tuesday)**

The details of the tender is available in our website i.e. www.cipranchi.nic.in and also in CPP Portal website i.e. at the www.eprocure.gov.in.

Sd/-, Director
CIP, Ranchi, Jharkhand

AXIS BANK

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Secured Creditor will be sold on “As is where is”, “As is what is” and “Whatever there is” basis on 07-11-2020, 11:30 A.M. at Axis House, Tower-2, 2nd Floor, I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Jaypee Greens Wishtown, Noida (U.P.)-201301 for recovery of Rs. 34,91,528/- due as on 17-10-2020 along with further interest as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred up to the date of actual payment and/or realization due to the secured creditor from Ms. Honey Roy & Mrs. Bani Roy. The reserve price will be Rs. 18,80,820/- and the earnest money deposit will be Rs. 1,88,082/-.

Account Number	Location / Details of the Immovable Property/Secured Assets possessed and put for sale	Encumbrances, if any known to the Bank.
PHR0792 03241253 & HTR0792 03280067	Residential Unit Bearing No. H/09-1, Admeasuring Super Area, 1200 Square Feet Situated At 9th Floor, Tower No. 5(H), In The Residential Scheme/Complex Known As “Redwood Residency”, Situated In Village Faridpur, Sector-78, Tehsil Tigraon & District Faridabad, Haryana Alongwith Proportiate, Undivided Imperible Share And Interest In The Said Land Underneath The Building In Which Said Unit is Located And In The Common Areas And Facilities Provided In The Building Complex.	

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in the secured creditor’s website i.e. <https://www.axisbank.com/auction-notices/>

Date : 18-10-2020
Place: Noida
Sd/-, Authorized Officer, Axis Bank Ltd.

WESTERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM

Tender notice no. BCT/20-21/207 dtd. 24.09.2020 & BCT/20-21/208 dtd.: 24.09.2020 due for opening on 20.10.2020 Should be Treated as **CANCELLED** D-0363
Like us on: [f facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)



SBFC FINANCE PVT.LTD.
(Erstwhile Small Business Fincredit India Pvt. Ltd.)
Unit No. 103, First Floor C & B Square, Sangam Complex, 127, Andheri-Kurla Road, Village Chakala, Andheri (East), Mumbai -400059 | Telephone: +91 22- 67875300 | Fax: +91 22 67875334 | www.sbfsc.com | Corporate Identity Number: U67130MH2008PTC178270

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform & notify the Public about the relocation of **Laxmi Nagar, Delhi Branch of SBFC Finance Pvt. Ltd.** effective from 15.01.2021.

From: SBFC Finance Pvt Ltd, G-59, 1st Floor, Main Vikas Marg, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi - 110092

To: SBFC Finance Pvt Ltd, Property No. 1/10 & 1/12, First Floor, Lalita Park, Near Laxmi Nagar Metro Station, Delhi-110092

For more details, please contact:-
SBFC FINANCE PVT.LTD.
Toll Free : 1800 – 102- 8012



SBFC FINANCE PVT.LTD.
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SBFC FINANCE PVT.LTD.
Toll Free : 1800 – 102- 8012

PUBLIC NOTICE

Lokesh Construction Private Limited
CIN: U70101DL1992PTC186666
Notice: Cessation of an Employee
Subject: Mr. Rajinder Singh, no longer associated with the Companies mentioned below Dear All,

This is to inform you that Mr. Rajinder Singh is no longer associated with Me or any of the following companies namely, Lokesh Constructions Private Limited, Karma Lifestyle Private Limited, Anki Wine Private Limited and Elxir Benidictine LLP with effect from September 12, 2020,

He is not authorised to represent the aforesaid companies and me in any matter whatsoever. Any person dealing with him shall do so at his own risk and responsibility
Sd/-
Ms. Anki Bhulia
Director

Istanbul: Turkey’s president has announced the discovery of an additional 85 billion cubic meters of natural gas reserves in the Black Sea.

Speaking aboard the drill ship Fatih on Saturday, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said explorations in the Tuna-1 well were complete after reaching a depth of 4775 meters (5,222 yards).

In August, Turkey announced the discovery 320 billion cubic meters of natural gas reserves off the Black Sea coast, which energy analysts considered notable but not large enough to turn Turkey into a regional energy hub.

Ankara says it plans to extract and use the gas by 2023, hoping to eventually decrease its dependence on energy imports. Last year’s imports totaled more than \$41 billion.

Turkey has increased its mar-

itime search for hydrocarbon resources, with several drill ships in waters near the country. Its vessels in the Eastern Mediterranean have been at the heart of a dispute with neighboring Greece over the delimitation of continental shelves.

“We will continue our search for hydrocarbon resources in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean,” Erdogan said.

This week, Turkey redeployed its survey ship Oruc Reis to disputed waters in an area among Greek islands, Cyprus and Turkey’s southern coast. Turkey pulled the vessel to shore last month for maintenance and resupply, saying the move would give diplomacy a chance, but the military and diplomatic spat continues. Erdogan warned that Turkey would use diplomacy and “all its might” to defend the energy rights for Turkey and Turkish Cypriots. **AP**

Turkey’s Black Sea gas find reaches 405bn cubic meters

2% fee on credit card use to top up Paytm wallets

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Paytm users will have to pay a 2 per cent fee on the amount added to their e-wallet using a credit card.

Until now, users had to pay 2 per cent fee if they loaded more than ₹10,000 in their e-wallets via credit card in a month.

A message saying “Nominal charge of 2 per cent is applicable on adding money using credit card. Nominal fee is applicable since we pay high charges to your bank/payment network when you add money using a credit card. Please use UPI or debit card to add money for free” is displayed when customers attempt to add money to their Paytm wallet via a credit card.

Paytm is also providing an offer, wherein users will get 2 per cent cashback up to Rs 200 on adding minimum Rs 50 using credit card, as per the message.

When contacted, a Paytm Payments Bank spokesperson said customers have the flexi-



bility to add money to their Paytm wallet from any of their preferred funding source, including UPI, net banking and cards.

“The banks and credit card companies charge a fee for loading money into the Paytm wallet from any of these sources.

The 2 per cent charge is passed on to customers, who use credit cards for adding funds to their wallet. For all other sources, we will continue to absorb the cost of loading money,” the spokesperson said.

The spokesperson further said the company has temporarily waived the 5 per cent

charge that is levied on money transfer from wallet to bank accounts as a promotional offer for the festive season.

“The amount added in the wallet can be used to transfer money to another wallet or bank account, to make payments to online and offline merchants via QR codes, to process bill payments, do recharges and multiple other forms of transactions. All such transactions will also continue to be free of cost for our customers,” the spokesperson said.

In 2017, Paytm had introduced a similar fee on amounts added to wallet via credit cards, but had rolled back the decision after pressure from users.

IndiGo introduces service fee for check-in counter usage

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to encourage web check-in, airline lmajor IndiGo has introduced a service fee for usage of check-in counters at the airports.

Accordingly, the fee has come into effect from Saturday.

“We encourage all passengers to web check-in as per the government directive, using our website or mobile app. The check-in fee at the airport counters is applicable on all bookings made, starting from October 17,” the airline said in a statement.

The airline added that it is committed to take all precautionary measures for a contactless and hassle-free travel experience for its passengers.



₹1.08 lakh crore worth loans sanctioned under discom liquidity package



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As much as ₹1.08 lakh crore worth of loans under the liquidity package for stressed power distribution utilities have been sanctioned so far, REC said on Saturday.

In May, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced ₹90,000 crore liquidity infusion into cash-strapped discoms, facing demand slump due to the lockdown to contain COVID-19.

This package was later increased to ₹1.2 lakh crore by the Ministry of Power. “Till date, REC and PFC (Power Finance Corporation) have sanctioned ₹1.08 lakh crore and released nearly

₹30,000 crore to discoms under the scheme,” REC said in a statement.

The loans under the package will be co-funded by PFC and REC in equal proportion. The loans would be sanctioned in two equal tranches.

REC also said it has sanctioned ₹ 2,790 crore to Jammu Kashmir Power Corporation Ltd (JKPCL) under the scheme.

The agreement was signed between the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, JKPCL, REC and PFC.

Under the liquidity infusion scheme of the Centre, REC and PFC are extending financial assistance at a concessional rate of interest, it added.

Riding on 5G, Apple may see 15% iPhone growth next fiscal year

IANs ■ SAN FRANCISCO

Apple is expected to witness 15 per cent iPhone growth next fiscal year and the primary wave of Apple 5G telephones has placed the ball in carriers and builders court, research-driven US venture capital firm Loup Ventures has forecast.

“While we believe it will take carriers years to build a compelling 5G infrastructure, Apple is ready today with a lineup of phones that should enjoy a three-year upgrade cycle, compared to a typical one-year duration,” wrote Gene Munster and David Stokman.

“Additionally, the company continues to advance augmented reality. We see the combination of AR and a 5G iPhone as the basis for why Apple is the best way to invest in 5G.”

According to a report in DigiTimes, Apple iPhone 12 series shipments are expected to reach as many as 80 million units by the end of the year owing to more affordable pricing strategy.

Shipments of the new iPhone lineup, including the iPhone 12, iPhone 12 mini, iPhone 12 Pro and iPhone 12 Pro Max, will at least top 70 million units by the end 2020, with the possibility of hitting 80 million barring a further escalation of the US-China trade conflicts, it reported.

According to Munster and Stokman from Loup Ventures, “We imagine the variety of iPhones which are three years or older has elevated by 90 million items over the previous year, which supplies a tailwind for iPhone demand within the coming year.”

Low base, attractive interest rates lift Sept domestic PV sales

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

Low base, along with more sustainable pent-up demand, boosted domestic passenger vehicles’ sales in September on a year-on-year basis.

According to industry data released on Friday, a total of 2,72,027 passenger vehicles were sold in the domestic market, representing a rise of 26.45 per cent, against the 2,15,124 units off-take during the like period of 2019.

The data released by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) also showed a sequential growth in sales during September.

In August, the domestic passenger vehicles’ sales had risen by 14.16 per cent to 215,916 units from 1,89,129 units sold during the corresponding month of the previous year.

Besides, the data showed that car sales in the country rose by 28.92 per cent to 163,981 units in September, compared with 127,194 units during the year-ago period.

As per SIAM, the data does not include sales figures from some key players such as Tata Motors.

In terms of utility vehicles, sales grew by 24.50 per cent to 96,633, while vans’ offtake went

up by 10.64 per cent to 11,413 units against the same month a year ago.

However, three-wheeler sales were 18,640 units in September 2020 compared to 66,362 units on a y-o-y basis, marking a decrease by (-) 71.91 per cent.

Additionally, two-wheeler sales were 1,849,546 units in September 2020, compared to 1,656,658 units, representing a growth of 11.64 per cent.

On the second quarter FY21 performance, SIAM data showed that passenger vehicle sales rose 17.02 per cent to 726,232 units from 620,620 units sold during the corresponding month of the previous year. In contrast, commercial vehicle sales stood at 133,524 units from 167,173 units showing a de-growth of (-) 20.13 per cent. Similarly, three-wheeler off-take declined. The segment’s sales decrease by (-) 74.63 per cent to 45,902 units from 180,899 units. Two-wheeler sales segment, however, reported a marginal growth of 0.17 per cent to 4,690,565 units from 4,682,571 units.”In quarter-2 some segments have shown signs of recovery. Passenger vehicles and two-wheelers are positive, although on a very low base of previous year,” said SIAM President Kenichi Ayukawa.

India is gradually moving towards an economy based on clean energy

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

As part of reforms oriented towards providing cleaner auto fuels in the country, government will soon launch a pilot on hydrogen CNG or HCNG soon, a senior government official said on Saturday.

Petroleum secretary Tarun Kapoor said that a pilot project on HCNG is being undertaken in Delhi soon that will improve efficiency and reduce emissions drastically.

Speaking the Inaugural Session of ‘Alternative Fuel Technology for Vehicles: A Cure-all for Sustainable Mobility’ organised by PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry in association with CSIDC, Government of Chhattisgarh, Kapoor said.

India is becoming a leader in CNG, there has been a significant transition with the need to move towards cleaner fuels like CNG, ethanol, biodiesel, and electric vehicles.

He said that we need to ensure that CNG is available and affordable ensuring that vehicles are modelled to incorporate CNG smoothly.

Discussing city gas distribution, he shared that there is significant work happening especially in the infrastructure so that CNG is seamlessly available. “We will be doing a pilot project in Delhi on HCNG that will improve efficiency and reduce emissions drastically,” the secretary said.

Talking about ethanol, he mentioned that by the next year, there would be a jump in the ethanol production and India is planning to introduce E12 and E15 shortly.

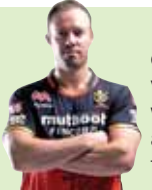
Gradually, we will have blended petrol all over the country and moving to a higher percentage. We have to make pure ethanol available that is happening in several countries and, some countries also have multi-fuel vehicles like Brazil. There is a pilot project



Given the strength and depth we have in our batting-line, and the different skill-levels and skill-sets that we have, we have to be as adaptable as possible going forward



The preparations for play-offs haven't started. We are taking every game as it comes. Whatever happens we got to keep it simple, stay humble and play to our strengths



I'm very very nervous and erratic (in chase) and I get very stressed like any player. I want to perform for the team and show the owners I'm here for a good reason



We wanted to use Jaydev to the bigger boundary, he bowls a lot of slower stuff into the wicket. Obviously the boundary was not big enough for De Villiers



Yuzvendra Chahal fiancé Dhanaashree Verma arrives at Dubai International Stadium on Saturday to watch IPL game between Royal Challengers Bangalore and Rajasthan Royals [IPL720.com](#)



Mumbai Indians pacer Jasprit Bumrah chats with KKR's young pacer duo of Shivam Mavi and Kamlesh Nagarkoti [@KKRiders](#)

BOOM'S WILLINGNESS TO IMPROVE

Mumbai Indians' bowling coach Shane Bond heaped praise on Jasprit Bumrah, saying the India fast bowler's desire to improve makes him one of the best fast bowlers in the world. Bumrah is one of the world's premier fast bowlers currently, having led the India attack in their first-ever Test series win in Australia in 2018-19. "It's been fun, always loved working with Booms (Bumrah), six years now," said Bond in a video on Mumbai's pace attack posted by MI on Twitter. "The thing I love about Jasprit is his willingness to want to improve. He's turned up in this series (IPL 2020), he has got another different ball in his armoury and when you're seeing it from a player who's self-motivated, doing things in the background to make himself better, then there's no surprise to me that he's one of the best fast bowlers in the world."

DON'T BAT IN PRACTICE PANTS

Mumbai Indians' opening batsman and wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock put up a perfect performance with the bat on Friday night, scoring a 44-ball 78 to lead his team to an eight-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders. But if you ask team head coach Mahela Jayawardene, his show on the batting crease wasn't exactly perfect. In a video released by the Mumbai Indians on Twitter, the former Sri Lanka batsman is seen telling De Kock to avoid batting in practice pants which the South African did on Friday. "Apart from Quinny going and batting with his practice pants, everything else was pretty decent," he said during a post-match pep talk in the team camp, leaving others in splits. "Ok, so don't do that again because the marketing guys are going nuts, people went nuts as well. If it works, it works but we'll sort something else," he said to De Kock. De Kock had to lower his jersey during the innings to hide the orange strip on the practice pants.

POINTS TABLE

		P	W	L	NRR	PTS
1	MI	8	6	2	+1.353	12
2	DC	8	6	2	+0.990	12
3	RCB	9	6	3	-0.096	12
4	KKR	8	4	4	-0.684	8
5	SRH	8	3	5	+0.009	6
6	CSK	8	3	5	-0.390	6
7	RR	9	3	6	-0.778	6
8	KXIP	8	2	6	-0.295	4

AB deVilliers again

Former South African skipper's 22 ball 55* takes RCB past finish line

PTI ■ DUBAI

AB de Villiers' swashbuckling 22-ball 55 fashioned an incredible seven-wicket victory for Royal Challengers Bangalore over Rajasthan Royals on Saturday.

Chasing 178, De Villiers smashed six sixes to help RCB win the game after all seemed lost for them following the dismissal of Virat Kohli with the team struggling at 102 for three in the 14th over.

The seasoned South African launched into Jaydev Unadkat for three successive sixes in the 19th over to swing the match in his team's favour. He finished the game in style, hitting Jofra Archer for a maximum with two balls still to go.

RCB lost Aaron Finch (14) after Australia's limited overs captain had hit two sixes.

Kohli and Devdutt Padikkal stitched a 79-run partnership for the second wicket but consumed too many deliveries in doing so, failing to keep pace with the required run rate.

Kohli brought the team's hundred by lofting Rahul Tewatia for a big six over long-on, but Padikkal, while trying to break the shackles after struggling his way to 35 off 37 balls, got out when his pull shot failed to clear Ben Stokes in the deep.

And then came the big wicket of Kohli, thanks to a brilliant piece of fielding by Tewatia, who pulled off a catch inches from the line at deep midwicket on the rebound after the batsman whipped it off his pads.

The ball travelled at a



great speed but Tewatia, coming off a wicket in his previous ball, balanced himself after nearly falling over the line to complete a fine catch.

Kohli made 43 off 32 balls with the help of two sixes and a four.

The required run rate rose rapidly as RCB struggled to find the big overs, but de Villiers had other ideas.

Earlier, skipper Steve Smith's counterattacking 36-ball 57 guided Rajasthan to 177 for six.

Smith struck six fours and one maximum before Chris Morris bowled a brilliant final over, conceding only four runs while taking two wickets to check RR from going past 180.

Fast-medium bowler Morris finished with excellent figures of 4/26 in four overs.

Earlier batting first, Rajasthan were off to a brisk start as opener Robin Uthappa (41 off 22 ball) launched into the RCB attack with a flurry of fours and a six.

Back in his favoured position alongside Ben Stokes after another change in the combination, Uthappa saw his team play two quiet overs before smashing Washington Sundar for four boundaries in the innings' third over.

Isuru Udana was pulled and then lofted over long-on by Uthappa for the day's first maximum as RR raced to 38 for no loss in four overs.

Morris gave RCB their first

KKR aim to sort out batting woes

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

MATCHES	18
SUNISERS HYDERABAD	07
KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS	11
Stats: Faisel Features	

A new captain in the saddle, Kolkata Knight Riders would look to sort out their batting woes and strive for consistency when they face Sunrisers Hyderabad in an intriguing mid-table clash here on Sunday.

After a string of below par performances, Dinesh Karthik handed over the reins to his deputy Eoin Morgan hours before KKR's match against Mumbai Indians on Friday. But the World Cup-winning England captain's campaign as leader was off to a disappointing start with MI handing KKR an eight-wicket mauling.

KKR are still in the top four of IPL points table behind Mumbai Indians, Delhi Capitals and Royal Challengers Bangalore with four wins and as many defeats. But if the two-time champions want to seal a play-off spot, their batsmen need to step up, shrug off their inconsistencies and win matches for the team.

After a massive 82-run loss to RCB, the KKR batsmen failed yet again against MI bowlers as they were reduced to 42 for 4 in the eighth over. Half of KKR batsmen were gone for 61 in the 11th over. An 87-run unbroken stand for the sixth wicket between Morgan (39 not out) and pacer Pat Cummins (53 not out) took them to 148 for 5.

But MI needed just 16.5 overs to overhaul the target, losing two wickets in the process.

At the top, Shubman Gill has failed to capitalise on his starts, while Rahul Tripathi has not gone past the 20-run mark after his brilliant 81 against the Chennai Super Kings.

Nitish Rana has been profligate and Karthik's batting slot has been experimented with throughout the tournament. Andre Russell and Morgan have also not been able to make the kind of impact expected from players of their calibre.

The KKR bowlers did well to fashion narrow victories against Kings XI Punjab and

CSK, but leaked runs against RCB and MI. To add to their woes, star spinner Sunil Narine has been reported for suspect bowling action and he has missed two matches since then.

The Sunrisers, who occupy the fifth spot on the points table with just three wins from eight outings, are also struggling. With the injuries ruling out pace spearhead Bhuvneshwar Kumar and all-rounder Mitchell Marsh, the Orange Army is facing a conundrum of whether to strengthen their batting or their bowling unit, a fact that skipper David Warner conceded.

The team heavily relies on its batting unit, mainly on the top four comprising Jonny Bairstow, Warner, Manish Pandey and Kane Williamson. A cause of concern for the Sunrisers is Rashid Khan's form. After returning impressive figures like 3/14, 0/12, 3/12, the Afghan leg-spinner remained ineffective in the team's last two losses. And skipper Warner will desperately hope that his star spinner finds his mojo back which is imperative for the team's success.



Collective batting effort takes CSK to 179/4

PTI ■ SHARJAH

Faf du Plessis hit his fourth half-century of the season before Ambati Rayudu produced another useful cameo as a collective batting effort propelled Chennai Super Kings to 179 for four against Delhi Capitals, here on Saturday.

Du Plessis (58) added 87 runs with Shane Watson (36) after early fall of Sam Curran (0), setting it up nicely for the CSK.

Rayudu hit 45 off 25 balls while Ravindra Jadeja hit four sixes in his fiery 33-run knock as CSK collected runs in the last three overs. One of Jadeja's sixes landed on the road outside the stadium.

They added 50 runs in 3.3 overs during their unbeaten fifth wicket partnership.

While Watson relied on safe ground-strokes considering the sluggish track Du Plessis did not hesitate to improvise, playing a lot



Shane Watson congratulates CSK teammate Faf du Plessis on his fifty [IPLT20.com](#)

of scoop shots. He pulled the short ones with ease.

Young pacer Tushar Deshpande bowled a tight line with

decent speed and was rewarded when Curran, without measuring the bowler, swung his arms but just managed a top-edge that was

Top meets the bottom

PTI ■ DUBAI

They have been in rampaging form with five straight wins but Mumbai Indians can ill afford to be complacent against a Chris Gayle-inspired Kings XI Punjab side here on Sunday.

A win for Mumbai Indians will virtually seal them a spot in the play-offs while a loss for KXIP could send them out of contention.

Mumbai Indians have steam-rolled opposition teams with an explosive batting line-up complemented by a lethal bowling attack and the latest side to bear their brunt were the Kolkata Knight Riders who suffered an eight-wicket defeat on Friday.

Table-toppers MI boast of top batsmen such as captain Rohit Sharma (251 runs) and his opening partner Quinton de Kock (269) and both are in good touch, while the middle-order is manned by the likes of Suryakumar Yadav (243 runs) and Ishan Kishan (186 runs).

Rohit played second fiddle to de Kock in MI's win against KKR, with the South African hitting



Rohit Sharma prepares to bat at nets [@mipaltan](#)

78 not out from 44 balls.

In the bowling front, pacers Jasprit Bumrah and Trent Boult have formed the most successful pair this IPL with 12 wickets apiece from eight matches so far. Spinner Rahul Chahar chipped in against KKR with two wickets for 18 runs.

On the other hand, KXIP are languishing at the bottom of the table despite having the top-two

leading run-getters of the tournament in skipper K L Rahul (387 runs at a strike rate of 134.84) and his opening partner, Mayank Agarwal (337 runs).

KXIP's problem has been that their batting and bowling have not fired in unison on most occasions even though their confidence has been boosted by the return of Gayle.

The self-proclaimed *Universe Boss* made his first appearance this IPL with a bang, hitting a 45-ball 53, a knock that was laced with five sixes and a four in KXIP's win over Virat Kohli's Royal Challengers Bangalore.

A captivating duel may be in store between Gayle on one side and Bumrah and Boult on the other.

KXIP have other in-form batsmen in Rahul and Agarwal, with both or at least one of them scoring big in almost every match.

But their bowling has been the weakest link. Barring Mohammad Shami and Ravi Bishnoi, none of the bowlers have inspired confidence, especially in the death overs.

Not being able to find the right balance despite trying out many options has also contributed to KXIP's rapid slide.

MATCHES	25
MUMBAI INDIANS	14
KINGS XI PUNJAB	11
Stats: Faisel Features	

Planning to start domestic cricket from Jan 1: Ganguly

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The much awaited domestic cricket season will start from January 1, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly said on Saturday.

The BCCI Apex Council met on Saturday evening and a good amount of time was spent on discussing the domestic calendar which had been thrown in disarray by the surging cases of Covid-19 in India.

"We have had extensive discussions on domestic cricket and we have tentatively decided to start the competitions from January 1, 2021," Ganguly told *PTI* from Dubai.

When asked if it would be a curtailed season or not, the former Indian captain said the board won't be able to accommodate all domestic tournaments for practical purposes.

"We will certainly have the full fledged Ranji Trophy redball tournament. It will probably not be possible to hold all tournaments," Ganguly said, hinting that BCCI is eyeing the January-March window for Ranji Trophy.

The BCCI president also assured that the junior cricket and women's tournaments will be held between March and April.

"We also have elaborate plans for

our age group and women's cricket. We will start with Ranji Trophy and then we will also have the other tournaments between March and April," he said.

He also informed that the Indian team will be allowed to train in Australia during their quarantine phase.

"Cricket Australia has sent us an itinerary and we discussed the modalities of that itinerary. We will be playing four Tests and that will end in third week of January," the BCCI president said.

The Indian team is expected to play three ODIs, three T20Is and four Tests Down Under.

On the home series against England, Ganguly said that the BCCI is monitoring the situation and the final itinerary will be prepared in due time.

"The England series is good three and a half to four months away. We still have time. We are monitoring the situation (Covid-19) which is pretty fluid and will take a call accordingly," he said.

While hosting the series in India (Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Dharamdala being likely venues) remains priority, the UAE is a second option.



the pioneer agenda

FROM THE INSIDE

A super thriller all the way

Balla House puts to rest a lot of controversies and versions on the infamous Balla House encounter

2



4

Test of astrologer/astrology

The astrological chart at the moment makes one aware of the potential seeded in mind, making it possible to foresee the future

I'd rather be by myself than be spending any time or energy on somebody that I didn't feel sure about
— Blake Lively



Photos: Ayandrali Dutta

Will this year see the beginning of the return of the Durga Puja in its original form? SAIMI SATTAR discusses the idea with Kolkata denizens to find out more

THE HOMECOMING

This year, 41-year-old Arpita Sarkar is relieved that rather than being stuck for hours in traffic in the month preceding Duga Puja, she has been able to commute smoothly to and from office. “Things had come to such a head that we had decided that even though we hate spending these days away from Kolkata, we would do so,” she says. But a tiny miniscule virus had other plans. So now, for the six days of the Puja, rather than engage in *pandal*-hopping, Arpita along with her family will cook something special at home, probably go to a relative’s house where children too would be able to catch up with their cousins. “That is what *Pujo* signified for us when we were growing up. Heading to *Mama baari* or *Bade Papa*’s place with our parents is what we did as children. Even though, it is a community celebration, the crowds that have become synonymous with Durga Puja are not the essence of the festival,” says 41-year-old Arpita who works as an HR in a multi-national company in Kolkata and counts dance and drama as her areas of interest. She often performs at the cultural programmes organised during Puja and this year she is recording the performance which is being put up jointly with other artists on YouTube channels.

Over the years, for Bengalis and non-Bengalis, Durga Puja came to be centered around how many *pandals* they had hopped, which one displayed the best theme and which Puja Committee was likely to win an award that year. The lament, especially among the older generation, was that the emphasis was now on an extraneous journey while the festival was more of an inward cruise of devotion which had gone completely missing. But nature often has a way of setting humans on the path of course correction, sometimes in the form of a virus, only if they are willing to listen to its call.

Like every year, Ayandrali Dutta, travel and food writer who has made Delhi her home for the past 12 years, will be making her way back to Kolkata be a part of the 168-year old ancestral Burrabazar Mallick Bari Durga Puja that is celebrated at her house. “Over the past five-six years, Durga Puja has become a social media activity where you have to do a check in at all the pandals,” says Dutta who sees her annual homecoming as something akin to the Goddess Durga’s return to her maternal house.

At Ayandrali’s, till last year, there would have been around 300-400 people visiting and eating at her house. These would be family friends, relatives, people who had heard about the *puja* through word-of-mouth. “This won’t happen this year,” says Ayandrali firmly. While the *aarti* would take place, the ceremonial conch would be blown but the place where the five-feet idol is placed would not be flocked with people who had queued up for a dekho at the *prati-ma*. This year there would not be more than five-six at one time. But Ayandrali believes that this was very much-required. “We needed to slow down and cut down on lot

of frills which we thought were an important part of life. After all, that is what we have been doing during the past seven months and it has done us a lot of good. It has made us realise that minimalism could be a part of life. Instead of 400 people eating earlier, now there would be 50 and that it is perfectly fine. If we are feeding for the sake of charity, we can do it in some other place and in some other way,” she says adding that Pujas had become a larger than life affair.

While Ayandrali is much younger, Arup Sarkar, a retired government servant can recall a time when Pujas were simpler affairs. “The budgets have become huge due to sponsorship by political parties and corporates. There is an excess of everything — lighting, theme, decoration. A lot of money is thrown around on the display but the devotion that is needed is nowhere to be found. Earlier, the way the face was crafted, the body made and the decorations done were exceptional. The idols were simpler but they inspired devoutness. The *bhakti* that came from the heart is no longer there,” he says. He hopes for a return to the simplicity of earlier times but is not relying on the fulfilment of his wishes — even during the pandemic.

Arpita, a trained Bharatnatyam and Odissi dancer, too is not fond of the theme *pandals*. “The competitions are a way of showing off how much money can be splurged. The focus is on making expensive *pandals* and political parties have jumped into the fray as well. When we were younger, we went to see the *pandals* every year. The idols and *pandals* were the same each year but they inspired devotion. Since they are so intricate and expensive now, there are many restrictions about where we can sit and what we can touch so much so that people are not able to enjoy themselves,” she says.

Arup points out that earlier there was a lot personal involvement. “The entertainment was different. Everyone from the extended family pitched in ensuring that the festivities went off smoothly. On the cultural side, someone sang, another one recited. It was unparalleled *anand*,” he says.

Ayandrali too agrees that the complexion of Puja underwent a change as different members of the household became busier and a lot of work was outsourced to people. “Earlier every member had a responsibility to go and get the flowers, buy the vegetables, decorate the house and more so there was personal touch. Many of us no longer stay in Kolkata and when we return for Puja we prefer to outsource the work and spend time with family,” she says.

Of course, like contemporary times, earlier too *pujas* entailed dressing up to the nines; *dhaaki* players who by their rhythmic percussions signalled the arrival of *Maa* Durga to her maternal home; the *dhumochi naach* made popular in the non-Bengali speaking areas by countless Bollywood films as well as *pandal*-hopping but it is the



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new norms of social distancing that have forced many to sit back and rethink about the hijacking of this festival by Mammon.

The change had started around 25 years back when the concept of “theme *puja*” made an entry. From 1993-94 each of the *paara* (area) began to conceptualise the *pandal* around a contemporary issue. It could be questioning violence against women while celebrating a goddess or depicting the condition of refugees or creating awareness about social issue of contemporary relevance. As the *pandals* grew in scale, awards started being handed out for different categories like best idol, lighting, decoration, social work and more. To remain a contender in the competitions needed a scaling up of budgets and corporate sponsorship or by political parties entered the picture. And after that there was no looking back as each year the magnificence and size of the *pandals* grew and visitors from and around Kolkata lined up.

However, 48-year-old Sutirtha Basu, a regional manager in a pharmaceutical company has a different take. Sutirtha, who used to visit nothing less than 50-60 *pandals* every Puja, feels that these gave artists and craftspeople a platform to display their talent. “Artists who conceptualise the *pandals* are from arts college and are really talented. Depending on the theme, they get village artisans adept in crafts like mud, metal or others to make the *pandals* and give them an opportunity to showcase their ability. An entire economy depends on Durga Puja. These people have tremendous flair but it was never exhibited,” he says and adds, “The awards are a recognition of the hard work and talent.” Not just the *pandals* and idols but also the social work done by Puja Committee is rewarded.

Despite the changes, a *bonedi puja* or the one celebrated at a *Zamindar baari* (home) like the one at Ayandrali’s ancestral home, still maintains tradition. “Even if they do not assemble at any other time, they make sure to come during *puja*. They dress up in traditional attire, wear the heirloom jewellery and have cultural programmes,” says Arup.

In fact, historically it was only the *zamindar* and other rich families who celebrated Durga Puja at their homes. “There was no *paara puja* which started 100-110 years back during the British Raj. The *zamindars* objected to the *paara pujas* as earlier they had exercised a monopoly over organising Durga puja. Being allowed to visit one was considered to be a favour bestowed upon one. While all the *paara* people were not freedom fighters but they wanted that they should be able to express their hatred against the British. So the *asur* (demon) in the *pratima* (idol) was depicted like the British and the Goddess was shown to be killing him,” says Basu.

Fast forward to today. And whether we would be able to annihilate materialism and imbibe the true spirit of the festival, this year and in the ones that follow, is a story that is unfolding and yet to be written.

MEANWHILE IN THE CAPITAL...

For sometime now the Durga Puja Committees in Delhi were in a quandary about the way they could go ahead and celebrate the festival without endangering people while ensuring that the festivities remained intact. The Purbanchal Bangio Samiti, a forum of 38 committees which celebrate Durga Puja in East Delhi formed about two years ago decided to take the lead and, post several parleys with Manish Sisodia, Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi finally, managed to come out with a set of guidelines that attempts to do both.

While the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Govt. of India had already issued a Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the first week of the month, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) suggested some additional measures. All the event organisers have to obtain requisite permission from the District Magistrate concerned for organising the festival events well in advance. The order says that the capacity of each event site would be decided on the basis of area and social distancing norms, laid down by MHA by which in a closed space, a maximum of 50 per cent of the hall capacity would be allowed, with a ceiling of 200 persons, and in an open spaces the size of the ground would be kept in view and strict observance of social distancing norms would be followed. Naturally, the seating capacity for each such site would be determined according to the norms of social distancing and observing Covid-appropriate behaviour.

This would include ensuring separate entry and exit at each event which will be strictly regulated and only those wearing a face mask would be allowed inside.

Every organising committee is supposed to video-record the entire event and a soft copy of the unedited video recording in pen-drive and a certificate, certifying that no violation of the SOPs/Guidelines issued by Govt. of India and Govt. of NCT of Delhi has taken place, shall be submitted to Nodal officers within three hours of closing of the programme of each day. In case of any violation of SOPs/guidelines the permission for conducting such an event shall be revoked immediately for all subsequent days. At all events only sitting on chairs with social distancing norms shall be allowed. Suitable arrangements have to be made for an adequate number of temporary toilets and other public facilities like electricity, water, sanitisers and thermal screeners at each site venue.

Mrinal Biswas is the general secretary, Milani Cultural & Welfare Association, Mayur Vihar, as well as the Purbanchal Bangio Samiti, a forum of 38 committees which celebrate Durga Puja in East Delhi formed about two years ago. Says he, “Only 11 of the 38 committees will organise the Durga Puja with a small idol. The rest would have a *kalash/ghot puja*. The idol would be eco-friendly with water-based colour and of the height of three-five feet. Some of the *puja* committees would be organising online pushpanjali. No cultural events, *bhandara* and stalls would be allowed.”

At the Milani Clubhouse, they are registering members and handing out digital tokens for visiting the place where the idol is kept. The restricted entry would be rotated after every half an hour so that everyone gets a chance to offer prayers while maintaining social distancing. Children below 12 and elderly people above 65 will not be allowed inside.

For the immersion, a metal tank is being arranged by Purbanchal Bangio Samiti at Mayur Vihar Kali Bari Ph-1 and at Purbasha Kali Bari (IP extn) premises with each Puja committee being given a different time slot. Puja material like flowers, leaves and decorative items will not be allowed at the time of immersion.

(The writer is a Professor of English. Presently, he is Director at UGC Human Resource Development Centre, Aligarh Muslim University)

