

WORLD 6

'I VOTED FOR A GUY NAMED TRUMP,' PRESIDENT SAYS

MONEY 7

FY19 GST RETURNS FILING DEADLINE EXTENDED TILL DEC 31

SPORT 8

KKR BEAT DELHI BY 59 RUNS

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USUAL SUSPECTS
SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Can Modi's appeal do wonders for Nitish?

Opinion polls in India may well be indicative but they are rarely accurate — as opposed to exit polls which tend to be nearer the mark. Part of the reason for unending inaccuracies lie in the flawed methodologies of the polls. Random sampling costs a lot of money, not to mention sampling rigour, and the limited budgets of media organisations often rule out a statistically robust survey. On top of that is the bizarre — but nevertheless real — inclination of some pollsters to produce results that appear good news to their clients. The importance of accurate predictions over make-believe good news has never been fully appreciated by either media organisations or political parties.

The real shortcoming of opinion polls in Indian elections can be located in the restrictions imposed by the Election Commission on the publication of the polls. Since it has been deemed that the campaign should not be influenced in any way by polls that predict winners and losers, the surveys are conducted before the battle lines in the constituencies are clear. The polls published so far contain a significantly large numbers of undecided voters — or voters who refuse to indicate their voting intentions. This means that small shifts can change the outcome. Accurate polls have to track the popular mood as the campaign progresses. Since this isn't possible owing to the restrictions imposed by the EC, speculation based on anecdotal evidence by politicians and media professionals abound.

Notwithstanding these obvious limitations, it is possible to make a few observations on the state of play in the Bihar Assembly elections.

First, there is a huge question mark surrounding the final turnout at a time of pandemic. The crowds at rallies may well be impressive and passionate about their preferences. However, while the mood of the rallies may well turn out to be infectious, it is pertinent to bear in mind the fact that those attending rallies constitute a small percentage of the electorate. Most voters make up their mind on the strength of accumulated experiences built up over the years, traditional affiliations and, finally, community choices. Rallies and smaller campaign meetings do help to disseminate messages, but they are never all-important inputs in the final vote.

Although Narendra Modi's appeal and popularity is intact, can it offset the impression that Nitish is well past his prime? Here the record is mixed. Modi couldn't offset the anti-incumbency against Raghuraj Das in Jharkhand; he and Amit Shah couldn't prevent the AAP victory in Delhi because Kejriwal had a higher leadership rating than local BJP faces. But electoral arithmetic has an important role

This election may be further complicated by the underlying fear of being part of a crowd on voting day. Although the fear of the Covid-19 pandemic is more pronounced in the urban areas, there is still a significant proportion of rural voters who are loath to step out of their safe zones and go into polling stations. I personally feel that the Bihar election may see a dip in the turnout of voters in the 50+ age bracket. If this happens, it is

conceivable that some of the advantages Nitish Kumar has gained on the strength of his governance record and a corresponding fear of the return of "jungle raj" may be neutralised.

Secondly, as a leader and administrator, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is understated. He is a quiet worker and is not inclined to be theatrical in his style. The prolonged disruption of normal life since March has meant that his presence on the ground has become more fleeting. This reclusiveness hasn't affected the administrative reach of the State Government and its work during the migrant worker influx from other States has been quite exemplary. However, quiet work is often peripheral to a loud narrative which exaggerates hardships and underplays administrative depth. It is difficult to know if this can shape the final outcome. The past record is mixed. In Odisha, for example, Naveen Patnaik's low-key approach hasn't affected his party's election outcome. In a similar vein, the Left Front in neighbouring West Bengal prevailed for three decades on the strength of the CPI(M)'s formidable network — this despite the fact that in terms of campaigning in the three weeks prior to voting day, the Opposition was more visible.

In Bihar, there is no doubt that in the past week Tejashwi Yadav has generated excitement on the strength of his aggressive campaigning and promise of 10 lakh new Government jobs. The BJP has responded with a promise of 19 lakh additional jobs, a promise which may either be regarded as a copy-cat assurance or have the effect of diluting both assurances. However, the fact remains that the Janata Dal (U)-BJP alliance has been reduced to banking disproportionately on the appeal of the Prime Minister. Now, although Narendra Modi's appeal and popularity is intact, can it offset the impression that Nitish is well past his prime? Here the record is mixed. Modi couldn't offset the anti-incumbency against Raghuraj Das in Jharkhand; he and Amit Shah couldn't prevent the AAP victory in Delhi because Arvind Kejriwal had a higher leadership rating than local BJP faces.

Finally, there is electoral arithmetic to consider. The Opposition in Bihar seems terribly fractured and the anti-Nitish Kumar vote may well be horribly fractured. This may give the incumbent the advantage in a first-past-the-post system. But there is also the uncertainty over the JD(U)'s organisational weakness and its ability to harvest votes in the constituencies it is fighting. What are likely to be the consequences if the BJP's strike rate is significantly higher than that of the JD(U)? This possibility has opened the doors to speculation and many conspiracy theories.

Every election in India is bitterly fought and clouded in uncertainty till the counting of votes. However, when the votes are counted, the results often reveal a clear pattern. Bihar may well be no different.

KITCHEN BUDGET GOES FOR A TOSS

Soaring prices of veggie, pulse, other essential items dampen festive spirits

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Already suffering from the Covid-19-induced miseries, the "aam aadmi" is finding it tough to manage his household affairs with his kitchen budget having doubled or tripled due to soaring prices of vegetables, pulses and even wheat flour (atta). As if the wiping out of the annual festivities due to coronavirus wasn't enough, the price rise has only added to the dampening of the festive spirits.

The kitchen staples are burning a hole in the common man's pocket. Prices of vegetables are already high as onions cost ₹80-100 a kg, potatoes ₹50-60 a kg and tomatoes ₹60-70 a kg while the retail prices of pulses have recently registered a steep hike. There has been a sharp increase in prices of most pulses including tur (arhar), moong, masoor and urad that have crossed the ₹100 per kg mark in most cities

across India.

Interestingly, a significant population avoids consuming onions during the "navratra" period (for nine days) but despite the lower consumption the prices continue to be very high due to shortage of supply.

Officials of the Agriculture Ministry said potato prices too have surged more than 62 per cent since May as production fell in key growing States and demand soared amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Traders in Uttar Pradesh, the largest potato producer in the country, said prices will remain on these lines at least till March.

As for onions, according to Rajendra Sharma, a wholesale supplier of the bulb at Asia's biggest vegetable and fruits market Azadpur, the supply has reduced from Maharashtra and Karnataka due to its shortage. "Of the 28 lakh tonnes stored in Maharashtra, around 10-11 lakh tonnes remain now. The yearly consumption of onions

	MAXIMUM PRICE (RS) PER KG	CITIES
Onion	95	Mumbai
Potato	60	Port Blair
Tomato	80	Raiganj
Moong (dal)	138	Mumbai
Tur/Arhar	130	Varanasi
Urad	130	Thiruchirappalli
Masoor	120	Siliguri
Wheat	48	Nashik
Atta	55	Port Blair

*PRICES AS PER MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS FOR OCT 24

in India is slated to be 160 lakh tonnes with Maharashtra alone consuming around 4,000-6,000 tonnes per day," he said.

"The heavy rain in September not only destroyed the new crop in Karnataka but also took a toll on stored onions in States like Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. Farmers in Maharashtra alone had marketable onions, having stored the 28 lakh tonnes at the start

of summer," he added.

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs has imposed a stock limit of two tonnes on retailers and 25 tonnes for wholesalers till December 31. The Ministry has also supplied 35,000 metric tonnes of onion to States and Union Territories to maintain certain stability in prices.

The national acreage for rabi onions last season was 10

lakh hectares as against 7 lakh hectares of 2018-19. But the additional wastage has constrained supply. There are three main onion crops — kharif (June-July sowing, post-October harvest), late kharif (September sowing, post-December harvest), and rabi (December-January sowing, post-March harvest). The rabi crop has the least moisture content, making it amenable to

storage.

Given the steep hike in the onion price, the Telangana Government on Saturday decided to sell the edible bulb at ₹35 per kilo at the Government-run "Rythu Bazaars". Two kilos of onions would be sold per person and the consumers have to show any identity card.

According to Suresh Agarwal, All India Dal Miller Association, there is a shortage of pulses in the country as farmers have switched over from pulses to wheat and soybean since 2018. Besides, the Government policies also led to this situation.

Most pulses come to India from South African countries, Canada and Myanmar. India had imported 3.17 MT of pulses in 2014. This rose to 5.8 MT in 2016. It further rose to 6.6 MT in 2017, followed by 5.6 MT in 2018. In 2018-19 though, the imports reduced to 2.527 MT.

Cashback of extra interest on loans up to ₹2 cr soon: Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In line with the Supreme Court's directions in view of the festival season and the Covid-19 pandemic, the Centre has finalised a scheme for grant of ex-gratia payment of the difference between compound interest and simple interest for six months of loans up to ₹2 crore.

The move will cost the State exchequer ₹6,500 crore. The Supreme Court had directed the Centre to implement such a scheme "as soon as possible".

As per the operational guidelines issued by Department of Financial Services, the scheme can be

availed by borrowers in specified loan accounts for a period from March 1 to August 31, 2020.

"Borrowers who have loan accounts having sanctioned limits and outstanding amount of not exceeding ₹2 crore (aggregate of all facilities with lending institutions) as on February 29 shall be eligible for the scheme," it said.

Housing loan, education loans, credit card dues, auto loans, MSME loans, consumer durable loans and consumption loans are covered under the scheme.

As per the scheme, the lending institutions shall credit the difference between compound interest and simple

interest with regard to the eligible borrowers in respective accounts for the said period irrespective of whether the borrower fully or partially availed the moratorium on repayment of loan announced by the RBI on March 27, 2020.

The scheme is applicable on those who have not availed the moratorium scheme and continued with the repayment of loans.

The lending institutions after crediting the amount will claim the reimbursement from the Central Government.

According to sources, the Government will have to shell out ₹6,500 crore for the implementation of the scheme.

Income tax returns' deadline extended till December 31

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Aiming to provide relief to taxpayers facing constraints due to Covid-19, the Income Tax Department on Saturday yet again extended the deadline for individual taxpayers for filing their returns for Financial Year 2019-20 (assessment year 2020-21) by a month till December 31.

For those taxpayers whose accounts need to be audited, the Income-Tax Return filing deadline has been extended by two months till January 31, 2021.

The Government had in May extended the date for filing ITR for FY2019-20 from July 31 to November 30, to give



compliance relief to taxpayers.

In a statement, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said, "The due date for furnishing of Income Tax Returns for the taxpayers [for whom the due date (i.e. before the extension by the said notification) as per the Act was July 31, 2020] has been extended to December 31, 2020."

The due date for furnishing

of ITR for the taxpayers, who are required to get their accounts audited (for whom the due date as per the I-T Act is October 31, 2020), has been extended to January 31, 2021, it added.

The CBDT said the deadlines have been extended in order to "provide more time to taxpayers for furnishing of Income Tax Returns".

CAPSULE

FREE VACCINE PROMISE IN PERFECTLY IN ORDER: FM

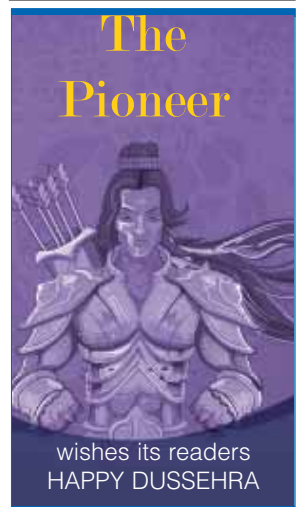
New Delhi: Amid Opposition's criticism of the BJP's Bihar poll promise of free Covid vaccines, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman asserted that the announcement was perfectly in order and a party can announce what it wants to do when it comes to power.

FAROOQ TO LEAD GUPKAR ALLIANCE

Srinagar: Seven mainstream parties of Jammu & Kashmir on Saturday gave a formal shape to their cobbled Gupkar alliance for the restoration of Article 370, electing National Conference's Farooq Abdullah as its chairman and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti as vice-chairperson.

RISHI SUNAK 'BARRED FOR LIFE' FROM UK PUB

London: UK Chancellor Rishi Sunak and three fellow ruling Conservative Party members of Parliament from northern England have been "barred for life" by a local pub and restaurant in their constituency region after they voted against free school meals for children during the holidays.



Corona attack on BJP Bihar election drive

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Coronavirus continues to hit the BJP in Bihar, the latest being the party's election campaign incharge and former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

Making it public, Fadnavis tweeted on Saturday, "I have been working every single day since the lockdown but now it seems that God wants me to stop for a while and take a break! I have tested #COVID19 positive and in isolation. Taking all medication & treatment as per the advice of the doctors."

"Those who have come in contact with me are advised to get Covid-19 tests done. Take care, everyone!" another tweet read.

Fadnavis, who is also the leader of Opposition in the Maharashtra Assembly, was appointed as the BJP incharge for Bihar elections last month. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had on Friday during his rallies

Now campaign incharge Fadnavis tests +ve

in the State termed it as the first major election in the world amid the corona pandemic."

Before Fadnavis, Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister Sushil

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 78,60,149

DEATHS: 1,18,477

RECOVERED: 70,68,241

ACTIVE: 6,72,121



Nath is deceptive like Ravan: Chouhan

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Ahead of bypolls in Madhya Pradesh, while Dussehra is approaching, demon king Ravana has entered the campaigning. Addressing election rallies at Ambh in Morena and Gwalior, CM Chouhan said Kamal Nath is deceptive like Ravan.

"In the past he had weaved a deceptive net of farm loan waiver. He is weaving the same net again, please don't fall for the trap," Chouhan urged the public.

Prompt came the reply from Kamal Nath when he said, "Shivraj ji, the public has

identified you properly and like year 2018, the public will make you sit at home against this time in bypolls."

Chouhan in his address said, "Ravan was also deceptive and he had created deception for abducting goddess Sita. Mother Sita had fallen for the trap and was abducted by Ravan. Therefore, don't fall for trap laid by the Congressmen. When we are making recruitments, Kamal Nath is saying it was there in Vachan Patra. If he was in state government, he would have done nothing."

MPCC chief Kamal Nath at Bhind;s Mehgaon and Morena said, "Shivraj ji is say-

ing that he is temporary Chief Minister and let him be appointed permanent CM. When the public had appointed you as permanent CM for 15 years, he destroyed the state. The public will not be deceived now and will make you sit at home," said Nath.

He also lauded the land of Chambal saying locals here don't forgive deceit and the BJP has defamed the region with saudebazi and the public will teach it a lesson.

Nath of late has been accusing Chouhan of engaging in theatrics kneeling down at times and laying the ground on others.

India vows to save Himalayan abode of snow leopards

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a move that would go a long way in the conservation of snow leopards and prevent land degradation of the Himalayan ecosystem inhabited by a large number of locals, India has identified three sets of landscape — Hemis-Spiti across Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh, Nanda Devi-Gangotri in Uttarakhand and Khangchendzonga-Tawang across Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh — for the restoration of the flagship species in the high-altitude region.

"The Government is committed to landscape restora-

tion for snow leopard habitat conservation and is implementing participatory landscape-based management plans involving local stakeholders," Union Minister of State for Environment Babul Supriyo said on Friday on the eve of the International Snow Leopard Day 2020 on Saturday. He listed out the three landscapes.

The iconic big cats' conservation status improved from "endangered" to "vulnerable" in 2017, as the Centre has been conserving the snow leopard and its habitat through the Project Snow Leopard (PSL), which was launched in 2009.

HOME THEATRE

Mirzapur 2 as good or bad as 1



MIRZAPUR 2
Amazon Prime Video
***ing: Pankaj Tripathi, Divyenndu Sharma, Ali Fazal, Shweta Tripathi, Harshita Gaur, Rasika Dugal, Rajesh Tailang, Sheeba Chadha, Anjum Sharma, Vijay Varma and others**
Rated: 6/10

First things first. *Mirzapur* has not reformed itself from being perhaps one of the most violent, sleazy, abusive and yet unashamedly luring. Season 2 is even more so, at least in the first three mentioned traits. The disclaimer at the beginning attempts to assuage your alarm by saying totally fictitious and the like. However, the knowledge of this sort of a scenario being a reality in the cow belt of the nation, the unabated goondaism, the police criminal nexus, the impunity and violence with which criminals conduct their business keeps you on the hook all through the 10 episodes of Season 2, which, by the way, has set itself up for a third season. Personally, I eschew and cringe at pronounced screen violence and in this one the bloodbaths are what makes for the story.

Mirzapur is India's *Game of Thrones* with just a tad less history to it.

The man who will be King of Mirzapur has to be powerful, with no chinks of vulnerability in his demeanour. He should be able to kill at will even if it is his favourite and loyal servant for decades or his own father! Corruption of the system matches up with the corruption of the mind, boy and soul of all its main characters who have, come to think of it, done a pretty good job if you hate them all in equal measure.

Will not be able to call *Mirzapur* riveting but yes it draws your blood to your temples, makes you curdle in fear and cringe in disgust with such pointed venom and force that it automatically qualifies for a binge watch.

The end is predictable and similar to the first season, the characters have matured and the violence here prevails only to push the story into a state of no repair and the climax sets up the window for the next season with the polish of a veteran.

Mirzapur will be watched in the third season too. How watch-worthy is such content can be a topic for debate on another platform.

Meanwhile waiting avidly for the sequel of *The Family Man*.

Short & sweet

LAGHUSHANKA
SonyLiv
Short film, 14 minutes
***ing: Sanjay Mishra, Raghav Juyal, Abhishek Chauhan**
Rated: 8/10

The thing about short films is that they are fully loaded second to second to tell a story. In this format the story has to be short but have the potential of leaving a long term impact. Stunning climax, an ending you may not have fathomed, and every frame meant to tell the story, or should one say race to finish the story because the director has just 14 minutes to leave a mark on you.

Laghushanka is of that

potent, telling and interesting category. It deals with the issue of bedwetting by an adult girl who has a marriage staring down her face, a hysterical family and the prospect of it coming out in the open in her *sasural*.

The film has been treated with a lot of acumen, tender loving care and slick production which keeps you hooked from the beginning to the end.

It also delivers a powerful message on human weakness and ailments that are often treated with insensitivity and indifference.

This head turner film is neither insensitive nor indifferent to the issue it has at and must watch.



Worth a watch

A SUITABLE BOY
Netflix
***ing: Tabu, Ishaan Khatter, Tanya Maniktala, Rasika Dugal, Ram Kapoor, Mikhail Sen, Namit Das**
Rated: 6/10

Many of us over the last 27 years would have tried to reach out to a copy of *A Suitable Boy* only to balk at the sheer size of the novel — 1349 pages. This alone was a good enough for a large number of people to stay away from one of the longest novels published in a single volume.

But thanks to Mira Nair, one can now find out why the book had created quite a stir when the book was out in 1993. The subject was enough to make it the talk of the town — a mother's quest to look for a suitable boy for her youngest daughter.

Even though there are a few misrepresentations of how women behaved back then and what they wore, one can give them a miss and instead concentrate on how Nair has brought the 1951s era alive once again on the screen. The six-episode limited series takes one on a journey on what it was like to live in a post-Independent India. A few clippings give us a sneak peek of what it was like when people voted for the very first time. But the mini-series and the book is not about post-Independent India but the lives of people in that time and how a mother

goes about choosing a husband for her daughter and rejecting many because they are — of course — not suitable. A mother knows best the adage which comes across loud and clear.

Despite the fact that Tanya Maniktala's character keeps smiling even though there is an internal turmoil, she does a great job as the daughter who has to do the choosing. Tabu, Ishaan Khatter and Ram Kapoor



do a brilliant job in supporting roles. In fact, they are the backbone of this mini-series.

While many may not agree with the whole concept with a mother looking for a suitable boy given that we are living in the 21 st Century. But the truth remains that arranged marriages and a parent choosing husband/wife is not such an alien concept even today.

Overall, the mini-series is entertaining and keeps you glued wanting to know what comes next and who is finally the suitable one.

— Shalini Sakesna

Of magic and life lessons

OVER THE MOON
Netflix
***ing: Cathy Ang, John Cho, Ruthie Ann Miles, Sandra Oh, Phillipa Soo, Robert G Chiu**
Rated: 6.5/10

There is something so sweet and cute about watching animation especially if it is a fairy tale. There is a reason why even adults love watching them.

The whole idea of seeing a kid believe in fairy tales and living it, makes us relive the same and take us back to times when we were kids and believed in Santa Claus and the idea of an old lady who lives on the Moon and keeps herself busy by spinning. But as adults, we do know that the dark patches on this natural satellite are actually deep craters on its surface.

Over The Moon, is one such sweet fairy tale even though it does borrow a lot from Disney — a castle, a princess, a side kick and neon colours that covers the entire canvas. But then Disney is the benchmark when it comes to animation and it is no wonder that the makers would want to be as close as they can get to perfection.

This lunar adventure has

magical locations, fantastic animation, good music and sweet characters. The stark contrast when the protagonist lands on Moon, makes one feel a bit disconcerting but the vibrancy and positive life lesson — family is what matters the most — makes this a must watch especially if one has kids.

— Shalini Sakesna

TELLY TALE

KULFI TURNS HOST
Popular child artist Aakriti Sharma *aka* Kulfi is all set to co-host Star Plus' upcoming singing reality show *Taare Zameen Par* alongside ace comedian Sugandha Mishra. The talented duo will enthrall viewers with various performances on stage, enabling a fun-viewing experience. Premiering on Monday, November 2, the show will highlight the musical journey of 20 children who will be nurtured, supported and encouraged by 3 celebrated mentors Shankar Mahadevan, Tony Kakkar and Jonita Gandhi.

Little Kulfi *aka* Aakriti Sharma has won many hearts with her innocence in her earlier show *Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala* and she is a pro at portraying emotions with much ease and perfection.

Kulfi Kumar Bajewala fame Aakriti Sharma embarks on a new journey and she says: "I am happy and excited to host/anchor my first show on television. The



entire team has been kind and helpful especially Sugandha *did*, she has been the best partner to me. I get to learn so many things while shooting for this show since singing is my favorite hobby. In the coming days, I wish to learn the music from Shankar Sir who is the mentor on our show."

Gear up to watch a unique show which explores the talent, personality and goofiness of young singing wonders.

THE UNBREAKABLE JODI

Sony SAB's widely acclaimed historical fiction show, *Tenali Rama*, continues to win viewers' hearts by reviving the ancient tales and anecdotes of the legendary scholar and poet Tenali Rama and taking them right into the heart of Raja Krishnadevaraya's Vijayanagar. The show continues to gain immense love and support for its engaging and values driven storyline that offers entertainment across all ages in a family.

Talking about the glorious success on television and sharing their experience so far, Krishna Bharadwaj — everyone's beloved



Pandit Rama Krishna and Tarun Khanna — the celebrated king Krishnadevaraya, get candid about their journey so far as artistes and a lot more.

Krishna Bharadwaj, better known as Pandit Rama Krishna since past three and a half years shared key highlights of the journey so far: "I have lived this character for so long that I do not even remember my life before Tenali Rama. Pandit Rama Krishna is a part of me, and I am so glad that I have had the opportunity to adopt all the noteworthy qualities of Rama. This show has given me immense love and support from the fans, and it is indeed a heartwarming feeling when a character succeeds in creating a positive change in someone's life. A lot of fans reach out to me talking about how the show made them smile or helped them cope with difficult times. As an actor, it is really fulfilling."

Tarun, while sharing his views on the reasons behind the success of this show, said: "Since my childhood till now, I have never come across a show that is a total family entertainer and at the same time high on values. Tenali Rama is a show that familiarizes the audience with our Indian culture. In my family my six-year-old son and my 75-year-old father-in-law watch this show together. There are hardly any shows that can bring such distinct age groups together. The characters have been so beautifully and cleverly designed that even a character like Amma who has no dialogues in the show has been loved. The characters are so well rounded and unique that makes him stand out in any situation. This is immense hard work and dedication that has determined the success of this show.

Sharing about their experience of working with one another, Krishna said: "I feel Rama and Krishnadevaraya's character are like Lord Krishna and Sudama. Rama practically worships Krishnadevaraya and would do anything for him. So, the chemistry between these two characters are really important for the show. After Tarun's arrival on the show, we never lacked the chemistry. It was there since day one." Adding further, Tarun said, "I was thrilled to be a part of this show as it is fulfilled my childhood dream of being a part of the world of Tenali Rama. Before joining the show, I had not watched any of the episodes and I

got the glimpse of Krishna's talent on my first day of the shoot. I have rarely seen artists who have such a stronghold on their language and Krishna is certainly one of those few actors."

BEATING THE BLUES AWAY

Given the tough past six months that we have spent during the lockdown, the current festive season is giving a whole lot of positive energy to everyone! Last year during this time, we all were excited and in a festive mood spreading cheer all around. In the same way, Sayantani Ghosh who is currently seen as Rasiya in *Colors' Barrister Babu* & will also be seen in *Colors Shandaar Ravivaar*, misses being in Kolkata for Durga



Puja. The actress says she feels nostalgic about being away from all the festivities in Kolkata. However, the popular show *Barrister Babu* and the upcoming two-hour long special segment *Shandaar Ravivaar* are helping the actress cope up! Sayantani will be seen celebrating Durga Pooja and doing the traditional dance in both the shows.

Commenting about the same Sayantani Ghosh said: "The ambience during Durga Puja in Kolkata is totally different. The festival fever is unmatched and everyone is gripped by the festive fervour. I miss the noise of the dhak (drums) and wearing new clothes. These were yearly rituals for me wherein there used to be one pandal in every single lane in Kolkata! This year, I am feeling a bit sad as I will not be able to go due to COVID-19. Although the flights are open now, I do not want to risk travelling especially because of the current situation as my parents are senior citizens and I do not want to risk their health. In our show the current track is around Durga puja and so is my performance in *Shandaar Ravivaar* and the atmosphere around is really making me feel more nostalgic. Hopefully next year, by the blessings of Maa Durga, I'll be able to go there!"

‘Interesting to play traditional father’

RAJENDRA CHAWLA, who plays Pratap Ratan Bansal in *Tera Yaar Hoon Main* on Sony SAB, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about how tough it was to shoot under the new normal, how this role is different and upcoming projects

■ What is your role in the show?

The show represents three generations — grandfather, father and son. I play Pratap Ratan Bansal who is the eldest in the family. He lives his life according to what he thinks is right. He doesn't belong to the era where the father is not a friend but someone who needed to be heard when he spoke without being questioned. According to him each relationship is defined and need not be merged.

■ What is the best thing about your character?

It is his quirkiness that is interesting. It is not as if he is in a foul mood all the time. However, the other person may think otherwise. He is a fun person to be with. He has fun with this grandson. But he has a grudge. He wanted his grandson to be a cricketer but he could be one. So, Bansal keeps taunting him about this. But he loves his family.

■ Was it tough to go back to shooting after the lockdown opened?

Yes, definitely. Before the show started its shoot, we had a virtual meeting with a doctor. He told us that while on the sets, we must always think that the person in front of us is asymptomatic. He told us that despite all the precautions the production house takes, we must not let our guard down. But doing this was so tough and scary. When we reached the set, the normal was to hug and greet each other. But on the first day, nobody exchanged more than two lines. Each one of us was scared that more conversation will mean a hand on the shoulder and we had to maintain distance. We avoided talking to each other. It will take time to get things back to normal.

■ You have played the role of a father a few times, how is this different?

The first thing is that I have never played a father who is from the 40s and the 50s. Till now, I had played the role of a progressive father. Here I play a traditional father which is interesting. Also, the way I deliver the dialogues is different, language here is different. The character is Marwari. I don't know anything about the accent or how they behave.

■ You have been in the industry for over two decades now. How have things changed?

Back then there were fewer people in the industry but we managed to get things done. Now, there are a lot more people and jobs are defined. Earlier, a verbal agreement was enough. Now everything has to be done via emails — it has become a corporate set-up



Before the shoot started, we had a virtual meeting with a doctor. He told us that while on the sets, we must always think that the person in front of us is asymptomatic

now. This could be because there is far more work involved.

■ Does this mean that competition has increased?

Yes, there is competition. But it also means that there is much more work in the industry. Many youngsters now don't have to struggle for work. There is theatre, there is TV, there is web and films that offer all kinds of diverse work. There is no dearth of work today. This means one gets to do varied work. Even cinema has changed. This is because the younger generation has access to more information.

■ You have done TV shows and films. How are the two different when it comes to acting?

There is no difference. For each platform, be it theatre, TV or films, I have always done my work honestly. The only difference is that in cinema, one gets more time to prepare for the character. The director has time to pay attention to how the character needs to go forward. In TV, this is not possible since the director has little time. So here, I have to be prepared 90 per cent before I reach the set.

■ How did your acting career begin?

It began with Marathi theatre. I met Satish Kaushik and ended up doing more theatre. In time, I ended up with a Marathi serial. Since I didn't have any Godfather my previous work propelled me further. Wherever I am today, is due to the people I met in my work and I am grateful to them for it.

■ What are your future plans?

I am working on two shows. One, of course, *Tera Yaar Hoon Main* and the other is *Mere Dad Ki Dulhan* on Sony Entertainment Television. In between, if I get a film, I will do that as well. Also, I love to work with new-age directors. Working on web series doesn't involve too much time since they are finite.

NEP for maximum benefit of students: Guv

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Governor Anandiben Patel has said that the building structures of the new university should be built high rise. Special efforts should be made by marking the universities of the State for a place in the list of top universities of the country. Stress should be laid on making arrangements for the new projects and innovation with P.P.P.T. Model and CSR fund.

Patel was holding discussions with officials and vice-chancellors of Government universities of Indore and Bhopal on various topics related to quality of higher education and development of the universities of the State at Raj Bhavan today. Principal Secretary Higher Education Anupam Rajan and Principal Secretary Raj Bhavan D.P. Ahuja was present in the meeting.

Patel said that the universities of the State should make efforts to get a place in the list of top universities of the country. In this work, the universities should not depend on the administration for essential financial resources. Along with utilisation of funds available in the university, financial support should be garnered from industrial establishments under the P.P.P.T. Model and Corporate Responsibility Fund. She said that it is necessary to make efforts with innovative thinking for P.P.P.T. model.

Instead of thinking about profit-loss, efforts will have to be made for innovation while prioritising students' interests. Sharing her memories with

the Vice Chancellors, she inspired them to connect vocational and commercial institutions with the universities. She stressed on the need to take the initiative to acquire modern experimental, Training tools equipments and machines required for training for the university by coordinating with the industrial units close to the university with their research, human resources, educational and training requirements.

She urged to acquire sufficient funds from the CSR fund for vocational, commercial, research and innovative knowledge resources and continuous contact with industrial establishments. She stated the need for constant efforts and effective contact and coordination with the establishments.

The Governor said that the building structures of the new universities should be made high rise. This work should be done according to the modern construction technology, environmental protection and availability of financial resources. The State government and University Management should work with consideration. She said that proper arrangement of all modern facilities, lighting and ventilation should be ensured in the university building by making it high rise.

While the construction of such buildings will make additional land will be available for tree cover for environmental protection, the expenditure on link related arrangements like road, drinking water supply, boundary wall construction will be reduced. Integrated use of resources

will lead to maximum and better utilisation and management. She has also asked to consider setting up of a land limit of 10 acres for universities to be set up in urban areas and a maximum of 100 acres for universities to be built in the outer region. She also expressed concern over the large amount of money kept by universities in fixed deposits. She said that except the amount fixed for emergency requirements, the entire remaining amount should be used for the academic quality of the university. Instructions were given to the authorities to get an action plan for the next three years from the universities for the work to be done in this regard.

Patel said that the provisions of the National Education Policy should be used for maximum benefit of students. Online learning system should be disseminated to benefit students from lectures of best teachers from all over the country. She also held discussion on the management of employee pension fund. She stated the need for use the fund with excellent professional expertise. She instructed that a coordination committee should be formed to review and take effective action to ensure the arrangement of amount required for the fund. She said that the Higher Education Department should take necessary action related to reimbursement of government grant given by Indore University for the management of Suganidevi Government College in view of emergency.

Nath Govt lied and betrayed the entire State: VD Sharma



BJP State President VD Sharma during an election campaign rally in Sumaoli, Morena district, Madhya Pradesh, on Saturday

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

This is the habit of Congressmen to lie, as they lied about loan waiver and in upcoming elections, they will make rounds to gain. They would spread lies and tricks but people should avoid them and vow to make Bharatiya Janata Party victorious for the development of your region, said State President of BJP and Parliamentarian VD Sharma.

He was addressing the public meetings of Karaira, Sumavali and Gohad on Saturday.

He further said that this election is not just the election of 28 Assemblies. The people of the entire State are fighting this election, because the Kamal Nath Government lied and betrayed the entire State.

The meeting was also addressed by Home Minister of the State Narottam Mishra.

BJP Government used to provide ₹25,000 under Kanyadan scheme Congress government raise it to ₹

51,000 which was never provided to any beneficiary.

The loan waiver for farmers was not done. Sambal scheme which has provisions from birth to last rites was shut by former CM Kamalnath. Women from economical weaker section were provided ₹4,000 which was increased to ₹12,000 but was closed former CM Kamalnath.

Home Minister of the state Narottam Mishra said that Gwalior- Chambal region was neglected by Congress due to which Kamalnath never visited the region but eyeing elections they have started to reach people of the region.

He said, Congress terms defectors as traitor but in reality Congress is traitor as people of the state have been deceived in the name of loan waiver, unemployment allowance.

The pace with which state has grown and developed in the past six months is remarkable and to maintain growth vote for BJP.

Tanjavoor painting depicts scene of Raj Darbar of Lord Rama

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Under the Latest and popular online series of Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya entitled 'Exhibit of the Week' The Tanjavoor Kal Ovium (painting), collected from 1998, The Nagarhar / Chettiyar Community of - Karikudi, Shivganga, Tamil Nadu Its Measurement — Height - 187 cm., Width - 130 cm. displayed in the audience as the Fifth Exhibit of the month of October. 2020 through official website, Facebook, Instagram and twitter page of the IGRMS.

In this regard Praveen Kumar Mishra, Director, IGRMS said that Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (National Museum of Mankind), Initially this series will focus on the masterpieces from its collection which are considered as unique for their contribution to the cultural history of a particular ethnic group or area.

This Tanjavoor painting depicts the scene of Raj Darbar of Lord Rama. In this painting Lord Rama and Sita are shown sitting in a couch and Laxman with Bharat and Shatrughna holding chhatra and chouri respectively standing behind them. Hanuman is shown holding the foot of Lord Rama. Courtiers, saints and other vanaras are also depicted in this painting. On the lower part of the painting ten incarnations of lord Vishnu is depicted in separate niches.

Regarding this object Sudeepa Roy said that The Tanjavoor painting consists generally of vivid red, deep greens, chalk white, turquoise



blue and the lavish use of gold foil and inset glass beads. Sometimes precious stones are also used in the paintings. The Raju community of Tanjavoor and Tiruchi, known as Chitragara and the Naidu community of Madurai are the traditional artists who skilfully executed paintings in the Tanjavoor style.

The artists originally migrated from "Rayalseema" region of Andhra. Painting was made on different subjects which varied in quality depending upon the patron's

interest, urgency and most importantly influence and financial capacity.

However, the art was by and large a sacred task to be performed with a reasonable degree of ritual purity and humility by the master craftsmen. Generally, Tanjavoor painting was generally made on a canvas, pasted over a plank of wood (jackfruit or teak) with Arabic gum. In the past, artists used natural colours like vegetable and mineral dyes, whereas the present day artists use chemical paints.



Devotees perform Yagna on Maha Ashtami in a temple during Navratri festival in Bhopal on Saturday

Four miscreants nabbed

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Koh-e-Fiza police has nabbed four miscreants who were involved in robbery of car in the wee hours on Friday. An ex-employee of the victim murdered the robbery who was burdened with heavy loan and to repay loan crime was committed.

Police have recovered car bearing registration number MP04CS9682 which was robbed, car used in the crime bearing registration number MP17CC6248, a mobile phone, Rs 600 cash, one air pistol, one country made pistol, 7 live cartridges and two sharp edged weapons.

Notably, the victim Pawan Nagpal was held captive by

The robbery was planned by Atul who was in debt and sought help of Sharad Pandey

four masked miscreants in the wee hours on Friday when he went to morning walk and found that the security guard of building was tied to the chair and later they captivated him in his flat while his mother and wife were held captive in another room and miscreants escaped with car of the victim which was later recovered from Bhainskhedi.

Atul Verma (26) of Harshwardhan Nagar, Ravi

Gupta (27) of Gandhi Nagar, Ravindra Patel (24) and Sharad Pandey (22) of Harshwardhan Nagar.

The robbery was planned by Atul who was in debt and sought help of Sharad Pandey but as he was also facing financial problems and was in debt and both are residents of Rewa and came to Bhopal in search of work where they met their friend Ravi Gupta who gave idea of robbery of the victim and they roped in Ravindra Patel who works in Pune.

Accused conducted recce for days to plan robbery and have planned to sell car and repay loan. After the crime the car was sold which was recovered from buyer.



Senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Digvijay Singh comes out from Election Commission office after registering a complaint against BJP leaders using derogatory remarks during the ongoing election campaign, in Bhopal on Saturday

37,420 square kilometres of forest area in State classified as degraded forest area: Min

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Forest Minister Kunwar Vijay Shah has said that an innovative initiative has been taken by the Forest Department to entrust the responsibility for private investment aimed at restoring and improving the degraded forest areas of the state. Approval will be sought by sending the proposal to the Government of India following which the process of inviting private investment will begin.

Shah informed that 37,420 square kilometres of forest area in the State has been classified as degraded forest area. He said that through private investment, the forest cover would be increased to strengthen the livelihoods of the local communities living in degraded forest areas, as well as to achieve the goal of sustainable operation of mitigating environmental services like water cycle etc.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief of Forest Force, Rajesh Srivastava has issued guidelines to all the Regional Chief Conservator of Forests and Regional Forest Divisional Officers in this regard that all the Forest Divisional Officers should select and inspect the areas and prepare the information including the map and mandatorily send it to the Head Office in a fortnight.

This work has been taken up keeping in mind the constructive role of private investment in degraded forest areas of the state. This will achieve the goal of increasing pro-

ductivity of degraded forest areas besides capital investment in forestry sector will boost technical and managerial skills. Through this scheme, increase in employment opportunities to local communities will strengthen livelihood based on natural resources in the long run, achieving the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat by providing local products in place of imported raw material to wood based industries as well as sustainable operation of ecological services through green cover will also play a leading role in achieving the nation's goals for mitigation of climate change from carbon absorption.

In the first phase, areas with good prospects will be selected in each forest division. In area selection, such areas will be selected from the reserved or protected forest area in the restoration work area, where more than 60 percent of the area has less than 0.2 area density, under the action plan of the forest board. One work unit will be formed including the forest area of 7500 to 1000 hectares at one place. As much as possible, the formation of a work unit in the selected forest room should be located within a radius of 10 km besides the entire area should be free from encroachment. Proposal can be made by including the government revenue land adjacent to the forest area. For this the permission of the District Collector will be required.

Webinar on 'Dharampal: Bhartiya Shiksha Paddhati Ki Punah Khoj Karne Wale Itihaaskar' held

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

An International webinar on the topic 'Dharampal: Bhartiya Shiksha Paddhati Ki Punah Khoj Karne Wale Itihaaskar' was organised under the joint aegis of Madhya Pradesh Culture Department, Directorate of Swaraj Sansthan and Dharmapala Shodhpeeth, on the occasion of the 14th death anniversary of renowned Gandhian, Thinker and Historian Dharampal, on 24 October.

Presiding over the programme, Shiv Shekhar Shukla, Principal Secretary, Culture Department, said that it is most important to organise such webinars and seminars from time to time to highlight services rendered by Dharampal and values inculcated by him in the society, before the present generation.

Principal Secretary Culture and Vice-Chairman Dharmapala Shodh Peeth Shiv Shekhar Shukla said that our webinar will be fruitful if even a part of Dharampal's extensive research and penance reach us. The glorious traditions and Swadeshi policies of our great India should be presented before the new generation. Our younger generation is disconnecting from the mainstream of the country for many reasons. We are making efforts to make people aware of our glorious past.

Principal Secretary Shukla said that a new education policy has been implemented by the Government of India in July 2020. During the research on Dharampal Ji, work has been done on the facts of Indian culture and education. In this period of pandemic, the

Principal Secretary Culture and Vice-Chairman Dharmapala Shodh Peeth Shiv Shekhar Shukla said that our webinar will be fruitful if even a part of Dharampal's extensive research and penance reach us

whole world has started greeting each other with Namsate. Yoga is being practised and Ayurved is being adopted.

Retired Historian and Professor of Heidelberg University, Germany, Prof. Geeta Dharmpal as a special guest and Young Write Dr. Ankur Kakkad as a speaker participated in the programme. According to Prof. Geeta Dharmpal, it is necessary to highlight the literature written by Dharampal among the readers through appropriate and favourable means in the present scenario, because his ideas and research defines Indian education system from a new and positive perspective. While discussing various aspects of Dharmapal ji's life and accomplishments in detail, she said that following the path shown by Mahatma Gandhi, Dharmapal ji made constant

efforts to serve the country after India's independence and the took necessary steps to remove any obstacle arising between identity and security of the country.

Special speaker Ankur Kakkad, the Research Scholar of Heidelberg University, Germany, had comparative discussions on the provisions of the new education system in the light of the ideas and facts, mentioned in the important book 'The Beautiful Tree', written by Dharmapal. He told that before the arrival of the British, the ancient education system which was prevalent in India was very rich and the subjects which have been included in the new education policy are also mentioned in Dharmapal's 'The Beautiful Tree'. Provisions like the spread of public education and equality in education were also present in India in the past. They have been highlighted by Dharampal with proof.

The coordinator of the webinar, Sanjay Swarnkar said that the work, how to assess the work done in the society by Dharmapal Ji in today's circumstances is also necessary. He always challenged the colonization. Has built a huge corpus. It is visible in various original publications. Attention should be paid to re-evaluate the past and their lasting contribution to Indian education. Participants from various states of the country attended the online webinar.

At the end of the programme, vote of thanks was proposed by Sanjay Yadav, Director, Dharampal Shodhpeeth. The webinar was broadcast live on various social media platforms.

Police on toes ahead of poll

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

As the ongoing election code of conduct prevailing in Dhar district the police is on high alert and in this connection, Dhar S P Aditya Pratap Singh with police team including SDOP Pithampur Tarunendra Singh Baghel, T I Tareesh Soni, T I C S Chadar raided Worth Peripherals a closed company on the tip-off something large scale illegal activity going on in the company in wee hours on Friday.

It is to be noted that Pithampur industrial area in district Dhar district has now become an easy hide out of criminals and criminal activities especially in those factories which are closed. There are around 800 factories out of which many are closed. There are thousands of workers working in these factories from different districts of MP and other states.

Recently, the murder of two youths in the closed factory premises by the seven security guards of the factories has given an alarming call to the police and according to sources the factory owners in greed of cheap labour acquire the labour and security guards without police verification in their factories through labour contractors and security agencies.

Recently Dhar police also arrested a gang of highway dacoits of other districts who after committing crime used to work as a labour in the factories of Pithampur by different names to escape from police.

IN BRIEF

SS EYE HOSPITAL TO REMAIN OPEN ON MONDAY

Bhopal: Sant Hirdaram Nagar Bhopal-based Seva Sadan Eye Hospital will remain open on Monday, October 26th 2020 on Dussehra festival. Normal working of the Hospital will remain open on the festival. Managing trustee L.C. Janiyani have extended warm greetings to all sections of the society on the occasion.

VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK 2020 HELD

Bhopal: Under Vigilance Awareness Week 2020, various competitions were organised on the subject of 'Vigilant India, Prosperous India' under the aegis of Vigilance Department and BHEL Siksha Mandal of BHEL Bhopal. Essay writing competition at Vikram School Piplani, poster competition at Kasturba College of Nursing Habibganj and speech competition at Jawaharlal Nehru School Habibganj was organised. All the participants presented their views on this topic through their chosen medium - Essay, Painting and Speech. Instead of organising programs in the premises of college and schools, online platforms were used to follow physical distancing due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

21-yr-old hangs self

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Angered over tiff with wife, A 21-year-old man committed suicide by hanging with the ceiling at Piplani on Friday. The suicide was committed at school owner's house where the deceased used to work.

According to the police, Rajaram Ahirwar was found hanging at the storeroom of James Verges and he was taken to hospital where he was declared dead.

Police said that the deceased used to work as peon at private school in Raisen owned by James and lived at the school with his wife. On October 18 after festival holidays started James asked Rajaram to stay along with his wife at his house in Piplani.

Rajaram used to have frequent fights with his wife over drinking liquor as he was addicted to liquor.

In the initial investigation, police found

that the deceased used to talk over phone with others women late in the night and his wife would oppose which raised to fights between them. After the preliminary investigation, the body was sent for the post mortem.

The police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPc and have started further investigation.

Meanwhile a 30-year-old man died after he was injured after his bike was hit by a speeding motorbike near Hope hospital under Piplani police station area late in the night on Friday.

Police said that an injured man was rushed to a hospital where he died during treatment and was identified as Amjad Khan.

After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem.

The police have registered a case under section 304 A of the IPC and started further investigation.

War of words intensifies between Capt, Sukhbir over farm laws

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Saturday said the strange and senseless recent remarks of Sukhbir Singh Badal showed that the Akali leader had completely lost the political narrative, causing him to fumble for words and desperate to find a way out of the pathetic situation in which his party finds itself over the farmers' issue.

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) chief seemed to have been jolted into desperation by the entire Farm Laws saga, which had completely exposed the double standards of the Akalis, said the Chief Minister, adding that Sukhbir clearly had no idea what he was talking about.

Capt Amarinder was reacting to Sukhbir's remarks on the easing of 'Rail Roko' by the

Kisan Unions and his suggestion that the state government should have taken SAD's advice before coming out with the amendment Bills in the Vidhan Sabha.

Sukhbir has accused the Chief Minister of colluding with the Centre to get the blockade of the farmers lifted. Ridiculing Sukhbir's suggestion on going to Akalis for advice, the Chief Minister quipped that "it seems the NDA government at the Centre had taken the advice of their then allies, the Akalis, in the matter of the anti-farmer, anti-federal and anti-Constitutional farm laws."

That would explain why they messed it up so badly and took the unilateral decision to impose laws that are clearly designed to ruin the farmers, he added.

Terming the Akali presi-

dent's allegation of collusion between him and the BJP as ludicrous, Capt Amarinder said Sukhbir appears to be in a state of mental despair and denial, which is leading him to make such nonsensical remarks. "Does Sukhbir really believe that I would lead my party to political suicide with such an act?" asked the Chief Minister.

The only rational explanation for such preposterous comments would be that the SAD leader had lost all sense of proportion out of sheer desperation at his and his party's political oblivion, which was no longer a distant possibility but a concrete fact, he added.

The Chief Minister also mocked Sukhbir over the latter's demand for him to "come clean" on the subject of the state amendment Bills, aimed at negating the devastating effect of the central laws on the

farming community. "On the one hand you complain when I tell the legislators frankly in the House that the Governor/President may or may not give consent to the Bills, and on the other you say I'm not being honest," he remarked, asking the SAD chief to make up his mind on where he and his party stand.

"The farmers are sick and tired of your games," Capt Amarinder told Sukhbir, adding that it was SAD which was feeling the heat of the farming community – the reason why they are running around in circles on the Centre's laws and the State's Bills. He reiterated his demand for the Akalis to explain to the people why they backed the central legislations if these were anti-farmer and whey they backed the state's Bills in the Vidhan Sabha if they found

them useless.

What his government had done with these Bills despite the risks and dangers involved was many times more than what the SAD had done as part of NDA's Union Government in six years, quipped the Chief Minister. He added that this was probably the reason for Sukhbir getting so flustered and frustrated, and causing the Akali leader to lie even more brazenly and shamelessly than he usually does.

SUKHBIR BADAL POSES FOUR QUESTIONS TO CM

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) President Sukhbir Singh Badal on Saturday put four questions to chief minister Capt Amarinder Singh including a challenge to tell if had annulled the central agri-marketing laws and when the new Bills passed in the Vidhan

Sabha would come into being.

These two queries, which are part of the four question set, also ask the chief minister to tell farmers if the Bills moved by him in the Vidhan Sabha had made msp a statutory right of farmers. The fourth and final question asks the chief minister to tell if he had guaranteed government purchase of all 24 crops falling under the MSP regime.

Stating that these four questions were being asked by everyone, Badal asked the chief minister not to play games with people of Punjab in league with the centre. "You know your Bills will not be approved by the central government. You have not even annulled the amended APMC Act of 2017 which is a copy of the central Agri Acts. We know you have no straight answers but still we give you fifteen days to tell

Punjabis why you defrauded them in this manner and why you are hand in glove with the centre in destroying their future".

Asserting that Capt Amarinder Singh was pushing Punjab into turmoil, the SAD President said "the only solution was declaring the entire State as one Mandi (principal market yard) which would have automatically negated implementation of the central Agri Acts in Punjab. But you did not take this suggestion because you did not have any intention of securing the rights of Punjabis. You chose to enter into a deal with Delhi and passed wishy-washy Bills with the sole intention of sabotaging the ongoing farmer agitation and getting the 'rail roko' agitation lifted".

Badal also requested farmer organizations to ask

the chief minister why he had refused to guarantee government procurement and why he did not take them into confidence before moving Bills which concerned their future. He said the chief minister's lie that he had consulted farmer organizations had been caught out already. "It is also known that Capt Amarinder Singh was forced to call the special assembly session under pressure after having rejected the demand earlier.

Now Punjabis want the chief minister to come clean. Give us straight answers to the straight questions we have put on behalf of the people. Don't try to obfuscate and confuse the issue with foul mouthed evasive replies. Give answers to the people or else it will be proven beyond doubt that you backstabbed the annadaata", Badal added.

Punjab CM launches Phase-II of Urban Environment Improvement Programme

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Saturday virtually launched phase two of the ₹11,000 crore Urban Environment Improvement Programme (UEIP) and expressed confidence that the scheme, of which ₹3,000 crore worth had been completed in the first phase, would help the state make significant improvement in the infrastructure of the cities and lives of people.

The programme would enable the development of state-of-the-art urban infrastructure and efficient service delivery systems to the urban population of Punjab, thus making urbanisation impactful, he said.

Connected digitally to over 45,000 people at 940 locations, the chief minister pointed out that the state government had succeeded in securing finances for these projects, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, despite the acute financial crunch.

Among the key projects, the CM cited canal-based water supply in the four big cities of Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Patiala, with work in Jalandhar being launched on



Saturday and the foundation stone for Patiala to be laid on Sunday.

The government was also close to allocating work for cleaning of "Budha Nullah" in Ludhiana, with the operations expected to commence in a month's time, he added. Noting that around 40 percent of Punjab's population lives in cities, which are generally regarded as engines of growth, Singh said the projects were in line with the various steps being taken by his government for the welfare of people residing in the cities.

Pointing out that water supply and sewerage works are already in progress, at a total cost of ₹4,000 crore, in many towns of Punjab, he said that of 103 towns, water supply

works had been completed in 49 towns and works in remaining towns would be completed by next year.

For sewerage facilities, of 116 towns, works had been completed in 51 towns, and would be completed next year in the remaining.

The chief minister also announced a one-time settlement (OTS) scheme for pending VAT (value added tax) assessments to promote economic activity in urban areas.

He said the department of excise and taxation would soon notify the scheme, which his government had decided to initiate in view of the concern of businesses that issues related to their VAT assessments and grievances had not been redressed speedily.

‘Complete projects in time to prevent cost escalation’

Himachal CM directs officials

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Saturday directed the officers of the Public Works Department to ensure time bound completion of all ongoing projects to avoid price escalation.

Presiding over the review meeting of the Department held here, Thakur said the Department must give top priority to the Chief Ministers' announcements and those projects the foundation stones of which have been laid. He said that top priority must be laid on those projects which were nearing completion.

The Chief Minister said that roads were a mirror of development of any state as people gauge the development by the condition of the roads. He said that stress must be laid on construction of quality roads, as compromise in quality would be viewed seriously. He said that strict action would be taken against the erring officers and contractors, responsible for poor quality of roads and bridges, besides unnecessary delay in the works.

While congratulating the

Public Works Department for securing second position at National level for successful implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY) in the State, Chief Minister said that this programme funded by Centre government had proved a boon to connect habitations having population of more than 250 in the state.

He said that Mandi district has bagged top position in the country among all 30 top districts of the country, as many as seven districts of the State were amongst the top thirty districts in achieving maximum length under PMGSY during the year 2020-21. He said that this has been possible due to the hard work of the department and their focused approach.

Thakur expressed concern over the delay in allocation of various projects for execution and directed the officers of the department to evolve mechanisms to reduce time for awarding of works. He said that works must be awarded immediately and in case of any problem the issue must be brought to the knowledge of the higher authorities. He said that greater focus must be laid on optimum use of IT and modern technology in execution of the projects.



He directed the NHAI authorities for ensuring proper maintenance of various NHAI projects in the State and said that the National Highways should be maintained properly and any laxity in this regard would be viewed seriously. He said that all the potholes along all the National Highways must be filled by 3rd of next month.

He said that as many as 219 projects have been sanctioned under NABARD from 1st January, 2018 till date worth Rs 894.38 crore. Similarly 28 road

projects worth Rs 747.08 crore have been sanctioned under CRIF in the State during the tenure of the present State Government.

The CM said that HP State Road Transformation Project was also being implemented in the State which was worth Rs 799.68 crore, adding that the project was being implemented under three components, which includes re-establishing and operationalizing HPRIDC and building resilience, improving selected roads stimulating States horticulture and

overall economic growth and enhancing road safety.

Thakur said that for the first time assessment has been done to identify division wise roads, on which snow clearance activities need to be undertaken as and when required. He said that a dedicated human resource deployment roster was being formulated which would coordinate with disaster management authorities of respective districts at divisional, district and sub divisional level in event of such requirement

HOSHIYARPUR RAPE-MURDER CASE — Union Ministers’ criticism a political puffery: Capt

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Trashing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) senior leadership's attack on his Government as well as the Gandhis over the Hoshiarpur rape-murder case, Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Saturday termed the remarks of Union Ministers Nirmala Sitharaman and Prakash Javadekar as political puffery, with no substance or basis to support their criticism.

The BJP attacked the Congress on Saturday over alleged rape and killing of a six-year-old girl in Hoshiarpur, as it asked opposition party leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra why had they not paid a visit to the family of the victim yet. Capt Amarinder said contrary to what these leaders were claiming, there was no comparison between the Hoshiarpur and the Hathras case.

He pointed out that in the Hathras case, the Uttar Pradesh government and police not only failed to initiate stern

action but in fact was seemingly trying to cover up the matter to benefit the upper-caste accused. This, he said, was in sharp contrast to the prompt action taken by the Punjab Police, who immediately arrested the accused and is now preparing to file the challan within a week.

In a statement, the CM said he himself had directed the director general of police to ensure that the case is fast-tracked by the courts to ensure strict and exemplary action for the accused.

He ridiculed the BJP leaders' criticism of the so-called silence of the Congress leadership on the Hoshiarpur case. The CM said his party had been forced to speak up and protest in the Hathras case because the state had failed to get justice for the Dalit girl there.

"Had the BJP government in UP responded as effectively and speedily as we did in Punjab, neither the Congress and the Gandhis, nor scores of NGOs, lawyers, human rights

activists would have been forced to take to the streets to fight for the victim," he added.

The selective politics and selective outrage charge, which Sitharaman made against Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, was, in fact, completely apt for the BJP, Capt Amarinder said.

No BJP leader had uttered a word in protest against the acts of omission and commission of the UP government and police in the Hathras case, when the entire nation was in angry uproar, he said, slamming the party over its "politically motivated" reaction to the Hoshiarpur incident.

The Chief Minister expressed shock at Sitharaman's and Javadekar's remark of 'picnic tour' by the Gandhis and other Congress MPs in Hathras, saying it reflected the grossness of the BJP's anti-Dalit and anti-woman mindset.

The Gandhis faced lathis at the hands of the brutal UP Police in Hathras, they walked miles in their attempts to reach

out to the victim's family, who cried on the shoulders of the brother-sister duo, he pointed out. If the BJP had made even an iota of this effort to pressurise the UP government into ensuring justice for the family in Hathras, the Congress would not have been forced to take on the responsibility of doing so, he added.

Capt Amarinder further pointed out that unlike the Hoshiarpur incident, the Hathras case, and the subsequent developments including the middle-of-the-night burning of the victim's body, were a part of the chain of atrocities being committed against Dalits in UP under the BJP rule.

Independent data endorses that crimes against Dalits/SCs in UP are continuously rising, with nobody to offer succour to the victims, who are living under a blanket of fear, he said. Dalits are fleeing UP, while in Punjab, which accounts for the country's largest SC population, they feel safe and cared for, he added.

Two vehicle lifters nabbed, car recovered

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Shahjehanbad police nabbed two vehicle lifters and recovered one car and five motorbikes from their possession near 108 services office on Sunday, miscreant would visit steal motorbike from different parts of the city, said police.

According to the police acting on a tip off regarding two youths who were on a bike were nabbed and when they were quizzed regarding the motorbike they were not able to provide the details and document of the motorbike.

Later they confessed that the motorbike was stolen and in the further investigation the accused confessed that they have stolen one car and five motorbikes.

The nabbed miscreants were identified as Vicky alias Vakar Ahmed (40) of Shahjehanabad and Ubed Ahmed (39) of Kotwali.

A Mahindra Bolero jeep was recovered which was stolen from Shahjehanabad area and based on the information it was found in an abandoned state in Shahjehanabad area.

Police have registered a case under section 379 of the IPC and section 41(1-4) of CrPC and started further investigation.

The miscreants habitual offender and has been booked for other crimes in the past. The details of the vehicle and owners of the vehicles would be searched in the further investigation.

Stolen bikes were recovered from different parts of the state capital which were kept by the accused after stealing them to hide and would sell them later. In cases of vehicle lifting apart from vehicle lifters aids help in disposing vehicles who would be nabbed in the investigation.

Preparations in advance before arrival of Covid Vaccination being made by all States

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

As per the instructions Issued by the Government of India, preparations in advance before arrival of Covid Vaccination are being made by all the States. Under this, a database of health workers (Corona warriors) and high risk group beneficiaries, identified in the first phase is to be prepared in the State. In this regard, training of all officers and staff has been completed by organizing national and state-level video conferences.

Photographs, identity cards and mobile numbers of doctors and staff working in all clinics, hospitals, nursing homes, diag-

nostic centers, registered under the Clinical Establishment Act and all government hospitals (Health Department, Medical Education, Police, Gas Relief, Municipal Corporations) etc. will be entered in the format at the earliest, so that information about the place of vaccination and time can be forwarded via SMS on the day of vaccination.

There is a plan to administer vaccine twice in an interval of one month to every beneficiary of Covid-19 vaccine, which will be beneficial to prevent corona infection.

At state level, in-depth review has already been conducted by Additional Chief Secretary Health on many

micro points like maintenance of vaccine, transportation, micro plan, cold chain, equipments, man power, supervision, monitoring etc.

The Commissioner Health Services has instructed the State Nodal Officer Vaccination / IDSP and District-level officers to make available the information about the preparations as soon as possible as per the check list.

The Mission Director NHM has been identified by the Government of India as the state nodal officer for state-level Covid vaccination. Collectors have been entrusted with the responsibility at the district level.

Prevent public inconvenience in festive period: DSCL CEO

PNS ■ DEHRADUN



The works being undertaken as part of the Smart City project in Dehradun will be executed in two shifts- day and night. Further, works should be planned in such a manner that the public faces least inconvenience during the festive period. The Dehradun Smart City Limited (DSCL) chief executive officer Ashish Kumar Srivastava issued this direction for public convenience while conducting a site inspection of the works late on Friday night along with officials and contractors.

Regarding the smart road works the CEO directed that the work be expedited and that it not be done without barricading. He instructed the officials to ensure that other works are not impacted due to all the works being undertaken for the Smart City project. During the site

inspection, Srivastava checked the smart road, multi-utility duct, Paltan Bazaar and Parade Ground works, and sought information about observance of earlier directions. He further directed the officials and contractors to plan the works in such a manner that the public does not face any inconvenience during the coming festive period. Inspecting the Parade Ground, the CEO said that an attempt will be made to hold the Republic Day parade 2021

in the developed Parade Ground. For this, he directed the officials and contractors to execute the work here on a war footing while ensuring full safety of the labourers.

He said that surprise inspections will be carried out at night in the future too to ascertain the quality of the works. He also instructed that during execution of the project works care should be taken that shopkeepers do not face problems due to the work.

Hry Deputy CM distributes 42 scooties to female panchayat representatives

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala on Saturday distributed scooties to 42 female Panchayat representatives of seven districts including Bhiwani, Charkhi Dadri, Jind, Hisar, Sirsa, Fatehabad, and Kaithal for their commendable work. He said that a felicitation ceremony will soon be organised in Panchkula to honour women Panchayat representatives from five districts of northern Haryana.

Addressing the women representatives at the programme organised in Jind, the Deputy

Chief Minister said in the election of Panchayati Raj Institutions, 50 percent reservation will be given to women so that they do not lag behind in any field but can come forward and contribute their 100 percent in the development of the state by playing an important role in the development of their area, and village, he added.

Dushyant said that the State Government is also making efforts to increase the income of panchayats and warehouses will be built to stock 7 lakh metric tonnes of food grains in rural areas, he added.

Haryana reports 15 Covid-19 fatalities, 1299 new infections

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana on Saturday registered 15 fatalities due to Covid-19 and 1299 new cases, while 1218 patients recovered in the last 24 hours.

As per the health bulletin, the death toll has reached 1720 (1195 men, 525 women) and the tally of people tested positive stands at 157,064. While six patients died in Hisar, two each lost their battle to the infection in Sirsa, Yamunanagar and Jind; one each from Fatehabad, Bhiwani and Gurugram.

With 1218 recoveries on Saturday, the number of those cured of Covid-19 rose to



1,45,196 and the number of active Covid-19 cases stood at 10,148. The number of critical patients has come down to 159, of which 33 are on ventilator support. As per the bulletin, the case doubling rate in Haryana further rose to 47 days and the fatality rate is 1.10 per cent. Gurugram reported 398 new infections, Faridabad 193, Hisar 139, Sonapat and Mahinderghar 71 Rohtak 63 and Rewari 58 as per the health bulletin.

Quad interested in boosting rules-based order in Indo-Pacific: US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Quad — comprising Japan, India, Australia and the United States — is not an alliance but a grouping of countries driven by shared interests and values and interested in strengthening a rules-based order in the strategically-important Indo-Pacific region, a senior Trump administration official has said.

The four countries had in 2017 given shape to the long-pending proposal of setting up the “Quad” or the Quadrilateral coalition to counter China’s aggressive behaviour in the Indo-Pacific region.

“There’s nothing about the Quad that it is an alliance. It is not formalised. There’s no reciprocal obligation among the countries who are involved. It’s not an organisation that solicits its membership,” a senior administration official said during a conference call with reporters ahead of the next week’s 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue between India and the US.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defence Secretary Mark Esper are travelling to India to hold talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The

visiting American officials would also be meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

To a query, the official said, the Quad ministerial meeting that they had in Tokyo in October just demonstrated the strong ties among the Indo-Pacific democracies.

“I would say it’s a grouping of countries who are interested in strengthening a rules-based order in which all nations are sovereign, strong, and prosperous. It’s an opportunity for us to carry out continued dialogue and to work towards mutually agreed-upon outcomes.

“It’s a grouping of countries

that’s driven by shared interests and values rather than binding obligations. That’s an example of effective multilateralism at its best,” the official said, requesting anonymity.

As the US, Japan, Australia, and India are getting together to cooperate on one issue or another, if there are other countries that want to participate in those discussions or those activities, the door is always open, the official said.

The cooperation of the US and India on the Quad along with Australia and Japan really reflect a convergence of common values and interests in the region, the official said.

“We’re the two largest democracies in the Indo-Pacific region, and we have shared values and interests with all four countries. It’s not an exclusive grouping by any means. All four countries are interested and eager in welcoming other countries to the table for individual elements of cooperation that we do, some of them under the Quad framework but not all of them. That’s for sure,” the official said.

“It is something that’s flexible and reflects our common values and interests, and I think is really for the long term,” the official said.

In November 2017, India,

Japan, the US and Australia gave shape to the long-pending proposal of setting up the “Quad” to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence.

In the midst of growing global concern over China’s expansionist behaviour, the foreign ministers of the Quad member nations met in Tokyo on October 6 and reaffirmed their collective vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

The foreign minister of the four countries held their first meeting under the ‘Quad’ framework in New York in

September 2019.

The evolving situation in the Indo-Pacific region in the wake of China’s increasing military muscle flexing has become a major talking point among leading global powers. The US has been favouring making Quad a security architecture to check China’s growing assertiveness.

China is engaged in hotly contested territorial disputes in the South and East China Seas. Beijing has also made substantial progress in militarising its man-made islands in the past few years.

Beijing claims sovereignty over all of the South China Sea.

But Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei and Taiwan have counterclaims. In the East China Sea, China has territorial disputes with Japan.

The South China Sea and the East China Sea are stated to be rich in minerals, oil and other natural resources. They are also vital to global trade. Although the US lays no claims to the disputed waters, it has challenged China’s growing territorial claims in the South China Sea by deploying warships and fighter jets to assert freedom of navigation and overflight patrols in the strategically vital region.

I voted for a guy named Trump, says President

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump has casted his ballot Saturday morning in West Palm Beach, Florida, and he tells reporters afterward: “I voted for a guy named Trump.”

West Palm Beach is near his private Mar-a-Lago club. He used to vote in New York but changed his residency to Florida last year.

There were several hundred supporters gathered with flags and signs outside the library where he voted. And there were chants of “Four more years.”

The president wore a mask while voting but he took it off as he approached reporters afterward in the building.

He called it “a very secure vote. Much more secure than when you send in a ballot, I can tell you that.”

Democrat Joe Biden hasn’t voted yet and it likely to do so in person in Delaware on Election Day, Nov. 3. Delaware doesn’t offer early, in-person voting like Florida.

Trump said at a Florida rally



President Donald Trump walks with Wendy Sartory Link, Supervisor of Elections Palm Beach County, after casting his ballot for the presidential election, on Saturday

on Friday that he likes being able to vote in person. “I’m old fashioned, I guess,” he said. The President has a busy Saturday,

with rallies scheduled in North Carolina, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Oli’s office rejects claims of using Nepal’s old map in PM’s Dussehra greeting

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli has been criticised by netizens for deliberately not using the updated map of Nepal, showing three Indian areas as part of its territory, in his Dussehra greetings, a claim rejected by his office which said the revised map was not visible due to its tiny size.

In June, Nepal’s Parliament approved the new political map of the country featuring Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura which is part of Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand.

In response to the criticism, Prime Minister’s Press Advisor Surya Thapa in a statement claimed that the revised map was used in the prime minister’s message, but was not visible due to its tiny size.

“It is natural for the map to appear in such a manner due to its tiny size but the same map, if enlarged, may clearly show the updated areas,” he claimed.

He also asked the people not to be misled by such pre-planned efforts to spread rumours about the map included in the greetings.

“How can we consider using Nepal’s old map in the PM’s greeting without incorporating Limpiyadhura as a simple error?” asked main Opposition Nepali Congress spokesperson Bishwa Prakash Sharma.

Many people in their social media posts asked why did the prime minister’s office remove the government’s coat of arms from the map which includes Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura.

In its response to the criticism, Prime Minister’s Press Advisor Surya Thapa in a statement claimed that the revised map was used in the prime minister’s message, but was not visible due to its tiny size.

“It is natural for the map to appear in such a manner due to its tiny size but the same map, if enlarged, may clearly show the updated areas,” he claimed.

He also asked the people not to be misled by such pre-planned efforts to spread rumours about the map included in the greetings.

“There should not be any confusion that the map used in the greetings is the updated version which was endorsed by Nepal’s Parliament,” Thapa said. The Press Advisor in his press note issued through social media also included an enlarged version of the map, which clearly shows the map which includes all the three territories. The ties between the two countries came under strain after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated an 80-km-long strategically crucial road connecting the Lipulekh pass with Dharchula in Uttarakhand on May 8.

Nepal protested the inauguration of the road claiming that it passed through its territory. Days later, Nepal came out with the new map showing Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura as its territories.

India too had published a new map in November 2019, showing the areas as its territories. After Nepal released the map, India reacted sharply, calling it a “unilateral act” and

□ In June, Nepal’s Parliament approved the new political map of the country featuring Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura which is part of Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand

□ Oli in a Twitter message on Friday conveyed his best wishes to the people of Nepal for Vijayadashami or Dussehra

□ Many people in their social media posts asked why did the prime minister’s office remove the government’s coat of arms from the map which includes Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura

cautioning Kathmandu that such “artificial enlargement” of territorial claims will not be acceptable to it.

In its reaction, after Nepal’s lower house of parliament approved the bill, India termed as untenable the “artificial enlargement” of territorial claims by the neighbouring country. India said Nepal’s action violates an understanding reached between the two countries to resolve the boundary issues through talks.

Prime Minister Oli has been asserting that Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura belong to his country and vowed to “reclaim” them from India.

Biden promises free Covid vaccine for everyone in US if elected as President

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has pledged that if elected as president in the November 3 election, he will ensure free COVID-19 vaccination for all Americans, laying out his pandemic response plan just days before the US presidential polls.

In a major policy speech on the coronavirus in his home state of Delaware, Biden on Friday flayed US President Donald Trump for his policies to combat the coronavirus pandemic that has killed over 220,000 people and has had a devastating impact on the country’s economy.

“President Trump said we’re rounding the corner, it’s going away, we’re learning to live with it. They are quotes. But as I told him last night, we’re not learning to live with it. We’re learning to die with it. This is a dark winter ahead,” Biden, 77, said.

Already more than 220,000 people in the US have lost their lives to this virus. Worse yet, a new study from Columbia University suggests that anywhere between 130,000 and 210,000 of those deaths were avoidable, he said.

“Once we have a safe and effective vaccine, it has to be free to everyone, whether or not you’re insured,” the former vice president said.

He said that if elected, he would direct the federal government to “bulk-purchase as many doses as necessary of the COVID-19 vaccine so we can provide it free to those who are uninsured, under-insured or Medicaid-eligible.” “COVID-19 dwarfs anything we’ve faced in recent history and it isn’t showing any signs of slowing down. The virus is surging in almost every state. We passed 4.8 million cases. And when Trump was asked this week what he’d do differently to get the pandemic response right from the start his answer was and I quote, “Not much. Not much,” he said. Alleging that Trump does not have a plan to fight the coronavirus, Biden said the longer he is the president, the “more reckless” he gets. “We don’t have to be held prisoner by this administration’s failures. We can choose a different path. We can do what Americans have always done: come together and meet the challenge with grit, compassion, and determination,” he said.

democratic response right from the start his answer was and I quote, “Not much. Not much,” he said. Alleging that Trump does not have a plan to fight the coronavirus, Biden said the longer he is the president, the “more reckless” he gets. “We don’t have to be held prisoner by this administration’s failures. We can choose a different path. We can do what Americans have always done: come together and meet the challenge with grit, compassion, and determination,” he said.

Teens behind latest art damage on Berlin’s Museum Island

AP ■ BERLIN

Several teenagers sprayed graffiti on a piece of art outside one of Berlin’s most famous museums and that the vandalism was unrelated to the damaging of more than 60 other art works on the city’s Museum Island that were smeared with an oily liquid early this month, police said on Saturday.

A huge granite bowl in front of the Altes Museum, which is part of the German capital’s museum complex and houses antiquities, was defaced Friday night by some teenagers and adults, Berlin police said. Two of the suspects were temporarily detained.

Museum Island is a UNESCO world heritage site in the heart of Berlin and one of the city’s main tourist attractions.

Dozens of other exhibits at the Museum Island complex were vandalized Oct. 3. Investigators said they had watched hours of surveillance camera footage but not found

any obvious sign of anyone applying the liquid.

Museum experts have said the motive remains a mystery and there appeared to be no thematic link between the targeted works. They expressed optimism that the apparently random damage can be repaired.

Berlin police said the graffiti sprayed on the granite bowl did not have any political content or appear related to the damaging of the other art works.

Poland’s President tests positive for coronavirus

Warsaw: Polish President Andrzej Duda said he feels well despite testing positive for the coronavirus, and he apologised Saturday to everyone who must quarantine because they had contact with him. Duda, 48, said in a recording published on Twitter that he was experiencing no COVID-19 symptoms “but unfortunately, the test result is absolutely unambiguous.” “I would like to apologise to all those who are exposed to quarantine procedures because of meeting me in recent days,” he said. “If I had had any symptoms of coronavirus, please believe me, all meetings would have been cancelled.” AP

Biden’s warning on oil tests voter resolve on climate change

AP ■ OKLAHOMA CITY

Joe Biden is confronting the harsh political realities of combating climate change.

The Democratic presidential nominee has spent months touting a \$2 trillion plan to boost investment in clean energy and stop all climate-damaging emissions from the U.S. economy by 2050. The plan implied that he would wean the U.S. off oil and gas, but Biden wasn’t so explicit about the industry’s fate — until Thursday night.

During the final moments of the presidential debate, Biden said he would “transition away from the oil industry.”

President Donald Trump,

trailing Biden in many national and battleground state polls, immediately sensed an opportunity to appeal to voters in competitive states like Texas and Pennsylvania that produce oil and gas.

“Basically what he is saying is he is going to destroy the oil industry,” Trump said. “Will you remember that, Texas? Will you remember that, Pennsylvania? Oklahoma? Ohio?” With less than two weeks until the election, Biden’s comment is prompting a sudden test of whether voters who increasingly say they are worried about the climate crisis will embrace steps to confront it. During a season of worsening wildfires, hurricanes and other

disasters, scientists are issuing urgent warnings that big cuts in burning oil, gas and coal are needed right away.

Republicans, eager to shift focus away from the intensifying coronavirus pandemic, say Biden’s plan would cost jobs. Biden “just killed paycheck(s) earned by hardworking families in Texas,” Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, a Republican, tweeted after Thursday’s final presidential debate saw Trump and Biden spell out their worlds-apart stances on climate-damaging fossil fuels.

“Joe just wants to transition away from Texas. Remember that on election day,” Abbott

wrote.

Even some Democrats distanced themselves from Biden’s comment. Rep. Kendra Horn, a Democrat who flipped a Republican seat in Trump-loyal Oklahoma in 2018, tweeted: “We must stand up for our oil and gas industry.”

So did Rep. Xochitl Torres Small, a first-term Democratic congresswoman in a tossup race in New Mexico, in the oil- and gas-rich Permian Basin.

“We need to work together to promote responsible energy production and stop climate change, not demonize a particular industry,” she tweeted, adding that she was ready to “stand up to” the Democratic Party.

Big suicide bombing in Kabul kills 18 at education centre

AP ■ KABUL

The death toll from the suicide attack Saturday in Afghanistan’s capital has risen to at least 18 killed and 57 people wounded, including students, the interior ministry said.

The explosion struck outside an education center in a heavily Shiite neighborhood of western Kabul, Dasht-e-Barchi.

Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Arian says that the attacker was trying to enter the centre when he was stopped by security guards.

According to Arian, the casualty toll may rise further as family members of victims of the suicide bombing are still searching the several different hospitals where the wounded have been taken.

No group claimed immediate responsibility for the bombing. The Taliban rejected any connection

with the attack.

An Islamic State affiliate claimed responsibility for a similar suicide attack at an education center in August 2018, in which 34 students were killed. Within Afghanistan, IS has launched large-scale attacks on minority Shias, Sikhs and Hindus, whom it views as apostates.

Hundreds of Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan fled the country in September after a gunman loyal to the militant group killed 25 members of the shrinking community in an attack on their share a place of worship in Kabul.

The U.S. signed a peace deal with the Taliban in February, opening up a path toward withdrawing American troops from the conflict. U.S. officials said the deal would also help refocus security efforts on fighting the Islamic State, which is a rival of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

There has been an upsurge in violence between Taliban and Afghan forces in the country recently, even as representatives from the two warring sides begin their own peace talks in Doha to end the decades-long war in Afghanistan.

Earlier Saturday a roadside bomb killed nine people in eastern Afghanistan after it struck a minivan full of civilians, a local official said.

Ghazni province police spokesman Ahmad Khan Sirat said that a second roadside bomb killed two policemen, after it struck their vehicle that was making its way to the victims of the first explosion.

Sirat added that the bombings had wounded several others, and that the attacks were under investigation.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks. The provincial police spokesman claimed the Taliban had placed the bomb.

Rishi Sunak ‘barred for life’ from UK pub

PTI ■ LONDON

UK Chancellor Rishi Sunak and three fellow ruling Conservative Party members of Parliament from northern England have been “barred for life” by a local pub and restaurant in their constituency region after they voted against free school meals for children during the holidays.

The Mill pub and its connected Il Mulino restaurant at Stokesley in North Yorkshire, which falls within Sunak’s constituency of Richmond (Yorks), took to social media soon after a vote in the House of Commons earlier this week on extending the government’s temporary free meals for schoolchildren as part of a campaign led by England team footballer Marcus Rashford.

“The government voted against extending free school meals. This is disgusting,” Alex Cook, the owner of the eatery, posted on Facebook on Thursday. “What’s worse Matt

Vickers MP, Simon Clarke MP & Jacob Young MP. Rishi Sunak all voted against the scheme. DISGUSTING! All 4 are now barred from The Mill & Il Mulino for life. I don’t want their business,” he said.

His angry post, which has been shared over thousand times and signed off as “Team Mill”, begins by saying that while he does not usually “do politics”, the vote against free meals for children in need had forced him to. “I have never known a government which is consistently the wrong end of every argument. Forget the poor handling of Covid for a minute and concentrate on what happened yesterday [Wednesday],” he said, in reference to the Commons vote which the government won by 61 votes. The pub, meanwhile, has announced that it will deliver 100 freshly cooked healthy meals to three separate food banks in the Middlesbrough area next week to try and make up for the government decision.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL
HOSPITAL AND CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR
Telefax :- 0194-2496089, Email Id:- xenmhchdk@yahoo.in

Gist of e-tender
NIT No: MHCHD/TS /2020-21/175/e-tendering Dated: 22.10.2020
For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, e-tenders, valid for 180 days, are invited from the **Registered, reputed & experienced firms** as detailed in the NIT for below mentioned works:
Name of Work:- Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 2-Post Hydraulic Lifts and Pneumatic guns along with allied fittings at Regional Workshop at State Motor Garages Department, Bemina, Srinagar.
Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs) :- 12.45
Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees) :- 1000/-
Earnest Money (Rs):- 25,000/-
Time of completion (in Days):- 30
Position of AAA/funds:- Available
1. Downloading of Bids:- The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen from the departmental website **www.jktenders.gov.in** from **22-10-2020 (18.00 hrs)** and can be downloaded from **22.10.2020(18.00 hrs)**.
2. Uploading: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site from **23-10-2020(10.00 hrs) to 11-11-2020 (18.55 hrs)** in two (02) covers.
3. Opening of Bids:- The bids received upto due date and time shall be opened on **12-11-2020at 14.00 hrs or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD , Srinagar.**
No. DIPPK-7928/20
Dated:-23.10.2020
Sd/- Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one male was found dead at Subway, Near Hanuman Mandir, Kashmir Gate, Delhi on 20.10.2020. In this regard a **DD No. 59-A u/s 174 CrPC, Dated 20.10.2020** has been lodged at **P.S. Kashmir Gate, Delhi**. The description of the dead body is given as under:

Name: Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** about 30-35 years, **Height:** 5'8" Feet, **Face:** Round, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Thin, **Wearing:** Red Colour T-Shirt and Blue Colour Pant.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the information about the dead male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one is having any information about this dead male please inform the undersigned.

S.H.O
P.S. Kashmir Gate, Delhi
Ph.: 011-23967889, 23968730

DP/669/N/2020



FY19 GST returns filing deadline extended till Dec 31

New Delhi: The government on Saturday extended the deadline for furnishing GST annual returns for FY 2018-19 by two months till December 31.

The government had last month extended the last date for filing GST annual return and audit report for the 2018-19 fiscal by a month till October 31, 2020.

In a statement, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said the government has been receiving a number of representations regarding need to extend due date for filing Annual Return

(Form GSTR-9) and Reconciliation Statement (Form GSTR-9C) for FY 2018-19.

The representations have been made on the grounds that due to the COVID-19 pandemic related lockdown and restrictions, normal business operations have still not been possible in several parts of the country, it said.

The statement said it has been requested that the due dates for the same be extended beyond October 31, 2020 to enable the businesses and auditors to comply in this regard.



"In view of the same, on the recommendations of the GST Council, it has been decided to extend the due date for filing

Annual Return (Form GSTR-9/GSTR-9A) and Reconciliation Statement (FORM GSTR-9C) for Financial Year 2018-19 from October 31, 2020 to December 31, 2020," the CBIC said.

GSTR 9 is an annual return to be filed yearly by taxpayers registered

under the Goods and Services Tax (GST). It consists of details regarding the outward and inward supplies made or received under different tax heads. GSTR-9C is a statement of reconciliation between GSTR-9 and the audited annual financial statement.

Furnishing of the annual return is mandatory only for taxpayers with aggregate annual turnover of above Rs 2 crore while reconciliation statement is to be furnished only by the registered persons having aggregate turnover above Rs 5 crore.

PTI

Base year revision for CPI-industrial workers suspicious: AITUC

New Delhi: The All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) on Saturday said the labour ministry's move to revise base year for consumer price index for industrial workers (CPI-IW) is "suspicious". The AITUC further said that it is of the view that the move will lead to "depression" in dearness allowance (DA) paid to workers.

The labour ministry has recently revised the base year for CPI-IW from 2001 to 2001.

The retail inflation measured in terms of CPI-IW is the single most important price statistics with financial implications.

The CPI-IW is primarily used to regulate the dearness allowance of government employees and the workers in the industrial sectors.

It is also used in the fixation and revision of minimum wages in scheduled employments besides measuring the inflation in retail prices. In a statement issued on Saturday, the AITUC said that "the Centre's move to shift base year for calculating DA is suspicious". The Labour Bureau of the Ministry of Labour sent out emails announcing revision

of base year for calculating CPI-IW from 2001 to 2016, on October 22, 2020, it claimed.

This decision follows the earlier pattern practiced by the labour ministry: making a show of consulting stakeholders at the eleventh hour and then completely ignoring the responses received, it alleged.

The entire lot of central trade unions had opposed through a written, signed communication, the recommendations of the Labour Bureau point by point, only to discover that they have simply been brushed aside, the AITUC said.

The so-called consultations on labour codes, including recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Labour, met the same fate, it added.

"Since the present decision of shifting the base year to 2016, linking factor of 2.88, proportions of items of household expenditures, points of data collections, all are going to result in depression of dearness allowance payable to industrial workers, the employers stand to gain that much as their profits," it opined.

PTI



E-tailers begin 2nd festive sale round after 7-day fiesta

New Delhi: After registering record sales in the seven-day period to kick off the festive season after pandemic-induced lockdowns, ecommerce marketplaces like Amazon and Flipkart have announced the second round of online sales to keep up the momentum.

Amazon on Saturday announced its 1/2 Happiness Upgrade Days' where customers will get special offers on a wide range of products across categories from top brands till October 28.

The e-commerce platform is offering up to 40 per cent off on latest smartphones from top brands, 65 per cent off on large appliances and TVs and up to 80 per cent off on Amazon fashion and home and kitchen products.

The sale brings over 6,000 deals on consumer electronics and accessories, up to Rs 30,000 off on laptops, up to 75 per cent off on headphones and up to 60 per cent off on camera devices, the company said in a statement.

"The customers can save big with a 10 per cent instant bank discount on Axis Bank, Citibank and ICICI Bank credit and debit cards and EMI transactions.

They can get 5 per cent instant discount plus up to 5 per cent reward points with Amazon Pay ICICI Bank credit card.

Flipkart has also started Dussehra sale from October 22 till October 28 and after that, the ecommerce platform will begin its 1/2 Big Diwali Sale'.

According to industry reports, the seven-day sales likely witnessed over \$4.8 billion (nearly Rs 35,273 crore) in sales.

According to Bengaluru-based market research firm RedSeer, \$3.1 billion (about Rs 22,000 crore) of goods were sold online from brands and sellers in the first four-and-a-half days of the online sales event that started from October 15.

Online retailers are expected to generate approximately \$6.5 billion (Rs 47,751 crore) in sales during the festive month (October 15-November 15), with around 5.5-6 crore online buyers participating, according to a Forrester report.

IAN S

'IBC raised confidence of all investors in Indian economy'

New Delhi: The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has not only strengthened the banking system by helping them resolve outstanding debt piled over years but has also come as a big booster of confidence of national and foreign investors in the Indian economy, a senior SBI official said on Saturday.

IBC has changed the relationship between borrowers and creditors and provided a mechanism of insolvency

In his address as the Guest of Honour in the inaugural session of the international conference (online) on "Insolvency Resolution Paradigm: Global Headwinds and Responses", State Bank of India's Managing Director, Commercial Clients Groups, Arijit Basu, said that earlier banks only had "loan structuring" option which used to take five to six years.

"Now, the IBC has provided equal opportunity to corporate sector and banks. It has changed the relationship between borrowers and creditors and provided a mechanism of insolvency.

"Unsustainable debt is a symptom of fundamental issues in the 'business model' of the concerned company. In case if you don't have a viable resolution plan, we (banks) have a viable resolution plan under IBC," he said.

However, Basu expressed satisfaction that the big corporate houses in India have efficiently managed their cash flow during Covid-19.

The event was organised by the Indian Institute of Insolvency Professionals of ICAI (IIIPi).

In his address, Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) President Atul Kumar Gupta highlighted the role of CAS as being played in IBC ecosystem as insolvency professionals (IPs).

"About 62 per cent of insolvency professionals are CAS. Besides, IBC has opened several new opportunities for CAS

in the form of valuer, liquidator, technical experts in the NCLT, the NCLAT, high courts, and also the Supreme Court, and also various kinds of advisory services," he said.

Gupta also appreciated the initiatives of the Central government in helping businesses to wade through the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In the session titled "Perspective on Global Insolvency Regime", Joint Secretary, Corporate Affairs, Gyaneshwar Kumar Singh said: "IBC has not only served corporates but livelihoods also. As per estimates, the total value of insolvency cases amount to about Rs 5.63 lakh crore. If it had undergone through liquidation, only about 7 per cent of the money would have been recovered. This would have adversely impacted the Indian economy."

"With IBC in place, there will be no sick companies and sick banks in the future".

In the same session, Paul Bannister, Head (Policy), Insolvency Service, UK, appreciated the response of India in handling the economic crisis caused by Covid-19.

"These are very difficult times. We already have a world-class insolvency regime but we are developing further against the context of crisis and changing international context including Covid and UK's exit from the European Union," he said.

IAN S

Steady oil prices holds up any reversion in petrol-diesel prices

New Delhi: The pump prices of auto fuels petrol and diesel remained unchanged on Saturday as softer global crude and product prices prevented oil marketing companies from carrying out any revision in prices.

With this, Petrol prices have now been unchanged for 32 days at a stretch while diesel prices were the same for the 22 consecutive days.

Price of petrol in the national capital stood at Rs 81.06 per litre. In Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, the fuel was sold for Rs 87.74, Rs 84.14 and Rs 82.59 per litre, respectively.

Diesel prices in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata continues to be at Rs 70.46, Rs 76.86, Rs 75.95 and Rs 73.99, respectively.

Oil sector experts said that with global oil prices under pressure from slowing demand

Petrol prices have now been unchanged for 32 days at a stretch while diesel prices were the same for the 22 consecutive days

auto fuel consumers in India by way of a fall in retail price of petrol and diesel.

Global crude prices are holding close to \$42 a barrel now. It has been hovering between \$40-42 a barrel for over a month now. But with lower oil demand and rising inventory, there is fear among oil producing companies that crude prices may start falling again.

IAN S

in the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic sweeping several western countries, crude price could fall in coming days. If this holds on for a week or so, there could be positive gains for

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED BOY



Ankit Kumar

General public is hereby informed that this boy namely Ankit Kumar S/o Jitender Pathak R/o RZF-82, Nihal Vihar, Nangloi, Delhi Age : 14 years, Complexion : Wheatish, Height : 5'2", Face : Round, Identification: An old scar mark on left side of face, wearing white colour T-shirt, black colour trouser and white colour sports shoes in feet, has been missing/kidnapped since 25.05.2019 from the area of P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 352/19 dated 25.05.2019 u/s 363 IPC has been lodged at P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing/kidnapped boy may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in SHO : P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi.
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> Ph. : 011-25946700.
Fax: 24368639, 25946710
Tel.: 24368638/24368641

SEARCH FOR MISSING



Yogita D/o Mukesh

General public is hereby informed that one girl namely Yogita, D/o Mukesh, R/o C-1325, Jahangir Puri, Delhi, Age: 22 years, Height: 5', Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Built: Strong, wearing Grey colour Frock and Black Leggie or Chappal in feet, has been missing from the area of P.S. Jahangir Puri, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 111A, dated 13.10.2020 has been registered at P.S. Jahangir Puri, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in> SHO
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639 P.S. Jahangir Puri, Delhi
Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/454/NW/2020 Ph. No.: 011-27636000, 27631600

JASCH INDUSTRIES LIMITED						
Regd. Off. : 43/5, Bahalgarh Road, Sonipat - 131021 Tele : 0130 – 2216666, Fax : 011-66173923						
CIN : L24302HR1985PLC022758 Website : www.jaschindustries.com , Email : accounts@jasch.biz						
Extract of Standalone Reviewed Financial Results for the Quarter ended 30 th September, 2020. (₹ in Lakhs)						
Sl No	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Half Year Ended	
		30.09.20	30.06.20	30.09.19	30.09.20	30.09.19
		Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations.	2645.23	1488.66	3117.23	4133.89	6597.24
2	Profit before Interest, Depreciation & Taxes (EBITDA)	331.08	181.40	59.79	512.48	446.05
3	Net Profit for the Period (before Tax and Exceptional Items)	245.53	85.37	(74.25)	330.90	172.13
4	Net Profit for the Period before Tax (after Exceptional Items)	245.53	85.37	(74.25)	330.90	172.13
5	Net Profit for the period after Tax (after Exceptional Items)	183.73	63.88	(60.99)	247.61	123.80
6	Total Comprehensive Income for the period ((Comprising Profit) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	183.73	63.88	(60.99)	247.61	123.80
7	Equity Share Capital	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00
8	Reserves	4904.18	4387.64	4326.65	4904.18	4326.65
9	Earnings Per Share (of ₹10/- each)	1.62	0.56	(0.54)	2.19	1.09
	Basic & Diluted:					4.00
Notes :						
1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Financial Results are available on the website of Stock Exchange at www.bseindia.com and also on Company's website at www.jaschindustries.com .						
2. The Company has prepared these results in accordance with the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 (Ind AS) prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013.						
3. Figures for the previous periods have been regrouped, wherever necessary, to conform to the current period's classification.						
Sonipat, 24th October 2020						
sd/- (J. K. GARG) MANAGING DIRECTOR						

Karnataka HC restrains Franklin Templeton to wind up schemes without investors' consent

Bengaluru: In a major victory for investors, the High Court of Karnataka on Saturday restrained Franklin Templeton (FT) India's decision from winding up its six debt schemes without obtaining the consent of unitholders.

Pronouncing the verdict in petitions challenging the winding-up of six debt fund schemes of FT, a division bench of Chief Justice A.S. Oka and Justice Justice Ashok S. Kinagi directed that trustees should not take any action on the winding up of the six schemes till a simple majority consent of unit holders is obtained.

"We hold that no interference is called for in the decision of trustees to winding up of the said schemes. We hold and declare that the decision of the trustees to winding up the six schemes cannot be implemented until consent from the unitholders is obtained in accordance with Sub Clause C of Regulation 15.

Hence, we restrain the trustees to take any further steps based on the notice April 23, 2020 and May 28, 2020, issued till the consent of the unitholders is obtained. It will open for trustees to obtain the consent of unitholders and to take further steps," the division bench stated in its 330-page order.

Market regulator SEBI should have played a more active role in the matter and it failed in its duty towards taking prompt actions, the court noted, adding that the forensic audit report in the case is tentative and doesn't include final findings.

In view of the Supreme Court's vacation, the operation of the order has been stayed for six weeks to give time to FT

India to appeal the order, the Karnataka High Court ruled, directing that status quo on refund and redemptions should be maintained till then.

It also restricted the asset management company and trustees from taking on any fresh borrowings in the six debt schemes, which were shut in April.

Reacting on the High Court order, Franklin Templeton said: "Court has upheld the authority and decision taken by the Trustees to wind-up the schemes under regulation 39(2)(a). As per the judgement, for operationalising such a decision, approval of the unitholders will be required

under regulation 18(15)(c). "We are considering the order and will take appropriate steps in consultation with our legal experts in the best interest of the unitholders.

Our focus remains on maximizing value for unitholders in these schemes and returning monies as soon as possible," said FT in a statement.

Notably, on April 23 amid severe redemption pressure and illiquidity, Franklin Templeton had decided to shut down its suite of six debt schemes, affecting 3,00,000 investors adversely and assets under management of Rs 26,000 crore.

IAN S

CFMA hails HC verdict in FTMF case, to move SC for unit-holders' interests

Chennai: Hailing the Karnataka High Court's verdict that upheld the rights of unit-holders of the Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund (FTMF), the Chennai Financial Markets and Accountability (CFMA), an investor's protection organisation, said it would approach the Supreme Court to safeguard the entire interests of investors.

The Karnataka High Court has directed Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund to not proceed with the winding-up of its debt schemes without obtaining the consent of its unit-holders. It clarified that the consent of unit-holders as per the regulations is to be obtained before going through the winding-up process.

Stating that the half-battle

was won wherein rights of unit-holders are upheld by the Karnataka High Court, Nithyaesh Natraj, the counsel for the CFMA, noted: "There are few areas which the court has not decided upon (which) may set a wrong precedent for the Mutual Fund Industry."

He pointed out that it has been rightly observed by the court that the SEBI has failed to be proactive in this case and reiterated that the CFMA would challenge the order in the apex court so that the entire interests of unit-holders are protected further.

"Leaving the fate of three lakh unit-holders at the mercy of trustees without knowing the content of forensic audit will set a bad precedent," he added.

IAN S

PUBLIC NOTICE

Information is given to general public at large that my client Mr. Naveen Kumar Verma, Advocate, F-211, Sector-3, Vaishali, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010

WESTERN RAILWAY

(SURVEY & CONSTRUCTION)

E-TENDER NOTICE

Deputy Chief Engineer (Construction), Western Railway, 8th floor, station building, Churchgate, Mumbai-400 020 invites offer through e-tender portal www.reps.gov.in under single packet system for the following tender: **Tender No.:** Dy CE (C)-775(R), **Name of Work:** Mahim-Bandra- Construction strengthening of cast iron screw piles (bridge No. 20) Placing of precast RCC box segments between south abutment and pier No. 1 and strengthening of piers and other Misc works, Mumbai Division W. Rly. **NIT Cost (Rs.) :** 5,14,46,942/- **EMD (in Rs.) :** 4,57,200/- **Bid submission closing date:** 17.11.2020 at 15.00 hrs. **Instructions of tenderers:** Only E-offers submitted online through e-tender portal will be considered. Please note that printed offers will not be entertained. The date of tender, terms & conditions and scope of work are uploaded and are available only in electronic format in our website www.reps.gov.in **0375**

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We back all the bowlers in our team to get wickets and stop runs. We have a quality bowling lineup. We pride ourselves on that. And today I guess it just didn't happen

This now can be the start of his (Rana) campaign taking things forward. Today, against one of the best bowling lineups in the tournament, he played absolutely outstanding

We could've put more pressure on them (KKR) and gone more attacking but the way they played in between especially Narine coming and changing the momentum towards them

I've been lucky to get the first over so if it's going to swing, it's going to be up front. The wickets are becoming a lot slower and lot drier. I think it just comes down to accuracy

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Leg-spinner Varun Chakravarthy dished out the best bowling performance of this IPL with a five-for after his batting colleagues stepped up in style as Kolkata Knight Riders beat Delhi Capitals by 59 runs here on Saturday.

Promoted to open the innings, Nitish Rana revelled in his new role as he overcame a personal tragedy to smash a whirlwind 81 and shared a game-changing 115-run stand with Sunil Narine (64) to lift KKR to an imposing 194/6 after being put in to bat.

Chasing a stiff target, Chakravarthy (5/20) and Pat Cummins (3/17) gave the Delhi Capitals batsmen a torrid time to restrict them to 135 for 9 in 20 overs.

Cummins gave a perfect start, dismissing both the openers Ajinkya Rahane (0) and in-form Shikhar Dhawan (6) in his first two overs.

Then Chakravarthy played the finisher's act in the back-end of the innings to choke the DC run chase.

Coming on the back of a horror batting show against Royal Challengers Bangalore when they crumbled to 84/8, KKR ticked all the boxes to keep their playoff hopes alive by securing their sixth win, with three matches left.

For DC, this was their second successive loss but they still maintained the second spot.

Skipper Shreyas Iyer was the top-scorer for DC with 47 as he, along with Rishabh Pant (27), held on after Cummins' twin strike. They took on the opposition attack in the second half but KKR's strategy to press in Chakravarthy paid dividends.

The spinner opened his account after Pant holed out at deep square leg and in his next over he got two in two, dismissing Shimron Hetmyer (10) and Iyer off consecutive balls.



Varun Chakravarthy reacts after he dismiss Delhi Capitals Shimron Hetmyer during run chase on Saturday

IPLT20.com

DC trapped in Varun's Chakravyuh

Hetmyer fell while trying to clear the long on boundary, while Iyer could not connect well and was caught by Kamlesh Nagarkoti at long on.

In his next over, Chakravarthy dismissed Marcus Stoinis and then picked his five-for in the fifth ball, cleaning up Axar Patel with a straight one.

Earlier, new opener Nitish Rana made 81, while Sunil Narine, playing in her first match after being cleared of suspect bowling, smashed a 32-ball 64 to propel KKR to 194 for 6 after being asked to bat.

Promoted to open, Rana smashed 13 fours and one six in his 53-ball 81, while Narine also

came out all guns blazing, smacking four sixes and six fours as KKR put behind their horror show against RCB to post a stiff total.

The left-handed duo stitched together 115 runs from just 59 balls to seize the momentum.

Having crumbled for 84 in their last match against RCB, KKR once again were staring down the barrel at 42/3 after 7.2 overs.

Anrich Nortje grabbed the wickets of the under-performing Shubman Gill (9) and Rahul Tripathi (13) inside the Powerplay, while Kagiso Rabada accounted for Dinesh Karthik (3).

Just when KKR's tale of battling woes began to unfold, Rana came into do the rescue act, tak-

'Our most complete performance so far'

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Kolkata Knight Riders skipper Eoin Morgan on Saturday said his team produced its most complete performance of the season so far when it upstaged the fancied Delhi Capitals by 59 runs to stay alive in the IPL.

"I think the timing of this couldn't be any better. Playing against a side who are second coming towards the business end of the tournament, two points is huge," Morgan said in the post-match conference.

"We had the most complete performance as a group in this tournament so far. Until today, we feel as if we hadn't played our best cricket. Today I think it was close to that," he added.

It was Narine (64) and Rana (81) who set it up for KKR in a 115-run partnership from 56 balls. Playing his first match after being cleared of a suspect bowling attack, Narine batted at five and fired on all cylinders in his 32-ball 64.

"...I think that rubbed off on Nitish Rana as well. Watching them play with the freedom that they did was outstanding."

"Sunil has been an integral part of this franchise for a number of years now. His ability as an all-rounder is key in

our team.

"To have him back and come in and perform not only with the ball but with the bat, I think is outstanding. He has just proved how valuable he is to the team."

He also spoke very highly of mystery spinner Chakravarthy who returned with the first five-wicket haul of this season.

"He has gelled really well in the team. I think he's been one of the positive stories out of our campaign so far," he said of the man who has been their leading wicket-taker this season with 12 from 10 matches.



ing the attack to the experienced R Ashwin in an over that yielded 13 runs.

Rana first smacked Ashwin's tossed up delivery for a six and followed it up with a boundary.

In the next over, Narine joined in to continue KKR's run feast in the back-end of the innings in an incredible partner-

ship.

DC brought back Nortje but there was no respite for them and Rana brought up his fifty with an outside edge.

He was then seen dedicating his half-century to his father-in-law, who died of cancer recently, by showing a jersey customised by KKR as a special tribute to him.

RCB look to seal play-off berth

PTI ■ DUBAI

Their house in complete disarray after eight defeats from 11 outings, Chennai Super Kings will look to give their forgettable campaign a semblance of respectability when they take on in-form Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Sunday.

CSK, with six points from 11 games, still have a theoretical chance to make it to the play-offs, provided they do not lose any of their remaining three games, improve their net run-rate and all other match results go their way.

The three-time IPL winners have struggled in all departments of the game, leading to heavy criticism towards skipper MS Dhoni for not showing enough faith in the youngsters.

CSK brought in young Ruturaj Gaekwad and Narayan Jagadeesan against Mumbai Indians but both batsmen perished without opening their account.

The Super Kings batsmen were rocked by Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah's devastating pace-bowling spell, slipping to 21 for five inside the powerplay.

Their bowlers also failed to make an impact as the *Yellow Army* suffered its first-ever 10-wicket defeat on Friday.

Sam Curran's half century was the only saving grace for the CSK. With 173 runs and 10 wickets in 11 games, the England all-rounder has been their silver in a devastating season.

CSK is expected to continue giving opportunities to the youngsters, treating the remaining three games as an audition for the next season.

"We have to make the most of the next three games and it is good preparation for the next year. Identify the batsmen, who will bowl at the death and hopefully the players will soak up the pressure," Dhoni said after the loss to MI.

They run into a RCB squad which has grown in confidence as the tournament has progressed. Virat Kohli and his men are placed third on the points table with 14 points, the same as



Virat Kohli & Ab de Villiers

IPLT20.com

the table toppers MI and Delhi Capitals.

They will aim to grab the two points on offer, while also trying to improve their net run-rate, which could play a vital role in deciding the top two teams heading to the playoffs.

RCB are coming on the back of two morale-boosting victories against Rajasthan Royals and Kolkata Knight Riders.

While AB de Villiers single-handedly fetched them the win against the Royals, pacer Mohammed Siraj tormented KKR by

bowling a sensational spell, including a double-wicket maiden, in the eight-wicket victory over the two-time champions.

The pace trio of Chris Morris, Isuru Udana and Navdeep Saini have done well for the team, while spinners Washington Sundar and Yuzvendra Chahal have also proved effective.

RCB's strong batting lineup led by captain Kohli has also lived up to the billing. Young opener Devdutt Padikkal has looked in good touch, while de Villiers has been a key player.

The two teams' last game against each other was also on this ground, with RCB inflicting a 37-run defeat upon CSK.

Sunrisers keep KXIP down to 126-7

PTI ■ DUBAI

Sunrisers Hyderabad bowlers produced a clinical performance to restrict Kings XI Punjab to a modest 126 for seven in an Indian Premier League match here on Saturday.

SRH bowlers responded impressively to their skipper David Warner's decision to field first, picking wickets at regular intervals to control the innings.

KXIP Skipper KL Rahul (27), Mandeep Singh (17) and Chris Gayle (20) all got starts but their innings never got going as they failed to grab the momentum.

SRH perfectly planned Gayle's dismissal who came at one down. They kept the big-hitting batsman quiet for a long time, consistently bowling wide of the off stump and in the process frustrated him.

Gayle repeatedly tried to force his way out of the shackles



Jason Holder celebrates with SRH teammates after taking wicket of Chris Gayle

@IPL

but was dismissed by his West Indian teammate Jason Holder (2/27), caught at long-off by Warner with a wide of the stumps delivery in the 10th over.

Rashid Khan (2/14) then

went through the defence of captain Rahul in the first ball off the next over as KXIP slumped to 66 for three.

Glenn Maxwell's (12) struggle with the bat continued as he

KXIP SKIPPER KL RAHUL (27), MANDEEP SINGH (17) AND CHRIS GAYLE (20) ALL GOT STARTS BUT THEIR INNINGS NEVER GOT GOING AS THEY FAILED TO GRAB THE MOMENTUM

too departed soon, holed out to Warner at long-on off Sandeep Sharma (2/29) before Deepak Hooda was stumped by Jonny Bairstow off Rashid.

Boundaries and sixes were hard to come by and KXIP batsmen's struggle can be gauged from the fact they failed to find the fence for more than 11 overs, which was finally broken by Nicholas Pooran in the 19th over.

Pooran ended being the top-scorer, making an unbeaten 32 off 28 balls.

One last chance for Royals

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Skipper Rohit Sharma's fitness would be a concern for defending champions Mumbai Indians as they aim to continue their dominant run, while a depleted Rajasthan Royals would hope to stay afloat when the two teams clash here on Sunday.

Mumbai roared back to form by crushing CSK by 10 wickets on Friday after their Super Over loss to the Kings XI Punjab. RR, on the other hand, lost to the SRH by 8 wickets in their last game.

Table-toppers MI are on course to make it to the playoffs but the game is crucial for Royals, who are languishing at seventh place and a loss would mean a step closer to exit.

Questions remain on whether Rohit, who suffered a hamstring injury and missed the game against CSK, will be available on Sunday for MI.

But Rohit's absence was hardly felt on Friday as the young Ishan Kishan (261 runs) launched into CSK bowlers with gusto.



Trent Boult & Jasprit Bumrah pose for photo after win against CSK

@mipaltan

So did Quinton De Kock (368 runs), continuing his sublime run. In the event of Rohit missing out on Sunday as well, the two will open again.

Mumbai's middle-order has also been among runs — be it Suryakumar Yadav (243 runs), Hardik Pandya (164 runs), swashbuckling West Indian all-rounder Kieron Pollard (208 runs) or Krunal Pandya (82 runs).

With their big-hitting ability, the Pandya brothers and Pollard are a threat to any oppo-

sition.

MI bowlers are also wreaking havoc, especially New Zealand left-arm pacer Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah, who are lethal upfront and in the death.

The two have accounted for 33 wickets, while Australian Nathan Coulter-Nile (2 wickets) has supported the duo.

Spinners Krunal (5 wickets) and Rahul Chahar (13 wickets) are equally aggressive in the middle overs.

For Rajasthan, the biggest

worry is the form of skipper Steve Smith, who has made 265 runs from 11 matches and a mis-firing top-order.

In the course of the season, Rajasthan have made constant changes at the top and that has hurt them badly.

The team does possess quality players like Ben Stokes (110 runs), Sanju Samson (272 runs) and Jos Buttler (271), but the trio has failed to deliver collectively.

With two crucial points at stake, the management would be hoping that the three click on Sunday, something which has not happened this season.

All-rounder Rahul Tewatia (224 runs and 7 wickets) has been a revelation with both the bat and ball, but too much is being left for him to achieve.

On the bowling front too, RR lack consistency.

Only Jofra Archer (15 wickets) has been effective with his pace but has failed to get support from fellow pacers Karthik Tyagi, Jaydev Unadkat and Ankit Rajpoot, who have 12 wickets combined. Stokes, as a bowler, has also been unimpressive and has failed to get a single wicket so far.

Virat most complete player across formats: Root

PTI ■ LONDON

England Test skipper Joe Root considers Virat Kohli as the "most complete player" across all formats, saying he has an all-round game and his ability to chase down totals in white-ball cricket is "extraordinary".

Root also called countryman Jos Buttler as the "most complete white-ball batsman" in the world currently.

It has been widely accepted that Kohli, New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson, Australia's Steve Smith and Root are currently the leading batsmen in world Test cricket.

"Virat is probably the most complete player out of the three of them across formats. His ability to chase things down in the limited-overs format and to pace it as well as he does as often as he does and be not out at the end is extraordinary," Root was quoted as saying by *ESPNcricinfo*.

"He's got a very good all-round game but you wouldn't say

he's weaker against spin or pace."

Kohli followed up his disastrous 2014 tour of England by producing 894 runs across the three formats against the home team in 2018.

"He obviously struggled on his first tour to England, but he scored really heavily when he came back. And similarly, elsewhere in the world, he's put in massive performances. All that with the weight of India on his shoulders, as well," Root said.

The 29-year-old said he tries not to measure himself against other players but likes to watch the top three go about their business.

"I try not to measure myself against Kohli, Williamson and Smith. But I do watch a lot of how they go about constructing different types of innings across the three formats.

"You're looking at three of the greatest players the game has seen. They're three brilliant people to watch play and learn from. I'm not sure I'd put myself in their bracket, to be honest," he added.

DUGOUT

MOTION PICTURE



KKR batsman Nitish Rana paid heart-warming tribute to his father-in-law Surinder Marwah, who passed away on Friday, after completing his fifty against Delhi Capitals

@KKRiders



Pandya brothers Hardik and Krunal pose with CSK skipper MS Dhoni's jersey at the end of IPL match between Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings

@mipaltan



Wriddhiman Saha poses for photo with his Sunrisers Hyderabad teammates Priyam Garg, Abhishek Sharma, Manish Pandey and Khaleel Ahmed after his birthday celebrations

@SunRisers



India's first World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev is well on road to recovery after a successful emergency coronary angioplasty, and this is evident from a photo in which the legendary all-rounder is seen flashing a double thumbs up sign from his hospital bed

@chetans1987

GAME WAS ALMOST OVER IN POWERPLAY

CSK head coach Stephen Fleming has attributed his team's 10-wicket loss to Mumbai Indians to a "terrible" powerplay where they lost too many quick wickets. CSK were on Friday reduced to 21 for five in the powerplay and could only post a paltry 114 for nine, thanks to a 47-ball 52 by Sam Curran. "We were pretty stunned really. It was a terrible powerplay. To lose wickets so quickly, so frequently, the game was almost over in the powerplay. Obviously, we had a couple of young guys who had an opportunity which didn't work out," Fleming said at the post-match press conference on Friday.

POINTS TABLE

		P	W	L	NRR	PTS
1	MI	10	7	3	+1.448	14
2	DC	11	7	4	+0.434	14
3	RCB	10	7	3	+0.182	14
4	KKR	11	6	5	-0.476	12
5	SRH	10	4	6	+0.092	8
6	KXIP	10	4	6	-0.177	8
7	RR	11	4	7	-0.620	8
8	CSK	11	3	8	-0.733	6



Dussehra at Kulasekaranpatinam

A sleepy coastal village deep in the heart of South India (Tamil Nadu) gives Dussehra its own twist

2



4

Season of empowerment

Shardeya Navaratri provides us with an occasion to get periodically geared up to take on life ahead in all strength

Your regrets aren't what you did, but what you didn't do. So I take every opportunity
— Cameron Diaz



As the world battles a pandemic this year, the smog situation in Delhi can wreak havoc on public health, writes SONAL SHUKLA, as she details the factors and challenges before the concerned governments in handling the perennial hazard

THE RETURN OF DELHI SMOG

A blanket of haze has been shrouding the National Capital for some days now: the smog season is back. The AQI has crossed 300, pushing air quality to 'very poor' level, which was last witnessed in February. NASA images show clusters of fire in Punjab and Haryana, as the post-harvest paddy stubble burning has started in the farms.

Last year towards October end, the Delhi Government had to declare a 'public health emergency' for nine days, as Delhi experienced its longest period of hazardous air pollution. This year, as the world battles a pandemic, the smog situation can wreak a havoc on the public health. The health experts warn that smog can increase the time the virus can stay in the environment, increasing the infection rate. The increased number of Covid cases in Delhi and Mumbai are already being linked to the higher pollution level of these cities. Pollution also affects immunity and lungs, thus placing the Delhi residents at higher Corona susceptibility and fatality risk.

WHAT'S BEHIND THE DELHI SMOG?

The trough like topography of North India and meteorological conditions set by winter season makes the pollution linger over it, creating the condition for Delhi smog. With the onset of the winter season, weather condition becomes conducive to pollution, as cold settles air closer to the surface (inversion), wind speed drops and moisture goes up — so the pollution is not dispersed. Diwali firecrackers and stubble burning which also occur in the months of October-November, become contributory factors to the smog, as they add on to Delhi's pre-existing air pollution. As around this time the wind direction also changes to north-westerly, the stubble burning pollution is carried towards Delhi from its neighbouring states.

CONTRIBUTION OF STUBBLE BURNING TO DELHI SMOG

As the Government of Delhi, Punjab and at Centre, squabble over the contribution of stubble burning to Delhi's smog — while the Punjab CM cited the findings of IISER, to state that stubble burning is not responsible for most of the Delhi's pollution — a look at other studies on the matter is merited.

A recent study undertaken by IIT Kanpur and Delhi Pollution Control Board links contribution of PM 2.5 as 38% to road dust, 20% to vehicular emission, 11% to industries etc; with stubble burning merely adding on to the current load. Council of Energy, Environment and Water, a Delhi based think tank, which also arrives at similar figures, agrees that local sources and unfavourable meteorological conditions are the main factors behind Delhi's air pollution woes; with transportation and road dusts as the biggest culprits. Massive Earth Foundation, another think tank, also undertook a research to find the impact of stubble burning, thermal power plants, Diwali crackers and broken transportation of the air pollution; and found vehicular traffic as the biggest culprit, which has shifted base line of air pollution in India from a desirable 60 AQI to unhealthy 200.

According to Government's analysis of Delhi

smog during 2019, the contribution of stubble burning was variable, only peaking at 44% once.

However, it will be pertinent to quote Supreme Court mandated agency, Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) on the issue, "even if it is not the only cause of pollution in the region, there is no doubt that the transportation of pollutants from burning fields is the tipping point that makes winter's already unhealthy air quality into a public health emergency."

CASE OF STUBBLE BURNING

The whole issue of stubble burning is based in structural fault in the Indian agriculture system, which promotes wheat and rice crops through assured MSP — even though India is the second largest producer of rice and wheat in the world, and a foodgrain surplus state. This is creating many ecological problems for Delhi's neighbours — the erstwhile Green Revolution states, Punjab, Haryana and Western UP — like alarming rate of ground water depletion due to excessive water intensive crop of paddy and stubble burning. The use of combined harvesters for paddy which is common in these states, leaves behind a nine-inch stubble in the farm. Moved by the Government assured economic returns, farmers in these states sow wheat after paddy harvesting — the time duration between the two is a month or less; not enough for the stubble to decompose naturally, thus stubble burning, the cheapest option, is resorted to.

Not just is the stubble burning polluting, it is equally harmful for the soil itself, which loses most essential nutrients like organic carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulphur with the burning of the stubble. The heat destroys the beneficial microflora and fauna from the soil and hardens it; thus affecting physical, chemical and biological attributes of soil making it less fertile and vulnerable to weed and drought.

The long term solution to the problem lies in crop diversification: a move towards less water intensive crops like soyabeans, pulses, corn — which are harvested by hand or can be harvesting mechanically earlier on, providing sufficient window for the residue to decompose before the next sowing. For the time being, the in-situ and ex-situ sustainable management techniques for crop residue are an alternative.

SUPREME COURT IN ACTION

The Supreme Court (SC) has been quite proactive on the issue of air pollution in Delhi; closely monitoring the situation since last year, when it criticised Punjab, Haryana and UP Governments for failing to control stubble burning. In February, SC directed Central and Delhi Government to take strong measure for stopping stubble burning; and approved an action plan on the matter, based on the affidavit of Ministry of Agriculture — which included steps like setting up smog towers, smog guns in Delhi, and implementing other in-situ and ex-situ stubble management techniques which will be funded by Central Government and implemented by the State Governments of Punjab, Haryana, UP and Delhi. In September, the SC had rebuked the Delhi and Central Government for delay in setting up of the Smog Towers in Delhi. A few days back SC



THE LONG TERM SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM LIES IN CROP DIVERSIFICATION: A MOVE TOWARDS LESS WATER INTENSIVE CROPS LIKE SOYABEANS, PULSES, CORN — WHICH ARE HARVESTED BY HAND OR CAN BE HARVESTING MECHANICALLY EARLIER ON, PROVIDING SUFFICIENT WINDOW FOR THE RESIDUE TO DECOMPOSE BEFORE THE NEXT SOWING. FOR THE TIME BEING, THE IN-SITU AND EX-SITU SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES FOR CROP RESIDUE ARE AN ALTERNATIVE



appointed former judge, Justice Lokur as one man committee to monitor stubble burning in Delhi, and its neighbourhood, and report to SC directly in 15 days.

ACTION BY EPCA, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND NEIGHBOURING STATES

EPCA is monitoring the implementation of the SC approved Action Plan, by the Centre and the States. It also suggests other measures to the States like setting up control room, obtaining undertakings from big construction projects and red and orange category industries on pollution. Central Government is experimenting with PUSA decomposer in farms in Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and UP. It is also funding Smog Towers, in-situ stubble management machines, farmer awareness campaigns and has set off 50 teams of Central Pollution Control Board for monitoring the situation in Delhi and its neighbourhood.

The steps taken by Punjab, Haryana and UP as reported to EPCA, mentioned in its last month's report are: making in-situ stubble management machines available to farmers at highly subsidised rates through purchase by farmer directly, or on rental through village panchayats and Farmer Producer Organisations by setting up Custom Hire Centres. A mobile app is also being launched for creating awareness in the farmers about the scheme. Ex-Situ management steps are also being taken for converting stubble into bio-energy and power plants are being set up for the purpose.

Despite of these steps by the Central Government and the States, farmers especially of Punjab and Haryana are complaining about not receiving any help from the Governments, thus being forced to burn the stubble. Hence, the implementation of these schemes seems to be rather thin on the ground, also its being reported that the action against stubble fires has not been as widespread this year, as before.

TOWARDS A SMOG FREE DELHI

Delhi needs 65% reduction in PM 2.5 to meet the desirable national standard. The strategy for that has to be comprehensive and multi-pronged. First, adopting crop diversification, proper implementation of in-situ and ex-situ residue management policies by States, creating a market for crop residue, setting up crop residue collection system based on municipal solid waste collection system — thus giving alternative options to farmers to opt out of stubble burning.

Second, to fix Delhi's broken public transport infrastructure. There has been four-fold increase in vehicles in Delhi between 2000-2018. The pandemic has further aggravated this trend, pushing up the purchase and plying of private vehicles on the road. Number of public buses in Delhi need to be ramped up, while creating smooth connectivity with the metro. Emission testing, which is only 25%, must be pushed up. More incentives on e-vehicles like waiver of road fee and low interest loans must be provided. Third, controlling the road dust by intensive roadside plantation of big crown trees, planting grass on the sidewalks and improved solid waste management.

The writer is a public policy analyst, and a lawyer, an alumnus of National Law University, Jodhpur

STEPS TAKEN BY DELHI GOVERNMENT

- Campaign called 'Yuddh Pradhushan ke Viruddh'
- Green War Room for monitoring, enforcement compliance, complaint redressal
- Green Mobile app for launching complaints
- Spraying PUSA decomposer for free in fields for composting of stubble
- Smog towers to come up in Connaught Place and Anand Vihar in few months
- Strict anti-dust policy for construction and demolition sites
- Smog guns for hotspots
- Transplantation policy for projects
- Campaign 'Red light on, Gaddi off'
- E-vehicle policy — by 2024, 25% new vehicles be electric



WHAT'S GRAP (GRADED RESPONSE ACTION PLAN)

- Comes into effect in Delhi and its neighbouring towns based on the severity of pollution
- Put in effect from October 15, by EPCA as AQI turned 'very poor'
- Banning of electricity generators apart from essential and emergency services, was ordered under it
- Other measures include increasing bus and metro services and raising the parking fee
- Steps when situation turns 'severe': closure of brick kilns, water sprinkling, frequent mechanised cleaning of roads, maximisation of power from natural gas
- 'Emergency situation' measures: odd/even scheme, banning construction activity and entry of trucks in Delhi



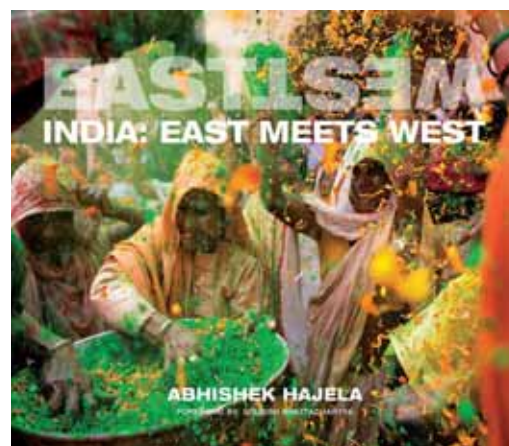
IT'S NOT THAT GOOD
DOESN'T TRIUMPH OVER
EVIL, IT'S THAT THE POINT
SPREAD IS TOO SMALL
— BOB THAVES



Devotees carry fire in earthenware pots and bowls, as fire is considered holy in Hindu mythology and is used during the festival to signify purity and the new beginnings that it brings

DUSSEHRA

OF KULASEKARANPATINAM, TUTICORIN



Signifying the triumph of good over evil, Dussehra is celebrated with much gusto and fanfare and in several forms and almost all parts of India.

The most interesting place to observe this epic festival is at Kulasekaranpatinam, near Madurai. A sleepy coastal village deep in the heart of South India—Kulasekaranpatinam, near Madurai, in Tamil Nadu, gives it its own twist. Devotees converge in Kulasekaranpatinam from all parts of Tamil Nadu as they take to the streets in the village dressed as Goddess Kali and various other mythological characters.

The 12-day celebrations begin on the starting of the lunar cycle, and culminate on the day Dussehra is celebrated. The events take place in and around the 300-year-old Mutharamman Temple in the village, which is an important part of the town's history. The beginnings of the festival was much more humble, but over the years the participation of many more villages and towns have given it a deeper significance and fervor. The vast stretch of seashore along the area plays a gentle host during the occasion and a general air of gaiety, excitement and festivity hangs in the air...

Excerpted with permission from Abhishek Hajela's India: East Meets West. A recipient of International Nikon Award, Hajela is a passionate travel photographer, who loves to capture people in their environment and likes to tell life stories through visual imagery



A number of villages and towns in Tamil Nadu field participants during the festival who divide themselves into groups of 6-10 people. These people dress up as mythological characters, saints and Goddess Kali. An accompanying orchestra team that loudly announces their arrival and presence further enhances this procession



Once a person wears the Kali outfit, they go into a state of trance and start dancing almost maniacally. It is said that the Goddess Kali possesses whoever wears the Kali outfit and those people become manifestations of her divine form



The trident represents the three supreme beings of Hindu Mythology, which are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. It is also said to represent the past, present and the future, the seven *chakras* and the three energy channels of *Ida*, *Pingala* and *Sushmana*

Larger than life US elections and Trump's comeback

US elections are a spectacle and roller coaster ride par excellence with their intertwined doses of confetti and the minitiarised Star-Spangled Banner with the poignant Bald Eagle in the background. It is all symptomatic of the oeuvre of symbolism, American homeland's verve and the patriotic and the MAGA phenomenon, (Make America Great Again). The US elections are an extravaganza normally but with the Trump Administration battling the Covid-19 pandemic, the spectacle and the larger verve of the exciting hustings have been dampened a bit. But, no one can keep the palaver about American Presidential elections down for long, not even a deprecatory Joe Biden, who leads by a slender margin of 10 per cent in the aftermath of the first presidential debate hosted by Wallace of Fox News a few days backs.

In the first televised debate between the twin candidates, Joe Biden, the Democrat candidate, has raised questions about the anti-pandemic policies and proclivities of President Donald Trump. He contended aloud in the Fox TV moderated debate, "The Administration should provide masks and other paraphernalia to the American citizens. It's a different matter to talk aloud about the measures the Government has undertaken. The functional aspect of the Administration should not be relegated to the backburner in the light of hyperbole." Another brick bat which Joe Biden utilised to beat the incumbent with was the allegation that the question of removing the race factor from the sensitivities list of the US Marines was a blunder which the presidential seat of power which the White House has indulged in. Thus in a manner the debate brought out contradictory aspects of US presidential elections but the chutzpah attached with the elec-

tionering extravaganza remains subdued due to the persistent essential evil of the novel coronavirus which has taken a heavy toll on the world's sole surviving superpower.

US elections in the past were carried out in the grand old rail road and big business era of the United States through whistle-stop tours carried on by the candidates who addressed audiences from the pulpits of the last coaches of the trains. Thus, apart from the foggy trail of the big bosses of the political parties, it can be ascertained that the spectacle still remains the core refrain of any US elections in the past era too. The strategy earlier was to sway the voters with the hidden intent of President Donald Trump that he will win the elections through the modicum of postal ballots which will be the praxis in a pandemic infected scenario in the homeland's domestic polity, society and economy. It might be a close race and President Donald Trump has lived true to his image of lambasting the left liberal domain of the Democrats, especially in the States of California and Montana which need to be strengthened as they are swing States going by the nomenclature of the American elections. This was one riposte cannily advanced by a fighting and adversarial entrepreneur, President Donald Trump presented in the televised debate when being riled for the case of Peter Floyd in Charlottesville.

It was in 2016 that the presumptive candidate, Hillary Clinton, was leading till late in the US elections but the white collared vote along with the ecclesiastical support base of the WASP majority let him sail through with the flailing Star-Spangled Banner. Will it be the same fate of the US elections in line with what transpired in the 2016 contest with Hillary Clinton? This happens to be a million dollar question. Al



President Donald Trump dances after a campaign rally at Pensacola International Airport in Pensacola on Friday

AP

Jazzera has reported that Biden is winning with the lot of undecided voters while Joe Biden is also taking an expanse amid all kinds of voters. This might be early days but the US President has returned to the White House in the wake of his testing positive for coronavirus which might be what the doctors ordered for the electoral fortunes of President Donald Trump. The Democrats are uselessly cranking up the fact that single mothers have been hard hit by the novel coronavirus retrenchment in an

unimaginative to ratchet up the support of the single women which Hillary too had attempted in the year 2016 to no avail. So it's a known and tried strategy which did not work the way of the Democrats in 2016 and is a fashionable tenet of referring to fake concerns of lift and liberals for spawning political gains in the American political firmament. Al Jazzera reports, "The US Senate Judiciary Committee announced that it would open a confirmation hearing for President Donald Trump's

Supreme Court nominee, Amy Coney Barrett, on October 12, making clear that an outbreak of Covid-19 will not interfere with the election schedule." Thus, the Opposition attempts to ratchet up all possible permutations and combinations and commissions and commissions indulged in by the American President in the 2020 election trail.

As part of the process part of the US elections in 2020, the American Embassy has to inform that, "Americans will go to the polls on November 3,

2020 to cast their ballots for the man who will serve as US president for the following four years, but first they must select delegates who will vote at national conventions to determine which candidates appear on those ballots." The Democrats are also creating the wily canard that President Donald Trump is a Teflon President and if Joe Biden does not come through as the victor then the grand American nation would crack up badly and inimitably.

In the contemporary times,

the US elections are slated to take place in the month of November, 2020, Joe Biden, the Democratic presumptive candidate, made an issue out of the Covid outbreak in the US wherein, he cannily, forecasted that President Donald Trump would postpone the elections in the light of the ravaging impact of the pandemic which was denied by President Donald Trump and the Republic establishment. The initiation of the Indian origin Kamala Harris is being posited a voice of the Indian diaspora in the United States but little is known of her in the sphere of foreign policy making and decision-making experience. Kamla Harris has many times repeatedly stated, "I am a Negro and I am a Negro first and nothing more with my American underpinnings." She has never actively confabulated with the public sphere in the United States concerning her Indian origins. She might be the first non-white Vice Presidential candidate but does not have many credentials to show off herself, as being the sole feminine voice of the Indian diaspora in the American homeland. In summation it can be argued that a stable but happening world comity of States chaperoned by the American dreamers and the vishwa gurus might be the panacea for what the doctor ordered for the larger ecosystem of nation states in a to be turbulent and testy 2020. With the pandemic becoming a larger reality, it can be argued that the gaffes committed by the White House in the light of calling the novel coronavirus as a flu and a mild malady, President Trump might still romp home with the backing of the global coalition of the Quad comity of nations and the global churn against China.

(The writer teaches at International Relations and International Organisations, IIPA, New Delhi)

With the pandemic becoming a larger reality, it can be argued that despite the gaffes committed by the White House in the light of calling the novel coronavirus as a flu and a mild malady, President Trump might still romp home with the backing of the global coalition of the Quad comity of nations and the global churn against China



MANAN DWIVEDI

PERSPECTIVE

Hard task ahead for charismatic Jacinda

At a time when right-wing parties have a field day around the world, Jacinda Ardern has led the centre-left Labour Party to a historic victory. Considering her winning formula of compromise and consensus, the absolute majority might prove a challenge for her as she needs to take along the polar opposite groups: the affluent middle class and the poor

The recently concluded New Zealand parliamentary election has once again brought back Jacinda Ardern to power. The election was scheduled for September, but because of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was postponed by a month. Since the introduction of the MMR in the 1996, the Labour Party has become the first ever party to form Government on its own, winning 64 seats out of total 120 in the House of Representatives. Looking at the results: Labour Party 64 seats (49.1%), National Party 35 seats (26.8%), ACT (Association of Consumers and Taxpayers) 10 seats (8%), Greens 10 seats (7.6%), NZ First (2.7%), but no seat, Maori Party 1 seat (1%) and others got 7.7 % (no seat), it is clear that the centre-Left Labour has recorded a landslide victory.

With this thumping victory, Ardern has spread the message of stability and certainty to the people of New Zealand.

Jacinda's foray into politics is an interesting story. With her father being a police officer and mother a school cook, Jacinda had a ground experience of poverty that her country was facing. When she was 17, she was an active Labour Party worker. After completing her degree in Communication Studies in Politics and Public Relations, she started working for Helen Clarke, the then Prime Minister of the country. She also had the experience of working in the UK Cabinet Office when Tony Blair was the Prime Minister of the UK. By 2008, she was back to her country from London and became an MP of the Labour Party. One of her most controversial political moves was an attempt to introduce a Bill to support gay rights in her

country. She even renounced the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints in her early twenties as the Church's views on gay rights clashed with hers. Thus, she is in favour of equal rights for the LGBT's.

"Jacinda Mania" has finally worked. She has been awarded an outright majority, with an approval rating of 55 per cent. The election was set behind an extraordinary background accompanying three pronged crises — the first being a terror attack, second the natural disaster, and third the global pandemic of Covid-19. She has been able to handle all the three issues much better than any other leader of the country. Her unequivocal stand not to defend the white man accused of the terror attack in the Chirstchurch area that killed 50 and wounded more than fifty in mid-March 2019 earned her admiration of the people.

The mass shooter Brenton Tarrant, an Australian white man driven by anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiments, was temporarily based in the country before the incident took place. In fact, an unsigned manifesto before the carnage on the Twitter and 8chan, an online messaging platform which has been used by anonymous accounts to share extremist messages and cheer on mass shooters, was posted in Tarrant's name. The attack threatened the country, particularly the Muslim community. Throughout the entire crisis, Jacinda stuck to her stand that the white gunman was a terrorist and emphasised that he did not represent the people of New Zealand.

Second, when a volcanic eruption rocked the White Island or Whakaari, a small volcanic Isle in New Zealand's



New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern is congratulated by her partner Clarke Gayford following her victory speech to Labour Party members at an event in Auckland on October 17

AP

Bay of Plenty, on December 9, 2019, it shocked the nation as Covid-19 was already gripping the world around the same time. This was probably the worst case scenario for the islanders that killed more than 17 people. Jacinda joined a nation-wide mourning on this incident. The fact is that the White Island is a summit of a complex submarine volcano. As the island is regularly visited by tourists, the Government was extremely careful in taking the best of the post-volcanic disaster management measures.

Third, unlike many other countries, the Covid-19 handling was too early and followed by extremely hard actions by the Jacinda Government. Its success in controlling the virus has been widely described as "crushing the curve". The island nation's Covid strategy was based on speedy testing, contact tracing and isolation, while adhering to strict public health guidance norms across the country. Indeed, the country benefitted from being a high income and an island nation with an advanced health care system at

its best. But the best part of the Government was that it called on its entire population to fight the menace as a "team of five million" to protect their families, friends and all the neighboring nations. And Jacinda has earned rare reputation and fame by taking such preventing measures to save her people from this health havoc.

Her charisma is well appreciated. On record, she has become a Labour leader just seven weeks before the 2017 parliamentary election that gave her a rare opportunity to

grab power at Wellington with a coalition Government with the New Zealand First Party and the Greens Party, although she was able to score only second highest number of votes. But the country's unique proportional representation system had helped her to form the Government with these two coalition partners. Very soon, she was branded as an anti-Trump liberal icon at a time when the international community witnessed a wave of rightist nationalist leaders around the world. Again she came into prominence for

wearing a Maori cloak, known as "Korowai", while meeting her monarch Queen Elizabeth-II in April 2018.

Jacinda's popular slogan "be strong, be kind" has worked magic in this election. And she has become the third woman Prime Minister of the country. She has driven a positive message across. Considering her age, unlike the other Opposition leaders, she has long and bright future in New Zealand's politics. But the critics and global political experts say that the absolute majority could be a problem for her, even as top Opposition leaders like Judith Collins of the National Party has accepted her defeat and she has vowed to play the role of a robust Opposition figure in Parliament.

Much more than this, people have also voted on two critical referendums; the first being the legalisation of euthanasia and the second, for using cannabis. The first will offer terminally ill patients to go for assisted dying. It is a binding vote and if more than 50 per cent voters say yes, this will be implemented soon. The second is related to the recreational use of cannabis making legal. This is not a binding vote which implies that even if more than 50 per cent people say yes, cannabis can't be made legal on the basis of this referendum. The Jacinda Government has to bring a fresh Bill to legalise this. And finally when the results of both these referendums are expected on October 30, the decisions delivered by the voters will make a lot for the entire nation and especially for the widely popular Jacinda.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)



MAKHAN SAIKIA

