

WORLD 6
'I VOTED FOR A GUY NAMED TRUMP,' PRESIDENT SAYS**MONEY 7**
FY19 GST RETURNS FILING DEADLINE EXTENDED TILL DEC 31**SPORT 8**
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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 number 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.

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 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 'navratri' 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 alone had marketable onions, having stored the 28 lakh tonnes at the start



	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 soyabean 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 debts, 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".

Breather for choking Delhi likely tomorrow

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality remained in the 'very poor' category on Saturday with the Air Quality Index recorded at 347. The Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor, System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAQFAR), said that some locations entered 'severe' zone but that will be short lived as winds are expected to increase slightly.

Some areas like Mundka, Wazirpur and Alipur recorded 'severe' levels of pollution, authorities said. It said the air quality could improve on October 26.

"The overall Delhi in the Air Quality Index (AQI) is in the very poor category with few Delhi locations entering at higher zone but that will be short lived," it said.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Coronavirus continues to hit the BJP in Bihar, the latest being the party's election campaign 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

Kumar Modi and former Union Minister and star campaigner Shah Nawaz Hussain had on Thursday announced about having tested positive.

The instances of BJP leaders testing positive coincidentally continue to come when their party in its poll manifesto has promised to provide free vaccination to the State residents triggering a major row.

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 78,60,149

DEATHS: 1,18,477

RECOVERED: 70,68,241

ACTIVE: 6,72,121

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	16,38,961	43,152	14,55,107
Andhra Pradesh	8,04,026	6,566	7,65,991
Karnataka	7,98,378	10,873	7,00,737
Tamil Nadu	7,06,136	10,893	6,63,456
Uttar Pradesh	4,68,238	6,854	4,33,703
Kerala	3,86,088	1,307	2,87,261
Delhi	3,52,520	6,225	3,19,828
West Bengal	3,45,574	6,427	3,02,340
Odisha	2,79,582	1,282	2,62,031
Telangana	2,30,274	1,303	2,09,034
Bihar	2,11,443	1,042	1,99,521
Assam	2,03,709	900	1,79,843
Rajasthan	1,84,422	1,826	1,65,496
Chhattisgarh	1,72,580	1,738	1,46,222
Madhya Pradesh	1,66,298	2,875	1,51,946
Gujarat	1,66,254	3,685	1,48,685

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 restoration 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.

According to an estimate, there are around 7,000 leopards, found in 12 countries — India, Nepal, Bhutan, China,

Mongolia, Russia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In India, the geographical range of snow leopards encompasses a large part of the western Himalayas including Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

The landscape, covering around 47,000 sq km, has at least five national parks where wild animals including snow leopards can be spotted.

Hemis National Park is situated in the eastern Ladakh region of Jammu & Kashmir while the Great Himalayan National Park, one of the natural world heritage sites, is in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu region.

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.

the pioneer

wishes its readers
HAPPY DUSSEHRA

HOME THEATRE

Mirzapur 2 as good or bad as 1



MIRZAPUR 2
Amazon Prime Video
*Ing: Pankaj Tripathi, Divyendu 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 lurid. 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 goondism, 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 repeat 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 Worth a watch

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 squalor.

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.



A SUITABLE BOY
Netflix
*Ing: Tabu, Ishaan Khatter, Tanya Maniktala, Rasika Dugal, Ram Kapoor, Mikhal 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 1951 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 glimpses of the social and political backdrop 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 21st 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 Sakseena

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, as we look 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 Sakseena

Retelling a classical tale

REBECCA

Netflix

*Ing: Lily James, Armie Hammer, Kristin Scott Thomas, Sam Riley
Rated: 5.5/10

Many of us have either seen or read *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier. Hence, there are no surprises when it comes to the climax or what is to come next. What is different here than the 1940 psychological thriller is directed by Alfred Hitchcock is of course the way the two films have dealt with the same story. Then there is the whole black and white as opposed to colour. The chilliness and the cold reserve that played out so brilliantly in the Hitchcock version is totally missing here. There is Laurence Olivier and Joan Fontaine as opposed to Lily James and Armie Hammer.

This *Rebecca* leaves you cold, unmoved and somewhat disconnected. Though it is never right nor fair to compare two movies with the same story as a viewer it is difficult to look at this film without doing the unforgivable. However, for those who have not seen the Hitchcock version, it will be a treat to watch the book come alive.

While there is no way one can even compare this *Rebecca* to the Olivier and Joan Fontaine characters to Lily James and Armie Hammer's, the latter manage to hold their ground well. James, who has done movies like *Mamma Mia*, *Here We Go Again*! and *Cinderella*, plays Mrs de Winter well. But instead of coming off as somebody who is naive and innocent, she comes across as a person who is more curious and we know where that leads. Still one can't ignore her performance here which is delivered well. One however, finds it difficult to understand what her motive is especially when she realises that her husband did kill her first husband and covered it up — is it because she realises that she is the only woman her husband loved or is it something entirely different? This *Rebecca* leaves the viewer to interpret the last look of the second Mrs de Winter.

A movie to watch if not seen Hitchcock's version.

— Shalini Sakseena

TELLY TALE

KULFI TURNS HOST

Popular child artist Akriti Sharma aka Kufli 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 Kufli aka Akriti Sharma has won many hearts with her innocence in her earlier show *Kulfi Kumar Bajewala* and she is a pro at portraying emotions with much ease and perfection.

Kulfi Kumar Bajewala fame Akriti 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 Bhardwaj — everyone's beloved



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

Krishna Bhardwaj, 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 adapt 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 making 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 made them smile or helped them cope with difficult times. As an actor, it is really fulfilling."

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 special segment *Shandaar Ravivaar* are helping the actress cope up! Sayantani will be seen celebrating Durga Puja 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 fool mood all the time. However, the other person may think otherwise. He is a fun person to be with. He has fun with his 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?**

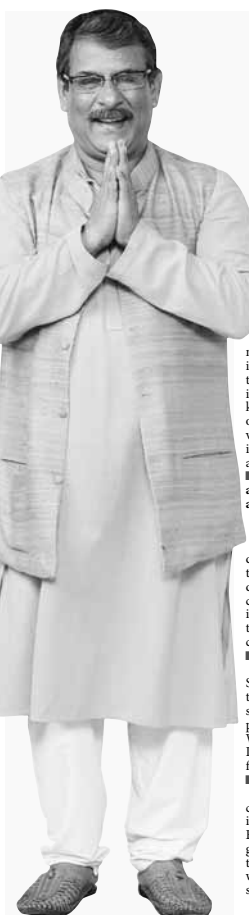
Yes, definitely. Before the show started its shoot, we had a virtual meeting with a doctor. He told us that while on the sets, we must always think that the person in front of us is asymptomatic. He told us that despite all the precautions the production house takes, we must not let our guard down. But 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 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?**

I began with Marathi theatre. I met Satish Kaushik and ended up doing more Marathi. 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 am 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.

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 polkest position, 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's anti-farmer laws, adding that he was 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 anti-farmer laws were what 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 he annulled the central agri-market 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, under 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 urban areas.

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.

Himachal CM directs officials

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Saturday directed the officers of the Public Works Department to ensure timely 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) under the 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

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 the Congress 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 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 lathi 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 endorsed 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.

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 store 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 Mahendergarh 171 Rohtak 63 and Rewari 58 as per the health bulletin.

क्या आप पूजा पंडाल का आयोजन कर रहे हैं या वहां जाने की योजना बना रहे हैं ?

2 गज 6 फीट

2 गज 6 फीट

साही से मास्क पहनें

हाथ धोएं बार बार

सुरक्षा की युक्ति, कोरोना से मुक्ति

मास्क नहीं तो रोकेंगे कोरोना को रोकेंगे

राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन

स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, हिमाचल प्रदेश

China's aggression on LAC, South China Sea to figure in 2+2 talks

Defence, Foreign Ministers of US, India to have extensive discussions on strategic, defence ties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

China's aggressive moves in theatres across the world, including the South China Sea and the ongoing stand-off at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh, will figure prominently during the 2+2 dialogue here next week.

Given the growing profile of the 2+2 grouping and seriousness of the situation at the LAC, the foreign and defence ministers of the two countries will hold intense talks during the two-day conference beginning Monday.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will have extensive discussions on the entire range of strategic and defence ties with their counterparts Mark Esper and Mike Pompeo.

The visiting ministers will also call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval. Incidentally, the dialogue takes place days before Presidential elections in the US in early November. This will be the third edition of the annual dialogue. The last one was held in the US.



While the two sides will review the whole range of bilateral ties, the ministers will also discuss the growing aggressive stance and expansionist behaviour of China on the LAC and the South China Sea.

Beijing is also against the Quad formation and not in favour of Australian Navy joining the Malabar series of exercise. India, last week, however, brushed aside China's objection and invited Australia to take part in the annual exercise in late November in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. In all four countries including India, US, Japan and Australia will take part in the exercise.

The two countries are likely to ink the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA). It will facilitate sharing of classified satellite and sensor data. Officials from both the sides are now fine tuning the final format of the proposed pact.

Meanwhile, a senior Trump administration official said in Washington on Friday the US is closely monitoring the border row between India

and China and does not want the situation to escalate.

The official told reporters during a conference call on Friday ahead of the next week's 2+2 India-US Ministerial in New Delhi, that the Trump administration was providing support to India through defence sales, joint military exercises and information sharing.

"We as a Government are covering the situation in the Himalayas closely, and understandably. We certainly want to ensure that the situation doesn't escalate," the official said. "These are all areas where we cooperate with the Indians on, and not just as it relates to the tensions in the Himalayas," the official said.

In response to a question, the official, who spoke on the phone from the Pentagon, said the US was having an ongoing dialogue with India about increased cooperation in Southeast Asia, and not simply about the South China Sea.

"And we encourage their involvement. That cuts across development investments, it

ITBP has broken myth that some countries have powerful armies: Reddy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Junior Home Minister G Kishan Reddy on Saturday said the ITBP has broken the myth that some countries have powerful armies, in an oblique reference to China that is at the core of the ongoing standoff in eastern Ladakh.

The Minister of State for Home was addressing the troops of the mountain warfare-trained border force on its 59th Raising Day at the paramilitary's facility in neighbouring Greater Noida.

Without taking names, the minister said while India believes in the philosophy of 'vasudhaiva kutumbakam' or 'the world is one family', the culture of the country teaches it to worship both 'shastra and astra' (sacred scriptures and weapons at the same time).

"This has taught us that the enemy can raise its head anywhere and anytime, and we should be fully prepared to face any possibility. The ITBP is an important pillar of that preparedness of the country,"

cuts across security cooperation, and that on it also involves presence. So, we welcome greater Indian participation in Southeast Asia across all three of those areas," said the official.

The senior official's remarks came in the midst of a growing global concern over China's expansionist behav-



Junior Home Minister G Kishan Reddy addresses ITBP force on its 59th Raising Day at paramilitary's facility in Greater Noida

Reddy asserted.

"The armies of some countries had a myth that they were among the powerful armies of the world, but during the developments in the past few months, the ITBP has broken that myth," he added.

The country and its citizens are proud of the ITBP's

valour and dedication, he said.

The ITBP is the designated force to secure the 3,488-km Line of Actual Control (LAC) on the Indo-China frontier that runs from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh in the Northeast.

Earlier, the ITBP had said it 'fought the whole night' and

gave a befitting reply to the Chinese PLA troops during a violent clash between the two sides on June 15-16.

"India is surrounded by a hostile neighbourhood and our enemy, time and again, puts obstacles to stop our economic development. When you defeat these designs of the

enemy, you ensure the country's economic development," he further said.

The minister asserted that the government is "determined" to strengthen and modernise "the force and announce certain sanctions given to it recently."

"I am happy to inform that the ITBP has been given the approval by the Ministry of Home Affairs to establish 47 border posts, uniform special clothing and mountain-crawling equipment for high-altitude locations, latest weapons are being provided and work is on to prepare priority border roads for the force," he said.

The minister said the Centre has approved a budget of Rs 7,223 crore for the Force for financial year 2019-20.

"I assure you that there will be no dearth of funds for the ITBP," he added.

ITBP Director General (DG) SS Deswal also spoke at the event and lauded the bravery displayed by the troops recently in Ladakh under "very challenging circumstances."

Hoshiarpur rape-murder of minor: BJP flays Congress over silence



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Facing criticism over the Hathras rape and murder case, the BJP on Saturday returned fire by attacking the Congress and its leadership for its silence over the rape and murder of a 6-year-old child of a Dalit migrant labourer from Bihar at Hoshiarpur in Punjab.

Union Finance Minister and senior BJP leader Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday hit out at Congress' "double-standards" and the "silence" of the "brother-sister (Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi)" on the incident in their party-ruled State and asked why there was "no picnic on this."

She also sought to know why RJD's "Yadav-brothers (Tejashwi and Tej Pratap)" in the poll-bound Bihar "chirp" on the issue. Sitharaman herself went on to explain the "silence" of the Yadav brothers as she quoted media reports in 2008 saying the duo was themselves accused of "chhed-chhod" (molestation) in New Delhi.

The BJP leader condemned the Congress for suppressing "freedom of expression" by its Maharashtra government and imposing emergency-like situations and asked the left and

the extreme-left of "tukde-tukde-gang" to comment as to why was restricting the media in this country.

Addressing a press conference here in the BJP headquarters, the Union Finance Minister alleged that the Congress is silent when it is about voicing horrors from States ruled by them.

"A 6-year-old child of a Dalit migrant labourer from Bihar is raped, killed and body half-burnt in Hoshiarpur (Punjab) and it doesn't shake the conscience of the brother and sister who rush to every other place which can help them politically," she said.

She further attacked the Congress leadership saying, "Not a word from the tweet-friendly leader, Shri Rahul Gandhi. No tweets on this (Hoshiarpur rape incident), no outrage on this, and no picnic on this. A woman (Sonia Gandhi) heads the party. Does this kind of selective outrage suit the stature of their party?"

She questioned why RJD leader Tejashwi and his brother were silent on the issue when their alliance partner Congress was running the state of Punjab.

"Are you not answerable to that family in Punjab," she asked the Yadavs, sons of former Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad, currently in jail.

Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar also attacked the Congress saying, "We demand strict action against the culprits."

Instead of going on political tours, Rahul Gandhi should visit Tanda (Punjab) and Rajasthan to take cognisance of incidents of crime against women."

On the same vein, he targeted RJD leader Tejashwi and said: "Tejashwi Yadav is sharing the stage and campaigning with the people who are committing atrocities on Bihar's daughter. How will it go?"

Sitharaman condemned the Congress and the RJD while herself maintaining that rape "should not be politicised" and all political parties should do their best to mitigate the situation.

When asked about the promise to provide Covid-19 vaccines free in Bihar, she justified her party's manifesto and said health is a state subject and the party has every right to make such a statement in the manifesto.

Answering a question on cases filed by Maharashtra Government, the finance minister said freedom is in danger wherever Congress is in governance. She said the Prime Minister and Home Minister were abused regularly but no action was taken against them (by us) but now the liberal diaspora has refused to speak on what is happening in Maharashtra, she said.

31% adolescents battled extreme anxiety about finances in past few months due to Covid: Survey



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

About 31 per cent surveyed adolescents battled extreme anxiety in the past few months worrying about the impact of coronavirus pandemic on their family's financial status, according to a survey of over 7,300 adolescents from four states of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Odisha.

The survey on "What do the Adolescents have to say? COVID-19 and its Impact" by NGO Centre for Catalysing Change was conducted in two rounds in the months of April, July and August.

Out of the 7,324 adolescents surveyed, 31 per cent said they were worried about the pandemic's impact on their family's financial status.

The survey also found that adolescent girls faced significant gender discrimination in these months due to the pandemic.

Only 12 per cent of surveyed adolescent girls had access to their own mobile phones to be able to attend online classes, while 35 per cent boys had access to their

own mobile phones, the survey found.

"Further, 51 per cent of the adolescent girls surveyed lacked access to essential textbooks in comparison to boys, highlighting how the pandemic had jeopardized girls' access to education," it said.

About 39 per cent of the girls were found to be contributing to housework as opposed to the number of boys at 35 per cent, it said.

Under the survey, the adolescent girls also stated how their mobility has been curbed, with only 39 per cent girls saying they were allowed to go out alone in comparison to 62 per cent boys of the same age who were allowed to go out alone.

"At the same time, only 36 per cent adolescents knew the correct helpline numbers, while awareness about the use of the helplines was even lower. Only 18 per cent was aware that helplines could be used in reporting domestic violence and only 22-23 per cent knew that it could be used in reporting child labour and child trafficking cases," it added.

Govt taking steps to strengthen agri sector to help farmers: Modi

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said his Government is taking initiatives to strengthen the agriculture sector in the country so that farmers do not have to face any trouble.

His statement comes amid opposition to the new farm laws by farmers' groups and political parties.

Modi was speaking after inaugurating three projects in Gujarat - one each related to agriculture, healthcare and tourism development - via video conference from New Delhi.

"In order to double the farmers' income and to reduce the production cost and their troubles, we will have to increase our efforts with the changing times," he said.

"Whether granting freedom to farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country or creating thousands of

farmer producer organisations, whether completing stalled irrigation projects or improving crop insurance scheme or 100 per cent neem-coating of urea or soil health card... The aim is to strengthen the agriculture sector so that farmers do not have trouble in farming. Initiatives like these are being taken continuously for it," he said.

He launched the state government's Kisan Suryodaya Yojana (KSY) aimed at providing day-time electricity to the farmers in the state for irrigation and farming purposes.

The PM also inaugurated Padiar Heart Hospital at the U N Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research Centre in Ahmedabad, developed at a cost of Rs 470 crore by the state's health and family welfare department.

Besides, he launched the recently-completed ropeway project on Mount Girnar, a major tourist and pilgrim site near Junagadh city in the state.

The 2.3-km long ropeway is being touted as the longest temple ropeway in Asia.

Modi held the opposition responsible for the delay in completion of the Girnar ropeway project.

The project was proposed in 1983, and was delayed due to various reasons, most importantly due to the environmental concerns, before the UPA government granted it conditional approval in 2011.

"Had they not created hurdles in the Girnar ropeway project, it would not have got stalled for so many years. People and tourists should have got its benefit a long back," he said.

"As a nation, we all should think of the loss caused to the people and the country when such projects (Girnar ropeway) of public importance are delayed for a long time," he said, adding that the new project will facilitate the pilgrims and tourists, and create job opportunities.

Stay vigilant in fight against polio amid pandemic: WHO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As the world marks the World Polio Day on Saturday, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF are urging nations to stay vigilant in the fight against poliomyelitis (polio) and bolster vaccination services amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

India was declared polio-free (wild polio virus) in March 2014. This was a huge accomplishment as India was considered one of the most challenging countries. Though polio still exists in neighbouring Pakistan and Afghanistan, the instances have decreased by over 99% in comparison with the 1980s.

Polio is a crippling and sometimes fatal disease with no cure. However, there are safe and effective vaccines and infection of polio can be pre-



vented through immunization. Eradication of polio is based on preventing infection by immunizing every child until transmission stops and the country, region, and world is polio-free. Thanks to these vaccination efforts, cases of polio have been reduced by about 99% over the past decade.

However, since March 2020, the pandemic has disrupted life-saving immunisation endeavours around the

world, putting millions of children at risk of diseases like polio, diphtheria, and measles. The disruption of such routine immunisation services may be unprecedented since the inception of the expanded programme on immunisation (EPI) in the 1970s, in both government and private sectors.

In order to successfully eradicate polio, experts said that parents should get their child immunised with OPV

and IPV and also continue to get the vaccine administered during government polio drives. Both vaccines are very safe and their use should be continued. The government should have campaigns to strengthen the immunisation drive.

The World Health Organization and UNICEF in July 2020 had warned of an alarming decline in the number of children receiving life-saving vaccines around the world due to disruptions in the delivery and uptake of immunization services caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to new data by the two UN bodies, these disruptions threaten to reverse hard-won progress to reach more children and adolescents with a wider range of vaccines, which has already been hampered by a decade of stalling coverage.

53,370 new cases take India's Covid tally to 78,14,682

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's COVID-19 tally climbed to 78.14 lakh with 53,370 fresh cases in a day, while 70,16,046 people have so far recuperated pushing the national recovery rate to 89.78 per cent on Saturday, the Union health ministry said.

The total number of coronavirus cases mounted to 78,14,682 and the death toll to 1,17,956, with the novel coronavirus virus claiming 650 lives in a span of 24 hours in the country, the ministry data updated at 8 am on Saturday showed.

The COVID-19 case fatality rate has further declined to



1.51 per cent.

There are 6,80,680 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 8.71 per cent of the total case-load, the ministry data said.

According to ICMR, a cumulative total of 10,13,82,564 samples have been tested up to October 23, with 12,69,479 samples tested on Friday.

Govt sets up high-level committee to commemorate 400th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Saturday set up a high-level committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to commemorate the 400th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur.

The mandate of the 70-member committee includes approval of policies, plans, programmes and supervision and guiding the commemoration. Besides deciding broad dates for detailed programmes of celebration.

The members of the committee include former prime minister Manmohan Singh, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Union ministers Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Nirmala Sitharaman, Hardeep

Singh Puri, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, chief ministers of Haryana, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Rajasthan.

Other members include Congress leader Gulam Nabi Azad, Akali Dal leaders Parkash Singh Badal, Sukhbir Singh Badal, SCPC president Gobind Singh Longowal, former chief of Indian Army J Singh, former chief of Indian Air Force Birender Singh Dhanoa, and sportspersons Milkha Singh and Harbhajan Singh.

Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla will be the member secretary of the high-level committee.

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.

"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 it 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 in New York in

September 2019.

The evolving situation in the Indo-Pacific region in the wake of China's increasing military muscle 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 says no claims in 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 rights 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 Nepali citizens for allegedly 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.

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

Many people on social media, including Facebook and Twitter, commented that the Prime Minister's office deliberately removed the updated map after his meeting with India's Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) chief Samant Kumar Goel.

"How can we consider using Nepal's old map in the PM's greeting without incorporating Limpiyadhura as a simple error?" asked 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 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 Dharachula 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.

Prime Minister Oli has 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 Vijaydashami or Dussehra.

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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 played 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 them 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 pan-

dem 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 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.

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, "I'm not responsible for our oil and gas industry."

So did Rep. Nochi 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."

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 were "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 11 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 & 11 Mulino for life. I don't want the 'barrenness' 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 to three separate food banks in the Middlesbrough area next week to try and make up for the government decision.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
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Gist of e-tender
NIT No: MHCHD/TS/2020-21/175/e-tendering Date: 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 Lakhs): 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 website www.tenders.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 12-11-2020 at 10.00 hrs, or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar.
No. DIPK-7928/20
Dated:-23.10.2020
Sd/- Executive Engineer,
MHCHD, Srinagar

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 centre in a heavily Shiite neighborhood of western Kabul, Dasht-e Barchi.

Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Arian says the bomber 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, including 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 centre in August 2018, in which 34 students and 57 people were killed. IS has launched large-scale attacks on minority Shihs, 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 US 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 Ahmadullah 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.

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Interested tenderer can submit their bids only on eproc.rajasthan.gov.in details can be seen of tender on our official website industries.rajasthan.gov.in/rasico
Reg. Samwad/C/2020-21/6023 Managing Director

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/US 174 CrP, 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, Build: 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
P.O. 011-23967889, 23968730
DP/669/N/2020



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 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 spinners, led by Iyer, accounted for Pant boled 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 dismisses Delhi Capitals Shimron Hetmyer during run chase on Saturday

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 his 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 batting woes began to unfold, Rana came into 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 action, 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. He has 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.

Chakravarthy, who returned with the first five-wicket haul of this season, took 12 from 10 matches.

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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 to win for the next two matches, leading to heavy criticism towards skipper MS Dhoni for not showing enough faith in the youngsters.

CSK brought in young Ruturaj Gaikwad 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.



Virat Kohli & AB de Villiers

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 team's 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, consistent bowling wide of the off stump and in the process frustrated him.

Gayle repeatedly tried to force his way out of the shackles

but was dismissed by his West Indian teammate Jason Holder (27/27), 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 net over as KXIP slumped to 66 for three.

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



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

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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 sizes 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 should 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 play-offs 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.

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



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

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-

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.

On the bowling front, RR lack consistency.

Only Jofra Archer (15 wickets) has been effective with his pace but has failed to get support from fellow pacers Karthik

Trayagi, Jaydev Unadkat and Aniket Rajpoot, who have 12 wickets combined. Stokes, as a bowler, has also been unimpressive and has failed to get a single wicket so far.

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



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



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



India's first World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev is well on road to recovery after a successful recovery 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

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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

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 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 cricket.

"Virat is probably the most complete player out of the three of them across formats. His ability to chase 'ball batsman' in the limited-overs format and to pace it as well as he does and 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 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. 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.

