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DON'T TEST OUR PATIENCE

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11 VIVACITY



Fight over AIIMS report on Sushant

Rajput's sister cries foul over 'suicide' report; Mumbai Police, Sena say their stand vindicated

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After a medical board of the AIIMS unanimously decided that Sushant Singh Rajput committed suicide and ruled out any possibility of homicide, the section advancing the "murder" theory has cried foul. The CBI has also found nothing so far that suggested any foul play in the actor's death.

While Sushant Singh Rajput's sister has rejected the AIIMS report, the doctors on the panel have strongly defended their findings. The Mumbai Police and the Shiv Sena have said they stood vindicated by the AIIMS report.

The CBI reiterated its stand that all aspects of the film star's untimely demise are being probed. However, the agency has so far found nothing either by way of forensic, documentary, or photographic evidence or by way of profiling of the suspects to differ with the AIIMS findings. The agency will continue with its probe and look into all aspects as was routinely done in similar cases

until a closure report is filed. A CBI spokesperson said, "Investigation in Sushant Singh Rajput case is going on. All aspects into the case are being looked into meticulously."

Earlier on September 28, the CBI had in a similar statement said, "The Central Bureau of Investigation is conducting the investigation related to the death of Shri Sushant Singh Rajput in which all aspects are being looked at and no aspect has been ruled out as of date."

The CBI's reaction on Monday came in response to the contradictory claims by AIIMS Forensic Department head Dr Sudhir Gupta who had on Saturday claimed that "Sushant's death is a case of suicide and the murder angle has been completely ruled out."

The AIIMS panel was tasked to re-evaluate the late actor's post-mortem and viscera reports based on the 20 per cent viscera samples available with them. Dr Gupta's claims with respect to Rajput's case forensic probe from August 22 completely contradict his views in the matter.



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■ Sushant's sister Shweta Singh Kirti called for a probe into an alleged 'U-turn' by Dr Sudhir Gupta, who headed the AIIMS panel re-evaluating the actor's post-mortem report

"Why was the autopsy done in such a hurry, was any videography done? There was contamination of evidence and is not suitable for further examination with sanctity. I had never given permission to open Sunanda Pushkar's room for four years. There was also a case of DK Ravi in Bangalore," he had told a news channel.

The channel also revealed the WhatsApp chats with Dr Gupta, from August 11, where he had raised questions on forensics. "The panel of five doctors of Cooper (Hospital) conducted an autopsy...only one is junior level forensic doctor...rest 4 are just medical officer. The panel must be of forensic specialists as per norms. Who constituted the medical board? What was justification for the medical board...by the police?" were some of the questions asked by Dr Gupta then.

Apart from the forensic issue, Dr Gupta had also subsequently openly questioned the manner in which the autopsy was conducted in Rajput case by the Mumbai hospital.

Sushant's sister Shweta Singh Kirti called for a probe into an alleged 'U-turn' by Dr Sudhir Gupta, who headed the AIIMS panel re-evaluating the actor's post-mortem report. Gupta stuck to his ground and pointed out that all members of the medical board has come to one conclusion that it was a case of suicide.

"This kind of U-Turn must be explained!! #SushantConspiracyExposed #SushantAIIMSTape." In another tweet, she asked, "Why?" Shweta wrote.

But doctors on the AIIMS panel rejected such contention and said that Gupta had said so on August 22 when the AIIMS had not received any medical report or Sushant's viscera and he was merely reacting to wild media reports. Meanwhile, the Mumbai Police is jubilant that its probe stood vindicated with the AIIMS ruling out murder. Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh said people with "vested interests" targeted Mumbai Police without knowing anything about the probe.

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China can't get better of us, says IAF Chief

'But main focus of Govt is to resolve tension at LAC through talks'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a stern message to India's neighbours, IAF chief RKS Bhaduria on Monday said his force is ready to take on China and "there is no question it can get better of us." Assuring that the armed forces are "well positioned" to deal with any threat, he also said the IAF is prepared to fight a two-front war.

While adopting a tough stance, the IAF chief, however, said the main focus of the Government at present is to resolve the tension at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) through talks. His remarks came days before the seventh round of Corps Commander-level talks between the two sides slated for October 12.

Incidentally, last week he had described the present scenario on the border as "not war, not peace."

Elaborating upon the operational readiness in the backdrop of more than five-month-long stand-off at the LAC in Eastern Ladakh, the IAF chief on Monday said his force is very "well positioned" to deal with any threat and very strong



IAF chief Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhaduria addresses a Press conference in New Delhi Monday PTI

deployments have been made in all relevant areas considering the security scenario.

The IAF helped the Army in a major way in mobilising troops and equipment in a short time in all the operational areas on the LAC, he said but refrained from giving details.

Addressing a Press conference ahead of Air Force Day on October 8, Bhaduria, cautioned that there was no question of underestimating the capabilities of the adversary and said China has superiority in number of aircraft and missile systems.

Observing that China has made huge investments in military technology, Bhaduria said, "Their strength lies in surface-to-air systems they have put up in the area. They have long missile systems. We cater to those in our matrix... we can take on that threat."

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3 more rapes in UP dists

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A minor girl was critically injured after being gangraped in Maharajanj while in two more cases in Muzaffarnagar, a girl was raped at gunpoint and a blind girl was sexually exploited by her kin.

According to reports from Maharajanj, four accused raped a minor girl in the Kothibhar area and when she resisted they brutally assaulted her and threatened to kill her if she told the incident.

The incident took place on Sunday afternoon and the girl fainted after the incident. When she regained her senses after a few hours, she somehow reached home and revealed her trauma after which the family members took her to the Community Health Centre in Siswa from where she was referred to District Hospital.

Continued on Page 2

Hathras family begs for security as upper caste men hold meet to defend accused

Police file 19 FIRs, say Hathras protest conspiracy to incite caste riots across UP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The family members of the Hathras gangrape victim continue to reel under fear begging for protection, while hundreds of upper caste men openly held a massive meet and defended the four accused.

Unmindful of these developments, the police on Monday went on to file 19 FIRs across the State for criminal conspiracy for inciting riots and communal violence in the State.

The FIR has been registered in Chandpa police station of Hathras district under as many as 20 different sections including criminal conspiracy

and IT Act 2008.

The police, which is facing flaks for its handling of the entire case and cremating the victim's body at midnight without taking victim's parents permission, claimed that it was a big ploy to destabilise the Government. The police also blocked a website "JusticeforHathras" claiming it was created to spread fake information related to the Hathras incident in order to incite caste riots across UP.

Uttar Pradesh Additional Director General of Police, Law and Order, Prashant Kumar, claimed that a "conspiracy" was made to push the State into "turmoil".

Police have found justice-forhathrasvictim.carrd.co was involved in the conspiracy and even received foreign funds to carry on the campaigning. But when the Government found

out the conspiracy, the website was immediately closed.

The SIT team on Monday visited the Aligarh jail and met the four accused who are lodged there in judicial custody. The team took their statements and interrogated them briefly about the incident.

Issuing a statement before the electronic media on Monday afternoon, ADGP Kumar said that the investigating agencies suspected a conspiracy involving the Popular Front of India (PFI), the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) and mafias targeting the Government and funding in this regard to create chaos in the State.

"These people issued fake photo of the CM with a screen shot of a TV news channel writing breaking news to confuse the people and also issued a fake statement of the CM," he added.



Police personnel try to stop Congress workers while they were marching towards Mahatma Gandhi statue during a protest against the gangrape and murder of a 19-year-old Dalit woman in Hathras, in Gurugram, on Monday PTI

Covid +ve AAP MLA Kuldeep Kumar reaches Hathras victim's home

New Delhi: Aam Aadmi Party MLA Kuldeep Kumar, who was found Covid-19 positive just five days ago, on Monday landed up at the Hathras gang-rape victim's home to meet her family. Kumar, MLA from Kondli Assembly seat in Delhi, along with dozens of his supporters reached Hathras.

Kumar also made public the identity of the victim as he tweeted mentioning the victim's name.

10% of world's population infected with Covid: WHO

AP ■ GENEVA

The head of emergencies at the World Health Organization (WHO) on Monday said its "best estimates" indicate that roughly 1 in 10 people worldwide may have been infected by the coronavirus — more than 20 times the number of confirmed cases — and warned of a difficult period ahead.

Dr Michael Ryan, speaking to a special session of the WHO's 34-member executive board focusing on Covid-19, said the figures vary from

urban to rural, and between different groups, but that ultimately it means "the vast majority of the world remains at risk."

He said the pandemic would continue to evolve, but that tools exist to suppress transmission and save lives.

"Many deaths have been averted and many more lives can be protected," Ryan said. He was flanked by his boss, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who minutes earlier led a moment of silence to honour victims as well as round of applause for

the health workers who have strived to save them.

Ryan said southeast Asia faced a surge in cases, Europe and the eastern Mediterranean were seeing an increase in deaths, while the situations in Africa and the Western Pacific were "rather more positive."

"Our current best estimates tell us that about 10 percent of the global population may have been infected by this virus," Ryan told attendees from member governments who make up the executive board and provide much of its funding.

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Safety prime focus of schools reopening SOP

Students may opt for online classes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major development, the Union Education Ministry on Monday issued guidelines for reopening of schools after October 15 in a phased manner. The guidelines give students the options to opt for online classes.

Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank said the States have been given the flexibility to prepare their SOPs based on the Centre's guidelines and local concerns.

GUIDELINES ON HEALTH & SAFETY ASPECTS

- Disinfecting of all areas in schools and ensuring air flow indoors
- Schools to form Emergency Care Response Team
- Functions to be avoided
- Staggering of entry and exit timings
- All students and staff to wear mask at all times
- Signage and markings for social distancing to be displayed at adequate places
- Regular health check-up of students and staff
- A full-time trained healthcare attendant/nurse/doctor

"The SOP of the Education Ministry comprises two parts—health and safety aspects for reopening schools and learning with social distancing... In consonance with the MHA guide-

lines, students are also permitted to take online classes and can attend schools only with the written consent of parents," said a Ministry official.

Continued on Page 2

CBI books DK Shivakumar for ₹75 cr DA, ₹50L seized

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Monday registered a case against former Karnataka Minister and State Congress president DK Shivakumar and others in a ₹75-cr disproportionate assets probe and conducted searches at 14 locations, including nine in Karnataka, four in Delhi and one in Mumbai. The Congress condemned the raid and said it was a case of political vendetta. The search yielded ₹50 lakh in cash and several property and investment documents.

Continued on Page 2

Centre releases ₹20,000 cr to States as GST compensation immediately

Cess to be levied beyond 2022, GST Council decides

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Monday said it will release ₹20,000 crore to States on account of GST compensation dues.

Briefing reporters after the meeting of the 42nd GST Council here, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the States which received less apportionment of Integrated

GST (IGST) for 2017-18, the Centre will next week transfer a cumulative ₹24,000 crore to them. On the issue of releasing compensation to the States, Sitharaman said: "This year whatever we have collected till now, ₹20,000 crore will get disbursed tonight."

The compensation requirement of States between April and July stood at ₹1.51 lakh crore. On the issue of IGST, she said excess IGST apportioned to certain States would be retrieved. However, the Minister did not mention the amount.

Sitharaman said ₹24,000 crore would be released by the middle of next week to those states which have received less IGST share against their actual dues. The Minister said the proposal to extend GST compensation cess levy beyond 2022 was cleared by the GST Council.

"Levy of Compensation Cess to be extended beyond the transition period of five years i.e. Beyond June, 2022, for such period as may be required to meet the revenue gap," an official statement said.

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Bengal BJP accuses TMC of killing leader, demands CBI enquiry

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Alleging Trinamool Congress' hand in the murder of State BJP leader Manish Shukla, the saffron outfit has demanded a CBI investigation into the incident with Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar too asking Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to arrest the "nose diving" law and order situation in the State.

A furious Governor reportedly expressed his mind to

Chief Secretary Alapan Bandyopadhyay who called on him after the Home Secretary and the DGP failed to respond to Dhankhar's summons.

This, while all hell broke loose in the Barrackpore police commissionerate area where cops fought pitched battles with the stone-pelting BJP supporters firing several rounds of tear-gas shells. The BJP had called a 12-hour-Barrackpore bandh on Monday in protest.

Detailed report on P5

2 CRPF jawans martyred, 3 injured as 2 bike-borne LeT terrorists open fire

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Two motorcycle-borne Lashkar-e-Tayyeba terrorists, including a Pakistani commander, on Monday opened "indiscriminate" firing on the road opening party of the CRPF in which two personnel were martyred and three others received injuries near Kandijal bridge in Pampore area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

In retaliation, CRPF personnel also opened fire but the

terrorists managed to escape. This is the third such strike carried out by the same group of terrorists led by a Pakistani LeT commander Saifullah, police said.

The traffic on the National Highway (NH-44) near Pampore was disrupted as different teams of the security forces launched a cordon and search operations in the close vicinity of the attack site to track down the footprints of these terrorists.

Detailed report on P5

'CHALTE CHALTE' ACTOR VISHAL ANAND DIES AT 82

Mumbai: Veteran actor Vishal Anand, best known for featuring in the 1976 hit film "Chalte Chalte", passed away on Sunday following a prolonged illness, his family said in a statement on Monday. He was 82. The actor, whose real name was Bhisam Kohli, appeared in several Hindi films in the 1970s, including "Hindustan Ki Kasam" and "Taxi Driver". It was, however, "Chalte Chalte", also starring Simi Garewal, that earned Anand acclaim and fame.

BRICS VIRTUAL SUMMIT ON NOV 17

Modi, Xi face-to-face for 1st time since border standoff

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

For the first time since the standoff between Indian and Chinese troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping are expected to come face-to-face virtually at the BRICS annual summit to be held on November 17.

Russia, the chair of the five-nation BRICS, announced on

Monday that the annual summit of the bloc will be held on November 17 via video conference.

The BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) is known as an influential bloc that represents over 3.6 billion people, or half of the world's population. The BRICS countries have a combined GDP of USD 16.6 trillion.

"The theme of the meeting of the leaders of BRICS countries is 'BRICS Partnership for

Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth", the Russian government said in a statement.

Both Prime Minister Modi and President Xi have attended all summit meetings of the BRICS in the last few years.

Modi and Xi are attending the virtual summit, said a diplomat, involved in the arrangements for the multilateral event.

Last year, the BRICS summit had taken place in Brazil,

the capital city of Brazil. Modi and Xi also held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the summit.

India and China are locked in a bitter border standoff in eastern Ladakh since early May that has significantly strained the bilateral ties.

Both sides have held a series of diplomatic and military talks to resolve the row. However, no breakthrough has been achieved to end the standoff.

Want India to become global hub for AI: PM

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday stressed on responsible use of artificial intelligence and protecting the world against weaponisation of AI by non-state actors.

Speaking at the Raise 2020 conference, he said AI has a big role to play in sectors like agriculture, creating next generation urban infrastructure and making disaster management systems stronger.

"It remains our collective responsibility to ensure trust in how AI is used. Algorithm transparency is key to establishing this trust. Equally important is accountability. We must

protect the world against weaponisation of AI by non-state actors," he said.

Modi said India has experienced that technology has improved transparency and service delivery. "The teamwork of AI with humans can do wonders for our planet." "We want India to become a global hub for AI. Many Indians are already working on this. I hope many more do so in the times to come," he said. The Prime Minister said India has recently adopted the National Education Policy 2020 which focuses on technology-based learning and skilling as a major part of education.

E-courses will also be devel-

oped in various regional languages and dialects, he said.

A National Educational Technology Forum is being formed to create an e-education unit to boost the digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity, he said.

"We launched 'Responsible AI for Youth' program this year in April. Under this programme, more than 11,000 students from schools completed the basic course. They are now building their AI projects," he said.

"While we discuss AI, let also have no doubts that human creativity and human emotions continue to be our greatest strength." PTI

19-yr-old woman abducted, raped in UP's Kaushambi

Kaushambi (UP): A 19-year-old woman was allegedly abducted and raped by two youths from her village here, police said on Monday.

The woman was abducted on September 13 by the duo who are cousins. They took her to their relatives' place in Pashchim Sarira Police Station area and raped her, the victim's father alleged.

She somehow managed to escape and returned home about a week ago and told her family about the incident, her father said, adding that the local police refused to lodge an FIR. PTI

MoHUA, Swiggy join hands to take street food vendors online under PM SVANIDHI Scheme

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has entered into a MoU with Swiggy, the food ordering and delivery major, to bring street food vendors on its e-commerce platform, giving them online access to thousands of consumers and helping them grow their businesses under the Prime Minister Street Vendor's Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme.

According to the ministry,

MoHUA and Swiggy will run a pilot program by on-boarding 250 vendors across five cities namely - Ahmedabad, Chennai, Delhi, Indore, and Varanasi.

The street vendors will be helped with PAN and FSSAI registration, training on technology/ partner app usage, menu digitization and pricing, hygiene and packaging best practices. Upon the successful completion of the pilot, MoHUA and Swiggy plan to expand this initiative across the country in phases.

Safety prime focus...

From Page 1

"As per Home Ministry Unlock V order for reopening, States/UT Governments may take a decision in respect of the reopening of schools and coaching institutions after October 15 in a graded manner in consultation with the respective schools/institutions management and based on the local situation. For this purpose, States/UTs will prepare their own SOP regarding health and safety precaution for reopening of schools based on the SOP to the Ministry of Education, Government of India. States/UTs may adopt or adapt the SOP as per local context and requirements," the guidelines read.

The Education Ministry's guidelines further stated that the SOP for health, hygiene and safety include preparation the schools have to do

before reopening such as proper cleaning and sanitisation of all parts of the school, provision for hand wash and disinfection, seating plan, safe transport plan, staggering of time table and classes, precaution at entry and exit points, and arrangements for safe residential stay at hostels and sensitisation of students, teachers, school authorities, school management committees, and parents. The SOP also provides safety protocols to be followed after the re-opening of schools such as maintaining physical/social distancing norms by keeping a minimum 6 feet gap between each other, wearing of masks at all times in the classroom, laboratory and play areas, maintaining hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette and screening before entry into the school and students may attend schools only with the written consent of parents.

The guidelines further stated that there will be flexibility in attendance norms and students may opt for online classes.

UP Govt trying to hide something in Hathras horror, says Maha Cong

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Contending that the Uttar Pradesh Government "is trying to hide something" from the very beginning in the Hathras Dalit girl gang rape incident, the Maharashtra Congress on Monday charged that the Yogi Adityanath dispensation "is trying to save someone" and "suppress" the case.

The Maharashtra Congress' charge against the Yogi Adityanath government came on a day when it organised "Satyagraha" in all the district headquarters across the state to demand justice for the victim girl.

In Mumbai, the Congress' satyagraha was held in front of the Mahatma Gandhi statue near Mantralaya, Mumbai.

Apart from Congress State President and Revenue Minister Balasaheb Thorat who led the Satyagraha, Mumbai Congress President Eknath Gaikwad, Medical Education Minister Amit Deshmukh, Textiles Minister Aslam Sheikh, Minister of State for Home Affairs Satej alias Bunty Patil, former Minister Chandrakant Handore, former MP Dr. Balchandra Mungekar, Hussain Dalwai, MLC Bhai Jagtap, MLA Amin Patel and State Congress General Secretary Sachin Sawant were present.

China can't get...

From Page 1

Replying to a question whether the military was surprised by Chinese aggression in Ladakh, he said, "We acted swiftly and it will not be correct to say we were surprised... We do hope the talks between the military commanders progress on expected lines. The current progress (by China) is an effort to dig on for the winter... we too are taking actions to step up air assets."

Replying to another question whether China could use Pakistan air bases in the case of a conflict, the IAF chief said it would mean a collusive threat and the force was ready to tackle it. On the possibility of a two-front threat, he said, "We are aware they are cooperating closely. There is a significant threat, but so far there is no such indication that they are colluding for a two-front war."

Asked, if at any moment the IAF came close to an air strike against China, especially after the Galwan clash on June 15 when 20 Indian Army personnel were killed, the IAF chief replied in negative. But he said the IAF "is prepared."

On Rafale, he said it had provided the IAF a technological edge. "It gives the ability to strike first and strike deep and hard even in a contested air space," he said.

Bhadauria said there was no step up in deployment of assets on the other side since the last Corps Commander level talks on September 21. After the talks, the two sides had for the first time issued a joint statement and agreed to "stop sending more troops to frontline" and "refrain from unilaterally changing the situation on the ground." On his assessment on the LAC in the next three months, the IAF chief said the main focus was on talks to disengage. He admitted the current rate of progress was slow and said "ground realities" cannot be ignored. China is digging in for winter and India will also have to take precautionary steps, he added.

On delivery schedule of the Rafale jets, he said while the first five were inducted recently, the next four to five planes were expected in India in November and by 2023 all the 36 jets will be in operational in the IAF.

CBI books DK...

From Page 1

"The CBI has registered a case against former Minister of Karnataka Government (presently MLA) on the allegations of possession of disproportionate assets to the tune of Rs 74.93 crore (approximately) in his name and in the name of his family members," the CBI said in a statement here.

The Karnataka Government had issued a notification under Delhi Special Police Establishment Act and it was followed up by a notification from the Centre after which CBI had initially registered a Preliminary Enquiry (PE) during March, 2020 against the said MLA and others in the matter, the CBI spokesperson said.

Searches were conducted at 14 locations including Karnataka, Delhi and Mumbai at the premises of the said MLA and others which led to the recovery of cash of Rs 57 lakh (approximately) and several incriminating documents including property documents, bank related information, computer hard disk among others, reads the CBI statement, adding investigation is continuing.

Congress leaders flayed the Modi Government and CBI for the raids.

"The insidious game of intimidation & machinations of Modi-Yeddyurappa duo being executed by a puppet CBI by raiding @DKShivakumar won't deter us. CBI should be unearthing the layers of corruption in Yeddyurappa Govt. But, 'Raid Raj' is their only 'Machiavellian Move'!" Randeep Singh Surjewala, the Congress' national spokesperson, tweeted.

"Let Modi & Yeddyurappa Govts & BJP's frontal organizations i.e CBI-ED-Income Tax know that Congress workers & leaders will not be cowed down nor bow down before such devious attempts. Our resolve to fight for people & expose BJP's maladministration only becomes stronger," he added.

Karnataka Congress tweeted that CBI has become a permanent electoral weapon for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). "We condemn this

politics of vendetta," it said.

The Congress party said it will hold a protest meet at its headquarters against the CBI raid. "Afraid of losing the Sira and RR Nagar by-polls, the BJP is resorting to these tactics. We won't be cowed down and will fight this," Saleem Ahmed, the Congress state working president, said.

The CBI raids were also condemned by senior Congress leader Siddaramaiah. "@BJP4India has always tried to indulge in vindictive politics & mislead public attention. The latest CBI raid on @KPCCPresident @DKShivakumar's house is another attempt to derail our preparation for bypolls. I strongly condemn this," Siddaramaiah tweeted.

"After ED and I-T they have unleashed CBI. This is vendetta for what DKS did during the RS polls of our leader Ahmed Patel. We have belief and trust in the judiciary. We will fight it out," Lakshmi Hebbalkar, former Minister and Congress MLA, said.

Sources said the seized documents and records are being analysed for further legal action and probe into the matter. The accused persons will accordingly be summoned for questioning.

Based on the CBI case, the Enforcement Directorate is likely to register a separate case under Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

The CBI has registered the fresh case against the Congress leader based on information from another agency. The information relates to assets amassed during Shivakumar's tenure as a minister in the Karnataka government, sources said.

The premises searched include properties of Shivakumar's brother and MP from Bengaluru Rural D K Suresh. The agency sleuths reached their residences in Bengaluru and also at Doddalahalli in Kanakapura early this morning, they said. Shivakumar was arrested on September 23 last year by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case and was lodged in the Tihar jail under judicial custody. He was released from the jail on October 23 after the Delhi High Court granted him bail.

Fight over AIIMS...

From Page 1

"We all stand vindicated by these findings of AIIMS," the Police Commissioner said. The Supreme Court had upheld transfer of the FIR lodged by Bihar Police in the Rajput case and not the Mumbai Police's investigation, Singh said.

"The court didn't find any fault with our investigation," he said. Singh further said that the city police had submitted the investigation report to the apex court in a sealed cover and it was seen by only six persons - the investigating officer, senior police inspector, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Commissioner of Police, advocate general of the State and the judge.

"Without knowing anything about our investigation and without having seen our report some vested interests criticised our investigation," he said. Rajput (34) was found hanging at his flat in Mumbai on June 14. A section of media had hinted that it could be a murder.

The CBI had taken over the probe from Bihar Police into the alleged abetment to suicide case filed by the actor's father KK Singh in Patna against Rajput's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty and her family.

Meanwhile, Shiv Sena on Monday sought an apology from the BJP leaders as well as the media for trying to defame Maharashtra Government and Mumbai Police.

A day after the AIIMS forensic panel, set up to assist CBI in the medical investigation, ruled out murder claims in its report, the Sena said that the BJP-led Centre and its NDA partner in Bihar, JD (U), used the actor's death as a poll plank ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections in Bihar.

"Since the very beginning, in this case, there has been a conspiracy to malign Maharashtra Government and Mumbai Police. If now the CBI inquiry is also not being trusted, then we're speechless," senior Shiv leader Sanjay Raut said.

3 more rapes in UP dists

From Page 1

The girl's father also lodged a case in which he named one accused along with three unknown miscreants. The local cops detained two youths and claimed that the girl was friendly to one of the accused who called her to meet him in the village fields on Sunday afternoon. The cops said the youth also called three of his friends and they all gangraped the girl and escaped. A case under POCSO Act has been registered and efforts were made to arrest all the accused. SP Pradeep Gupta and ADM, Kunj Bihari also visited the hospital to take first hand information from the victim.

In a separate case, a woman was allegedly raped by a man at gunpoint in Muzaffarnagar following which the accused was arrested, police said on Monday. According to a complaint lodged by the woman, the man allegedly raped her in a sugarcane field on Sunday. A case was registered against the accused, identified as Shrawan Kumar (26), under relevant sections of the IPC on the basis of the complaint and he was arrested, police added.

In another incident, a blind woman was allegedly raped by her relative on the pretext of marriage for several months, police said. A case was registered against the accused under IPC sections 376 (rape) and 420 (cheating), SHO Deepak Chaturvedi said. Efforts were underway to nab the accused, he said.

Meanwhile in Deoria, a youth was brutally assaulted by his neighbor over a petty dispute and was also humiliated at gunpoint on Saturday evening. Interestingly, the cops swung into action only after the video of the act went viral on Sunday. They arrested three of the accused and sent them to jail. The Chief Minister Office also directed the local officers to take stern action against all the accused. Reports said one Anees Chandra Dwivedi, a resident of Chakradhar Pansrahi hamlet of Sadar, was constructing a boundary wall which was objected to by his neighbour Satish and the two parties scuffled four days back.

On Saturday evening, Anees was going to receive his father at railway station when he was stopped by Satish, Vinod Yadav, Nanhe Yadav and Govind Yadav who all brutally assaulted him and later at gunpoint, one of them also did objectionable act. An upset Anees returned home but on Sunday, the video of the entire incident went viral following which the local police arrested three of the accused. A case has been registered in this regard.

Govt scraps requirement of min 7 yr continuous service for enhanced family pension

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

An EOFP is 50 per cent of personnel's last emoluments and is payable for 10 years from the date of the death of the personnel in service, the ministry said in the statement.

"The requirement of continuous qualifying service of 7 years (to get EOFP) is done away with effect from October 1, 2019," it said.

10% of world's...

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The estimate - which would amount to more than 760 million people based on a current world population of about 7.6 billion - far outstrips the number of confirmed cases as tallied by both WHO and Johns Hopkins University, now more than 35 million worldwide.

Experts have long said that the number of confirmed cases greatly underestimates the true figure.

The comments came during a special session of the executive board to consider the follow-up to its previous meeting, in May, that passed a resolution to look into the world's - and WHO's - response to the pandemic. Ryan warned that the world was "now heading into a difficult period. The disease continues to spread. It is on the rise in many parts of the world."

PUBLIC NOTICE

I declare that my client Smt. Santosh Bansal W/o Late Sh. Rakesh Bansal R/o 717, Vikas Kunj, Vikas Puri, New Delhi - 110018, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that she has debarred my son namely Sachin Bansal from her house /property, immovable, movable and business from 05.10.2020. Further, from now onwards he is solely responsible for his liabilities, loans, fights, police cases, court cases, etc.

Nipul Katyal (Advocate)

PUBLIC NOTICE

1. Rajneesh Kumar Chakarvarti proprietor of Bhola Tent House, office address :- Shop No. 6-7, Ravi Complex, Munrika, New Delhi hereby declare that Mr. Rajeev Kumar Chakarvarti is no more associated with Bhola Tent House. He is not an authorised official or agent of Bhola Tent House so any order accepted by him would not accrue liability on Bhola Tent House to fulfill it. For official bookings kindly contact: 9810045026.

G. Sai Krishna Kumar (Advocate)

J-32, Lajpat Nagar-III, New Delhi-110024

जिला स्वास्थ्य समिति जिला राजगढ़ म.प्र.

क्रमांक/एन.एच.एम./2020/8132 राजगढ़ दिनांक 29.09.2020

विज्ञापित

कोविड-19 महामारी को रोकथाम हेतु जिले में मानव संसाधन की उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित करने हेतु राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन/राज्य शासन के निर्देशानुसार अस्थायी नियुक्तियों हेतु निम्नानुसार पदों हेतु ऑनलाइन आवेदन आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं।

क्रमांक	पदनाम	संख्या	अनिवार्य योग्यता
01	नातकोत्तर चिकित्सा अधिकारी (डिग्री/डिप्लोमा)	03	1. एम.डी. मेडिसिन 2. एम.डी./डी.ए. एनेस्थीसिया 3. फेलोशिप/बिस्ट
02	चिकित्सा अधिकारी	09	मान्यता प्राप्त मेडिकल कॉलेज से एम.बी.बी.एस
03	आयुष चिकित्सक	26	1. मान्यता प्राप्त विश्वविद्यालय से डिग्री 2. म.प्र. आयुर्वेद चिकित्सा पद्धति एवं प्राकृतिक चिकित्सा बोर्ड में जीवित पंजीयन/म.प्र. होम्योपैथी परिषद में जीवित पंजीयन।
04	फार्मासिस्ट	02	औषध निर्माण में डिप्लोमा अथवा औषध निर्माण में बी-फार्मा अथवा औषध निर्माण में एम फार्मा तथा मप्र फोर्मेसी काउंसिल का जीवित पंजीयन
05	लेब टेक्नीशियन	24	पैथालॉजी का 02 वर्षीय डिप्लोमा पाठ्यक्रम अथवा पैथोलॉजी डिग्री पाठ्यक्रम (बीएसएलटी) अथवा पैथोलॉजी का स्नातकोत्तर पाठ्यक्रम (एमएमएलटी) तथा म.प्र. सह चिकित्सकीय परिषद में जीवित पंजीयन।
06	महिला स्वास्थ्य कार्यकर्ता (एएनएम)	23	महिला स्वास्थ्य कार्यकर्ता प्रशिक्षण केंद्र से प्रशिक्षण उर्ताण एवं म.प्र. नर्सिंग काउंसिल में जीवित पंजीयन

1. उक्त पदों हेतु आवेदन rajgarh.nic.in पर आवेदन कर सकते हैं। उक्त नियुक्ति पूर्ण रूप से अस्थायी होगी एवं आकस्मिक सेवाओं के रूप में ली जा रही है, इन सेवाओं को नियमित अथवा सविदा सेवा के लिये किसी भी दशा में मान्य नहीं किया जावेगा।

2. ऑनलाइन आवेदन करने की अंतिम तिथि विज्ञापित प्रकाशन से 14 दिवस तक मान्य होगी। अंतिम तिथि की जानकारी rajgarh.nic.in पोर्टल पर देखी जा सकेगी।

3. नियुक्ति संबंधित आवेदन करने एवं अन्य समस्त शर्तें एवं जानकारी हेतु rajgarh.nic.in पर देखा जा सकता है। उक्त विज्ञापित के पूर्व किये गये आवेदन एवं ऑनलाइन प्रक्रिया के अतिरिक्त अन्य किसी माध्यम से किये गये आवेदनों को मान्य नहीं किया जावेगा।

सचिव
पदेन मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी
जिला स्वास्थ्य समिति जिला राजगढ़

G-1467/20

Centre...

From Page 1

Under the GST structure, taxes are levied under 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent slabs. On top of the highest tax slab, a cess is levied on luxury, sin and demerit goods and the proceeds from the same are used to compensate states for any revenue loss.

Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said with effect from January 1, 2021, GST refunds would be paid/distributed in a validated bank account linked with the PAN and Aadhaar of the registered taxpayer. The 42nd meeting of the GST Council, chaired by

Union Finance Minister and comprising state counterparts, also eased compliance burden for small taxpayers with an annual turnover of less than Rs 5 crore by allowing them to file GST returns on a quarterly basis with monthly tax payments from January 1, 2021.

"Such quarterly taxpayers would, for the first two months of the quarter, have an option to pay 35 per cent of the net cash tax liability of the last quarter using an auto-generated challan," the statement added.

Pandey said the Council has also approved the revised requirement of declaring HSN (Harmonised System of

Nomenclature) Code for goods in invoices and in sales return Form GSTR-1 with effect from April 1, 2021. Taxpayers with a turnover of over Rs 5 crore will have to quote 6 digit HSN or tariff code, while taxpayers with aggregate annual turnover up to Rs 5 crore will have to quote HSN code up to 4 digits for B2B supplies of both goods and services. Further, to encourage domestic launching of satellites particularly by young startups, the satellite launch services supplied by ISRO, Antrix Corporation Ltd and NSIL has been exempted from Goods and Services Tax (GST) by the Council.

Office of The Chief Engineer M.P.P.W.D Bridge Construction Zone Bhopal (M.P.)

Tender Notice

NIT No-29/C.E.(Bridge Zone)/2020-21 Date 29.09.2020

Online Tender for mentioned below are being invited. The Tender have been uploaded on the mptenders. system of Public Works Department on the Portal www.mptenders.gov.in Tender details are as below:-

S. No.	Tender No.	Work Area	Nature of Work	Name of Work	Call No.	Cost of Project (PAC) (Rs. In Lakh)	Physical submission (Original EMD & Other Document) at the office of as mentioned
1	2020_PWDRB_109685_1	All Madhya Pradesh	Bridge Work	Supervision and Quality Control Consultancy Services of Bridge Works on C.B.S. Method	Second	1133.00	Chief Engineer PWD Bridge Construction Zone Plot NO-27-28 Second Floor Nirman Bhawan Arera Hills Bhopal
						Total	1133.00

The document can only be purchased online from the above website after making online payment. The last date & time for purchase of Document on line is Dated 10/11/2020 up to (17:30) Detailed NIT and other details can be viewed on the above mentioned portal. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper. The Original FOR & Other document will be received on Dated 13/11/2020 up to (17:30) in the office mentioned.

Chief Engineer MP, PWD
Bridge Construction Zone, Bhopal

G-14665/20

MEGA DRIVE LAUNCHED TO CLEAN CITY'S LUNGS

CM says polluted air can be life threatening in view of Covid-19

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday launched a mega anti-air pollution campaign to reduce air pollution levels in the national Capital. Under the campaign "Yudh Pradushan ke Virudh", separate plans have been prepared for each of the 13 pollution hotspots in the city, Kejriwal said, adding polluted air can be life threatening in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chief Minister announced various measures to combat pollution such as the launching of the Green Delhi App, creation of a war room to monitor steps, processing liquid solution for farm fields to prevent stubble burning, implementing hotspot-specific action plans to contain pollution and subsidy on the adoption of electronic vehicles.

Kejriwal also appealed to the States to take measures to tackle stubble burning in their States by providing alternatives to the farmers, and by addressing issues in thermal power plants and brick kiln plants that are major sources of pollution.

Addressing the media on Monday, Kejriwal said the pollution level actually decreased between 2014 and 2019 in Delhi despite surge in economic and industrial activities in the city. "The average PM2.5 in 2014 was 154, and PM2.5 in 2018-19 was 115. It is because of the efforts of all the people of Delhi, the pollution levels have come down by 25 per cent," he said.

"This year, the pollution may prove to be a health haz-



An anti-smog gun kept at the Central Park in New Delhi on Monday

ard for us due to Corona. In the last five years, the Government has taken many steps to ensure pollution-free Delhi. The central Government constructed the Eastern and Western peripheral highway which has drastically reduced the traffic in Delhi. The Delhi Government has banned some of the dirtiest fuels from use in industry and we shifted all the industries to the use of PNG. We imposed heavy fines on construction sites violating dust control norms and conducted plantation drives and followed the directions of the Supreme Court regarding the implementation of the Graded Response Action Plan," he said.

Kejriwal also convened a meeting with various departments, who have all joined hands in this war against pollu-

tion announced by the CM, including the three MCDs, PWD, Delhi Government, DPCC, Pollution Control Board, transport department, etc. Unveiling the components of the anti-pollution campaign this year, Kejriwal added, "This year, the Delhi Government will spray the solution on the basmati rice farm fields itself. If this technique is successful in Delhi,



of the anti-pollution campaign this year, Kejriwal added, "This year, the Delhi Government will spray the solution on the basmati rice farm fields itself. If this technique is successful in Delhi,

we can tell the other States to implement the same to prevent stubble burning. The Delhi Government is preparing the mixture in Delhi on a large scale, and the process will start tomorrow under the guidance of the Pusa Research Institute."

"We are also launching an intensive anti-dust drive from today under which various action plans will be implemented. Our inspection teams will visit the construction sites across Delhi and impose heavy fines or challans if they are found not following the anti-pollution measures in construction sites. Mechanical sweepers will be intensively used by MCDs across Delhi to ensure no pollution due to road dust. I have also instructed agencies to repair the potholes which are also one of the main sources of pollution. Anti-smog guns have also been installed across Delhi to reduce the impact of pollution," he added.

The Government will also be launching the Green Delhi App this month on which pictures of any pollution related violations can be clicked and posted for action, he said, adding that a war room against pollution will also be created for monitoring of various measures that are implemented and have to be implemented in the coming days.

Capital reports 363 cases of dengue till Oct 3

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital reported 363 cases of dengue this year till October 3 with 66 fresh cases reported last week.

Thirty five new cases of malaria and six cases of chikungunya also reported in Delhi last week taking the total number to 259 and 83 respectively.

According to the latest report released by all three Municipal Corporation, mosquito-breeding has been reported in at least 83,389 households and 63,694 legal notices have

been issued this year. The dengue breeding checkers have checked 16,328,314 houses and also issued challans to 7,029 numbers of office and residential premises.

Dengue mosquito larvae breed in clear, standing water while those of malaria mosquito thrive even in dirty water.

The Delhi Government has launched "10 Hafte 10 Baje 10 Minute" campaign to check mosquito breeding to prevent vector borne diseases.

Last year, due to the campaign, only 206 cases and

two deaths were reported in the city.

The first edition of the anti-dengue campaign was launched in 2019.

This year, the Delhi Government has also launched a telephonic helpline — 01123300012 and WhatsApp helpline — 8595920530 to assist the general public with dengue.



HERE'S WHAT TO DO AND WHAT NOT TO:

Do's

- Use mosquito repellents and nets
- Install screens on your doors and windows
- Wear full-sleeve clothes to avoid mosquito bites
- Keep yourself hydrated throughout the day and carry water
- Do see a doctor if you show any symptoms of dengue

Don'ts

- Do not let water collect in open spaces and surroundings
- Do not self-medicate if you have symptoms of dengue like fever and body ache
- Avoid consuming paracetamol and aspirin-based medicines without medical supervision
- Avoid giving steroids or antibiotics to dengue patients
- Avoid platelet transfusion unless there is an active bleed or the platelet count is less than 10,000

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Most people with dengue and Covid-19 have mild illness and can recover

at home; symptoms usually last a few days, and people tend to feel better after a week

➤ However, both dengue and Covid-19 can cause severe illness

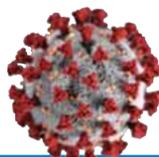
➤ COVID-19: People at higher risk for severe illness

➤ Healthcare providers should perform appropriate tests (for dengue; for Covid-19) and follow the patient closely for warning signs

➤ Dengue warning signs include persistent vomiting, mucosal bleeding, difficulty breathing, lethargy/restlessness, postural hypotension, liver enlargement and progressive increase in hematocrit

➤ Covid-19 warning signs include difficulty breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face. This list is not all possible symptoms

➤ Complications for both dengue and Covid-19 can develop before test results come back. Clinical management should be guided by clinical presentation



Action plan mooted to curb air pollution in Gurugram

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

The district administration of Gurugram finally has prepared an action plan to combat air pollution in the district. This plan will soon be implemented in coordination with all the concerned departments and agencies of the district.

Meanwhile, to implement this action plan effectively over the next four months, Amit Khatri, the deputy commissioner of Gurugram, has directed all the concerned departments and agencies to keep a tab on violations. Under the action plan, the Municipal Corporation Gurugram (MCG) and the Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) offices will form separate teams for checking to implement the action plan. These teams will keep an eye on waste burning

and other causes of pollution.

To prevent air pollution more effectively Khatri said that, "the number of pollution measuring instruments has also been increased in the district. Earlier, where pollution measuring devices were installed at only two places in Vikas Sadan near Rajiv Chowk and Manesar in Gurugram, now their number has been increased to 4. Two new devices have been installed in Gurugram University at Sector 51 of and the Terry campus on Faridabad-Gurugram Road."

"Special teams of MCG and HSPCB will be designated who will monitor the violations of the order. We will direct them to take immediate action if any particular area shows a spike in air pollution," Khatri said.

While speaking about the action plan to curb air pollution, Kuldeep Singh, Regional Officer of HSPCB said that, "the potential hotspots of air pollution have been identified in the district and those areas will be given more attention during checking".

AAP slams civic bodies for not paying salaries to dengue, malaria warriors

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and MCD Sin-charge Durgesh Pathak on Monday slammed the BJP-ruled municipal Corporations for not complying court's order to pay Rs 32,000 salary instead of Rs 14,000 to dengue-malaria warriors of Delhi.

Pathak said there are around 3,500 such people who work as dengue-malaria warriors. "The court ruled that these employees should get Rs 32,000 salary instead of Rs 14,000 and the verdict also observed that the BJP-ruled MCD should clear their arrears and bonus from 2012. It also issued a timeline which was of March 31, 2020 to finish these works," he said.

"The fight against vector borne diseases cannot be possible without the people who spray anti-dengue and malaria insecticides across the Capital. These people are also known as dengue-malaria warriors. They check the breeding of the larva and go door to door and spray the medicine. It is unfortunate that the BJP-ruled MCD is showing a step-motherly attitude towards them and not even confirmed their job but kept them as contractual employees," he said.

The AAP leader also demanded that the fund must be released for these warriors and follow the court order.

ASI, 54-year-old man hurt after two unidentified men fire at them in Alipur

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi Police Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) and a 54-year-old man was injured after two unidentified men fired at them in Delhi Alipur area.

According to Gaurav Sharma, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Outernorth district, the incident took place at around 6 pm on Sunday at Alipur area of outer Delhi.

"Both the injured persons, ASI Sube Singh of the Seelampur police station and Mahendra are undergoing treatment at a nearby hospital," said the DCP, adding that they are stable.

"Soon after the incident, Mahendra called up police and told them that two assailants fired upon him when he was with Singh in Alipur. Mahendra got injured when a bullet passed touching him, while Singh received a bullet injury on his right leg," said the DCP.

"A case has been registered and manhunt has been initiated to nab the accused," said the DCP.

Man stabbed to death for resisting snatching bid

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 24-year-old man was stabbed to death by two persons while trying to resist a snatching bid at GB Road in central Delhi. The incident occurred on Sunday night.

The deceased has been identified as Aman, a resident of New Ashok Nagar area in Delhi.

According to Sanjay Bhatia, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Central district, Aman, along with his friends Aniruddh, Hari Om and Raju, was roaming on the GB Road around 11.30 pm on Sunday when a person tried to snatch

his mobile phone.

"Aman caught hold of the snatcher and started beating him up. In the meantime, the snatcher's accomplice stabbed Aman with a knife and when his friend Aniruddh tried to stop him, he attacked him also," said the DCP.

"Both men were rushed to Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) hospital, where Aman was declared brought dead by doctors, while Aniruddh was undergoing treatment for his stab wounds," said the DCP.

"Police received information at 1.54 am from RML hospital through our duty constable," the DCP said.

CONG'S SATYAGRAHA SEEKS JUSTICE FOR HATHRAS VICTIM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress held silent satyagraha in all the 14 districts of the city, seeking justice to the family of the 19-year-old Dalit girl who was allegedly raped and killed by four anti-socials at Hathras in UP.

Delhi Congress president Anil Kumar who participated in a silent satyagraha at Rajghat said the Congress will continue its fight till justice is done to the family of the daughter of

Hathras, who became yet another victim of attacks against Dalit women ever since the Yogi Government came to power in Uttar Pradesh.

"It is very unfortunate that the UP Police cremated the mortal remains of the girl at night in gross violation of the customs and rituals of the Dalit community. The country is witnessing a dark and dictatorial rule" became evident when Congress leaders Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi Ji were

assaulted and lathi-charged by the police when they tried to go to Hathras to meet the girl's family to console them, and assure them of all support and help from the Congress," he said.

Many party leaders, including Mudit Agarwal, AICC secretary former MP Krishna Tirathi, Amrita Dhawan, former Delhi Pradesh Mahila Congress president Sharmistha Mukherjee and Parvez Alam Khan participated in the satyagraha.



City records 32 more Covid-19 deaths

RECOVERY RATE OVER 90 PER CENT

New Delhi: The national Capital recorded 32 Covid-19 fatalities on Monday taking the death toll to 5,542, while 1,947 fresh cases took the tally to over 2.92 lakh, authorities said. The relatively low number of fresh cases came out of the 35,593 tests conducted on Sunday. On weekdays, the average number of tests conducted ranges between 50,000 to 55,000.

Thirty-two new fatalities have been recorded, taking the death toll to 5,542, according to the latest bulletin issued by the Delhi health department.

The tally of active cases on Monday stood at 23,080. The bulletin said the total number of cases has climbed to 2,92,560. The positivity rate on Monday stood at 5.47 per cent while the recovery rate crossed 90 per cent, the bulletin said, adding that the case fatality rate



stood at 1.89 per cent.

Meanwhile, Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Monday held meeting with medical directors and medical superintendents of all Delhi Government hospitals to review the status of testing.

Delhi Chief Secretary Vijay Dev also held a review meeting with all district magistrates on

Sunday stood at 28,008 while the RT-PCR, CBNAAT and True NAAT tests figures were 7,585, in all adding to 35,593, according to the bulletin.

The number of tests done per million, as on Monday, was over 1.74 lakh while the total number of tests stood at over 33 lakh. The bulletin said that 2,63,938 patients have recovered, been discharged or migrated so far.

Since September, daily cases had begun to rise in the city. From the last week of September, it has started to come down a bit. According to the bulletin, out of the total number of 15,832 beds in Covid hospitals, 10,030 are vacant.

It said 774 beds in Covid care centres are occupied by persons under quarantine, including travellers who have returned by Vande Bharat Mission and bubble flights. The number of people in home isolation dropped to 13,905 on Monday compared to 14,700 the previous day.

The number of Rapid Antigen Tests conducted on

SIDELIGHTS

CONTAINMENT ZONES UP BY 2,700
The number of containment zones in the national Capital has gone past 2,700 with increase in tests to detect coronavirus infection, according to official data. According to revenue department data, the number of containment zones had gone up to 2,707 by Sunday. The number went up from 1,751 on September 17 to over 2,000 on September 24.

RWAs Body Issues Advisory
The apex body of resident welfare associations in Delhi on Monday said an advisory has been issued to all RWAs after reports came up that vendors are allegedly not being allowed to distribute newspapers in some areas. United RWAs Joint Action (URJA) president Atul Goyal said home delivery of newspapers is an essential services, and no one can create hindrance to it.

Man who escaped while undergoing Covid treatment arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has nabbed a 33-year-old man, who had escaped from police custody while undergoing treatment for Covid-19 at a hospital in national Capital last month. The accused has been identified as Soni alias Mehtab, a resident of Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh. Police said that Soni is involved in more than 10 cases, including murder, attempt to murder, robbery, dacoity and kidnapping and assault.

Police claimed to have recovered one semi-automatic pistol, one shell which he fired when police tried to apprehend him and three live cartridges. According to Pramod Singh Kushwaha, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Special Cell, on September 18, the accused had escaped from police custody at LNJP hospital where he was undergoing treatment for Covid-19.

"After escaping, Mehtab had taken a room on rent in the Sonia Vihar area and hiding. Since his escape from police custody, information was being gathered about his hideouts and discreet surveillance had

been mounted on his associates in the Delhi-NCR region," said the DCP.

"Police received information on Thursday that Mehtab would come to the Khajuri Khas area to meet his associate on October 2. A raiding team was formed and a trap was laid," said the DCP.

"Mehtab was spotted and when asked to surrender, he whipped out his pistol and fired at the members of the raiding party, but no one was hurt. Mehtab was finally overpowered and disarmed," he said.

"During interrogation, he disclosed that on September 14, he was arrested in a case of theft registered at Rajiv Chowk Metro police station and was sent to Tihar Jail where he was subsequently found coronavirus positive. Thereafter, he was admitted in LNJP hospital in police custody for treatment, the DCP said.

"On September 18, Mehtab went to the toilet and escaped from the hospital through a small window of the building. A case in this regard was registered at IP Estate police station," said the DCP

Hindu Rao Hospital staff deprived of last 3-month salaries

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Government is praising frontline medical workers for combating Covid-19, on the other doctors and staff members of North Delhi Municipal Corporation's Hindu Rao Hospital have decided to sit on indefinite agitation from Monday onwards. The emergency services will, however, operate smoothly.

Last week, the staffers were on a "Pen Down Strike" from 9 am to 12 pm to display their ordeal. According to the civic body, the matter is being looked into.

The letter written by the Resident Doctor Association (RDA) to the hospital administration said that "We apolo-

gise to announce that we are forced to go for an indefinite agitation w.e.f. October 5, 2020 considering strictly 'No pay, No work', while operating the emergency services smoothly."

It added, "The chronic sufferings of the staff have been too agonizing and intractable where it is distressing to one's mental and physical well-being. We strongly plea to you for releasing 3 months' pay and giving us an immediate permanent solution. We also demand a formal notice regarding the same."

RDA President Abhimanyu Sardana further

added that the inconvenience brought to the patient will be harboured by the administration. This comes a week after the association warned the Commissioner of North Delhi Municipal Corporation of holding an indefinite protest if their salaries are not paid.

"It has been made clear that there is strict non-compliance in view of fulfilment of the basic rights of the Healthcare Staff and provision of basic pay to an individual appointed by the North MCD under the employment act," the letter added.

Delhi Zoo's land, ecosystem worth ₹56K cr



ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The land and carbon sequestration value of the Delhi Zoo, also known as the National Zoological Park (NZP), in the heart of the city has been valued at a whopping ₹55,209.45 crore. And visited by over 2 lakh foreign and domestic tourists every year, the annual economic value of the Zoo's biodiversity conservation, recreational and cultural services has been pegged at ₹422.76 crore.

These have been estimated in a first of its kind economic valuation of any zoo in the country, conducted to identify its contributions to the economy as well as environmental awareness level of the visitor.

Spread over an area of 176 acres against the historic monument of Old Fort, the NZP is home to around 75 species of animals under various categories including the endangered one and 29 species of exotic animals besides several free ranging floral and faunal species.

The ecosystem services provided by the zoological park are bio-diversity conservation, carbon storage and sequestration,

restricted to its visitors but also reach Delhi's citizens. Hence, it is necessary to ensure proper maintenance of the zoo to improve its services," the report stated.

The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) prepared the report which was released by Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar on Monday during an online event on Wildlife Week 2020.

"Humans have always considered ecosystem services as a gift from nature without realizing the fact that they need to be maintained regularly to ensure their smooth flow. The maintenance of the service surely incurs a huge cost and hence these services may not be taken as granted to be a gift," Ajay Mathur, Director General, TERI, said on the need for conducting such a study.

Zoological Parks are unique ecosystems that provides numerous services of local and national significance and this makes it necessary to realise the potential of these ecosystem services towards societal and overall

employment generation, education and research, and recreational and cultural, said the report 'Economic Valuation of the Ecosystem Services of National Zoological Park, New Delhi - 2020'.

According to the report, 77 per cent of the total of ₹422.76 crore came from recreational and cultural services while education and research services contributed nine per cent. The informal interactions with the tourists suggested that most Indian tourists visiting the zoo were from Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, and Haryana.

While employment generation contributed eight per cent or ₹32.19 crore, the contribution of bio-diversity was six per cent or ₹27.33 crore. The least contribution was found in carbon sequestration which was 0.31 per cent or Rs 1.31 crore of the total economic value of ecosystem services provided by the Delhi zoo in 2019-2020.

"Irrespective of the contributions, every service is important as it contributes towards the improvement of the local environment. The benefits of the zoo are not only

Centre plans PPP model to operate zoos across country for better upkeep



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre is planning for a public-private partnership (PPP) model to operate zoos in the country for their proper maintenance, said Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar on Monday.

Speaking at an online event, he said that funds will be allocated for the plan and it will be announced in the budget session next year.

"Children like visiting zoos and to enhance their experience, these facilities must be maintained properly. There are 160 zoos in the country. We will soon come up with a new plan for upgradation and expansion of zoos across the country and we will set aside a budget for it, which will be announced in the next year's budget session," Javadekar said.

The minister said that State Governments and corporations will also be involved in this plan. There are about 160 zoos in the country, either funded by the State

Governments or the Centre through the Central Zoo Authority (CZA).

The Minister further said that State Governments, corporations, businesses and people will all be key elements of the plan. "It will help give enhanced experience to the visitors especially the students and children and the future generation in order to nurture the connect between wildlife, nature and humans."

SP Yadav, member secretary of the CZA said that the Authority which was established to oversee the functioning of Indian zoos and complement the wildlife conservation strategies through ex-situ measures, as on today recognizes around 160 zoo and rescue centers that enforce global standards in animal housing and welfare. "Over 567 captive animal species (with 114 species under endangered category) with overall 56481 individual animals are currently housed in various zoos in the country," he said.

habitats such as zoos to human wellbeing and the need for replication across India.

'Secret' extradition process on to bring fugitive bizman Mallya to country, Centre informs SC

New Delhi: The Centre on Monday told the Supreme Court that "secret" extradition process was going on to bring fugitive businessman Vijay Mallya to the country but it was not aware of its status. The Centre also told the top court that it was not a party to the proceedings.

A bench of Justices U U Lalit and Ashok Bhushan asked Mallya's lawyer to inform the court what kind of "secret" proceedings are going on to extradite him.

Advocate Ankur Saigal, appearing for Mallya, told the apex court that he was not aware what kind of proceedings are going on.

He said, "I have knowledge that my request against extradition has been rejected."

The bench also directed Mallya's lawyers to apprise it by November 2 when can the fugitive businessman appear before the court and when the "secret" proceedings are going to end.

Advocate Rajat Nair, appearing for the Centre, told the court that extradition request has been made as per the direction of the court.

"Some secret extradition proceedings are going on to which we are not a party."

"Extradition proceedings have been upheld by the highest court of UK but it has not been happening as of now," he said.

The apex court had earlier directed Mallya to appear before it on October 5 while dismissing his plea seeking review of the 2017 verdict which held him guilty of contempt for transferring USD 40 million to his children in violation of court orders.

Mallya, an accused in bank loan default case of over Rs 9,000 crore involving his

defunct Kingfisher Airlines, is in the United Kingdom.

The apex court had in June directed its registry to explain as to why Mallya's review petition had not been listed before the concerned court for the last three years.

It had directed the registry to furnish all the details including names of officials who had dealt with the file concerning the review petition in the last three years.

The apex court's 2017 order had come on a plea by consortium of banks led by the State Bank of India (SBI), which had said that Mallya had allegedly transferred USD 40 million received from British firm Diageo, to his children in "flagrant violation" of various judicial orders.

It was dealing with pleas of lending banks seeking contempt action and a direction to Mallya to deposit USD 40 million received from offshore firm Diageo respectively.

The banks had then alleged that Mallya concealed the facts and diverted the money to his son Siddharth Mallya and daughters Leanna Mallya and Tanya Mallya in "flagrant violation" of the orders passed by the Karnataka High Court.

Mallya had in May lost his application seeking leave to appeal his extradition to India in the UK Supreme Court, setting a 28-day clock on his removal from the UK.

The UK top court's decision marks a big legal setback to the 64-year-old flamboyant businessman, who had earlier lost his high court appeal against an extradition order to India on charges of alleged fraud and money laundering related to unrecovered loans to his now-defunct Kingfisher Airlines. **PTI**

Bihar election: Over 700 observers briefed virtually by EC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Over 700 observers including police and expenditure observers who joined virtually from 119 locations for the upcoming Assembly elections in Bihar — were on Monday briefed by the Election Commission (EC) to ensure strict compliance of the new guidelines amid the coronavirus pandemic in the poll fray.

Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora underlined the need for poll observers to be extra careful during the three-phase Bihar assembly elections, saying the exercise, being the largest in the world to be held amid the COVID-19 pandemic, will be keenly watched by the world community. He also reiterated the poll panel's commitment towards conducting an election that is free, fair, transparent, ethical and also "COVID safe".

The EC also gave them details of Covid19 guidelines for electorates and candidates and for poll duty officials during elections in Bihar.

Addressing observers, Arora said the strength of a democracy rests in its primary stakeholder -- the voters. "All efforts must be made to instil confidence in the voter to come to the polling station on election day to cast her/his vote safely and freely," an Election Commission statement said quoting him. Arora gave a global perspective on the impact of Covid 19 on election schedules around the world and the detailed deliberation and assessments done by poll body before taking the decision to conduct elections in Bihar.

Monday's meeting was a blend of virtual and physical gathering with more than 700 general, police and expenditure observers joining virtually from 119 locations across the country and about 40 observers posted in Delhi joining in person.

He underscored the need to be extra careful as this election will be keenly watched by the world community being the largest election in the world to be held amid the pandemic.

Speaking on the occasion, Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar drew the attention of the officers that as Observers they have a statutory duty to perform on behalf of Election Commission of India. He said the officers should always bear in mind they are the actual face of ECI on the ground.

Deputy Election Commissioner and in charge of Bihar polls at the ECI, Chandra Bhushan Kumar gave a detailed out the legal provision, Model Code of Conduct issues specifically in COVID scenario for Bihar Elections.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE

Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

NIT No.	221-S/4/2/AMC/FSD/2020-21/ML-IV
Name of work and its location	"Annual Maintenance Contract of Fog Safe Device (FSDs) for 04 months from 16 Nov '20 to 15 March '21" as per scope of work.
Approx Cost of Work	Rs. 1258870/- (Twelve Lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy only) With GST
Earnest Money	Rs. 25200/-
Completion period of work	Four Months i.e. 04 months from the date of execution of work
Cost of tender document on cash/by post	Rs. 2360/- with GST@18%
Date and Time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15.00 hrs on 29.10.2020, Opening of Tender at 15.00 hrs
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

No. 221-S/4/2/AMC/FSD/2020-21/ML-IV Dated: 05.10.2020 2147/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE

The Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer (Const), Northern Railway, Shivaji Bridge, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender for the following work:

1. Name of work and location	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract of 500kVA, 63kVA and 30kVA D.G. sets installed in the office complex of CAO/C/Kashmere Gate, Delhi, CEE/C/Tilak Bridge, Dy. CE/C/SE Road New Delhi & Dy. CEE/C/Shivaji Bridge.
2. Completion period of the work	36 (Thirty Six) months
3. Approx. Cost of the work	₹ 7,84,980/-
4. Earnest Money to be deposited	₹ 15,700/-
5. Date & Time for submission of E-tender and Opening of Tender	Tenders may be uploaded upto 11.30 Hrs. on 28.10.2020 date on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the tender will be opened at 11.30 hrs. on 28.10.2020
6. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Documents	The detailed e-tender notice is available on Northern Railway website i.e. www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in and tender document is available on www.ireps.gov.in. Above tender document will be available for submission of offer on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 14.10.2020 to 28.10.2020. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender documents. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

Tender Notice No. 17-Elect./DYCEE/CI/126C Dtd. 05.10.2020 2148/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE

The Chief Administrative Officer/Const.-II/Northern Railway, Kashmere Gate, Delhi, for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under Two Packet System for the under noted work :-

Mode of Tender	E-Tender (Two Packet)
Tender Notice No.	74-W/3/2/431/WA/LKO Dated 05.10.2020
Full name of work	Jaunpur-Shahganj Section (Zone-I):- Supply and Stacking of 65mm gauge machine crushed hard stone ballast as per RDSO specification for track ballast IRS-GE-1 (June-2016) (with update correction slips) in between Jaunpur (Including) to Shahganj (Including) in connection with "Proposed Doubling of Jaunpur-Akbarpur of Lucknow Division on Northern Railway
Approx. cost	Rs. 32.62 crores
Completion period	12 (Twelve) months
Earnest money amount	Rs. 17,81,100/- only
Sale/availability of tender document on Rly. Website	Tender documents will be available on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 07.10.2020 to 27.10.2020 up to 11:30 hrs.
Last date/Time of upload of tenders	27.10.2020 up to 11:30 hours. Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS website w.e.f. 13.10.2020 to 27.10.2020
Date and time of opening of tender	27.10.2020 at 11:30 hours (immediately after close of uploading of tender (D2). In case of two packet system, Financial bids of the eligible tenderers would be opened subsequently on the date & time to be notified later on

2145/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE



Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tests the Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo (SMART) from Wheeler Island off the coast of Odisha

'Therapeutic, diagnostics, vaccines for whole world only way out of Covid pandemic'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Therapeutic, diagnostics and vaccines for the whole world are the only way out of the Coronavirus pandemic, WHO Executive board director Dr Harshvardhan said on Monday during online interaction with the member nations of the world health agency.

As the world grapples with the virulent virus which has infected over 3.5 crore people and claimed 10 lakh lives, Dr Harsh Vardhan stressed on strengthening emergency preparedness and risk management as a key to addressing health risk posed by emerging diseases like Covid-19.

The agenda of the meet included focus on the measures necessary to ensure the full and effective implementation of the terms of resolution WHA 73.1 on Covid-19 responses.

He said, "Committing to disaster risk reduction and management would require early and transparent identification and communication of risks, maintaining the momentum in investing in people and resilient health systems,

strengthened multi-sector collaboration, stress on the swifter generation of evidence, accelerated research & development efforts and rational evidence-based implementation of plans.

In this regard, Dr Harsh Vardhan urged WHO members to work with the global community of partners for the efficient, effective and responsible discharge of public health obligations."All these challenges, such as the present pandemic, demand a shared response because these are the shared threats requiring shared responsibility to act.

India's COVID-19 caseload has crossed 66 lakh, while the number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 55,86,703, pushing the recovery rate to 84.34 per cent, according to Union Health Ministry data on Monday.

The death toll has climbed to 1,02,685 with the virus claiming 903 lives in a span of 24 hours. There are 9,34,427 active cases of the coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 14.11 per cent of the total caseload.

Bharat Biotech inks pact with US firm to use Alhydroxiquim-II

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hyderabad-based vaccines major Bharat Biotech on Monday said that it has inked pact with a US firm to use latter's adjuvant Alhydroxiquim-II to boost immune response and longer lasting immunity of its indigenous Covid-19 vaccine candidate Covaxin, which is currently undergoing Phase II clinical trials.

An adjuvant is a pharmacological or immunological agent that improves the immune response of a vaccine by producing more antibodies and providing longer-lasting immunity.

Kansas-based ViroVax LLC has licensed their adjuvant for the use of Covaxin, which is currently undergoing advanced stages of clinical trials in India.

Covaxin is an inactivated vaccine derived from a strain of the Sars-CoV-2 virus that causes Covid-19, isolated at the Indian Institute of Medical Research-National Institute of



Virology (NIV), Pune.

The inactivated virus has been formulated with ViroVax's adjuvant to produce the vaccine candidate.

Bharat Biotech is currently conducting Phase 2 human trials of its Covid-19 vaccine candidate after receiving approval from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) around the end of June.

"There is a critical need for the development and availability of adjuvants that induce greater antibody responses to vaccine antigens, thus resulting in long-term protection against pathogens. Adjuvants also enhance the sustainability of the global vaccine supply on account of their antigen-sparing effect," said Krishna Ella, chairman and managing director, Bharat Biotech.

"The widely used adjuvant Aluminium hydroxide in the development of Sars-CoV-2 vaccines is known to induce a Th2 based response (which are important for eradication of extracellular parasites and bacterial infection).

"The Th2 based response has a theoretical risk of vaccine associated enhanced respiratory diseases (VAERD or ADE). We have used

Bharat Biotech is currently conducting Phase 2 human trials of its Covid-19 vaccine candidate after receiving approval

Imidazoquinoline class of adjuvants (TLR7/8 agonists), which are known to induce Th1 based response which further reduces the risk of ADE (Anti-Body Dependent Enhancement)," he explained.

Sunil David of ViroVax, said, "ViroVax is delighted to partner with Bharat Biotech. This has been possible because of support from the National Institutes of Health."

ViroVax is supported by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, medical research centres under US Department of Health.

Bypoll to 3 more Manipur Assembly seats on Nov 7

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Monday announced that bypolls to three more Manipur Assembly seats — Wangoi, Saitu (ST) and Singhar (ST) — would be held on November 7. The counting will take place on November 10.

On September 29, the commission had announced bypolls to two assembly seats in Manipur. With these fresh announcements, the total number of seats going for by-election in the state goes up to five. All the bypolls in Manipur would be held on November 7 and counting will take place on November 10 along with that of the Bihar Assembly polls being held in three phases and 54 other assembly bypolls taking place on November 3.

Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren had requested the poll body to hold bypolls to six other Assembly constituencies along with the two constituencies whose byelection schedule had already been announced. At present, altogether 13 assembly constituencies are lying vacant in the 60 member Manipur legislative Assembly after nine MLAs resigned and four were disqualified.

"There are 13 vacant seats in the 60-member House. We will point out that there is no bar by courts against eight constituencies and it is just that some petitions had been filed," he had stated.

WB BJP leader shot, party wants CBI probe

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Alleging Trinamool Congress hand in the murder of Bengal BJP leader Manish Shukla, the saffron outfit has demanded a CBI investigation into the incident with State Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar too asking Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to arrest the "nose diving" law and order situation of the State.

With no love lost between him and the State Government a furious Governor reportedly expressed his mind to Chief Secretary Alapan Bandopadhyay who called on him, after Home Secretary and Director General of Police failed to respond to Dhankhar's express summons.

This, while all hell broke loose in the Barrackpore police commissionerate area north of Kolkata where the men in uniform fought pitched battles with the stone-pelt-

ing BJP supporters firing several rounds of tear-gas shells.

The BJP had called a 12-hour-Barrackpore bandh on Monday in protest against the murder of Shukla a local councilor, an upcoming party leader and close associate of strongman and BJP MP Arjun Singh who too had crossed over to the saffron outfit from the Trinamool Congress before the 2019 Lok Sabha elections after he was denied MP ticket by the party. He defeated sitting TMC MP Dinesh Trivedi by a few thousand votes.

Shukla, a man with manipulative and organizational skills, who too left the Trinamool and joined the BJP recently was shot dead late on Sunday evening moments after he alighted from Singh's car and proceeded towards a local party office at Titagarh.

While locals said the miscreants riding a motorbike fired at

least 25 to 30 rounds doctors conducting autopsy found 9 bullet injuries on his person. While four 7 mm pistol bullets were pulled out from his head and body other bullets seemed to have pierced through his neck and hand, sources said.

According to the police, Shukla suffered serious bullet injuries on his face and chest. He was immediately rushed to a hospital in Kolkata where he was declared brought dead on arrival at the hospital.

While Singh blamed local TMC MLA Nirmal Ghosh for the murder of Shukla saying "I have information that the miscreants came out of the MLAs house and they used police guns to kill Manish."

Later Bengal minister Firhad Hakim who too once enjoyed close chemistry with both Singh and Shukla suspected BJP hand in the

murder saying "he was sending feelers to us about his possible return to the party as he was feeling out of place in the new party."

Rejecting CBI investigation Hakim said "it is an open secret that CBI is a caged parrot. They have not been able to catch the culprit who stole Tagore's Nobel Prize. ... Bengal is not UP and the criminals will not be killed in encounter. We will arrest them, bring them to justice."

Later even as senior BJP leaders like Vijaybargiya, Locket Chatterjee and others met the Governor in the evening seeking CBI investigation Dhankhar expressed grave concern over what he called an "alarming situation" in Bengal.

He said that the "Chief Minister should take note of critical aspects that run down the democratic governance and lawlessness" adding targeted killing of

people should be stopped in Bengal.

After meeting the Chief Secretary he said about having "conveyed my concern of the present alarming scenario to the new Chief Secretary.

Am sure Chief Minister would be indicated all these critical aspects that run down democratic governance and lawlessness. Political violence and targeted killings must stop."

Expressing anger at the "official apathy" towards the Governor's summons he said, "alarming nose-diving law and order scenario Targeted political killings in spite of alert by Constitutional Head. Neither ACS Home nor DGP WB Police responded."

He further rued that though he had sent a message to the Chief Minister for a conversation on the issue but there was "no response."

FIR against Tejawshi Yadav, Tej Pratap in Dalit leader's murder case

Purnia (Bihar): A political storm has erupted ahead of the Bihar elections after an FIR was registered in the Khajanchi Haat police station in Purnia against Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejawshi Yadav and his brother Tej Pratap Yadav. The duo has been named in an alleged case of murder of Shakti Mallik, a Dalit leader and former state unit secretary of the RJDs SC/ST cell.

A police official said on Monday that Mallik was shot dead by some unidentified assailants at his residence in Purnia on Sunday.

Based on the written statement of the deceased's wife Khushboo Devi, an FIR was lodged at the Khajanchi Haat police station which allegedly names RJD leader and Leader of Opposition in the Bihar Legislative Assembly Tejawshi Yadav and his brother and former Health Minister Tej Pratap Yadav. The other accused named in the FIR include Kalo Paswan, Anil Kumar Sadhu, Suniti Devi and Manoj Paswan.

A video of the deceased Dalit leader shot a month ago has gone viral on the social media in which he speaks about the possibility of getting killed. IANS

Adhir hits out at Modi for silence on Hathras row

Kolkata: Senior Congress leader and Lok Sabha MP from Berhampore in Murshidabad district, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, on Monday questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his prolonged silence on the alleged gang-rape and murder of a 20-year-old Dalit girl in Hathras in Uttar Pradesh.

Chowdhury said that Modi, who used to be vocal on every local and global issue, is mute on the heart-wrenching incident of Hathras.

"What has happened to you Modi ji? Where is your 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikash, Sabka Viswas', the Congress MP asked on Twitter. He also said that hypocrisy has been exposed after the Hathras incident. IANS

Hathras is an icon of literature and culture

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Hathras may be in the news for this horrific incident but these districts have a golden and glorious history. "Mohabbato se logo ke dil ko jeetna padta hai, muft mai mil jaega faltoo kahin ehtarom nahi pada hai", this composition of the comic poet Kaka Hathrasi is alive in the heart of people even today. Nataram Gaur, Karpatri Maharaj also recognized the city globally. Shiv Kumar, the producer of the film Brijbhoomi was also from Hathras. The name of King Mahendra Pratap, who formed the exile government in Afghanistan is proudly taken, the scent of asafetida and gugal is still in the heart of people.

History said that Vivekananda had a night stay in Hathras while returning from Vrindavan. Sharat Chandra Gupta was the station master of Hathras at that time. Before making him a student, Vivekananda asked the station master to ask alms to the porters at his own station. Sharat Chandra succeeded in this examination and became Vivekanand's student. He was named Sadanand. Vivekanand went to Hrishikesh with Sadanand. The film Swami Vivekananda released on 12 June 1998 also mentions the Hathras station and the then station master.

Hathras is the only city to have four railway stations (hathras city, hathras qila, hathras junction and hathras mendu) Kaka Hathrasi (original name Prabhulal Garg) born in Hathras was a Hindi comic poet. His creations draw attention to the faults prevailing in the society, malicious corruption, and political misrule. Even though Kaka is not among us today, his comic poems will always tickle us.

Cong leader announces reward of ₹1 crore for beheading Hathras rapists

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Aligarh: In the Hathras rape case, the tongue of Nizam Malik, state vice-president of western Uttar Pradesh of the Congress Minority Department, slipped. In the viral video on social media, Nizam Malik on Hathras case is claiming a reward of one crore rupees by the society for beheading the rape accused. Police have arrested Nizam Malik.

Since the death of Hathras's rape victim, senior leaders of the opposition have started visiting Hathras.

Recently, Rahul Gandhi of Congress was also going to Hathras from Yamuna Expressway with his team and party leaders. Many Congress leaders of the district also joined him there. At the same time, on social media, a video of state vice-president of Congress Minority Department, Western Uttar Pradesh Nizam Malik, son of Haji Allaaddin, resident of mohalla Shaikh Saheban, is going viral in which he is seen giving disputed statements on the Hathras case. He also accused police of indecency and mishandling of Rahul Gandhi.

Apart from this, in the video, he showed his fractured hand because of a police lathi-charge and accused the police of this. In the video he is also demanded to hang the culprits and finally ended his video by saying that whoever will bring the head of the rape accused, a reward of one crore rupees will be given to him. PNS

2 CRPF jawans martyred, 3 hurt in Pulwama terror attack

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Two motorcycle-borne Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) terrorists, including a Pakistani commander on Monday opened 'indiscriminate' firing on the road opening party (ROP) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in which two CRPF personnel were martyred and three others received injuries near Kandijal bridge in Pampore area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

In retaliation, CRPF personnel also opened fire but the terrorists managed to escape taking advantage of the civilian traffic in the area. This is the third such strike carried out by the same group of terrorists led by a Pakistani LeT commander Saifullah, police said.

The traffic on the National Highway (NH-44) near Pampore was disrupted as different teams of the security forces launched a cordon and search operations in the close vicinity of the attack site to track down the footprints of these terrorists. Senior CRPF and Jammu and Kashmir police officials also visited the spot to assess the ground situation.

Briefing media persons at the loca-

tion, Inspector-General of Police, Kashmir range, Vijay Kumar said, "around 12.45 p.m when CRPF road opening party was conducting its drill two motorcycle borne terrorists arrived there, parked their motorcycle on the roadside and opened 'indiscriminate' firing on them". He said, CRPF jawans also retaliated. During the exchange of firing, which continued for a few minutes, two CRPF jawans received critical injuries and later they succumbed to their fatal injuries in the Army Base hospital in Srinagar. Three other CRPF personnel were undergoing treatment in the same hospital, he added.

IG, Kashmir said, the terrorists were armed with AK rifles. He said, "we have already identified the terrorist group behind the attack and soon we will neutralise them". Kumar confirmed that one of the terrorists is a Pakistani and has been identified as Saifullah.

Referring to back to back terror strikes on the security forces deployed on National Highway duty, IG Kashmir said, the national highway is vulnerable to such attacks and is a high value target.

JCO martyred in ceasefire violation along LoC in Rajouri

Jammu: A Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) of the Indian Army was martyred during ceasefire violation along the line of control in Nowshera sector of Rajouri late Monday evening.

Earlier, two back to back ceasefire violations were reported from both the frontier districts of Rajouri and Poonch Monday evening where Pakistan army resorted to 'unprovoked' mortar shelling targeting civilian pockets.

In response, the Indian army strongly retaliated at both the locations.

Till the time of filing the report, heavy exchange of firing was going on in the forward areas. Unconfirmed ground reports claimed, pint pointed retaliation by the Indian army caused extensive damages on the other side of the line of control.

Defence PRO in Jammu, Lt-Col Devender Anand said, "the first incident of ceasefire violation was reported in Nowshera sector of Rajouri around 6.30 p.m while the second incident was reported along the line of control in Degwar sector of Poonch around 8.00 p.m".

He said, the Pakistan Army resorted to intense mortar shelling after initiating small arms firing in the Nowshera sector. Later ceasefire agreement was violated in Degwar sector of Poonch, he added. PNS

Dengue, a new threat in Aligarh, 52 infected

Aligarh: Dengue has started spreading its leg in the district. In the last one week, 52 people have been infected by dengue while the reality is more frightening than this. People are still battling with corona and now the spread of dengue will worsen the situation. 31 people out of 85 total tested found dengue positive in the last few days in the district hospital's path lab. They are from Shahjamaal, Neenvari, Khair, and other areas of the city. JN Medical College also received some dengue patients

Dengue occurs when a female Aedes aegypti mosquito bites during the day, especially in the morning. The highest spreads occur from July to October - November. The current period is favorable conditions for mosquitoes to thrive. The symptoms of dengue fever start appearing in the patient 3 to 5 days after the Aedes mosquito bite.

Platelets are an important constituent of blood. A normal human being contains one and a half to two lakh platelets. It prevents bleeding of the body by making clots over the flowing blood to avoid excessive blood flow. Less than one lakh of platelets is considered as dangerous and needs transfusion if goes less than 20 thousand. Dengue virus usually reduces platelets which cause body bleeding.

Prof. Haris of JN Medical College said that we have received many dengue cases and are admitted in wards 10, 11, and 12. PNS

Maha sees low of 10,244 cases, recovery rate rises to 80%

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In two welcome developments, Maharashtra on Monday recorded relatively low 10,244 Covid-19 infections - which is the lowest in a week - and the recovery rate in the State touched 80 per cent, while 263 more people succumbed to coronavirus in various parts of the State.

On a day when the total infections in Mumbai region - comprising Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Kalyan-Dombivli, Ulhasnagar, Bhiwandi-Nizampur, Mira-Bhayandar, Palghar, Vasai-Virar, Raigad and Panvel - crossed 5 lakh infection mark to touch 5,02,583, there was a drop in the number of infections in the state. The infections came down to 10,244 from Sunday's 13,702.

With 13,702 fresh infections, the total number of infections jumped from 14,43,409 to 14,53,653. Similarly, with 263 fresh deaths, the

Covid-19 toll in the state mounted from 38,084 to 38,347.

On a day when 12,982 people were discharged from various hospitals in the state, the number of people discharged from various hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year went up to 11,49,603. The recovery rate in the state rose from 79.64 to 80 per cent.

Of the total 263 deaths reported on Monday, Mumbai recorded a maximum of 47 deaths, followed by 30 deaths in Pune, 25 in Kolhapur, 20 in Nagpur, 17 in Thane, 15 in Satara, 14 in Jalna, 12 in Yavatmal, 11 in Sangli and 10 deaths each in Raigad and Nanded.

In the lower range, there were 9 deaths in Nashik, 6 deaths each in Solapur and Bhandara, 5 each in Palghar, Latur and Amravati, 4 in Ahmednagar, 3 in Beed, 2 each in Jalgaon and Akola and one death each in Ratnagiri, Hingoli, Buldhana, Washim and Chandrapur.

Thrissur tense after CPM worker's death

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The murder of Sanoop (26), a CPI(M) activist in Thrissur district of Kerala on Sunday night has led to a tense situation in the region. Three associates of Sanoop have been injured in the attack, allegedly carried out by workers of the BJP and Bajrang Dal.

"Stage is set for another series of counter attacks and murders," said a cop investigating the case as Police have beefed up security all over the district. Thrissur is a CPI(M) stronghold and the district was home to many skirmishes between the Marxists and Hindutwa forces in the past.

Kodiyeri Balakrishnan, secretary, Kerala CPI(M) blamed the BJP and RSS leaders for the murder of Sanoop, who was the branch secretary of the party in Kunnamkulam. A C Moideen, Kerala minister for cooperation, said the CPI(M) workers in the district knew who the murderers were and they would be caught soon.

But BJP Kerala president K Surendran said the murder was the fall out of the turf war in the CPI(M) and his party has no role in it. "Let them conduct an enquiry. Truth will come out," he said.

Afghan consul general calls on Maha Governor, discusses bilateral issues

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Afghanistan's first woman Consul General in Mumbai Zakia Wardak called on Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari at Raj Bhavan in south Mumbai on Monday.

During her meeting with the Governor, the Consul General thanked India for its help in constructing the parliament building in Afghanistan and providing education scholarships to a large number of students from Afghanistan.

She told the Governor that during her tenure, she was keen to promote bilateral trade between India and Afghanistan. Zaika told the Governor that the trade between India and Afghanistan could grow significantly with the opening of the Chabahar port, a seaport in Chabahar located in southeastern Iran. She said it would be her endeavor to promote the Chabahar port route, which is directly linked with Nhava-Sheva Port in Mumbai and Kandla Port in Gujarat. Certain regulatory hurdles in the optimum utilization of the Chabahar port were also raised by the Consul General.

Welcoming the Consul General, Governor Koshyari assured that he would use his good offices to resolve bilater-



Afghanistan's first woman Consul General in Mumbai Zakia Wardak calls on Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari at Raj Bhavan in south Mumbai on Monday

*Afghan Envoy Promises to promote trade through Chabahar port

*Welcoming the Consul General, Governor Koshyari assured that he would use his good offices to resolve bilateral problems and promote trade between the two countries by seeking the intervention of the Ministry of External Affairs

al problems and promote trade between the two countries by seeking the intervention of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Stating that she had grown up in the midst of Indians, especially Sikhs in Afghanistan, Zakia said that there was no

difference between the people of Afghanistan and India. She said that Bollywood has done a good job of promoting Hindi language, which is understood by many in Afghanistan.

India and Afghanistan share traditionally warm and friendly relations between them in different spheres, India has built around 200 schools there, it awards 1,000 scholarships and hosts over 16,000 students here.

It may be recalled that in 2016 Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani had jointly inaugurated the Salma Dam, a hydroelectric and irrigation project, renamed as the Afghan-India Friendship Dam.



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Sl. No.	Name of the Posts & Place of Postings	No. of Vacancy*	Pay Matrix Level in CDA Pattern
1.	Executive Director (T/P) [Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]	02	Pay Matrix Level-14 of 7th CPC [Pre-revised PB - 4 of Rs.37,400 - 67,000/- plus Grade Pay Rs.10,000/-]
2.	General Manager (T/P) [Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]	20	Pay Matrix Level-13 of 7th CPC [Pre-revised PB - 4 of Rs.37,400 - 67,000/- plus Grade Pay Rs.8,700/-]
3.	Deputy General Manager (T/P) [Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]	20	Pay Matrix Level-12 of 7th CPC [Pre-revised PB - 3 of Rs.15,600 - 39,100/-] plus Grade Pay Rs.7,600/-]
4.	Manager (T/P) [Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]	20	Pay Matrix Level-11 of 7th CPC [Pre-revised Pay Band-3 of Rs.15,600 - 39,100/- plus Grade Pay Rs.6,600/-]
5.	General Manager (Land Acquisition & Coordination) [For NHIDCL HQs]	01	Pay Matrix Level-13 of 7th CPC [Pre-revised PB - 4 of Rs.37,400 - 67,000/- plus Grade Pay Rs.8,700/-]
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* The number of vacancies in the Posts may vary, depending upon the requirement. Further, NHIDCL reserves the right to prepare Panels (one for Roads Sector and another for Infrastructure Sector) of selected Candidates for filling up the indicated and future vacancies that may arise in NHIDCL. Panel would be valid for a period of 12 months, unless further extended.

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NOTE 2: Any change or amendment to this Vacancy Circular will be posted on the NHIDCL Website only.

NOTE 3: Incomplete applications or those received after the prescribed date shall be summarily rejected.

Dy. General Manager (HR)

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, BUILDING THE NATION

Why Chirag is the key

The BJP is using the LJP to undercut Nitish Kumar and increase its bargaining chip in the Bihar election



That the BJP is keen to have Bihar on its own terms is no secret even though it has agreed to a 50 per cent seat split with its ally, the Janata Dal (United), and has publicly expressed full faith in Chief Minister Nitish Kumar as the leading face of the combine. But the fact is it wants to cannibalise him without appearing so overtly ambitious. Besides, the growing trust deficit in Nitish, given his inept handling of the pandemic, the floods and the returnee migrants, is something that the BJP does not want to bet on or be burdened with in the long term. If anything, it wants Nitish's victory to be entirely dependent on it so that it can keep him in line and going forward, can even change him mid-course with its own man or somebody who would be subservient to its design. In fact, it has ambitions to become the single-largest party in the State. It wants to posit itself as the deliverer party, considering that despite Nitish's poor legacy, voters still buy into the aura of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and it, therefore, wants to encash it as soon as possible. It is against this perspective that one must see the decision of Dalit leader Ram Vilas Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) to contest against JD(U) despite being part of the larger National Democratic Alliance (NDA). It wants to undercut Nitish and become the BJP's B-team with the latter's blessing. For the LJP, with the potential to swing six to 10 per cent of the votes, can dent the JD(U) votebase and give an upper hand to the BJP. For playing spoiler, the LJP would either be rewarded at the State-level or even get another Central Ministry in return. Besides, Ram Vilas Paswan now wants his son Chirag to take the decisive lead in State politics and become his rightful heir. As the BJP's proxy, the LJP had already begun targeting Nitish long before the pandemic with Chirag Paswan losing no opportunity to lambast his poor performance. Not that Nitish was not aware of this strategy but considering he needed the BJP, he tried to squeeze out the LJP in seat-sharing, thereby ensuring that the JD(U) could retain its bargaining edge. To that end, he even got Paswan's Dalit contender, Hindustani Awam Morcha president Jitan Ram Manjhi, into the JD(U) fold, hoping to convince the BJP that he was good enough without the LJP. Except that the BJP, now that it has agreed to a 50:50 seat-sharing with Nitish, wants LJP to be the vote-cutter, increase its tally with the junior ally and bypass Nitish altogether. Dalits account for 16 per cent of Bihar's population and half of these are Paswans, a segment that has been loyal to the LJP over the years. But Nitish, by introducing sub-quotas for Mahadalits, chipped away his base. Manjhi isn't exactly a swinger despite Nitish's best efforts and the ambitious Chirag feels that with the Chief Minister's political stock at an all-time low, this is the best time for the LJP to shore up its base and anoint himself as a key power player. Besides, he wants to emerge as an alternative to Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav, who is also looking at the Assembly elections as his coronation. Many believe that Chirag has a better appeal and acceptability among the youth in general than the arrogant Tejashwi and wouldn't want to miss an opportunity to prove as much.

Tejashwi may be the face of the RJD but the party derives its political relevance from the legacy and aura of Lalu Yadav, still considered the best challenger to the NDA bloc. Ideally, with Lalu at the helm and on its own, it would have a fighting chance as it is best placed in terms of winnability. But it needs a strategic partnership simply because the multiplicity of like-minded parties and the Congress, which still has a consolidated Muslim votebank, would mean that the non-NDA vote could be badly divided. Besides, Lalu, who is battling health issues, is not on the ground to smoothen wrinkles in the grand alliance or *mahagathbandhan*. So the allies are becoming aggressive about bargaining for seats in return for staying together and that could push down the RJD's seat quota. As it is, many allies are upset with Tejashwi for pursuing his individual ambition, grooming his yes men and running down senior leaders of the caste movement as deadwood. He was one of the reasons why Lalu's upper caste comrade-in-arms Raghuvansh Prasad Singh resigned before he died. This brazenness has cost the RJD its dependable associations with the Left and the Congress. In fact, though Lalu wants to give the Congress no more than 60 seats, the latter is demanding a price of "loyalty," wanting 70 instead. The Left parties have their dedicated pockets but are only a fringe presence to influence the verdict. If in the process of bartering away seats in the allied clutter, the RJD gets about 140 seats, then its total would be again hovering around the 100-seat mark. A reduced number of seats for the RJD will only help the BJP. Besides, it can splinter unhappy, smaller parties by luring them away with governance positions. As for the Congress, another poor performance could see the party losing further members to the BJP. Alternatively, if it does well, then it can even restrain Lalu. And should Nitish indeed feel the need to detach himself from the NDA and jump ship going forward, the party could even build bridges with him. So this election is turning out to be a tussle for the Opposition's political relevance rather than people's issues. And if the youth leaders do deliver, then Bihar would have witnessed another change in its social and political template.

Defence spending

With China heaving down, the Govt may have eased purchase restrictions on procurement but these take time



Given the ongoing stalemate with China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and Beijing resurrecting its untenable 1959 claims, the Government has decided to shore up its defences. It has eased spending restrictions on emergency arms procurements and additional funding for the Border Roads Organisation. The immediate buys that need to be made include missiles, precision-guided munitions, drones and assault rifles from the US, France, Russia and Israel. Though India will formally induct the Nirbhay subsonic cruise missile into the Army and Navy after the seventh trial next month, it has already moved a

limited number of the missiles to the LAC to boost its defence preparedness. How serious the situation is on the border can be gauged from the fact that the cash-strapped Government had in April issued instructions to re-prioritise spending and a few Ministries and departments had to face spending cuts. With the Centre stepping up borrowings in a pandemic-stressed economy, the easing of spending restrictions on defence shows that it is not ready to back down and is serious about sending a strong message to Beijing that it is in for the long haul. There are fears that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) may use its 1959 territorial claim to put pressure on the six other areas of differences in the western sector that have not been impacted in the ongoing standoff so far.

Of course, these decisions and acquisitions are too late and too little as the time frame for any typical defence procurement usually takes five years. They give the forces the finances to buy additional systems, ammunition, repairs and so on, but there won't be capital accretion. The Government has transferred the procurement responsibility to the services and most importantly, removed the financial representative from the chain. So the discretionary powers to spend have been given to them to cover the immediate shortfall. But the lead time still remains the same. So it is left to the services to plead, push and cajole the vendors to supply the items. Conversely, the Centre has shifted its responsibility when it comes to the crunch on to the services by giving them the powers to spend, making sure that they are stocked up and ready. This when the enemy is at our doorstep. But the ground reality is far different. So for now, it is the valour of our services that will have to see us through any engagement with China, particularly through the harsh winter months ahead.

Don't test our patience

It is high time that the UN recognises India's potential and its contribution to the organisation and makes it a permanent member of the Security Council

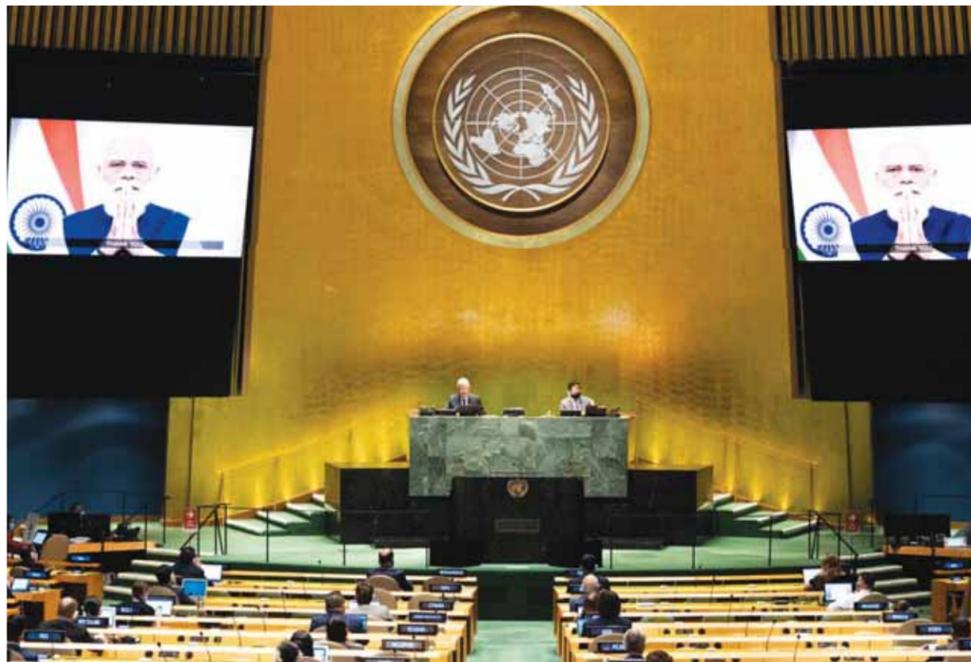


A SURYA PRAKASH

Addressing the historic 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi yet again made a forceful plea for reforming this international body and making the UN Security Council (UNSC) more representative and balanced. Modi had flagged this issue six years ago when he addressed the UNGA for the first time as India's Prime Minister in September 2014. On that occasion, he told the member countries that no one country or group of countries can determine the course of the world. There has to be a genuine international partnership. This is not just a moral position but a practical reality and these efforts should begin with the UN. "We must reform the United Nations, including the Security Council, and make it more democratic and participative," or else it could "face the risk of irrelevance" if it remained resistant to change. The Prime Minister was obviously emphasising India's right to be a permanent member of the UNSC, a status enjoyed by the P-5 — US, UK, France, Russia and China — who are also armed with extraordinary veto powers.

He returned to this theme once again when he addressed the UNGA last month. Referring to the circumstances prevailing in 1945 when the UN came into being, he told his audience that members were now in a completely different era — the 21st century. Therefore, the international community must ask itself whether the character of the institution, constituted in 1945, was relevant even today? He spoke of the regard that the people of India have for the UN and said they wonder whether the reform process will ever reach its logical conclusion. "For how long will India be kept out of the decision-making structures of the United Nations?...When we were strong, we did not trouble the world; when we were weak, we did not become a burden on the world. How long will such a country have to wait?"

The Prime Minister was echoing the sentiments of 1.35 billion citizens of the country when he hinted that India's patience was running thin. Indians find it difficult to fathom why their country is kept out, especially when it has such strong credentials. It is the



world's largest and most vibrant democracy with 911 million electors, of whom over 600 million exercised their franchise in 2019. It is also the most diverse nation in the world with unparalleled ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity and home to all the major religions in the world. Indians speak 121 languages and 270 dialects. Further, India accounts for 18 per cent of the global population and will overtake China and become the most populous nation by 2027. Add to this its economic and military strength — it is the fifth-largest economy and one of the top five military powers in the world. Finally, it is a founding member of the UN, one of the 26 signatories at the first conference in 1942 and has made a phenomenal contribution to the organisation's peace-keeping efforts across the world. Are these not enough reasons for India to be a permanent member of the UNSC?

As proud citizens of the world's largest and most vibrant democracy, Indians also have the right to demand that the UN remain faithful to its own fundamental postulates. Is it not strange that the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms faith "in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small..." and yet, actively promotes a hierarchy of nations and consequently, of human beings? How can India, which has equality as a fundamental precept in its

AS PROUD CITIZENS OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST AND MOST VIBRANT DEMOCRACY, INDIANS ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO DEMAND THAT THE UN REMAIN FAITHFUL TO ITS OWN FUNDAMENTAL POSTULATES. INDIA IS NO LONGER WILLING TO ACCEPT THE SECOND-CLASS STATUS THRUST ON IT 75 YEARS AGO

Constitution, accept this form of graded membership?

Further, Article 2 of the Charter says the UN is based on the sovereign equality of all members. How is this achieved when a nation with almost one-fifth of the global population is not a permanent member of the UNSC whereas two European nations — UK (67 million) and France (65 million), each with a population equivalent to just one of India's 28 states (Karnataka) — are permanent members of the UNSC?

Articles 108 and 109 of the UN Charter are also wholly undemocratic because even if two-thirds of the members of the UN agree to amend the Charter, any of the five permanent members of the UNSC can use its veto power to block the amendment. This is absolutely undemocratic and unworthy of being part of any civilised institution in the democratic world. Why should the world's largest democracy put up with this?

These articles enable members of the P-5 to play politics and stonewall reform. That is why the efforts of the G-4 (India, Brazil, Japan and Germany) to support each other's bid for a permanent seat in the UNSC have not thus far fructified.

The international community must understand that India's patience, despite all its philosophical underpinnings, is not inexhaustible and that there is a new India emerging — optimistic, self-confident and self-

reliant (*atmanirbhar*). It is true that seven decades ago, given India's economic plight after centuries of colonisation, it lacked the gumption to stand up and demand its rightful place. But that is not the India of today. This is not a tame India. This is a bold India. A billion-plus citizens of this nation are no longer willing to accept these inequities as part of their karma and reconcile themselves to the second-class status thrust on them 75 years ago.

India is shaking off the delusions of the past. It has shed its innocence and gullibility that was in full display during the "Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai" days and has realised that it must become strong and resilient to promote peace in its neighbourhood and the world. The Chinese are getting a taste of this, and as the momentum picks up, other nations too will begin to sense it. This is irreversible. Having nudged his countrymen towards this new thinking, Modi is sensing the change. That is why he made a specific reference to the aspirations of the people vis-à-vis UN reform.

India will celebrate the 75th anniversary of its independence in 2022. The UN must use the occasion to redeem itself, acknowledge that democracy is the most civilised political system ever devised by man and invite India to the high table.

(The writer is an author specialising in democracy studies. Views expressed are personal)

SOUNDBITE

We are given equal importance, job security, financial benefits through cash awards when we win. All these are great encouraging factors to take up the sport professionally.

Hockey player —Navneet Kaur



In the last three months, 458,000 jobs have been created — 60 per cent of which have gone to women, 40 per cent to young people.

Australian Treasurer —Josh Frydenberg



The farmers will not be scared into submission. They will face COVID pandemic but fight for their rights on the streets of Punjab and the rest of the country.

Congress leader —Rahul Gandhi



The best thing we can do now for all those who have suffered in the course of this pandemic is bring it to an end in the speediest possible way.

British PM —Boris Johnson



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ethics of journalism

Sir — Ruling out theories of poisoning and strangulation, the AIIMS medical board, in its report to the CBI, revealed that the cause of actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death was indeed suicide. Ever since the 34-year-old actor was found dead on June 14 in his Mumbai apartment, many news channels had falsely cooked up theories of his murder and started a witch-hunt against his girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty. Under pressure from the media trial, the case was handed over to the CBI for further investigation.

The media is supposed to be the fourth pillar of democracy and report unbiased news. Rajput's case is a perfect example of how media houses sensationalise news rather than reporting facts. They have become a tool for political parties to disseminate their propaganda and polarise the masses. Further, news debates are being used as a platform to distract people from important issues rather than being informed. There is an urgent need for implementation of the rules laid down by existing media regulatory bodies.

Falguni Aswani
Ujjain

Row over AIADMK CM candidate

The rift between the two factions, one led by Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami and the other by Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam, within the ruling All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) in Tamil Nadu is widening as the Assembly election is approaching. The internecine feud primarily centres on the finalisation of the party's chief ministerial candidate. Both the leaders covet the top job.

Having tasted power and consolidated his position in the party, Palaniswami is firm on staking his claim to lead the party in the election. On the other hand, Panneerselvam feels he is a credible choice as he claims the blessings of late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa. A disunited AIADMK coupled with anti-incumbency could hand over an easy victory to the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) waiting in the wings.

Jayalalithaa was not disadvantaged by her proximity to the BJP and her personal rapport with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. However, the perception that the present AIADMK Government dances to the tune



of the BJP might affect its electoral fortunes, given the strong anti-BJP sentiment in the State. The DMK led by MK Stalin could romp home by riding on the party's opposition to Hindi imposition, NEET, the dilution of federal autonomy and most importantly, Tamil pride.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

Caste and gender

Sir — There is no doubt that even after 73 years of Independence, not much has changed when it comes to caste discrimination and divide. Atrocities against Dalits and Scheduled Tribes are common across the country. And the recent rape-murder case of the young Dalit woman from Uttar Pradesh's Hathras is

one of many such instances. What is more shameful is the extent to which the State Government is ready to go in order to save the culprits. The UP police has claimed that the forensic report of the 19-year-old woman's viscera has established that she was not raped. How can one believe this, given the manner the police cremated her body? Having said that, the fault

not only lies in our police and judicial system but also the society which woke up too late in this case. There is not only a need for more stringent laws but also a political will to implement them. It is also time that we root out the patriarchal and casteist mindset from society and not feed it to create a political constituency.

Bal Govind
Noida

A hard lesson

Sir — US President Donald Trump, who has been playing down the threat of the Coronavirus pandemic from its outset, has tested positive along with his wife Melania. Feverish and fatigued, Trump was flown to a military hospital on October 2 after being injected with an experimental drug combination. In a video he posted from the hospital, he said that he was improving and would be "back soon" but he also acknowledged that the crucial coming days would be "the real test." With this, the prospects for two remaining presidential debates and whether the President will have to yield power temporarily to Vice President Mike Pence if his condition worsens are unknown. Also, now that Trump understands the severity of the pandemic that has killed more than 2,08,000 Americans, he should adopt a serious approach in the fight against the virus and stop sending mixed messages on mask-wearing.

Sanjana Soni
Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Acts of growth, empowerment

UP is developing 27 modern *Kisan Mandis* and 24 of these will have cold chamber and ripening facilities for preservation of farm produce



VIJAY BAHADUR PATHAK

The Opposition is staging protests against the recent farm reforms through the measures contained in the three Acts will enable barrier-free trade in agricultural produce and empower farmers to engage with investors of their choice. These Acts, which are a bid by the Centre to empower growers and double their income by 2022, will free them from unnecessary legislation, bring fundamental changes, give impetus to investment and increase employment in the agriculture sector, which in turn will strengthen the economy of the country. The promotion of contract farming will help farmers reach an agreement with food processing units/exporters on an individual or organised basis. It will also enable them to reduce the input of fertilisers and seeds, reduce other costs and use modern techniques to maximise products and get a better market as they will have the opportunity to work according to national-international demands.

The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act seeks to create an ecosystem where the farmers and traders enjoy the freedom of choice relating to sale and purchase of produce. This facilitates remunerative prices through competitive alternative trading channels to promote efficient, transparent and barrier-free inter and intra-State trade. This was proposed because there were restrictions to selling agri-produce outside the notified Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC). And growers could sell the produce only to registered licensees of the State Governments. This legislation will open more choices for farmers, reduce marketing costs and get them better prices. It will also help growers of regions with surplus produce to get better prices and consumers of regions with shortages, lower prices. The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act seeks to provide for a national framework on agreements that empowers growers to engage with agri-business firms, processors, wholesalers, exporters or large retailers for services and sale of future produce at a mutually agreed remunerative price framework, in a fair and transparent manner.

This has been done because agriculture is characterised by fragmentation due to small holding sizes in India and has certain weaknesses such as weather dependence, production uncertainties and market unpredictability. This makes it risky and inefficient in respect of both, input and output management. Now the risk of market unpredictability will be transferred from the grower to the sponsor. Farmers have been given adequate protection and an effective dispute resolution mechanism has been provided with clear redressal timelines.

The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act seeks to remove commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onion and potatoes from the list of essential commodities. This will remove fears of private investors of excessive regulatory interference in their business operations. The freedom to produce, hold, move, distribute and supply will lead to harnessing of economies of scale and attract private sector/Foreign Direct Investment. Farmers suffer huge losses when there are bumper harvests, especially of perishable commodities and this Act will help drive up investment in cold storages and modernisation of the food supply chain.

The Opposition parties have Governments in different States and they should show what they have done for the farming community. Take the case of Uttar Pradesh (UP) which is striving hard to double the income of farmers. During the lockdown, the Yogi Adityanath Government exempted 45 items of fruits and vegetables from *mandi* fee, which benefited growers who are now free to sell their produce anywhere in UP. They also have the option to sell their goods in the *mandis* where only one per cent user charge is taken from traders. Besides, all 119 sugar mills of UP ran at full capacity and produced 126.36 MT of sugar after crushing 1,118 lakh tonnes of sugarcane. As a bumper *kharif* crop is expected, the Mandi Parishad and the State Warehousing Corporation are building warehouses of 5,000 MT capacity each in 37 *mandis*. Farmers can keep their produce here free of charge for 30 days, after which they will get 30 per cent rebate on the rent, so that they can sell their products when they get the best price. The UP Government has ensured that the produce will be recognised as a guarantee for the farmers to get bank loans.

UP is developing 27 modern *Kisan Mandis* and in 24 of these, cold chamber and ripening facilities for preservation of fruits and vegetables are being made. This project will have a ripening chamber of 20 MT capacity and a cold chamber of 10 MT capacity. It is expected to be completed by 2020-21. Also, during the lockdown, 35.77 lakh tonnes of wheat was purchased, as were pulses and oilseed and it was ensured that the market price should be at least at par or above the Minimum Support Price. Now efforts are afoot to purchase paddy, pulses and oilseeds at the MSP in order to benefit farmers.

(The writer is a member, Legislative Council of Uttar Pradesh and vice-president of UP BJP)

(RAPES) CAN ONLY BE STOPPED THROUGH GOOD VALUES AND NOT GOVERNANCE OR VIOLENCE. PARENTS SHOULD INSTILL GOOD VALUES IN THEIR DAUGHTERS

—UP BJP MLA
SURENDRA SINGH

POINT COUNTERPOINT



THIS IS THE FILTHY RSS MALE CHAUVINIST MENTALITY AT WORK. MEN DO THE RAPING BUT WOMEN NEED TO BE TAUGHT GOOD VALUES.

—CONGRESS LEADER
RAHUL GANDHI

A taxing question

As pointed out by the nation's top auditor, there are irregularities galore in the management of the various cesses as they have been appropriated to manage deficits



UTTAM GUPTA

Reining in the fiscal deficit has always been a challenge for the Centre especially after the enactment of the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2003, which requires it to maintain the shortfall within a specified threshold. At the same time, there are certain thrust areas, such as education, roads and other infrastructure, telecommunication networks in rural areas, exploration of oil, gas and so on, which the Government feels won't get the desired funds in the normal course of budgeting. This led to successive dispensations to think of a special tax or cess — a form of tax charged/levied over and above the base tax liability of a taxpayer. These include USO (Universal Service Obligation) levy imposed on telecom service providers, cess on Crude Petroleum Oil (CPO), Road and Infrastructure Cess (RaIC), Primary Education cess (PEC), Secondary and Higher Education cess (SHEC), Education cess on Imported Goods (ECIG), R&D cess and so on. The proceeds from these taxes are credited to the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI) and subsequently transferred to a non-lapsable fund, for instance, the USO Fund (USOF) — based on the appropriation approved by the Parliament — created in the public account for utilising exclusively for the purposes for which it is collected. The financing of the specified activity thus gets shielded from the vulnerabilities associated with the normal budgeting exercise.

Prima facie, the idea sounds appealing. But the big question is if this is working. Are funds being utilised for the declared purpose? Are the outcomes commensurate with the intent? To answer these questions, let us look at the reports of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG) brought out from time to time. The Centre charges licence fee at eight per cent of the adjusted gross revenue (AGR) of telecom service providers. This includes five per cent as appropriation for crediting to USOF (set up in 2002) while the balance three per cent is retained with the general exchequer. For 2018-19, the CAG has noted that out of a total collection of about ₹6,900 crore as USO levy, only ₹4,800 crore was transferred to the USOF, implying a shortfall of ₹2,100 crore. Against a collection of ₹1,10,000 crore since 2002, the amount disbursed till date is only ₹54,500 crore. The balance ₹55,500 crore remains with the CFI. Coming to the SHEC, the Government started collecting this levy from 2006-07 and until January 2019, could harness about ₹94,000 crore. The entire amount has been retained in the CFI. In this case, even the public account christened as Madhyamik and Uchchar Shiksha Kosh (MUSK) was created only in August 2017 (more than a decade after the collection started) and has not been operationalised so far.

The R&D Cess Act, 1986, provides for levy and collection of cess on all payments made for the import of technology. The proceeds of this were to be disbursed as grants-in-aid to the Technology Development Board (TDB) set up in 1996. During 1996-97 to 2017-18, a total of about ₹8,000 crore was collected. Of this, a mere ₹800 crore was transferred to the TDB. Furthermore, though the cess was abolished from April 2017, it continued to be collected during the following two years, viz. 2017-18 and 2018-19. In case of Clean Energy Cess (levied on coal supplies) since 2010-11, the amount denied to the designated fund, viz.

“IN CERTAIN CASES, THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS WERE NOT EVEN CREATED LONG AFTER THE GOVERNMENT STARTED COLLECTING THE TAX. IN OTHERS, THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO COLLECT THE CESS EVEN AFTER THE SAME WAS ABOLISHED. NONETHELESS, THERE IS A DIRE NEED TO ABOLISH CESSES AS THESE ARE NOT ONLY COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE BUT ALSO MAKE OUR POLICY PLANNERS AND ADMINISTRATORS COMPLACENT WITH REGARD TO SUSTAINABLE WAYS OF BALANCING THE BUDGET



National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF), was about ₹44,500 crore. Likewise, in the case of the RaIC, (earlier nomenclature Road Cess), there was a "short transfer" of about ₹72,000 crore in the amount collected since 1998-99 till March 31, 2018 to the Central Road Fund (CRF), the public account.

Unlike other taxes, which are part of the "divisible pool" to be shared with the States as per the recommendations of the Finance Commission, the Centre gets to retain all of the cess (which goes to the CFI and is available for general use). Because its finances have come under serious stress during the current pandemic year, its reliance on RaIC has increased by leaps and bounds. It raised central excise duty (CED) on petrol and diesel twice this year in March and May, mostly through hike in the cess. At present, out of CED on petrol of ₹33 per litre, ₹18 per litre or 54.5 per cent comes from the cess. For diesel, out of ₹32 per litre CED, RaIC is ₹12 per litre or 37.5 per cent. The Government also levies the Oil Industry Development (OID) cess currently at 20 per cent ad-valorem on the price that domestic producers of crude, namely the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and the Oil India Limited (OIL), get on their supplies from nominated blocks and pre-NELP (new exploration licensing policy) exploratory blocks. Collected under the Oil Industries (Development) Act of 1974, though the cess proceeds are intended to fund research, exploration and development work, yet the money remains with the CFI.

As pointed out by the top auditor, there are irregularities galore in the management of the cesses. These include short or "nil" transfer of cess proceeds from the CFI to the dedicated non-lapsable fund in the public account set

up for the specified purpose. In certain cases, the public accounts were not even created long after the Government started collecting the tax. In others, it continued to collect even after the same was abolished. The Government has, in fact, used them primarily for increasing its "general revenue" and meeting the fiscal deficit target. If an overwhelming share of proceeds (or even the whole of it) from the cess remain with the CFI, what else one should conclude? Or the dedicated public account where the money has to go (for use in the intended purpose) is not even created, what else can one infer? Meanwhile, these cesses continue to inflict damage on the stakeholders who bear their brunt. Look at the impact of the five per cent USO levy on telecom service providers. In an intensely competitive environment, wherein they are compelled to keep the tariff low (this is also in sync with the dire need to make these affordable to consumers, with a majority of them having a low income), such levy has the effect of raising the cost of services and making them unviable. In fact, there is a strong case for scrapping this tariff.

This was recognised by none other than the Union Telecom Minister, Ravi Shankar Prasad, when he wrote to the Finance Ministry: "Given that rural tele-density has significantly increased since the time the fund was set up, it is proposed that the USO levy may be reduced from five per cent to three per cent. The two per cent USO levy reduction may be made available to the telecom service providers provided that this amount is utilised by them for carrying out research and development for development and deployment of indigenous technologies in the country." Yet the Government continues with *status quo*, the sole reason being easy availability of funds (from

USO levy) which can be used for plugging its general deficit. Look at the RaIC, which accounts for a major slice of the CED on petrol and diesel and together with the cascading effect of Value Added Tax (VAT) leads to a bizarre situation whereby taxes alone account for about two-third of their prices at the pump. The high fuel price contributes to high inflation and higher cost of fertilisers and food. Since the Government controls their prices at a low level to make them affordable, much of the extra revenue is given back as higher subsidy.

To that extent, the revenue gain from the cess (besides other taxes) is imaginary. Likewise, 20 per cent OID cess on domestic supplies of crude (besides the 20 per cent royalty ONGC/OIL need to pay to State Governments in respect of onshore supplies and 10-12.5 per cent royalty to the Centre on offshore supplies) impacts the viability of producers at a time when their realisation from sale has plummeted (courtesy, the steep decline in the international price of crude).

Despite the cesses not serving the intended purpose and their negative consequences, the mandarins in the Finance Ministry appear to be in no mood to say goodbye to them. Amid the current crisis created by the pandemic, when the tax collections have been severely impacted and expenditure commitments have ballooned, they may not even entertain any discussion on this. Nonetheless, there is dire need to put abolition of these cesses on the high table as these are not only counter-productive but also make our policy planners and administrators complacent with regard to sustainable ways of balancing the budget. Will the Government go on a course correction? One can only wait and watch.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst)

A real break-up or political posturing with eye on polls?

Many believe that the SAD would wait till the next wheat harvesting season and take a call on whether the divorce with the BJP would be final or not



AMITABH SHUKLA

It was supposed to be the most loyal, oldest and time-tested ally of the BJP but ground realities and compulsions of State politics in Punjab in the wake of the passage of the three farm Acts forced the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) to hurriedly exit the NDA. Had there been even a slight delay in announcing the divorce from the NDA, the party, whose major vote bank comprises the farmers and those in the rural areas of Punjab, would have seen an erosion of its base at a crucial juncture. Plus, the SAD draws its power from influential Sikh religious organisations, which would not have taken too kindly to the party continuing to be in an alliance with the NDA after its decision to push through the three farm Acts despite protests by the farmers.

The primary concern of the SAD at the moment is the March 2022 Assembly election, the countdown for which has already begun in the State with the political positioning by various parties. For the SAD, being a part of the NDA is a secondary concern at the moment, focussing as it is on gaining public traction and getting on the electoral bandwagon.

Particularly as the SAD's main rival, the ruling Congress Party, which is facing anti-incumbency sentiments in the State, has been aggressively targeting the farm Acts to divert attention from its lacklustre performance in the last 42 months. It would have challenged the SAD for being part of an alliance which passed the "anti-farmer" laws.

However, SAD patron and five-time Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal and party president Sukhbir Singh Badal sensed the mood and strategy of the Congress and took immediate measures by quitting the NDA. Harsimrat Kaur Badal was asked to submit her resignation from the Cabinet and when this was dubbed as "too little, too late", SAD walked away from the NDA to stop the

Congress from becoming the fulcrum of a pro-farmer political mobilisation.

However, the question remains, how deep is the fissure between the SAD and the BJP and is the split permanent? Moreover, questions are being raised whether this was mere posturing and a strategy to buy time? Will the two once again enter into an electoral alliance for the 2022 Assembly polls and then the 2024 Lok Sabha elections?

The Badal patriarch has time and again described the SAD-NDA alliance as "made for each other" and even after this break, he has refused to join in any public mudslinging against the former partner. He also did not get swayed by the temporary sentiments of hostility towards each other. Perhaps he wants to leave a window of rapprochement ajar as and when the time comes. Many in Punjab believe that this time would be a few weeks before the Assembly elections when the din associated with the farm Acts dies down in due course and a formula is evolved to appease the farmers, who are on the warpath at the moment.

Punjab has more or less been a

two-party system for decades now, where the SAD-BJP and the Congress Party have shared power for long, though the equations changed slightly after the emergence of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and its decent outing in the last State polls.

The BJP's votebank in urban pockets of Punjab is an increment in not only sociological terms for the Akalis but also psychologically as it helps the alliance present itself to the electorate as an ideal Sikh-Hindu combination, carrying the legitimacy of the entire population. With the SAD parting ways with the NDA, which many, even those in the Badal-led party, believe is temporary, this idea of a composite Sikh-Hindu electoral alliance has been dented. This is likely to carry an adverse message for the rest of the country as well, where the Opposition could party the BJP as "anti-alliance" or a party which could not keep a Sikh minority party in its fold or accommodate the viewpoint of its alliance partners.

Talk to the Akali Dal leaders in private and they admit that backdoor negotiations would begin once the heat generated by the Acts subside and the

churning for the Assembly elections starts. Even BJP leaders in the State are not sure what exactly to say at the moment. Behind the public posturing and the bravado of a couple of saffron leaders, who talked of a "clean sweep and Modi wave in next elections", lies a lurking fear on how to pick candidates and build the organisation in the rural pockets of the State. Hitherto, they had never been to the rural areas as it was always left for the Akalis. Even now, after the divorce, the saffron party leaders are taking no steps to build a semblance of a political structure in the Sikh-dominated rural pockets. Perhaps they, too, have a sense that the break-up is temporary and they should not do anything to aggravate the situation as of now.

The argument that the Shiv Sena walked away from the BJP and formed a Government in alliance with the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) in Maharashtra and that something similar could happen in Punjab, simply does not hold ground. The reason is simple — the SAD would cease to exist if it even goes soft on the Congress in Punjab, forget about entering into any sort of understand-

ing with the grand old party.

The SAD was born on an anti-Congress plank and has consistently maintained that in the two-party electoral ethos which the State has developed historically. The BJP or its earlier avatar, the Jan Sangh, has always been a minor player in the border State. Even at the height of the Narendra Modi wave in 2019, the Congress managed to swim through. For the BJP, Punjab is more or less politically similar to Kerala or Tamil Nadu — whatever it does, however hard it tries, it cannot get a foothold as of now if it goes solo. The reason is simple — demography and the socio-religious profile of the electorate.

Of course, the farm Acts could have consequences in neighbouring Haryana as well where the BJP is in a post-election alliance with the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP). The Ajay and Dushyant Chautala-led family party has so far stuck to the chorus that the Acts would not take away even an "iota" from the farmers and their interests are safe, but they, too, are slightly apprehensive given the support the farmers' agitation is receiving from the rich Jat growers — the main social and

political base of the JJP. But as Assembly elections in Haryana are four years away, sitting ensconced in the State Government is far more politically rewarding for the JJP than facing an uncertain future and an uncertain electoral outcome if it withdraws support at this juncture.

If the ongoing season of paddy procurement goes well, farmers get the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and are able to sell their produce in the *mandis* without any difficulty; the apprehensions related to the farm Acts would be addressed automatically to an extent. Then comes the wheat sowing and harvesting season in April next. Farmers and political parties like the SAD and the BJP will look at that too. And if everything goes as per what the proponents of the Acts in the BJP are saying, there could be a rethink in the strategy of the SAD and its approach towards the NDA. Many in Punjab believe that the SAD would wait till the next wheat harvesting season and take a call on whether the divorce with the NDA and the BJP would be permanent or temporary.

(The writer is Senior Resident Editor, The Pioneer, Chandigarh)

Prez Trump's drive-by surprises supporters

Washington: US President Donald Trump made a surprise drive-past to greet his supporters outside a military hospital where he has been admitted since Friday for the treatment of the deadly coronavirus, drawing criticism from Democrats and a leading medical expert.

The brief drive through Rockville Pike in Bethesda, a Maryland suburb of Washington DC, that separates the National Institute of Health and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, brought cheers to his supporters who have been praying for the 74-year-old president's health ahead of the presidential election next month.

"I really appreciate all of the fans and supporters outside of the hospital. The fact is, they really love our Country and are seeing how we are MAKING IT GREATER THAN EVER BEFORE!" Trump said in a



tweet soon after his unannounced drive-past.

Trump, a Republican is seeking another term in the White House. He is being challenged by former Vice President Joe Biden of the Democratic Party in the November 3 election.

Trump and the First Lady Melania tested positive for COVID-19 on Thursday night. Trump was shifted to the

Trump, moving to show strength, aims for Monday release

Bethesda: President Donald Trump was hoping for a Monday discharge from the military hospital where he is being treated for COVID-19, a day after he briefly ventured out while contagious to salute cheering supporters by motorcade in a move that disregarded precautions meant to contain the deadly virus that has killed more than 209,000 Americans.

White House officials said Trump was anxious to be released after three nights at Walter Reed National Military Medical Centre, where doctors revealed on Sunday that his blood oxygen level dropped suddenly twice in recent days and that they gave him a steroid typically only recom-

mended for the very sick. Still, the doctors said Trump's health is improving and volunteered that he could be discharged as early as Monday to continue the remainder of his treatment at the White House.

"This is an important day as the president continues to improve and is ready to get back to a normal work schedule," White House chief of staff Mark Meadows told Fox News on Monday.

He said the determination on whether Trump would leave the hospital won't be made until later in the day after the president is evaluated by his medical team, but that Trump was "optimistic" he could be released Monday. AP

Armenia, Azerbaijan clashes resume over separatist region

Yerevan (Armenia): The fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces over the separatist territory of Nagorno-Karabakh resumed on Monday morning, with both sides accusing each other of launching attacks.

Armenian military officials on Monday reported missile strikes hitting Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh. The region lies in Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since the end of a separatist war in 1994.

Firefights of varying intensity "continue to rage" in the conflict zone, Armenian Defence Ministry spokeswoman Shushan Stepanian said on Facebook.

The Azerbaijani Defence Ministry, in turn, accused Armenian forces of shelling the towns of Tartar, Barda and Beylagan. Ganja, Azerbaijan's second-largest city far outside of the conflict zone, is also "under fire," officials said. AP



Armenia's Foreign Ministry in a statement dismissed allegations of the attacks being launched from the Armenia's territory as a "disinformation campaign" waged by Azerbaijan.

Vahram Poghosyan, spokesman for Nagorno-Karabakh's leader, on Monday warned in a Facebook post that the territory's forces would target military facilities in Azerbaijani cities in response to strikes on Stepanakert and Shushi, a town in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The fighting erupted September 27 and has killed dozens, marking the biggest escalation in the decades-old conflict over the region. Both sides have accused each other of expanding the hostilities beyond the conflict zone in Nagorno-Karabakh. AP

3 win Nobel medicine prize for discovering hepatitis C virus

Stockholm: Americans Harvey J Alter and Charles M Rice and British-born scientist Michael Houghton won the Nobel Prize for medicine on Monday for their discovery of the hepatitis C virus, a major source of liver disease that affects millions worldwide.

Announcing the prize in Stockholm, the Nobel Committee noted that the trio's work identified a major source of blood-borne hepatitis that couldn't be explained by the previously discovered hepatitis A and B viruses.

Their work, dating back to the 1970s and 1980s, has helped saved millions of lives, the committee said.

"Thanks to their discovery, highly sensitive blood tests for the virus are now available and these have essentially eliminated post-transfusion hepatitis in many parts of the world, greatly improving global health," the committee said.

"Their discovery also allowed the rapid development of antiviral drugs directed at hepatitis C," it added. "For the

first time in history, the disease can now be cured, raising hopes of eradicating hepatitis C virus from the world population."

The World Health Organisation estimates there are over 70 million cases of hepatitis C worldwide and 400,000 deaths from it each year.

The disease is chronic and a major cause of liver cancer and cirrhosis requiring liver transplants.

The medicine prize carried particular significance this year due to the coronavirus pandemic, which has highlighted the importance that medical research has for societies and economies around the world.

Will Irving, a virologist at the University of Nottingham, said that identifying hepatitis C had been the "holy grail" in medicine.

"After hepatitis A and B were discovered in the 1970s, it was clear there was still at least one other virus or more that were causing liver damage," he said.

"We knew there was a

virus in the blood supply, because when people had blood transfusion they would get liver damage," Irving said.

"It was recognised as a risk but there was nothing we could do. We didn't know what the virus was and we couldn't test for it."

Nobel Committee member Patrik Ernfors drew a parallel between this year's prize and the current rush by millions of scientists around the world to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

"The first thing you need to do is to identify the causing virus," he told reporters. "And once that has been done, that is, in itself, the starting point for development of drugs to treat the disease and also to develop vaccines against the disorder."

"So the actual discovery, viral discovery itself, is a critical moment," said Ernfors. Unlike hepatitis A, which is transmitted via food or water and causes an acute infection that can last a few weeks, hepatitis B and C are transmitted through blood. AP

Over 300 detained in Belarus during Sunday protests

Kyiv: Authorities in Belarus said Monday that more than 300 people were detained during the previous day's protests against the country's authoritarian president, who won his sixth term in office in a vote widely seen as rigged.

The Interior Ministry said 317 people were detained during rallies in several cities Sunday against Alexander Lukashenko.

In the capital, Minsk, where according to a rights group nearly 120,000 took part in a rally on Sunday, water cannons were used to disperse the crowds, the ministry said. Police estimated the turnout to be around 10,000 people.

In the city of Vitebsk police used tear gas against protesters, the ministry said. The vast majority of those detained — 258 — remain in custody pending a court appearance.

Mass protests have rocked Belarus for almost two months, with the largest held on Sundays and drawing up to 200,000 people.

The unprecedented unrest was triggered by the results of the August 9 presidential election that handed Lukashenko, who has run Belarus with an iron fist for 26 years, victory with 80 per cent of the vote.

His main challenger, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, got 10 per cent. She and her supporters refused to recognize the results, saying the outcome of the vote was manipulated.

Initially, Belarusian authorities cracked down brutally on protesters, with police detaining thousands and injuring scores with truncheons, rubber bullets and stun grenades.

The government has since scaled down on the violence but has maintained the pressure, detaining hundreds of protesters and prosecuting top activists.

Prominent members of the opposition's Coordination Council, formed to push for a transition of power, have been arrested or forced to leave the country. AP

Malaysia PM quarantines as Minister tests positive for virus

Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said on Monday he will self-quarantine after a Cabinet minister he was in contact with tested positive for the coronavirus, as new cases in the country hit a record high.

Muhyiddin had chaired an October 3 meeting attended by Religious Affairs Minister Zulkifli Mohamad Al-Bakri, who confirmed Monday he has been hospitalized for treatment.

The health ministry has warned that Malaysia is facing a new wave of virus cases as the outbreak has widened in recent days.

New clusters have sprung up in many states amid increased travel to eastern Sabah state, a hotspot zone, for a state election last month.

New virus cases hit a record daily high of 432 on Monday, bringing Malaysia's tally to 12,813 with 137 deaths. Nearly half were from a prison in a northern state, and 130 were in Sabah.

Muhyiddin, who took power in March after a political coup, said in a statement that he underwent virus testing every two weeks since April. AP

Pak police register sedition case against Sharif, other PML-N leaders

Lahore: Pakistan's former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, his daughter Maryam and other top leaders of the Opposition PML-N party were charged with sedition and other serious cases for allegedly conspiring against the institutions of the army and judiciary, and inciting people against them.

The Lahore police registered a FIR on the complaint of a person on Monday, citing Sharif's two recent speeches made through a video link from London in which the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supreme made blistering remarks targeting the powerful Pakistan Army. Sharif - who left for London

late last year after securing bail for medical treatment in the Chaudhry Sugar Mills case and the Al Azizia case — has been targeting the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-led government led by Prime Minister Imran Khan as well as many state institutions, including the judiciary and the military.

He served as Pakistan's prime minister three times, first removed by a president in 1993, then by military ruler Pervez Musharraf in 1999. A court in 2017 ousted him from power over corruption allegations. Imran Khan, a former cricketer, came to power in 2018. PTI

Around the Globe

Geneva: The head of emergencies at the World Health Organization said Monday its "best estimates" indicate that roughly 1 in 10 people worldwide may have been infected by the coronavirus — more than 20 times the number of confirmed cases — and warned of a difficult period ahead.

Helsinki: The United States and Russia will hold a round of nuclear arms control talks in the Finland's capital, Helsinki, on Monday to follow up on negotiations in Austria this summer, the Finnish president's office said.

Suicide car bomb targets Afghan Governor, kills 8, say Officials

KABUL: A suicide car bomber targeted the convoy of a provincial governor in eastern Afghanistan on Monday, killing at least eight people, including four civilians, government officials said.

The governor, Rahmatullah Yarmal, was unharmed in the attack in Laghman province, according to his spokesman, Asadullah

Dawlatzai. Four of Yarmal's bodyguards were killed, the spokesman said, adding that about 38 people — both military and civilians — were wounded in the attack, which took place in Mihterlam, the provincial capital.

Dawlatzai said 36 civilians were among the wounded, including children, as well as two other bodyguards of the governor.

The explosion also left several badly damaged vehicles at the site of the attack. The wounded, including small children, were taken to the city's main hospitals.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but both the Islamic State group and the Taliban are active in the area. Both militant groups have carried out attacks in the past against Afghan government representatives, national security and defense personnel, and civilians. AP

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 Rc.No. 1359/P2/2020 Date: 03.10.2020
 Online tenders in two bid system are invited for the academic year 2021-22 on "All India Basis" for supply of 1) GSM Map Litho paper in reals, 2) Supply of 200 GSM White Art Card in Sheets. The details can be viewed and downloaded online directly from: www.tender.telangana.gov.in from 07-10-2020 at 11.00 A.M. onwards.
 Last date & time for download of tender form online: 26-10-2020 at 3.00 PM.
 Last date and time for submission of online tenders on 26-10-2020 at 4.00 PM.
 R.O. No. : 561-DP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21 Director, Telangana Govt. Text Book Press, Hyderabad.

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 This is inform to all concerned that M/s ESS AAR Packaging (P) Ltd. Thru its Director Savita Kohli W/o S.R. Kohli R/o D-80, Gulmohar Park, New Delhi was the Original allottee of residential flat no. 203C, Block-B 10, Sector-34, Noida, U.P. It had transferred the said property through general power of attorney and agreement to sell both dated 23-09-1995 to Sh. Jai Krishan Raina S/o Sh. R.K. Raina R/o B-10/203C, Sector-34, Noida, U.P. Now Sh. Jai Krishan Raina is further transferring the said property to Mrs. Manju W/o Sh. Anil Kumar R/o B 12-A/26-C, Sector-34, Noida U.P. The said transaction is being partially funded by Capital Small Finance Bank Limited Address Dhir Tower, 61/2179, Block-J, Nai Wala Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110002. In case anyone has any claim with respect to the said property or any objection to the said transaction the same may be communicated to the Bank at the aforesaid address within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice.
 Capital Small Finance Bank Ltd.

SEARCH FOR MISSING
 General public is hereby informed that one boy namely **Puspender, S/o Brij Nandan, R/o H.No. 647, Bakhtawar Pur Delhi, Age: 18 years, Height: 5'10", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Hair: Black, wearing White Shirt and Blue Jeans, has been missing since 19.09.2020. In this regard a DD No. 122A, dated 19.09.2020 has been registered at P.S. Alipur, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the boy but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about him please inform undersigned.
 Website: http://cbi.nic.in
 E-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in
 Fax: 011-24368639
 Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641
SHO P.S. Alipur, Delhi DP/500/ON/2020 Ph. No.: 011-27202290, 27202265

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 For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir state, 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:- Providing central heating facility to ward # 6 along with allied works at Govt. SMHS Hospital Srinagar.
Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs) :- 5.25
Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees) :- 500
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Position of AAA/funds:- Available
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3. Opening of Bids:- The bids received upto due date and time shall be opened on **17.10.2020 at 14.00 hrs or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar.**
Sd/- Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar
 No. DIPP-6821/20 Dated:-05.10.2020

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 To be known to all that I, Kawajit Singh S/o. Gurubakshish Singh R/o. H.No. 229E, DDA MIG Flat, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi have lost my original Agreement to sale registered GPA registered and money consider receipt of property No. 229E, DDA MIG Flat, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi. If any one found please contact on this no. # 9350150146

PUBLIC NOTICE
 I, Barkat Lal, proprietor of BK Bedding & furniture house, office address :- Shop No. 6-7 basement, Ravi Complex, Munirka, New Delhi hereby declare that Mr. Rajeev Kumar Chakarvarli is no more associated with BK Bedding & furniture house. He is not an authorised official or agent of BK Bedding & furniture house so any order accepted by him would not accrue liability on BK Bedding & furniture house to fulfill it. For official bookings kindly contact:- 9810045026.
 G. Sai Krishna Kumar (Advocate) J-32, Lajpat Nagar-III, New Delhi-110024

SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE
 General public is here by informed that one female **Namely: Manju Devi, W/o Sh. Avdesh, R/o H. No. 18, Gali No. 10A, Swatantra Nagar, Narela, Delhi. Age: 42 years, Height: 5', Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Wearing: Red Colour Saree & Blouse and Yellow Colour Hawai Chappal, has been missing since 23.08.2020 form her House.** In this regard a vide DD No. 114A dated 23.08.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Narela, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this female but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this female kindly inform to the following.
SHO P.S. Narela, Delhi DP/477/ON/2020
 E-Mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in Website: http://cbi.nic.in Ph. 011-27787592, 27787593 Fax: 011-24368639 Ph. 011-24368638, 24368641

SEARCH FOR MISSING
 General public is hereby informed that a man namely **Ram Sanehi, S/o Shri Ram R/o A-65, Gali No. 09, Gupta Enclave, Vikas Nagar, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi has been missing since 11/09/2020 from the area of P.S. Mayapuri, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 60-A dated 15.09.2020 has been registered at P.S. Mayapuri, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing man but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing man is as under:
Name: Ram Sanehi, Male, Age: 35 years, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Built: Normal, Wearing: Red colour t-shirt and black colour pant. If anyone has any information regarding this missing man, kindly inform SHO/Mayapuri, Delhi.
SHO P.S. Mayapuri, Delhi, DP/220/WD/2020 Ph. No. 011-28117644, 28116097

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED
 General public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Kajal, D/o Nanak Chand, R/o H.No. 143, Deep Enclave Part III, Vikash Nagar, Delhi has been missing/kidnapped since 07.09.2020 from the area of P.S. Rahnola, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 843/2020 dated 07.09.2020 u/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Rahnola, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing/kidnapped girl but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing/kidnapped girl is as under:
Name: Kajal, Gender: Female, Age: 17 years, Height: 5', Complexion: Shallow, Face: Long, Wearing: Yellow colour suit, red colour legging, and green colour slippers in her feet. If anyone has any information regarding this missing girl, kindly inform SHO/Rahnola, Delhi.
SHO P.S. Rahnola, Delhi, DP/405/OD/2020 Ph. No. 011-28363001, 28363002
 E-mail : cbc@cbi.gov.in Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 Fax : 011-24368639

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION
 General public is hereby informed that one male namely **Ravinder S/o Unknown R/o Unknown. Age about 55 years, Height about 57", Face round, Complexion shallow, Built thin, wearing Sky-blue and light pink vertical strip shirt and Dark blue colour pant was found unconscious in front of Dr. RML Hospital, Gate No. 5, New Delhi and admitted to Dr. RML Hospital where he declared brought dead. The dead body has been preserved at RML Hospital mortuary for identification.** In this regard a DD No. 24-A dated 01.10.2020 has been lodged at PS North Avenue, New Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about this deceased person may kindly inform to the undersigned at the address or telephone nos. given below.
SHO PS North Avenue, New Delhi Ph. 011-23093040, 23093294
 DP/128/ND/2020

Markets march higher for 3rd day

TCS zooms 7 pc on buyback plan

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex started up for the third consecutive session on Monday, buoyed by robust gains in IT and banking stocks amid a broad upmove in global markets.

TCS soared over 7 per cent after the IT major said it will consider a share buyback proposal later this week.

Starting off on a high note, the 30-share BSE Sensex zoomed to the day's peak at 39,263.85, before ceding some ground to settle at 38,973.70, up 276.65 points or 0.71 per cent.

Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty rose 86.40 points or 0.76 per cent to close at 11,503.35.

TCS was the top performer on the Sensex chart, rallying 7.30 per cent.

In the process, the IT giant became the second Indian firm after Reliance Industries to cross the Rs 10 lakh crore market valuation mark.

Other prominent gainers

included Tata Steel, Sun Pharma, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, IndusInd Bank, HCL Tech, ICICI Bank, HUL, Kotak Bank and HDFC Bank, spurring up to 4.71 per cent.

On the other hand, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Auto, PowerGrid and ITC were among the major laggards, shedding as much as 2.70 per cent.

With the global markets' focus turning to US President Donald Trump's COVID-19 treatment, reports of an improvement in his health boosted investor sentiment, analysts said.

Asian shares rose following Trump's health update, while European markets too opened on a firm footing.

"Indian indices had a very positive start taking cues from the global market and in anticipation of the Supreme Court verdict of the compounding of loans during the moratorium period. Gains came off when the decision was deferred to next week, this delay is unlikely to change the framework for small borrowers and the banking sector as the government

and RBI is expected to maintain the buoyancy of the market.

"In the near-term, the market is expected to maintain its optimism based on Trump's recovery, development of stimulus in US and India, upcoming Q2 FY21 results in India and Supreme Court final verdict," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Sectorally, the BSE IT index rose 4.06 per cent, followed by tech, metal, healthcare and banking.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap index shed 0.18 per cent, while the smallcap gauge rose 0.38 per cent, underperforming the benchmark.

On the forex market front, the rupee closed 16 paise lower at 73.29 against the US dollar.

Global crude oil benchmark Brent was trading nearly 3 per cent higher at USD 40.41 per barrel.

Analysts further said that going ahead, the market's focus will shift to corporate earnings announcements, with the results season beginning this week.

Rupee falls 16 paise on dollar buying by banks

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated by 16 paise to close at 73.29 against the US dollar on Monday due to dollar buying by banks. The Indian currency opened at 73.16 at the interbank forex market and touched an intra-day high of 73.08 and a low of 73.41 against the greenback. It finally settled at 73.29, down 16 paise over its last close of 73.13 a dollar. Weak US dollar, strong Asian currencies supported by improved risk appetite lent support initially, Sriram Iyer, Senior Research Analyst at Reliance Securities said. The RBI's presence amid expectations of more investment flows in the coming sessions capped gains in the currency this Mon, Iyer added.

India's economic fundamentals remain strong, says BSE chief

IANS ■ MUMBAI

Despite Covid-induced moderation, India's economic fundamentals remain strong, thereby retaining investors' interest, contended the chief of the Bombay Stock Exchange.

In a conversation with IANS, BSE MD and CEO Ashishkumar Chauhan pointed out that rising investor participation in the equity segment along with recent industrial recovery trends clearly show the resilience of the Indian economy.

"Overall, I believe that despite a moderation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the fundamentals of Indian economy remain strong and GDP growth is expected to rebound from the second quarter of FY 2020-21," Chauhan said.

"Indian government is seen not only as reformative, but transformative in approach, as seen by the recent farm and labour bill enactments. Foreign investors, in my view, are

focussed on such reforms."

According to Chauhan, India's economy has shown signs of stability in the last few months with manufacturing and services gradually improving even as coronavirus cases escalated across the country.

"Activity in India's dominant services sector is picking up and manufacturing has bounced back into expansion due to government push after four successive months of contraction," he said.

"So clearly the real economy is on the path of recovery, as the markets have indicated. It is early days to predict full recovery but current indications are good."

Besides, he cited that in the last 1 year, BSE brokers have opened 1.5 crore investor accounts. In the last 6 months alone, more than 80 lakh investor accounts have been opened on BSE. Consequently, the stock exchange major has reached a landmark of 5.47 crore investor accounts registered on its platform.

Recovery in domestic air passenger traffic continues in Sept: Ica

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Recovery in domestic air passenger traffic continued in September with a sequential growth about 37-39 per cent in passenger volume in the previous month over August, ratings agency Ica said on Monday.

The passenger volumes, however, plunged around 60 per cent in September over the same month year-ago, it said in a release.

Besides, the domestic carriers also increased capacity deployment significantly to around 46 per cent in September as compared to 33 per cent in the month ago, according to Ica.

The Civil Aviation Ministry in June had permitted increasing the capacity to 45 per cent with effect from June 27 from a maximum of one-third at the time of resumption of domestic flights from May 25, which was further scaled up to 60 per cent from September 2. This apart, the ministry in

late August announced other relaxations also such as allowing airlines to provide meals on board, serve pre-packed snacks/meals/ pre-packaged beverages, and allowing in-flight entertainment, however with certain riders. "The number of flights departing has also gradually increased from 416 on Day 1 (May 25) to 1,488 on Day 128 (September 28)," said Kinjal Shah, Vice President, ICRA. For September, the average daily departures were about 1,311, significantly lower than the average daily departures of 2,874 in September 2019, though much better than about 930 in August 2020, she said.

The average number of passengers per flight during September was 98, as against an average of 133 passengers per flight in September 2019, said Shah, adding, therefore, it is expected that the domestic industry operated at a passenger load factor of about 63 percent in the previous month as against 85.5 per cent in Sept 2019.

Govt mulls domestic gas floor price system to protect explorers' margin

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government proposes to implement a new floor price mechanism for gas produced from domestic fields by companies such as the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to prevent the fuel price from crashing below an identified threshold in current subdued market conditions.

Domestic gas price has fallen to \$1.79 per million British thermal units (mmBtu) for the October-March period of the current fiscal.

The administered price of the gas has fallen in the last four six-monthly revision cycles and has now reached the lowest price levels since 2014.

At this level of natural gas prices, exploration companies such as ONGC actually lose money on fuel as tariffs crash.

Sources said the Petroleum

Ministry is considering a proposal under which domestic gas will have a floor pricing that would be linked to gas prices with the Japan-Korea Marker, a benchmark index used to determine LNG tariff in North Asia with a discount.

With JKM prices hovering over \$5 per million British thermal units (mmBtu) even with a \$1 mmBtu discount, the Indian gas floor price under this formula will be close to \$4 mmBtu.

This is much higher than the government's current administered price of natural gas and would give necessary margins to oil explorers to economically maintain gas production cycles.

"Nothing has been finalised on having a gas floor price as of now. A panel in the Petroleum Ministry is looking at various options and the best course would be adopted that

has little impact on consumers but also supports oil and gas companies with remunerative and sustainable gas prices," said a source.

While a gas floor price at this juncture would benefit oil companies, it could render the price of piped natural gas to households and CNG for transportation expensive.

The average cost of gas production for the country's largest public sector oil company ONGC is about \$3.7/mmBtu, much higher than the current regulated price of natural gas at \$1.79/mmBtu. If the current demand cycle in the oil market sustains, gas prices may fall even further.

Lower gas price is bad news for the ONGC as it would mean further suppressed margins and losses. The company is set to lose close to Rs 6,000 crore on low gas prices this year, brokerages have said.

Sebi comes out with uniform timeline for listing securities on private placement basis

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi on Monday came out with a uniform time period for listing securities, including municipal bonds, issued on private placement basis.

The timeline will be applicable for non-convertible redeemable preference shares, debt securities, securitised debt instruments and security receipts and municipal bonds, Sebi said in a circular.

The move comes after the regulator received several requests from various market participants for clarification on the time period within which such securities need to be listed after completion of allotment.

After taking feedback from market participants, Sebi has decided that allotment of securities will be completed by

T+2 trading days after receiving funds.

T day refers to closure of the issue.

It further said issuer needs to make listing application to stock exchanges and obtain approval from the bourses by T+4 trading day.

In case of delay in listing of securities issued on private placement basis beyond the timeline, the issuer will pay penal interest of 1 per cent per annum over the coupon rate for the period of delay to the investor (i.e. From date of allotment to the date of listing), Sebi said.

In addition, issuer will be permitted to utilise the issue proceeds of its two subsequent privately placed issuances of securities only after receiving final listing approval from stock exchanges, it added.

Govt IoT endpoint electronics market to reach \$15bn in 2020

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The global government Internet of Things (IoT) endpoint electronics and communications market will reach \$14.7 billion in 2020, an increase of 6 per cent from 2019, a Gartner report said on Monday.

The largest revenue opportunities in the government IoT market in 2020 are in outdoor surveillance, street and outdoor lighting and road toll and traffic management.

"The Covid-19 pandemic is slowing down spending. However, governments across the globe continue to use IoT technologies and solutions to improve citizen safety.

At the same time, the falling endpoint and connectivity costs make smart city initiatives more viable," said Kay Sharpton, principal research

analyst at Gartner.

Globally, Gartner expects governments will deploy eight cameras per thousand urban citizens for outdoor surveillance by 2021, up from six cameras per thousand in 2019. "Governments are increasing their spending on outdoor surveillance cameras to monitor cities for crime. In the wake of Covid-19, they are also used to track compliance with safety restrictions," said Sharpton. Across all countries, the Chinese government is the key contributor to the outdoor surveillance spending growth. The Chinese government is investing in cameras that harness advanced image recognition techniques and will deploy 32 cameras per thousand urban citizens for outdoor surveillance by 2021, up from 27 cameras per thousand in 2019.

Reliance calls off merger of Viacom18 with Sony

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries has called off the proposed merger of his group's entertainment business with Sony Pictures Networks India following a strategic rethink.

Ambani's television networks housed in Viacom18 Media Pvt Ltd were to merge with Sony Corp, with the Japanese giant having a bigger stake in the merged entity. However, Reliance has now had a rethink and has decided not to pursue the merger route, sources with direct knowledge of the development said. Instead, the company is now keen to invest more in digital content creation. Digital media and entertainment is an essential pillar of telecom unit Jio's digital business strategy, they said

Rose Valley returned ₹10,500cr to investors: ED

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The probe into the Rose Valley scam started six years ago

Rose Valley, which is under the Concurrent probe of the CBI and ED for allegedly defrauding investors, has already returned around ₹10,500 crore out of ₹17,520 crore raised from them, an official said on Monday.

He said the ED had also attached properties worth ₹4,500 crore and filed two prosecution complaints with the designated Prevention of Money-Laundering Act (PMLA) court.

"Out of ₹17,520 crore raised by Rose Valley, which has been in in operation since 1999, around ₹10,500 crore has already been returned to investors," the ED official said.

The probe into the Rose Valley scam started six years ago. The official said the second

prosecution complaint is against all those who have been accused, including the owner of Rose Valley, who is still in jail.

"The designated court has given a date in November for hearing on the complaint, which had been filed by SEBI," he said, adding, the court would also frame charges against the accused on the day of hearing.

The official said there have been instances of forging of documents and cheating by "some unscrupulous elements who are trying to derail the session trial".

Google defers Play Store fee as Paytm launches own Android store

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Facing intense criticism over its Play Store billing policy, Google on Monday said it has extended the time for developers in India who use alternative payment system, to integrate with the Play Store billing system till March 31, 2022, thus deferring the enforcement of 30 per cent commission on in-app purchases of digital goods from its Play Store in the country.

As the announcement came, leading digital payments platform Paytm that is involved in a stand-off with Google, launched an Android Mini App Store to support local developers take their innovative products to the masses.

Google said that deferring the enforcement of the Play Store fee is to ensure that the Indian developers have "enough time to implement the UPI for subscription payment option that will be made avail-

able on Google Play".

The tech giant said it would also set up listening sessions with the leading Indian startups to understand their concerns more deeply.

"We will be setting up policy workshops to help clear any additional questions about our Play Store policies," Purnima Kochikar, Director of Business Development, Games & Applications, Google Play, said in a blog post.

The developers and payment gateway players have criticised the new Google in-app purchase policies where those using Play Store to sell digital services will be required to use the tech giant's own built-in payment system.

"Just because Google owns the gate and the gateway to the digital ecosystem of this country, they should not act arbitrarily and enforce their rules

and regulations which are contrary to our country's laws," said Vishwas Patel, Founder, CCAvenues and Chairman, Payments Council of India.

"Also, they cannot force Indian apps developers/owners selling digital services to compulsorily use the Google Billing and payment system and charge 30 per cent MDR," he added.

According to Kochikar, the Google Play payments policy is not new.

"In fact, more than 97 per cent of developers with apps on Google Play already comply with the policy.

To be clear, the policy only applies if a developer charges users to download their app or they sell in-app digital items, which is less than 3 per cent of developers with apps on Google Play," she reiterated.

Ola loses London licence, but operations to continue

London: Ride-hailing major Ola will continue its operations in London despite failing to get its licence renewed due to public safety concerns raised by the city's transport regulator.

Ola said that it will appeal against the decision of TfL.

The India-based ride-hailing major which began operating in London in February believes that it has corrected all the issues raised by the regulator and hopes to demonstrate them on appeal.

Vodafone gets lenders' nod for Indus Towers-Bharti Infratel merger

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

On September 1, Vodafone Group had announced that it had agreed to proceed with the proposed merger

Vodafone Group Plc on Monday said that its lenders have given their consent for the merger of Indus Towers and Bharti Infratel.

On September 1, Vodafone Group had announced that it had agreed to proceed with the proposed merger.

"The agreement to proceed was conditional on consent for a security package for the benefit of the Combined Company (the "Security Package") from Vodafone's existing lenders (for the Euro 1.3 billion loan utilised to fund Vodafone's contribution to the Vodafone Idea Ltd rights issue

in 2019). This consent has now been received," the company said in a statement on Monday.

The parties will now approach the National Company Law Tribunal to make the merger scheme effective. The parties are working to complete the transaction expeditiously, it added.

Metro Railway, Kolkata
Kolkata's Pride

ZONAL CONTRACT FOR ZONE 2

Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway, Metro Rail Bhavan, 33/1, J. L. Nehru Road, Kolkata - 700071 for and on behalf of the President of India invites tender notice for e-tendering for the following work:
Name of work : Zone No. 2, i.e., Zonal Contract for upkeepment of structures including overhead/elevated structures & underground structures, sheds, staff quarters, repair & replacement of pipeline, fire hydrants, water supply arrangements, sanitary & drainage arrangements of RTS box including all service buildings, sheds, staff quarters at Noapara Car Depot Complex including Belghoria Station (via link line) upto and including Dakshineswar Station and upto Km. 01/3-4 i.e. approach of Belgachia Tunnel face and Patipukur Store Depot including all staff quarters, TA quarters and RPF Barrack at Belgachia & Chitpur area upto Km. 7/14 i.e., Central (In) including overhead/ elevated structures and underground structures, sheds, repair & replacement of pipeline, fire hydrants, water supply arrangements, sanitary & drainage arrangements of Circular Tunnel including all service buildings at Central Park Depot Complex and from Salt Lake Sector V to Phool Bagan (Km. (-) 0/7 to Km. 08/06 of East West Metro of Metro Railway, Kolkata. **Tender Value :** ₹ 6,50,31,621.89. **Cost of Tender Document :** Nil. **Earnest Money :** ₹ 4,75,200/-. **Completion Period :** The contract shall be in force upto 30.06.2022. **Date of Closing :** 29.10.2020 at 12.00 hrs. The Tender Document and other details can be obtained from the website www.ireps.gov.in. The bidding for the tender is to be submitted only through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any manual offer, if received, shall not be accepted and will be summarily rejected.

Abbreviated e-Tender Notice No.: Civil-2342-2020 (Open)

FASTER SAFER SMOOTHER CLEANER

Office Project Manager, Construction Unit
Uttarakhand Peyjal Sansadhan Vikas Evam Nirman Nigam
Ghingharikhal, Ranikhet, Distt. Almora
E-Mail: pmranikhet@rediffmail.com Fax & Ph. No.: 05966-220690

Letter No. 1145 / NIVIDA/34 Date: 30-09-2020

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING

The Project Manager Construction Unit Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam Ranikhet (Almora) 263645, on behalf of Chairman Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam invites sealed item rate tender on e-Government Procurement System (e-GPS) portal i.e. <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>, for the following works.

S. No.	Name of Work	Cost of Work
1.	Construction of remaining civil and appurtenant work for S.A.D at Dhamdeval Distt Almora.	44.83 Lacs.
2.	Construction of approach road at government medical college and base hospital Almora Distt Almora.	330.07 Lacs.
3.	Construction of Trout Hatchery Bageshwar.	298.10 Lacs.

The tender form can be downloaded from e-Government Procurement System (e-GPS) portal i.e. <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> from 05.10.2020 at 10:00 hrs. to 20.10.2020 at 17:00 hrs. Other information can be seen in tender form or office notice board or obtained from office or phone no. 05966 220690 of office of tender inviting authority.

PROJECT MANAGER

NEW OKHLA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida G.B. Nagar, (U.P)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender are invited from firms/ contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on NOIDA Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <http://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/ amendments & corrigendum etc.

S.No.	JOB NO.	NAME OF WORK	AMOUNT
1	27/DGM(NTC)/SM (NTC)/2020-21	P/L Thermoplastic paint on edge line, centre line, broken line, speed breaker, zebra crossing, stop line, arrow, glow studs and post delineator on external road between Sector-122, 119, 117, 118 FNG road and Sector-79 and 113, 80 Noida.	5367456.50
2	28/DGM(NTC)/SM (NTC)/2020-21	P/F Spring Post, Bollard & Retro Reflective sheet in Different U-Turn & X-ing of MP-1, MP-2, MP-3 Road No-6 & DSC Road in Noida.	8613293.65
3	14/DGM(NTC)/SM (NTC)/2020-21	P/L Thermoplastic paint on edge line, broken line, zebra strips, stop line on 45.00 mtr. Wide road between Sector-82, 83, 85, 90 & 93, 92, 91, 137 and between Sector-90, 138 & 140A, 140 Noida.	3773930.90

Which can be uploaded by date **20.10.2020 upto 5.00PM**. Pre-qualification shall be opened/ downloaded on date **21.10.2020 at 11.00AM**.

Which can be uploaded by date **13.10.2020 upto 5.00PM**. Pre-qualification shall be opened/ downloaded on date **14.10.2020 at 11.00AM**.

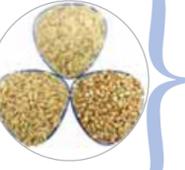
Dy. General Manager
Noida Traffic Cell

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

HEALTH

FindBalance

Kodo is more beneficial for health than polished rice sold in the market. Kodo is a type of coarse grain and coarse cereals are rich in micronutrients as well as fibre so it is necessary to include coarse grains in your food intake for boosting fitness. Renowned cooking expert Sanjeev Kapoor says coarse grains like kodo, ragi, jowar are more beneficial for health than polished grains



DOCYARD

DR DHANANJAYA | BHAT

Senior Consultant
Neurosurgery

ASTER RV HOSPITAL



All about Moyamoya

The Moyamoya Disease is a rare vascular disease which affects the brain. This disease is commonly seen in children between five-10 years of age and in adults between 35-50 years of age. Though certain genes have been linked to the disease, the exact cause remains elusive. In India, this disease is frequently seen in denizens of West Bengal and North East India.

This condition causes a progressive slow narrowing of major intracranial blood vessels which supplies blood to both hemispheres of the brain. The body tries to compensate for the reduced blood supply by opening up previously nonfunctioning small vascular connections between the adjacent blood vessels in order to improve the blood supply. Despite the best efforts, as the disease progresses, the blood supply to the brain progressively diminishes and a stage of decompensation occurs. There is an imbalance between blood oxygen supply and the demand of the brain. In the above event the patient starts experiencing initially fleeting neurological deficits leading to symptoms such as weakness, headaches, seizures which inevitably worsens and ends in permanent neurologic deficits of varying degrees.

Diagnosis of Moyamoya disease is mainly done with MRI and MR angiogram (MRA) or CT angiogram. The MRI shows the presence of any infarctions or bleed and presence of significant brain damage. MRA reveals the brain blood vessels patency and caliber. It demonstrates the narrowing of blood vessels and the presence of opened up vascular channels trying to shore up the brain blood supply. When the diagnosis cannot be made with certainty on MRI, a slightly invasive procedure known as digital subtraction angiogram (DSA) will be needed. It is the gold standard and can establish the diagnosis irrefutably.

At present, surgical intervention offers the best outcome for Moyamoya disease. If the patient has already suffered major strokes then the surgical outcome and improvement is not good. It needs to be done early in the course of the disease when the diagnosis is made

Ancillary tests like SPECT scans may be done in certain cases to demonstrate functionally the adequacy of blood supply.

Management of Moyamoya disease

- Untreated patients have a poor prognosis with major neurologic deficits, including death occurring in 70-75 per cent by two years.
- Medical management includes blood thinning tablets (aspirin and clopidogrel) to prevent formation of small clots which may block the already compromised narrow blood vessels and cause stroke. However though medications intuitively seem to reduce the risk of future stroke, it does not prevent the progression of the disease and a substantial number of patients develop strokes in the months or years ahead.

■ Surgical intervention consists of augmenting the intracranial blood supply by using the blood vessels on the scalp. By this procedure there is an immediate and a delayed increase in blood supply to the brain which offsets the progressive oxygen deficit the brain will face due to the ongoing progressive occlusion of the intracranial blood vessels.

■ The surgical procedures include a direct bypass between a scalp vessel (superficial temporal artery) and an intracranial vessel (branch of middle cerebral artery) and indirect procedures like placing the temporalis muscle directly on the brain surface. The direct surgery improves the blood supply immediately and the indirect procedures result in slow parasitisation of the muscle blood supply by the brain.

■ At present, surgical intervention offers the best outcome for Moyamoya disease. If the patient has already suffered major strokes then the surgical outcome and improvement is not good. It needs to be done early in the course of the disease when the diagnosis is made. Surgery prevents development of stroke and neurologic deficits, but cannot undo the damage of an already sustained stroke.

SUMMER COOLERS

CLOVE: Clove is a sweet and aromatic spice, found both in whole and ground forms. They are widely used in Indian dishes and beverages to add flavour.

Cloves are low in calories but a rich source of manganese. They're otherwise an insignificant source of nutrients. In addition to containing several important vitamins and minerals, cloves are rich in antioxidants.

Studies also show that cloves may promote oral health, thanks to their antimicrobial properties, which may help kill harmful bacteria. Cloves can also help

boost immunity. It may also help in regulating blood sugar levels.

The eugenol in cloves possess strong anti-inflammatory properties and helps ease pain by stimulating pain receptors in the body. Clove oil or extract provides relief from arthritis, inflammation and any pain in general.



HEART MATTERS

A recent study suggests that serious COVID-19 patients are 10 times more at risk of developing heart diseases. DR RAKESH CHUG shares tips that can help

The entire world is in the grip of COVID-19 infection. Rising number of infected patients with every next moment is one of the major concerns of the time. Social distancing, precautions for prevention have emerged as new normal, but even long before COVID came cardiac diseases have already been one of the top killer diseases in our country. Now another fact is although COVID is primarily a respiratory disease but in large number of cases it is leading to cardiac problems as well. Hence more awareness needs to be spread in this regard.

What exactly is Cardiac Disease?

Major function of the heart is pumping of blood after purification and oxygenation in lungs. Now when this basic functioning of the heart is obstructed it leads to a number of heart diseases, results can vary as per the seriousness and complexities of the disease. One can also be born with it and it can be developed due to other diseases and unhealthy habits, food pattern and smoking.

A number of COVID patients are reporting with heart block. A study suggests serious COVID patients are at 10 times risk of developing heart diseases. Hence take extra precaution and lead a healthy life in order to lower the risk.

There are some diseases which play a major role in predisposing to heart diseases.

There are a few standard risk and well established risk factors for blockages in the heart. These include high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol level, fam-

Diabetes is a major risk factor in India. Not only do Diabetics have a higher incidence of cardiac blockages, they are also more complex and difficult to treat

During the current time, heart patients are not only more at risk of infection but also their treatment process was also disturbed due to the lockdown and fear of infection. A case in point is one of the patients lost his life as he did not come to the hospital on time due to the fear of catching infection.

Hence considering every related risk factor, the following steps should be kept in mind especially in regard to cardiac diseases:

- Keep your BP under check, make sure your blood sugar is in

control.

■ Be in contact with your concerned doctor and tell her/him about every update regarding your disease.

■ Do go to the hospital if doctor suggests. Don't ignore your disease because of fear of infection. Take along only one adult with you for help so that there will be lesser risk of overcrowding and follow every required precaution.

■ Exercise daily. Some exercise patterns suggested in Yoga, Pranayama also lower the risk of

heart diseases. If you are already a heart patient then takes your concerned doctor's suggestion first in this regard.

■ Take extra care of your food habits. Keep the nutrition value high; make a diet plan with your concerned doctor's suggestion.

■ Keep a positive outlook towards life. Take your mental health also seriously and consult a specialist if face any related issue.

The writer is Dr Anand Kumar Pandey, Director and Senior Consultant — Cardiology, Dharamshila Narayana Superspeciality Hospital

Follow a healthy lifestyle

TIPTOP

Deep Learning — it is the artificial intelligence (AI) that powers today's self driving cars, chatbots, personal assistants (such as Alexa, Cortana, Siri etc.), facial recognition in social media and law enforcement agencies. The collaboration between Prof Anshul Majumdar of IIT Delhi and Prof Emilie Chouzenoux of INRIA, Saclay, Paris, harnesses the power of deep learning to screen drugs that have the potential to treat COVID-19 infections. "This is the first of a kind AI powered study for antiviral selection", says Prof Majumdar.

In scientific literature this is called 'drug repositioning'. Current approaches are based on rudimentary models like network diffusion, similarity matching, matrix factorisation, classification etc. In contrast, our approach (DeepVir), integrates the power of deep representation learning with biological insights via graphical regularisation. Furthermore, Prof. Chouzenoux boosted

DeepVir with a state-of-the-art optimisation approach based on hybrid proximal alternating minimization (HYPALM); in short "it is Deep Learning on steroids," she explains.

Our deep learning AI model, DeepVir, selects Chloroquine, Remdesivir, Umifenovir, Favipiravir and Ribavirin. All of them are undergoing clinical trials for treating COVID-19 infections.

The use of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19, both as a prophylactic and as a treatment, is common knowledge today. Major pharma companies (Zydus Cadilla, Cipla, Jubilant) in India have already launched Remdesivir for treating COVID-19 infections. The Russian drug Umifenovir has received DGI nod for phase III trials in the country a while back. Several big Pharma companies have launched the Japanese drug Favipiravir for treating novel coronavirus infections.

SLIMLINE

Patients facing end-stage heart failure years ago; and certain death in the absence of an immediate heart transplant — are leading near-normal lives. The reason: Heart surgeons at Max Super Speciality Hospital, Saket implanted a mechanical pump called the LVAD (Left Ventricular Assist Device) that took over the function of their failing hearts. These patients don't have a pulse, heartbeat or blood pressure, yet they are able to do everything that a healthy person can, as their blood flow has been fully restored.

Dr Kewal Krishan, Director, Heart Transplant & Ventricular Assist Devices, Dept of Cardiovascular Surgery, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Saket said: "LVAD is a device that adds 13 to 15 years to the life of people facing imminent heart failure. It boosts functions of the heart and is used either as a temporary measure till a heart transplant can be conducted, or as a destination therapy where the patient lives with the device permanently. LVAD enables patients to live a normal life even after end-stage heart failure."

MINDFUL EATING IS KEY

One doesn't necessarily have to follow extreme weight loss diets. DOLLY KUMAR tells you how by making small changes in the regular diet, one can get the desired results

Keto, Paleo and GM diet; most of us must have tried at least one of them during our weight loss journey. While the results must have varied, it is important to know that eating healthy is possible without falling for these extreme diets. Even if you are aiming for weight loss, you just have to make small changes to your food habits and you can reach your ideal weight. It is all about making the right choice when it comes eating healthy.

Muesli instead of paratha for breakfast: While we all love *parathas*, they have a lot of calories. Eating them on a regular basis can lead to a series of health problems such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity. That's why switching the *paratha* with muesli is a wise option. Muesli is essentially a mix of rolled oats, nuts, seeds, and a bunch of dried fruits. It is not only delicious when paired with toned milk or low-fat yoghurt, muesli is also a great source of nutrition.

Green tea instead of regular tea/coffee: We often don't realise how much sugar we consume daily through our tea and coffee. High intake of sugar can increase the risk of diabetes, obesity and heart diseases. It is also bad for our skin, hair and teeth. Switching regular tea/coffee with green tea is the right way to go. Rich in antioxidants, green tea has many health benefits, from weight loss to reduced risk of cancer.

Olive oil instead of regular cooking oil: Olive oil has loads of heart-protective polyphenols that lower cholesterol levels in the blood. Packed with a generous amount of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, this miraculous oil is also known to improve brain health and cure depression. Moreover, it has anti-inflammatory properties and contains mono-saturated fatty acids that aid weight loss by boosting metabolism. With so many health benefits to offer, you should definitely replace your regular cooking oil with olive oil.

Stevia instead of sugar: Stevia is a popular plant-based, carb-free and calorie-free alternative to sugar. Unlike artificial sweeteners, it is extracted from the leaves of a plant called *Stevia rebaudiana*. It is much sweeter than sugar and a small amount is sufficient. Taking stevia instead of sugar can promote weight loss as it essentially packs no calories. However, it is crucial to choose the right stevia as many brands add artificial sweeteners and fillers.

A2 cow ghee instead of regular ghee: Ghee is an indispensable part of any Indian kitchen. From using it as a seasoning for Biryani to putting it on *chapatis*, ghee is perhaps one of the most used ingredients. But, there are several reasons why you must replace your regular ghee with A2 cow ghee. Easier to digest, A2 cow ghee is loaded with Vitamin A, which is good for eyes. Since it contains essential fatty acids, it also helps in maintaining healthy cholesterol levels. Additionally, A2 cow ghee is Keto-friendly and maintains general immunity.

The writer is Founder & Director at Cosmic Nutracos Solutions Pvt Ltd

DadiKaKehna

Hair fall can be worrisome. While, in many cases, it can be due to hormonal imbalance and requires doctor intervention, in most cases simple ingredients found in our kitchen can do the trick, says ROSHANI DEVI



Most women love long hair. After all, one ends up styling it differently each time one goes out. Therefore, when clumps of hair start falling, it can lead to worry. And rightly so. In some cases, it can be due to hormonal imbalance and a visit to the doctor can help. Otherwise here is what one can do:

Given the benefits of aloe vera, most households have the plant in their home — either in their garden or in a pot. Take a stalk and extract pulp. Apply it to hair and scalp and leave it for

45 minutes. Rinse with normal water. Do this three-four times in a week.

Use fresh lemon juice or lemon oil. Apply fresh lemon juice to the scalp and hair. Wait for 15 minutes and shampoo. You can use lemon essential oil diluted in coconut oil and apply.

Apply coconut milk. Not only is it good for hair re-growth, it controls hair fall as well. Grate coconut and squeeze its milk. Then apply this milk to the scalp. Cover your head with a towel and leave it for 20 minutes. Wash hair with shampoo.



INBRIEF

Maxirich, the flagship multivitamin brand of Cipla Health Ltd has introduced Tulsii Drops, a natural immunity booster that effectively supports respiratory and digestive health, gives relief from cough and cold and helps in stress management.

While the pandemic has taken the world by storm, The World Health Organisation, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of AYUSH have highlighted the importance of having a strong immune system that enables and builds an individual's overall capability to battle diseases and stay healthy.

Taking this into consideration Maxirich Tulsii Drops has been specially curated with remedial ingredients best known to fight pathogens and that one could be susceptible to. It includes 95 per cent concentration of five varieties of *tulsii*: *shyam tulsii*, *van tulsii*, *ram tulsii*, *nimbu tulsii*, *vishnu tulsii* all of which have medicinal properties fostering complete wellbeing. *Tulsii* is a powerful antioxidant with anti-viral and anti-microbial properties useful in the treatment of cold, cough, sore throat, heart diseases, eye diseases, mouth infections, and stomach ailments.

A combination of five types of *tulsii* makes Maxirich Tulsii Drops an ideal inclusion in your everyday routine to remain strong and active. The flagship product in the range which is Maxirich Daily Multivitamin supplements include more than 13 essential vitamins and minerals in a softgel capsule which helps fulfil the body's nutrient requirement, in the event there is a shortfall.

Trend Glazer

Akshay's retro look in BellBottom

A new teaser of the forthcoming spy thriller *BellBottom* released on Monday sees lead actor AKSHAY KUMAR turn on the retro style quotient.

In the short video, Akshay wears bell-bottom pants and a turtle-neck pullover. While the look was revealed earlier in film stills from his recent outdoor stint of the film in Glasgow, the video sees Akshay hit attitude in motion.

He shared the video on Instagram and Twitter. "Go BellBottom! Here's a thrilling throw-back to the 80s. Presenting #BellBottomTeaser," he wrote.



HOTELS COUNT ON FESTIVE WEEKENDS

Travel aggregators and hotels are introducing more affordable services to attract travellers for a long-weekend vacation, which is slowly picking up post-COVID. By TEAM VIVA

Earlier, long weekends used to be the most awaited times of the year, especially during the festive season between October and December. However, is it same this year too, given that a pandemic has taken over the world? With the festive season round the corner and work-from-home/anywhere becoming the new normal, we analyse how travel suppliers and hotels are looking at it.

A recent survey by LocalCircles said that only 19 per cent of the people are opting to go on a holiday during the forthcoming festive season.

As per the survey, the much-awaited festive season is unlikely to bring any cheers to the travel industry, including the airline sector, as less than 20 per cent of people polled plan to travel during October-November amid the pandemic. The majority of those having travel plans said that they do not want to make their booking till they get closer to their travel date.

The survey was conducted to get citizen pulse on how people in India are planning to travel in the forthcoming festive season, given the current situation with COVID-19. It received over 25,000 responses from people located in 239 districts of India. "Only 19 per cent citizens (respondents of the survey) say that they will undertake festive travel this year due to COVID-19. Of those who plan to travel, only 23 per cent say they will travel by a flight and another 38 per cent plan to travel by car or a cab," reported the survey.

When the citizens were asked about the kind of travel they plan to undertake during the festive season, it said that as many as 69 per cent respondents don't want to be travelling this year and

would prefer to stay at home. Three per cent of the respondents said they will travel to a holiday destination, while 13 per cent said they will visit family and friends, and another three per cent said they will do both, as per the survey. However, 12 per cent respondents were unsure about what they would do.

People in many parts of India plan their travel back home or vacations during this time, it said adding, this year, however, looks drastically different due to the fast spreading COVID-19 pandemic, lockdowns, unlocks and just a lot of caution amongst people. Though India opened domestic air and train travel in June, the daily caseload has grown by 10 times during this period.

Well, it certainly raises questions at how hotels and travel aggregators are preparing to keep the travellers coming in and give them more chances to keep considering their long-awaited plans.

A BETTER PLAN

Nishant Pitti, CEO & Co-founder, EaseMyTrip, which is supporting its customers to plan their travel at affordable prices via air travel, said, "In order to boost the air travel, we have come up with the 'Lowest Airfare Challenge', which guarantees that the customers will get the lowest airfare on domestic and international flight bookings departing from India or else we will refund double the difference amount to the customer, who will be then eligible for the refund if s/he has made booking via EaseMyTrip and within four hours of booking flights with us, user finds a lower domestic or international airfare for the exact same itinerary on any other competitor website/app (India-based reputed online travel



to seize the festival demand uptick. Many online portals are even considering to get more providers for outstation rental cars and taxi services as people are opting to travel to nearby places more.

Kush Kapoor, CEO, Roseate Hotels & Resorts, said, "The Roseate Ganges, Rishikesh, is sold out during all the weekends in October 2020. Our 'drivecation' packages have been well received by our guests who have eagerly been waiting to experience the wellness resort with tailor-made experiences, proper hygiene and safety standards and easy accessibility from Delhi-NCR."

NEWER OPTIONS

While it's true that a lot of people are avoiding travel due to COVID scare, Roshan D'Silva, CEO, TripVillas, said, "It's even more interesting to note that there is a marked shift away from hotels to independent villas, homestays and apartments. People want to travel and we have seen a surge in bookings during this time. People are booking for much longer as compared to the two-night bookings as compared to how it was before."

ing bookings from many, who are going for car travel and isolated places."

NOT TOO FAR

The survey also revealed that many service providers in the road transportation sector are trying to build capacity

'Andhadhun will always be close to my heart. It gave me yet another opportunity to

collaborate with like minded colleagues, who inspire me and help me grow my craft. Working with a director like Sriram Raghavan and co-actor Ayushmann, was a great learning and experience. It feels lovely to have worked on a National award winner.'

—Radhika Apte

Actor TAAPSEE PANNU is excited about her much-needed forthcoming getaway, going by her post on social media.

She posted a picture on Instagram, where she is seen posing by the pool at an undisclosed getaway destination.

"Here's me looking forward to the much needed getaway. P.S—that pool was out of bound so @khamkaphotoartist figured out other means to make the picture look cool," she wrote with the picture.

Taapsee's forthcoming films are *Haseen Dillruba*, *Shabaash Mithu* and *Rashmi Rocket*.



A tale of rise and fall

Director HANSAL MEHTA's financial crime thriller, *Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story*, unravels the man and the story behind one of the biggest stock market scandals in India

In April 1992, mayhem hit the Indian financial sector as the nation woke up to the biggest stock market scam. So huge was its impact on the Dalal Street that it led to structural changes in the financial security system of India with new reforms in stock trades. However, what remains untold is the story of the mastermind behind it. SonyLIV brings *Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story* unraveling the man and the story behind one of the biggest stock market scandals in India.

Produced by Applause Entertainment in association with Studio Next, this series is a financial crime thriller based on the bestseller book *The Scam* written by notable journalists Debashis Basu and Sucheta Dalal. The makers spent over three years on this series to ensure absolute accuracy in detailing right from the script to the choice of actors



and the overall treatment.

Adapted by dialogue writers Sumit Purohit, Saurav Dey, Vaibhav Vishal and Karan Vyas, it is a gripping tale of the meteoric rise and the steep fall of the flamboyant Big Bull of the stock market — Harshad Mehta.

Directed by national award-winning filmmaker Hansal Mehta, the series is led by Pratik Gandhi and Shreya Dhanwanthary along with an ensemble cast of Satish Kaushik, Sharib Hashmi, Anant Mahadevan, Nikhil Dwivedi, KK Raina, Lalit Parmoo amongst others.

Indranil Chakraborty, Head, Studio Next says, "We are delight-

ed to foray into OTT with this series that reflects on a landmark event of the Indian stock market. The incident was integral to shaping up India's financial security systems and hence was a story waiting to be told. It's a new storytelling format for us and we had Hansal leading us through this process."

Hansal says, "The series is inspired by true events and sheds light on a man about whom not much is known. In a tale that is even more relevant today, this show gives you an intimate peek into the middle-class aspirations of a common man who rose from rags to riches while managing to subvert and deceive the



banking system."

Sameer Nair, CEO, Applause Entertainment says, "We have put together a great ensemble of actors and a team of talented writers who worked tirelessly on the show. Based on the book written by Sucheta Dalal and Debashis Basu, this show marks another chapter in Applause's slate of book adaptations where we have dramatised the story while staying true to the essence of book."

Ashish Golwalkar — Head-Content SET, Digital Business, Sony Pictures Networks India says, "The story offers an apt mix of talent, storytelling and technique. We are hopeful that like our previous offerings, this one will also open to a warm audience response and reinstate our promise of bringing 'stories of India' to the audience."

(The series releases on October 9 on SonyLIV.)

Reel turns real

Actor Harshita Gaur who will be seen in the forthcoming season of *Mirzapur* has roots from this city in Uttar Pradesh. Her maternal grandfather hailed from Deoria which is close to Mirzapur and he grew up there along with his siblings.

Speaking about her childhood memories, Harshita said, "Just talking about the show makes me go all nostalgic as I have spent quite an amount of my childhood there. My nanaji and his younger brother were settled in Mirzapur. He eventually settled in Amritsar but we used to visit our cousins in Mirzapur during summer holidays. I have actually seen guns and pistols in that home. When I used to visit the city women used to be in *ghoonghat* till their waists. Only a few years back, I got to know that my *naani* was fighting a case due to some illegal land grabbing. In fact, our family was advised not to go to Mirzapur or Wasiganj because of the threat of being killed on sight. It still sends shivers down my spine when I think about it."

She further added, "When I was offered the series, it took me back to some childhood memories. My family has suffered and got threats from an extended family. Even when I heard the narration and read the script, I had my childhood



memories play out like a show reel as it wasn't new to me. Years back if I was probably spotted in that city I would have been killed on sight. So somewhere yes, I resonated with the fact that things like these do happen."

Harshita will be seen reprising the role of Dimpi Pandit in the series starring Ali Fazal, Vikrant Massey, Pankaj Tripathi, Shweta Tripathi, Divyendu Sharma and Rasika Dugal.

(The series will stream on Amazon Prime Video from October 23.)

Eva loves spending time with husband

Actor EVA MENDES says she would rather be at home with her husband Ryan Gosling than anywhere else in the world.

A throwback photo the actor shared has her running on a beach. She joked that she "went for a run on the beach this morning" before adding, "No I didn't."

"This picture was taken at least 15 years ago. Haven't seen a beach this year. Haven't been on a run this year," Mendes joked.



TODAY
MUMBAI INDIANS VS RAJASTHAN ROYALS
Live from 7:30pm
STAR SPORTS 1



KL Rahul | 302 runs
Kagiso Rabada | 12 wickets

The last two games haven't gone to plan for us after what was a really good start to the tournament. But I guess that's the way T20 cricket goes sometimes

The conditions are very foreign for me, very hot, but you have to be clear in your head, execute what you want to do, and not worry about the ball travelling out of the park

It's hard being on the losing side for so many games on the trot. We need to come back harder and better. There's no rocket science where we are going wrong, it's the execution

We did the small things right. That's what was important to us. The kind of start we got in batting, that's what we needed. Hopefully we'll be able to replicate this in coming games

KAGISO GOOD

Rabada leads way with 4/24 as DC go top with 59-run win

PTI ■ DUBAI
Delhi Capitals dished out a clinical performance to outclass Royal Challengers Bangalore by 59 runs and reclaim the pole position in the Indian Premier League here on Monday. Asked to bat first, blistering knocks by Australian all-rounder Marcus Stoinis (53) and Prithvi Shaw (42) powered Delhi Capitals to 196 for four. Pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada then led a fine bowling display to end with excellent figures of 4/24, including picking the big wicket of Virat Kohli. With 43 off 39 balls, skipper Kohli, who became the first Indian batsman and the seventh in the world to surpass 9000 T20 runs, was the top scorer for his side. But the chase master could do little as his team was stopped at 137 for nine. With the win, Delhi reclaimed their position at the top, having lost only one game in the tournament so far. Stoinis, who was dropped on 30 by Yuzvendra Chahal, made RCB pay for the mistake as he raced to his 53 in just 26 balls, hitting two towering sixes and six fours at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. Shaw, however, missed what would have been a well-deserved half-century. Chasing a stiff total, RCB were never in the game after losing the wickets of the in-form opener Devdutt Padikkal (4), Aaron Finch (13) and AB de Villiers (9) in the Powerplay to Delhi spinners Ashwin (1/26) and Axar Patel (2/18) and pacer Anrich Nortje (2/22).

Finch (13) got three reprieves. First, Rabada put down an easy caught and bowled chance when the Australian ODI and T20 skipper was on zero. He was again dropped on six by Dhawan off Nortje. There was another incident involving Finch as he was caught well outside the crease at the non-striker's end, earning himself a warning from off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin. However, the right-handed batsman couldn't capitalise on his chances. With RCB reeling at 43 for three, skipper Kohli was joined in the middle by Moeen Ali (11). The duo added 32-runs before Axar broke the stand by getting rid of the England all-rounder. Earlier, Shaw provided a blazing start, hitting three fours off pacer Isuru Udana in the game's very first over. His innings was laced with five boundaries and two maximums. The opening duo of Shikhar Dhawan (32 off 28-balls) and Shaw put up a 68-run stand and looked to go the distance before the RCB bowlers made a splendid comeback. Mohammed Siraj provided the first breakthrough for his team by removing the dangerous looking Shaw. After Udana accounted for Dhawan, young Devdutt Padikkal pulled off an excellent catch at the boundary to dismiss DC's in-form skipper Shreyas Iyer (11). Stoinis and Rishabh Pant (37) immediately got into the recovery act. The duo stitched an 89-run partnership. Shimron Hetmyer also played a short cameo, the Guyanese hitting a six in the last over. Siraj (2/34 in 4 overs) was the most impressive bowler for RCB as he picked the key wickets off Shaw and Pant. After an expensive first over, Chahal pulled things back but couldn't provide a breakthrough for his team. Playing in place of Adam Zampa, Moeen Ali (1/21) and Udana (1/40) claimed a wicket each, while Washington Sundar (0/20 in four overs) was the most economical.

Ashwin gets his chance but refrains from Mankading

Dubai: Ravichandran Ashwin on Monday refrained from doing what he would instinctively do in the past — Mankad the batsman after he had backed up too far at the non-striker's end. Instead, what the Delhi capitals off-spinner did was smile wryly after catching Royal Challengers Bangalore opener Aaron Finch short of the crease during their IPL match in Dubai. The bowler, though, warned the Australian. In the dugout, DC coach Ricky Ponting, who found himself at odds with Ashwin on the contentious issue of Mankading in the run-up to the tournament, also smiled. The incident happened in the third over of RCB's innings, when Finch stepped way out of his crease, but the seasoned off-spinner Ashwin didn't attempt Mankading. Before the start of the 13th IPL, Ponting had said that he had told Ashwin that he would not like him to Mankad the non-striker in the tournament. PTI

Shaky Royals face rampaging MI

PTI ■ ABU DHABI
Rajasthan Royals may need to rejig their Indian line-up slightly when they try to pull their IPL campaign out of the current rut against a supremely confident Mumbai Indians on Tuesday. Starting with a bang at Sharjah on a conducive batting surface, Royals have suddenly hit a slump on bigger grounds of Dubai and Abu Dhabi with their willow-wielders not looking half as menacing as they did during the first two games. "The last two games haven't gone to plan for us after what was a really good start to the tournament. But I guess that's the way T20 cricket goes sometimes. We have been outplayed by the opposition on both occasions," Royals skipper Steve Smith said on the eve of the match. "Hopefully, I am able to score a few runs tomorrow. I've missed out on the last two games but that happens," Smith added. Mumbai Indians, on the other hand, have been solid in their last couple of games and are currently on top of the table by virtue of a better net run-rate compared to Delhi Capitals, who are also on six points. After a heart-breaking loss to Royal Challengers Bangalore in the Super Over, the defending champions bounced back in style, defeating Kings XI Punjab and Sunrisers Hyderabad by 48 and 34 runs respectively. The best part of MI's campaign so far is that they have ticked almost all the boxes with skipper Rohit Sharma (176) in good touch and now Quinton de Kock who also looking ominous. Kieron Pollard is consistent as ever, Ishan Kishan has looked solid and Hardik Pandya is also finishing games with the bat. Hardik's brother Krunal joined the party in the last game. MI's replacement pacer James Pattinson (7 wickets) has been a revelation alongside the redoubtable Jasprit Bumrah and the crafty Trent Boult. Once Hardik starts bowling, all the pieces of the puzzle will nicely fit in. In contrast, Royals would like to arrest the slide before Ben Stokes completes his quarantine and is available from October 11. One of the primary reasons of their fall has been the poor form of Jos Buttler (47 runs from 3 games) along with yet another dismal show from Jaydev Unadkat (1 wicket from 4 games at 9.97 economy). The young Riyan Parag has also seemed completely out-of-depth unlike last year. Skipper Steve Smith might consider dropping Parag, who is not exactly a top of the line off-spinner, and give another much-talked-about youngster Yashasvi Jaiswal a go at the top of the order. Smith might bring himself in the middle to give stability to the line-up. He indicated that there could be a few changes. "We will see which of our players fit in our plans for tomorrow's match and fit in certain scenarios in the game and try and get the best match-ups for Mumbai." In bowling, Smith may try out the experienced Varun Aaron who has a lot more pace than Unadkat or the young Kartik Tyagi who can bowl at 140 kmph.

MATCHES 20
MUMBAI INDIANS 10
RAJASTHAN ROYALS 10
Stats: Faisel Features



DUGOUT MOTION PICTURE



Mumbai Indians players Trent Boult and Chris Lynn pose for photo after playing golf



Rajasthan Royals all-rounder Ben Stokes poses for photo after training session

Shane Watson @ShaneWatson33
The perfect game for @ChennaiIPL is coming!!! 🙌🙌🙌
@ChennaiIPL #WhistlePodu
#Yellowe
T20 Stars @stars_t20 · 1d
The Debrief from last night's game against @SunRisers. @ChennaiIPL #WhistlePodu
t20stars.com/t20stars-vlog/...

Chennai Super Kings batsman Shane Watson's pre-match tweet that went viral after CSK beat KXIP by 10 wickets on Sunday

QUINTON NEVER STOPPED BELIEVING
Mumbai Indians opener Quinton de Kock, who roared back to form with a breezy half-century after an indifferent run, "never stopped believing" in his ability, said the team's fielding coach James Pamment on Monday. The seasoned South African made a 39-ball 67 against Sunrisers on Sunday. "We all know the quality that Quinton possess, so I'm not saying that it was just a matter of time, but you have to still work extremely hard. "You still have to believe in yourself and he never stopped believing in his ability to be effective for the team," Pamment said.

WE BACK OUR PLAYER'S WAY LONGER
CSK's "reticent" approach to change when faced with poor results has been the key to its success over the years, said head coach Stephen Fleming, citing Shane Watson as a shining example of what the side has achieved. Watson finally came good with an unbeaten 83 off 53 balls in his fifth game as an opener, helping CSK record an emphatic 10-wicket win over KXIP. "I think it helps as players know they get more opportunities...We are reticent to changing the team other than realising the areas that we are not happy with," Fleming said. "We try and improve and if players are doing the right thing we will back them as long and even longer than possible." CSK's long-serving coach echoed what has been his skipper MS Dhoni's philosophy over a decade now.

POINTS TABLE

	P	W	L	NRR	PTS	
1	DC	5	4	1	+1.060	8
2	MI	5	3	2	+1.214	6
3	RCB	5	3	2	-1.355	6
4	KKR	4	2	2	-0.121	4
5	RR	4	2	2	-0.317	4
6	CSK	5	2	3	-0.342	4
7	SRH	5	2	3	-0.417	4
8	KXIP	5	1	4	+0.178	2

Kohli inadvertently applies saliva on ball

Dubai: Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli inadvertently applied saliva on the ball after stopping a cracking drive during an Indian Premier League match here on Monday, violating the ICC's Covid-19 protocol. Fielding at shot cover during his team's game against Delhi Capitals, Kohli did not let the ball, that was headed in his direction at a great speed, go past him. While the Indian captain did not show any discomfort, he ended up applying saliva on the ball at the Dubai International Stadium. This happened after DC opener Prithvi Shaw launched into a booming drive against pacer Navdeep Saini in the third ball of the third over after Kohli elected to field. The skipper, though, realised his mistake immediately, smiled and also acknowledged the slip-up by raising his hands. PTI

Injured Amit, Bhuvni out of IPL

PTI ■ DUBAI
Senior leg-spinner Amit Mishra was ruled out of the ongoing IPL along with pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who could also miss the tour of Australia at year-end, after the duo sustained different injuries while competing for Delhi Capitals and Sunrisers Hyderabad respectively. While DC's Mishra fractured his ring finger while bowling against Kolkata Knight Riders on October 3, Bhuvneshwar picked up the thigh muscle injury on October 2 when SRH took on Chennai Super Kings. He is likely to be out of reckoning for the much-awaited trip Down Under. The 37-year-old Mishra had three wickets from three games this season while Bhuvneshwar also had equal number of scalps albeit after playing a match more. "Amit has fractured his ring finger and is out of IPL tournament.

Obviously, it is a very disappointing news considering he was integral to DC's plans," a source from Mishra's management team confirmed. Delhi Capitals' later issued a press release, stating that the bowler will consult a specialist on his return to India for recovery and rehabilitation. "Mishra will now consult with a specialist over the next few weeks to determine the most appropriate course of management for this unfortunate injury. Everyone at Delhi Capitals wishes him a speedy recovery," the statement read. As far as Bhuvneshwar is concerned, the extent of his injury is still not clear but it could take a good 6 to 8 weeks for the 30-year-old to completely recover from the setback.

"Bhuvneshwar Kumar is out of IPL with a thigh muscle injury. It is probably a grade 2 or 3 injury, which could mean that he would be out for at least 6 to 8 weeks. It might effectively rule him out of India's tour of Australia," a senior BCCI official told PTI. What will hurt the franchise is the fact that both bowlers were integral to the team's plans. Mishra, as a wrist-spinner, was very important strategically for Capitals on bigger grounds as he showed his skills against Chennai Super Kings with brilliant figures of 4-0-23-0. He returned 1/14 in 2 overs, including the wicket of Shubman Gill, against KKR. It was while trying to get hold of a return catch offered by Nitish Rana that Mishra fractured his finger which forced him to leave the ground. In case of Bhuvneshwar,

the injury was sustained while bowling the 19th over of CSK's innings during their clash. There was heavy strapping on his thigh but he was in so much pain that he hobbled out of the ground after sending down just one ball as Abdul Samad finished his over. His injury will be a massive blow to SRH skipper David Warner as he struggles for quality death bowlers in his side which is short on experience. In case of Bhuvneshwar, he might stay back in the UAE as the Indian team's physio Nitin Patel is also there as part of the BCCI's medical team. Being a centrally-contracted player, Bhuvneshwar's rehabilitation will be entirely looked after by the BCCI. However, for the past one year Bhuvneshwar has been mostly out, due to side strain and hamstring injuries and only recently, made a comeback during the IPL. He had missed the New Zealand tour earlier this year.

Villa put 7 past Liverpool

AFF ■ BIRMINGHAM
On a day of incredible results, Aston Villa produced one of the most stunning scorelines in the history of Premier League football as they beat defending champions Liverpool 7-2 on Sunday, not long after Manchester United were beaten 1-6 at Old Trafford by Jose Mourinho's Tottenham. Villa captain Jack Grealish was in inspired form while Ollie Watkins scored a first-half hat-trick as Liverpool were ripped apart by the club that just about stayed in the Premier League by surviving relegation on the last day of the previous season. Jurgen Klopp was so taken by surprise at Liverpool's collapse that he actually wore a bemused grin at times as his team fell to the biggest defeat of the German's career. Liverpool's chief tormentor was Ollie Watkins, who became the first Villa player to score a hat-trick against the Reds for 88 years. Watkins bagged Villa's first after a mistake by Liverpool keeper Adrian in the fourth minute. He netted again in the

22nd minute before Mohamed Salah got one back. John McGinn's deflected effort made it three and Watkins scored Villa's fourth before half-time. Ross Barkley, in his debut after joining on loan from Chelsea, scored Villa's fifth after the break with the aid of a deflection. Salah reduced the deficit but Jack Grealish netted number six before Villa's captain ran clear to cap the rout. Second placed Villa have won all three league games this term, while Liverpool's first defeat of the season left Klopp wondering how to fix a leaky defence that has shipped 11 goals in four matches. No defending champion in 67 years has lost so heavily in England. It's been 57 years since Liverpool was beaten as badly. "We lost kind of the plot," Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said. "The results are strange." With Leicester opening Sunday with a 3-0 loss to West Ham, it leaves Everton and Villa, whose last titles came in the 1980s, leading the way with perfect starts.

Barca drop points

AFF ■ BARCELONA
Barcelona dropped their first points of the season on Sunday as Sevilla made a statement of intent in La Liga's title race by drawing 1-1 at Camp Nou. Luuk de Jong gave Sevilla an early lead and while Philippe Coutinho levelled two minutes later, the visitors were arguably the better side in a frantic contest. The draw brings an end to Ronald Koeman's perfect start as Barca coach but he might not be too displeased with a point, even if his team also had chances to snatch a winner. "We were less energetic than in the first two games but that also depends on the opposition," said Koeman. "They have defended well." "Getting a point at this ground is always tough, (but) I am not satisfied. We had our chances. It is too bad we couldn't have gotten a better result," Lopetegui said. Real Madrid are three points ahead of Barcelona but having played a game more, after their 2-0 win over Levante earlier on Sunday sent them to the top of the table.

Kvitova makes French quarters

AFF ■ PARIS
Petra Kvitova returned to the French Open quarter-finals for the first time in eight years on Monday while German veteran Laura Siegemund reached her first Grand Slam quarter-final. Two-time Wimbledon champion Kvitova is through to the last eight at Roland Garros for just the second time. Her best run in Paris came when she reached the semi-finals in 2012. Seventh seed Kvitova, who missed last year's tournament due to an arm injury, defeated China's Zhang Shuai 6-2, 6-4 and will next play world No 66 Siegemund, who made the second week of a Grand Slam for the first time in 16 attempts. "It's been really difficult. It was a tough one for sure," said Kvitova, who will climb back into the top 10 following her performance in Paris. "She served very well and played very aggressive. I'm really happy I managed to win even if I didn't manage to serve it out at 5-2." Siegemund, 32, advanced to

her first Grand Slam quarter-final in singles after defeating former junior champion Paula Badosa of Spain 7-5, 6-2. She became the fourth unseeded player to make the last eight this year, joining Iga Swiatek, Nadia Podoroska and Martina Trevisan. In men's section, Novak Djokovic defeated Karen Khachanov in straight sets to make the Roland Garros quarter-finals for the 11th consecutive year while Stefanos Tsitsipas and Andrey Rublev set up a rematch of the recent Hamburg Open final. Top seed and 2016 champion Djokovic won 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 against Russian 15th seed Khachanov to draw level with Rafael Nadal on a record 14 quarter-final appearances in Paris. Djokovic faced his toughest assignment so far but Khachanov was unable to derail his bid to become the first man in half a century to win all four Grand Slam titles twice. The Serb hit 44 winners and has yet to drop a set in the tournament, losing only 25 games in four rounds. He improved his record in 2020 to 35 wins against just one loss. Fifth seed Tsitsipas overcame an eye problem to become the first Greek man to reach the last eight of the French Open with a 6-3, 7-6 (11/9), 6-2 win over Grigor Dimitrov. He has now won 12 successive sets at the tournament having been two sets down to Jaume Munar in the opening round. Rublev, the 13th seed, also advanced to the last eight for the first time after battling past Marton Fucsovics of Hungary 6-7 (4/7), 7-5, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3).

French Open
Live from 2:15pm IST
STAR SPORTS 2 NETWORK



Petra Kvitova celebrates winning her fourth round match against Zhang Shuai