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ATMANIRBHARTA
IN DEFENCE

WORLD 8
WILL GIVE CITIZENSHIP TO 11 MILLION
ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IF ELECTED: BIDEN

SPORT 12
MI START FAVOURITES
AGAINST KKR

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MANUSHI
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CAPSULE

RAIN CLAIMS 27 LIVES IN 3 MAHARASHTRA DISTRICTS

Pune: At least 27 people have died in rain-related incidents in Solapur, Sangli and Pune districts of Maharashtra, officials said on Thursday. Over 20,000 people were evacuated to safer places in these three districts.

GST SHORTFALL: CENTRE TO BORROW ₹1.1 L CR

New Delhi: The Central Government will borrow up to ₹1.1 lakh crore on behalf of the States to bridge the shortfall in GST collections, the Finance Ministry said on Thursday. P9

DELHI COP DRAGGED ON BONNET FOR HALF A KM

New Delhi: A Delhi Traffic Police constable, who tried to stop a rashly driven car, was dragged on the bonnet of the vehicle for almost half a kilometre in southwest Delhi Cantonment area, officials said on Thursday.

NO MESSAGE TO PAK FOR TALKS, SAYS INDIA

New Delhi: India has not sent any message to Pakistan for talks as claimed by its Prime Minister Imran Khan's special advisor on national security, the External Affairs Ministry said on Thursday, and asserted that Islamabad's support to terrorism and use of abusive language against New Delhi are not conducive to normal neighbourly relations.

INDIA'S FIRST OSCAR WINNER BHANU DIES

Mumbai: Costume designer Bhanu Athaiya, India's first Oscar winner, died at her home on Thursday after prolonged illness, her daughter said.

Mind your own business, India tells China

MEA asserts Beijing has no locus standi to comment on 44 strategic bridges, reiterates 'Ladakh, J&K will remain an integral part of India'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On a day when Chinese President Xi Jinping asked his troops to "prepare for war", India on Thursday categorically rejected Beijing's objection to opening of 44 bridges in border areas, including Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, saying China has no locus standi to comment on India's internal matters.

The strong assertion by the Ministry of External Affairs came here two days after Zhao Lijian, spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, in Beijing had called border infrastructure development "the root cause for tension between the two sides" and said neither country should take action that might escalate tensions.

India's rebuttal also came against the backdrop of continuing tension at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and Jinping asking his troops to "prepare for war" according to state news agency Xinhua. "Troops should 'maintain a state of high alert... Put all (your) minds and energy into preparing for war," China's State news agency Xinhua quoted Xi Jinping as saying.

Troops should be "absolutely loyal, absolutely pure, and absolutely reliable", the Chinese President said during his visit to Marine corps of PLA in Chaozhou City. Sources said the President's remarks



were "not specifically directed at India," even though it came amid the border dispute in Ladakh.

MEA Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava also brushed aside China's remark saying it does not recognise the Ladakh Union Territory.

This claim by the Chinese spokesperson came a day after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday inaugurated 44 permanent bridges, including eight in Ladakh and the same number in Arunachal Pradesh. These bridges will significantly bolster the logistical supplies to the troops deployed on the LAC facing China and the LoC with Pakistan.

Countering Beijing's contention, Srivastava made it amply clear here on Thursday that "the Union Territories of Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir have been, are and will remain an integral part of India".

Maintaining that China has no locus standi to comment

on internal matters of India, he also said, "Our position on Arunachal Pradesh has been made clear several times. Arunachal Pradesh is an integral and inalienable part of India. This fact has also been clearly conveyed to the Chinese side on several occasions, including at the highest level."

Elaborating on India's stand, the spokesperson also said New Delhi hopes that "countries will not comment on India's internal matters, as much as they expect the same of others".

The Chinese spokesperson had questioned the status of Ladakh and said, "First I want to make it clear that China does not recognise the Ladakh Union Territory illegally set up by the Indian side and Arunachal Pradesh. We stand against the development of infrastructure facilities aimed at military contention along the border area," the Chinese spokesperson had said.

Continued on Page 2

- The statements came against the backdrop of continuing tension at the LAC and Jinping asking his troops to "prepare for war"
- Zhao Lijian in Beijing had called border infrastructure development "the root cause for tension between the two sides"
- China has repeatedly raised objection over Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh after it was given the status of a Union Territory last year

India to give Myanmar sub to counter China's sinister outreach bids

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant move to bolster defence relations with countries in the neighbourhood to counter Chinese influence, India will lease out a submarine to Myanmar. The 3,000-ton INS Sindhuvir submarine powered by diesel engines is now undergoing the final refit at a dockyard in India.

India had a few months ago exported Shyena advanced light torpedoes to Myanmar as part of defence co-operation. The torpedoes were manufactured by public sector company Bharat Dynamics Limited.

The submarine transfer in the next few months comes at a time when India and China are locked in a five-month long stand-off at the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Moreover, China in the past few years has ramped up its bid to enhance its influence in the countries bordering India by offering to provide military and economic aid. This long-term move is part of Beijing's strategy of having a "string of pearls" around India. It means having strong military and economic ties with all the nations thereby posing a grave challenge to India's national interests.

Announcing India's decision about the submarine, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said here on Thursday, "This will be the first submarine of Myanmar Navy... Cooperation in the maritime domain is a part of our diverse and enhanced engagement with Myanmar."

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A Chinook helicopter of the IAF conducts survey for the construction of a tunnel on Manali-Leh road at Satingri in Lahaul-Spiti on Thursday PTI

'Watershed moment': Gadkari launches Zojila tunnel construction

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Terming it a "watershed moment" in the road history of the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and of great importance to the defence of the country in view of the "massive military activities along our borders", Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday launched the construction work on Zojila tunnel. He exuded confidence that the strategic project, providing all-year connectivity between Srinagar and Leh, will be completed ahead of schedule.

The geo-sensitive Zojila stretch is strategically important to the defence of our country in view of the fact that massive military activities along our borders in Ladakh, Gilgit and Baltistan regions are taking place. Zojila tunnel will not only provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Drass, Kargil and Leh but it will also further strengthen the economic and social-cultural integration of both the Union Territories," Gadkari said, addressing an event after the virtual launch of construction work of the 14.15-km tunnel project through the ceremonial first blast.

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Archrivals NC, PDP join hands to fight for Art 370

People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The mainstream politics in Jammu & Kashmir on Thursday witnessed a "tectonic" shift after top brass of the National Conference for the first time decided to forge an "alliance" with archrival Mehbooba Mufti, chief of Peoples Democratic Party, along with the leaders of four other regional parties under the banner of "People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration" to fight a "constitutional battle" demanding the Government of India to return to the people of the erstwhile State the rights they held before August 5, 2019.

The decision to float this new alliance was taken at a crucial meeting convened by Farooq Abdullah at his residence in Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by all the leaders who are signatories of "Gupkar Declaration", a resolution issued after an all-party meeting on



PDP president Mehbooba Mufti stands after a meeting with National Conference party leaders Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah in Srinagar on Thursday AP

August 4, 2019 at the Gupkar residence of Farooq Abdullah. JKPC chief GA Mir was not present during the meeting.

Addressing the media soon after the meeting, Abdullah, flanked by Mehbooba, Omar Abdullah, CPI(M) leader MY Tarigami, People's Conference chief Sajjad Lone, JKPM leader Javid Mustafa Mir and ANC leader Muzaffar Shah said that

the resolution passed on August 4 last year by the mainstream political parties in the valley has been named as "People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration".

He said, "Our motive is to fight for the restoration of last year's August 4 position. Our battle is a constitutional battle and we are ready to fight".

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Covid doubling rate improves by 3 fold to 70 days in 3 months

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indicating some slowdown in its spread, the doubling time of coronavirus in India has improved from 25.5 days in mid-August to nearly 70 days now. The doubling time for coronavirus is the number of days it takes for the cases count to double.

"India's doubling time has sharply increased to 70.4 days (it was 25.5 days in mid-August). This indicates a substantial fall in the daily new cases and the consequent increase in time taken to double the total cases," the Union Health Ministry said.

Crediting the Central Government's strategies and Covid-19 warriors with the improvement in India's case doubling time, the Ministry further tweeted, "This is the result of the Centre-led strategies and the selfless dedication of doctors, paramedics, frontline workers and all other Covid-19 warriors."

The country's current case-

load, the second-highest after that of the United States, stands at 7,239,389 as per data from the Health Ministry. However, 6,301,927 or 87.05 per cent of these are recovered cases, the highest number of recoveries globally.

Continued on Page 2

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	15,64,615	41,196	13,30,483
Andhra Pradesh	7,71,503	6,357	7,25,099
Karnataka	7,43,848	10,283	6,20,008
Tamil Nadu	6,74,802	10,472	6,22,458
Uttar Pradesh	4,47,383	6,543	4,04,545
Delhi	3,21,031	5,924	2,92,502
Kerala	3,17,930	1,090	2,22,231
West Bengal	3,09,417	5,870	2,71,563
Odisha	2,62,011	1,142	2,35,763
Telangana	2,17,670	1,249	1,93,218
Bihar	2,00,825	972	1,88,802
Assam	1,98,982	843	1,69,332
Rajasthan	1,67,279	1,708	1,43,984
Madhya Pradesh	1,56,584	2,710	1,39,717
Gujarat	1,56,283	3,609	1,37,970
Chhattisgarh	1,50,696	1,339	1,21,548

Covid-19 IN INDIA
TOTAL
CASES: 73,65,289
DEATHS: 1,12,143
RECOVERED: 64,48,421
ACTIVE: 8,03,555



A man exercises at Yamuna Ghat amid hazy weather in New Delhi on Thursday PTI

Delhi's air quality hits 8-month low with farm fires

Stubble burning accounts for 6% of city's PM 2.5 concentration: SAFAR

STAFF REPORTER/PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The air quality of the national Capital on Thursday hit an eight-month low with stubble burning accounting for six per cent of the city's PM2.5 concentration, according to Government agencies.

Satellite imagery grabbed by the NASA showed a large cluster of farm fires near Amritsar, Patiala, Tarn Taran, and Firozpur in Punjab, and Ambala and Rajpura in Haryana. Following which, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar urged the Punjab Government to curb stubble burning.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor, SAFAR, said the wind direction was partly favourable for the transport of smoke from farm fires and "hence, an increase in



contribution in Delhi's PM 2.5 (concentration) is expected".

Delhi recorded a 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) of 312. The last time the air quality hit such a poor level was in February with an AQI 320. The 24-hour average AQI was 276 on Wednesday, which falls in the 'poor' category. It was

300 on Tuesday, 261 on Monday, 216 on Sunday and 221 on Saturday.

An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

According to SAFAR data, the contribution of farm fires to Delhi's PM2.5 concentration was around 6 per cent on Thursday. It was only around one per cent on Wednesday and around 3 per cent on Tuesday, Monday and Sunday.

A senior scientist at the India Meteorological Department said the wind direction was northwesterly and the wind speed 15 kilometres per hour, which was favourable for the transport of smoke from farm fires.

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Scale up sero-surveys, tests, preparedness, exhorts Modi

PM calls for low cost Covid testing, continued vigilance

on Thursday directed health authorities to scale up sero-surveys as well as testing. He said the facility to get tested regularly and speedily at a low cost must be available to all at the earliest.

In the last six months since the Covid-19 expanded its tentacles, the ICMR has conducted two sero-surveys nationwide. The first countrywide



sero survey (conducted between May 11 and June 4) showed overall infection prevalence to be 0.73 per cent while the second one showed that one in every 15 individuals, or 6.6 per cent, of people above the age of 10 years in India, have been exposed to Sars-Cov2, the virus that causes coronavirus disease (Covid-19), till August.

Chairing a high-level meeting to review the country's research and vaccine deployment ecosystem against the Covid-19 pandemic, including testing technologies, contact tracing, drugs and therapeutics, the PM also called for continued vigilance and a high state of preparedness against the coronavirus pandemic, the PMO said in a statement.

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Let Allahabad HC monitor Hathras probe, says SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said the Allahabad High Court be allowed to monitor the Hathras case in which a Dalit girl was allegedly brutally raped and died of injuries.

The top court, which was hearing a PIL and several intervention pleas of activists and lawyers, was told that no fair trial was possible in Uttar Pradesh as the investigation has been allegedly botched up.

Allaying the apprehension, a bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde, said "Let the high court deal with it. We are here if there is any problem."

Besides Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, the hearing saw battery of senior advocates like Harish Salve, Indira Jaising and Siddharth Luthra appearing for various parties.

There were other lawyers who wanted to argue but the SC said, "We don't need assistance of the whole world."

The hearing also witnessed deliberations that in no case the victim's identity be disclosed and her family members and witnesses be given full security and protection.

The lawyer, appearing for the victim's family, demanded that the proceedings of the case be shifted out of Uttar Pradesh to a court in the Delhi.

The apprehension of not having the fair trial in the State was also raised by activist-lawyer Indira Jaising.

At the outset, the Solicitor General referred to recent affidavit filed by the Uttar Pradesh Government which gave details about the security and protection provided to the victim's family and witnesses in the case.

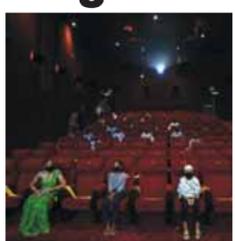
Day 1: A few shows, fewer cinemagoers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Majority cinema halls in the national Capital remained closed on Thursday and a few that reopened after seven months of the coronavirus-induced shutdown attracted very few audience for the "first day, first show" in the time of pandemic.

Some of the theatres that reopened held special screenings for Covid-19 warriors or staff members and their families. Sushant Singh Rajput's last theatrical release *Chhichhore*, *Kedarnath*, *Tanhaji*, *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan*, *Malang*, *War* and *Thappad* are among films that have been released on the big screen since there are no new releases this week.

PVR Naraina's first show was a special screening of



Tapsee Pannu-starrer *Thappad* for 40 coronavirus warriors, including doctors and civil defence volunteers. The special screening was organised by the New Delhi District Magistrate's office.

Similarly, at PVR Cinema at 3C's Mall in Lajpat Nagar, a special screening of *Tanhaji* was organised for the staff members and their families.

Continued on Page 2

Traffic cop dragged on car's bonnet in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Traffic Police constable was dragged on the bonnet of a car for almost half a kilometre in southwest Delhi Cantonment area Cantonment

The incident took place on Monday evening near Dhaula Kuan. A video of the incident also went viral on social media. In the video, it can be seen constable Mahipal Yadav on the bonnet of a white Hyundai I20

car. The driver of the vehicle is driving his car in a zig zag way, following which Yadav falls on ground and nearly escapes from the car wheels.

Police said that the constable had tried to stop the vehicle

which has the fancy number plate and was being driven rashly. The driver tried to flee from the spot, but was later apprehended by public and other policemen. Yadav suffered some injuries.

According to police, the accused, identified as Shubham, a resident of Uttam Nagar. "A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code against Shubham," a senior police official said.

Teen appears in Jamia entrance exam for another candidate, arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 15 year-old boy has been apprehended when he tried to appear in an entrance examination being held by Jamia Millia Islamia in place of another candidate.

Meanwhile, a JMI official said the boy, who tried to appear in the exam on Wednesday in place of the actual candidate, was wearing a mask and might have thought that the invigilator will not check his antecedents.

"The official on duty asked him to remove the mask and it was found that the photo on the admit card did not match the photo on the Aadhaar card of the candidate. The invigilator informed the superintendent who in turn informed the Controller of Examination and subsequently, a police complaint was filed," said the JMI official.

According to R P Meena, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Southeast district, action was taken after a complaint was received on Wednesday from the Chief Proctor of JMI alleging that a minor boy has been found appearing in an examination for admission in Bachelor of Voc. (Solar Energy) course in place of another candidate.

"The teenage boy, however, claimed that he doesn't know the whereabouts of the original candidate. He did it reportedly on the assurance of one Shah Nawaz who promised to waive his coaching class fees if he agrees for the arrangement," said the DCP.

"During questioning, the boy told police that he attends coaching classes in Joga Bai Extension. A month ago, he met Shah Nawaz at the coaching centre and was asked to appear in the entrance exam in place of

another candidate on the assurance of waiving his coaching fees. Shah Nawaz then took the boy to Sajid, the owner of the coaching class. Sajid told the boy the original candidate was unable to come to Delhi from Jharkhand because his ticket was not confirmed," said the DCP.

"The original admit card and Aadhaar card of the original candidate have been recovered from the boy who is aged between 16 and 17 years. The boy's age could be verified only after scrutiny of his documents," said the DCP.

"A case under IPC section 420 (cheating and dishonesty) and section 34 (acts by several persons in furtherance of common intention) has been registered at Jamia Nagar police station," said the DCP adding that police teams are looking for both Shah Nawaz and Sajid, who are presently absconding.

Keen to follow pollution norms, but G'gram societies seek steady power

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM:

Under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), the pollution regulatory authority has banned the use of diesel generators in Delhi and NCR region from Thursday.

However, the use of generators for emergency and essential services, such as hospitals, railway and metro stations, are excluded from the ban.

As per the pollution department in Gurugram, there are around 11,000 generators operational in the city, both in the residential and industrial sectors.

In Gurugram, there are around 67 societies and condominiums, housing

at least 1.5 lakh residents, which are either partially or heavily dependent on gensets.

Though residents have been living there for several years now, these societies run entirely on gensets because developers in the city running entire residential towers on gensets after handing over flats to buyers because of their inability to procure the requisite occupation and completion papers. Ten of these societies run 100% on generators.

"We also have essential services such as elevators. Then there are children and senior citizens, many of senior citizens who are suffering from serious ailments. For such patients, medicines need to be stored

at a certain temperature. All these things are dependent on continuous power supply," said Raman Sharma a senior citizen in Gurugram.

"Generators are required everyday to provide power connectivity when the power supply is not there. How will basic essential services like lifts work if there is a complete ban on gensets," said Aman Morya another resident.

"Frequent power cut will disrupt office work and will be difficult for those who work from home. The state government should provide appropriate infrastructure to deal with this problem," Vani Singh, who is a resident of new Gurugram, said.

Industry associations based in

Manesar and Udyog Vihar said the ban would impact production.

"The factories and multiple export units, which work continuously and need uninterrupted power supply, would now face lot of problems due to the issue. Covid-19 has already suffered our production this will further lead to huge losses," said Manmohan Gaind, general secretary, Manesar Industries Welfare Association.

"The state government must think about industries problem and gen set ban will surely impact industries. We are using gen sets in the absence of power cuts. The government must resolve this problem and take necessary step for 24-hours power supply," he, added.

EC: Cancel transfer of 12 Joint/Deputy Collectors in poll-bound MP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking note of violation of model code of conduct, the Election Commission has directed the Madhya Pradesh Government to cancel the transfer of 12 joint/deputy Collectors in poll bound districts with immediate effect. The state government has transferred 12 joint/deputy collectors on October 8.

According to the Commission, these transfers were issued during the period of Model Code of Conduct. "Commission discussed the matter at length and after taking into consideration the recommendation of Chief Electoral Officer, Madhya Pradesh. Commission has directed the state government to cancel these transfers with immediate effect", it said.

The Commission has reiterated that in case any poll going district has an acute necessity to fill a vacant post during the operation of Model Code of Conduct, state government in consultation with Chief Electoral Officer, Madhya Pradesh, shall send panel of suitable officers for Commission's consideration and approval", the Commission said.

Scale up...

From Page 1

The Prime Minister reiterated the need for continuous and rigorous scientific testing and validation of traditional medicine treatments. He appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of AYUSH for conducting evidence based research and providing reliable solutions in this difficult time.

The meeting was attended by Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, Dr VK Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, Principal Scientific Advisor and senior scientists. "The PM appreciated the efforts made by Indian vaccine developers and manufacturers to rise to the Covid-19 challenge, and committed to continue Govt facilitation and support for all such efforts. The PM stated that regulatory reform was a dynamic process, and experts in every current and emerging domain should be used by the regulator proactively, as many new approaches have emerged," said the PMO. The PM took stock of the Health Ministry's comprehensive distribution and delivery mechanism for vaccines, mechanisms for adequate procurement, and technologies for bulk-stockpiling, filling vials for distribution and ensuring delivery.

"The PM reiterated the country's resolve to provide cost effective, easily available and scalable solutions for testing, vaccine and medication, not only for India but for the entire world. The PM called for continued vigilance," the PMO maintained.

Delhi's air quality hits 8-month...

From Page 1

Asserting that the share of stubble burning to pollution levels changes every day, the Union Environment Ministry tweeted, "Last year, between Oct 8 and Dec 9, the share of stubble burning in air pollution in Delhi (as per SAFAR data), was greater than 15 per cent on six days, while on a single day it was greater than 40 per cent."

PM 10 levels in Delhi-NCR rose to 311 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m3) at 5 pm on Thursday -- the highest in this season so far. PM10 levels below 100 µg/m3 are considered safe.

PM 10 is particulate matter with a diameter of 10 micrometres and is inhalable into the lungs. These particles include dust, pollen and mould spores. The levels of PM 2.5 - finer particles which can even enter the bloodstream - were 156 µg/m3. PM 2.5 levels up to 60 µg/m3 are considered safe.

Delhi's Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Thursday wrote to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority, asking them to shut down in a week 11 coal-fired power plants within 300 kilometres of Delhi which have missed two deadlines to meet the pollution control norms.

The CPCB said it has set up 50 teams which will keep an eye on violations leading to air pollution during winters. The Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) -- a set of anti-pollution measures followed in Delhi and its vicinity according to the severity of the situation -- also came into force on Thursday.

It was notified by the Ministry of Environment and Forests in 2017 for implementation through the Supreme Court-mandated Environment Pollution (Prevention and

Control) Authority.

The measures under GRAP include increasing bus and metro services, hiking parking fees and stopping use of diesel generator sets when the air quality turns poor. When the situation turns "severe", GRAP recommends closure of brick kilns, stone crushers and hot mix plants, sprinkling of water, frequent mechanised cleaning of roads and maximising power generation from natural gas.

The measures to be followed in "emergency" situation include stopping the entry of trucks in Delhi, ban on construction activities and introduction of the odd-even car rationing scheme.

EPCA, however, had earlier told Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh that they "should try and avert the need to take other emergency measures for pollution control as the economy is already under stress post-lockdown. Therefore, our combined effort is to ensure that there is no further disruption".

With Delhi-NCR bracing for months of poor air quality, experts have warned that high levels of air pollution can aggravate the Covid-19 pandemic.

Severe air pollution in Delhi is a year-round problem, which can be attributed to unfavourable meteorological conditions, farm fires in neighbouring regions and local sources of pollution.

According to an analysis by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, a Delhi-based think tank, transportation contributes the most -- 18 to 39 per cent -- to the national Capital's air pollution. Road dust is the second-largest source of air pollution in the city (18 to 38 per cent), followed by industries (two to 29 per cent), thermal power plants (three to 11 per cent) and construction (eight per cent).

Day 1: A few...

From Page 1

The theatre will remain open for public from Friday onwards.

"We have total three shows tomorrow onwards. Our first show will start at 12 pm for Dream Girl, followed by Tanhaji at 3.15 pm and at 6.30 pm we have a Punjabi movie (Sardarji). We are maintaining social distancing at every point here. We have demarcations at the ticket counters, inside the cinema halls, at entry as well as exit points," said Sandeep Singh, Cinema Manager of PVR Cinemas at 3C'S.

"We are using the latest antimicrobial treatment to sanitise the halls. It was also used in sanitising all the touch points like door handles. Sanitiser dispensers have been placed at all major points inside and at the entry points of the cinema halls. We are also encouraging contact-less digital payments," he added.

At Cinepolis cinema in Greater Kailash, only five tickets were sold for the 11.30 am show. Cinepolis Fun cinema at V3S mall in Nirman Vihar, PVR Cinema at EDM Mall in Kaushambi, Eros cinema in Jangpura, and Cinepolis Karkadooma were among the theatres that remained

closed.

Owner of Milan Cinema Ravinder Gupta said that it was very difficult to reopen the hall. "My single screen hall has accumulated lakhs of rupees in dues due to pending fixed charges of electricity in past eight months. Also, due to COVID-19 no new releases are there to attract the audience," he said.

Ushering in a new era of movie watching, the Union government allowed multiplexes, cinema halls and theatres to reopen from Thursday within the framework of a set of standard operating procedures (SOPs). The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) left it to states to take a final call on the matter. The SOPs mandated by the Union government include one seat distance in halls, 50 per cent capacity, masks at all time, proper ventilation and air conditioner temperature settings at above 23 degrees Celsius.

Many cinema halls shut down even before the nationwide lockdown came into effect from March 25 and managements are hoping desperately to get back to work.

In Delhi, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal called a meeting of theatre owners on Wednesday to discuss arrangements before they reopen their doors to the public.

SPIKE IN MAHA DEATHS, 337 DIE

Mumbai: After a significant drop in the number of Covid-19 deaths, Maharashtra on Thursday 337 deaths, while 10,226 people tested positive for Coronavirus in various parts of the state.

After the state accounted for 165, 187 and 158 deaths on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday respectively, the daily Covid-19 toll rose to 337 on Thursday. With the fresh deaths, the total number of deaths increased from 40,859 to 41,196. Similarly, with 10,226 new infected cases, the total number of infections jumped from 15,54,389 to 15,64,615.

On a day when 13,714 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 13,30,483. The recovery rate in the state rose from 84.03 per cent to 85.04 per cent.

With 46 deaths, there were Covid-19 deaths 48, the total deaths rise from 9,555 to 9,601 while the infected cases rose by 2,119 to trigger a jump in the infections from 234,602 to 2,36,721.

Meanwhile, the mortality rate in the state stood at 2.63 per cent. The "active cases" dropped from 1,96,288 to 1,92,459. Pune district, which continued to be the worst-affected city-district in Maharashtra, saw the total number of cases go up from 3,18,035 to 3,20,681, while the total number of deaths in Pune increased from 6291 to 6358. PNS

Mind your own...

From Page 1

"Based on consensus, neither should take actions along the border that might escalate the situation that is to avoid undermining the efforts by the two sides to ease the situation. We urge the Indian side to earnestly implement our consensus and refrain from actions that might escalate the situation and take concrete measures to safeguard peace and tranquility along the border," said Zhao.

China has repeatedly raised objection over Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh after it was given the status of a Union Territory last year. It came about after the abrogation of Article 370 giving special sta-

tus to Jammu & Kashmir.

Incidentally, in the backdrop of the continuing stand-off at the LAC and successive rounds of military and diplomatic level talks failing to break the five-month long logjam, this is the second time in the past few weeks when China has raised questions about Ladakh Union Territory.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said India and China are engaged in talks to resolve the border standoff and what is going on is "something confidential" between the two sides. He said there has been a troop build-up along the LAC and in many ways it has no precedence in the recent past.

Covid...

From Page 1

In the last 24 hours, 81,514 new recoveries were added, taking the total number of recoveries to nearly 64 Lakh (63,83,441). It said that ten States/UTs account for 79 per cent of the new recovered

cases. Maharashtra has contributed more than 19,000 to the single day recoveries followed by Karnataka with more than 8,000 recoveries.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 73,07,097 and the death toll climbed to 1,11,266 with the novel coronavirus virus claiming 680 lives in a

span of 24 hours in the country.

The Covid-19 case fatality rate has further declined to 1.52 per cent. There are 81,2390 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 11.12 per cent of the total caseload, the Ministry stated.

India to give...

From Page 1

He said, "This is in accordance with our vision of SAGAR - Security and Growth for All in the Region, and also in line with our commitment to build capacities and self reliance in all our neighbouring countries."

The important move comes after the recent visit of Army Chief General MM Naravane and Foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla to Myanmar earlier this month.

India had agreed to supply artillery guns, tanks, bullet-proof jackets and other such equipment to Myanmar. New Delhi was already in the process of transferring the conventional submarine, refurbished by state-owned Hindustan Shipyards Limited, Visakhapatnam.

Moreover, the decision to lease the submarine came even as China was having talks with Myanmar for supplying submarines. India reacted quickly to counter this step, sources said. Incidentally, China has already supplied two of its submarines to Bangladesh two years back.

The Indian deal with Myanmar also includes training its navy for the next four to five years on operating the Kilo class submarine INS Sindhuvir, sources said. This submarine

built by Russia was inducted into the Indian Navy in the 1980s. The submarine has speed of more than 20 knots.

Meanwhile, the top echelon of the Indian Army will review the current volatile situation at the LAC in eastern Ladakh during the three-day commanders' conference here starting October 26.

The commanders will take stock of the developments after the seventh round of talks between the Corps Commanders of India and China on October 12 to speed up the process of disengagement and eventual de-escalation, sources said.

The forthcoming Army commanders' meet will also review the operational readiness of the force to meet any challenge from China all along the 4,000 km long LAC.

Though favouring a dialogue to end the tension at the LAC in Ladakh, the Army is geared for long haul and preparing for deployment in forward areas even during the winter months. Sufficient stocks of winter clothing and prefabricated huts to withstand temperatures dipping to below minus 20 are already in place at crucial points all along the border. The commanders will have a look at these preparations also, sources said.

Archivals...

From Page 1

Abdullah also stated that the signatories will also fight for the rights that were snatched last year from Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. "We also want that the steps be taken for the resolution of Kashmir issue and all the stakeholders should be taken on board in this regard," he added.

Farooq further informed media that the next meeting of the signatories will be held in the coming days and the decision taken for the future course of action will be made public on the particular day.

Elaborating further he said, "We met today to congratulate and greet Mehbooba who has been released from detention after 14 long months". "It was a totally 'illegal', 'unjustified' and 'unconstitutional' decision". He said we have also demanded the immediate release of all those people who are still under detention across different jails in India.

"We will also visit people from the other regions of the State so that we can have broader discussion on the issues we are putting before the people of the state and the Government of India", Dr Abdullah concluded.

B-340

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, JEYPORE (R&B) CIRCLE, JEYPORE
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)

Bid Identification No. S.E.J.C (R&B)- 12/2020-21
No.4161 Date:13.10.2020

1. Name of the work: ROAD WORK
2. Total No. of Works: 01 (One) No.
3. Estimated cost: Rs. 232.40 Lakhs
4. Period of completion: 06(Six) Months
5. Bid Cost: Rs. 10,000/- Each
6. Class of Contractor: "B" & "A" Class.
7. Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal: From 10.00 hours of 20.10.2020 to 17.00 hours of 02.11.2020
8. Last date / Time for receipt of bids in the Portal: 17.00 hours of 02.11.2020
9. Opening date of Bid: 10.00 hours of 03.11.2020

10. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid: Superintending Engineer
Jeyapore (R&B) Circle, Jeyapore

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>
Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.

Superintending Engineer
Jeyapore (R&B) Circle, Jeyapore

OIPR-34108/11/0010/2021

Office of the Executive Engineer
Public Health Engineering Department Division Shahdol (M.P.)
Website: www.mpphe.gov.in Email: eephehdhd@mp.nic.in
Phone No. 07652-240307 Fax No. 07652- 240307

:: Notice Inviting Tender ::

Online Tenders are inviting in portal <http://mptenders.gov.in> for the following works on the E-Tendering Appendix 2.1. Last date of Online Purchasing of Tender is 28.10.2020 at 5.30 PM.

Tender No.	System Tender No.	Name of the Work	PAC (in Rs. Lakh)	E.M.D (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender from (in Rs.)	Time Period elx Rainy Season	Tender Invitation/ Type of Tender
67	11087	Retrofitting of pipe water supply scheme in 05 Village of Block Sohagpur Dist Shahdol	369.75	369754.00	15000.00	06 Month	Second
68	11088	Retrofitting of pipe water supply scheme in 07 Village of Block Burhar Dist Shahdol	449.82	449824.00	15000.00	06 Month	Second
69	11089	Retrofitting of pipe water supply scheme Village Tengraha Block Jaysingnagar Dist Shahdol	16.58	33164.00	2000.00	02 Month	Second
70	11096	Inspection Vehicle for S.E. PHED Circle Shahdol	2.28	4560.00	2000.00	12 Month	Third

Note :-
1- This is only short NIT. Detail NIT and other details can be viewed on the E-Tendering portal <http://mptenders.gov.in>.
2- All condition of detailed NIT will be applicable.

Executive Engineer
Public Health Engineering Department
Division Shahdol

G-14931/20

Kejriwal launches drive to tackle air pollution

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday launched a 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' initiative as part of Delhi Govt's 'Yuddh, Pradushan Ke Viruddh' campaign to tackle air pollution in Delhi.

Kejriwal urged people to turn off the engines of their vehicles while waiting at traffic signals. "There are one crore vehicles registered in Delhi, out

of which if 10 lakh vehicles turn off ignition at traffic signals, around 1.5 tonnes of PM10 will reduce in a year, and the PM 2.5 will decrease by 0.4 tonnes. The initiative has been launched under the 'Yuddh, Pradushan Ke Viruddh' campaign of the Delhi government," he said.

Kejriwal said, "The pollution in Delhi is increasing and the situation of air-pollution deteriorates in Delhi every year due to the toxic air, due to

the stubble burning in the neighboring states. The stubble burning has started and with time, the number of stubble burning cases is increasing in the neighboring states. I think the toxic air becomes a bit diluted when it reaches the national capital, but the farmers who burn the stubble are the worst hit."

The chief minister also said, "In the last few days, we have taken several steps inside Delhi to bring down the pol-



lution levels in the city. We have launched an anti-dust campaign in Delhi, along with an

experiment to stop stubble burning in Delhi. We are using a bio-decomposer solution

developed by the Pusa Institute to stop stubble burning in the capital. We have also launched an electric vehicle policy and tree transplantation policy to combat air pollution in Delhi."

"The experts have noted that when a car is in the idling mode, it emits a lot more pollutants than when the car is traveling. If the car is in idling mode for 10 seconds it emits more pollutants than if you stop the engine and then restart

it. In this way, you can also save more fuel in your car. Every day, one car spends around 15 to 20 minutes at the red signal on an average. During this time one car utilizes around 200 mL of fuel. But if you switch off the engine at the red signals, you can save Rs.7000 per month," he said.

Kejriwal said, "The situation becomes worse during winters because in summers the toxic air goes up easily. The vehicular emissions in winters

stay near the surface and contribute to the air pollution of the city, which is dangerous for us."

"The citizens of Delhi have come together and brought down the pollution level of the capital by 25 per cent in the last five years. I am very hopeful that every citizen will join in this campaign. I will request every citizen, the bus drivers, the auto drivers, and others to cooperate in this campaign," he added.

Being in denial will not help: CM takes a dig at Javadekar on farm fires

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal took a dig at Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar after the latter said stubble burning only caused 4 per cent of total air pollution in Delhi. "Being in denial will not help," Kejriwal said on Thursday.

Taking to Twitter, the Chief Minister sought to know why pollution has suddenly increased in Delhi-NCR in the last fortnight if stubble burning causes only 4 per cent pollution.

"Staying in denial will not help. If stubble burning causes only 4% pollution, then why has pollution suddenly increased last fortnight? Air was clean before that. Same story every yr. "There's no massive jump in any local source of pol-

lution in last few days to cause this spike?," Kejriwal said in tweet.

Earlier in the day, Javadekar said that stubble burning is not a major factor for air pollution in Delhi-NCR. "Only 4 per cent pollution is due to stubble burning. Ninety-six per cent of it is due to local factors like biomass burning, garbage dumping, unpaved roads, dust, construction and demolition activities etc," he said.

Aam Aadmi Party MLA Raghav Chadha said that the CPCB's own estimate of 2019 suggest stubble burning contributed up to 44 per cent to the national capital's air pollution. "Central Pollution Control Board's own estimate of 2019 suggest stubble burning contributed up to 44% to Delhi's air pollution.

"Ministry of Earth

Sciences' SAFAR said at peak of stubble burning in Punjab & Haryana account for 44 per cent of Delhi's pollution. What is Javadekar smoking?," Chadha said in a tweet.

On Thursday, a layer of smoky haze lingered over Delhi-NCR with the air quality in the region hitting 'very poor' levels, even as stricter anti-air pollution measures, including a ban on electricity generators, came into force under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).

NASA's satellite imagery showed a large cluster of farm fires near Amritsar, Patiala, Tarn Taran, and Firozpur in Punjab, and Ambala and Rajpura in Haryana.

However, the Ministry of Earth Sciences' Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi said its impact on the capital's air quality was marginal.

Kashmiri woman accuses landlady of calling her 'terrorist'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A Kashmiri woman on Thursday alleged that her landlady targeted her for being a 'Kashmiri' and called her a 'terrorist'. She also alleged that in her absence the landlady had removed her furniture from the house. Police said they have registered a case and investigation has been initiated.

The Delhi Commission For Women (DCW) has issued a notice to the police in this connection and has sought an action taken report, copy of the FIR and whether any arrests have been made in the case. The incident took place on Wednesday.

In her complaint, the woman, who hails from Srinagar, has alleged that her landlady had entered the house along with a man and called her 'terrorist' as she is from Kashmir.

When the victim returned home, she found her house lock broken and valuables

stolen. Her landlady was also at the spot. Soon a heated argument broke out between both the parties, police said.

According to a senior police official, a police control room (PCR) call was received regarding a theft in a woman's house following which a police team was dispatched for the spot.

"On reaching the spot, it was revealed that the house was rented to two sisters. Both are natives of Srinagar. The PCR call was made by their landlady. The tenant alleged that her landlady had broken the locks of house and removed furniture and also stolen clothes and Rs 20,000," he said.

"During enquiry, it was found that a quarrel had taken place earlier between them over paying house rent and electricity bills. The electricity connection was also disconnected by the BSES. Based on a written complaint given by the tenant, a case has been registered under section 448 (pun-

ishment for house trespass), 380 (Theft dwelling house), 457 (lurking house-trespass), 323 (Punishment for voluntarily causing hurt), 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) of Indian Penal Code at Amar Colony police station and the matter is being investigated," said R P Meena, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Southeast district.

A written complaint has also been given by the landlady in this regard and it is also being examined," said the DCP.

"So my landlady enters my house along with a man, that I have never seen in my whole life and starts to call me and my friends 'TERRORISTS' just because we are from KASHMIR that too, in front of a police official. They trespassed, broke in and our money, furniture," she alleged in her tweet.

She claimed her landlady also abused them. "Then she framed us for stealing the furniture, which she herself took

The Delhi Commission For Women (DCW) has issued a notice to the police in this connection and has sought an action taken report, copy of the FIR and whether any arrests have been made in the case

from here in our absence. She is calling us names, abusing us and provoking us. The man literally pushed me and the landlady as well tried to attack me, all in front of DELHI POLICE," she alleged in her tweet.

However, police, said they are probing about the man who was allegedly accompanying the landlady.

Responding to her tweet, Delhi Commission for Women Chief Swati Maliwal said "This is shocking & shameful. DCW

team is in touch. We'll ensure action!"

The DCW also issued a notice to the police in this connection and sought an action taken report, copy of the FIR and whether any arrests have been made in the case.

It has also sought details whether any complaints were filed previously, details of any police personnel being present at the spot and steps taken to ensure the safety of the Kashmiri woman. It has sought this information by October 19.

'Will ask CPCB to shut 11 coal-fired power plants near Delhi'

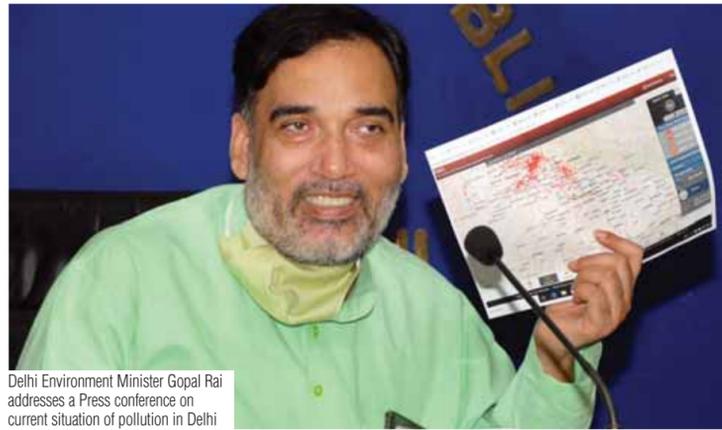
STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Thursday said he will ask the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and a Supreme Court-mandated pollution control authority to shut the 11 coal-fired power plants operating within 300 kilometres of Delhi within a week.

Rai said the Delhi Government has been making all efforts to bring pollution levels down, "but we become helpless when pollution from neighbouring states affects the city's air quality."

Rai on Thursday undertook a surprise inspection of the construction sites of the drain being constructed along the main road of Burari in its series of anti-dust operations in Delhi which are being implemented to combat the issue of dust pollution.

The environment minister found large-scale violations of the guidelines issued by the



Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai addresses a Press conference on current situation of pollution in Delhi and NCR, in New Delhi on Thursday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Delhi Government on the spot. He expressed strong displeasure over this and said that the sites were found to be grossly negligent in complying with the guidelines issued by the gov-

ernment.

"Negligence was found in the vigilance that the departments should take to deal with the growing pollution crisis inside Delhi. We have directed the DPCC to impose an environmental compensation penalty of Rs 20 lakh on the

PWD. In addition, PWD has been directed to install two water tankers at the site. At the same time, it is instructed to cover the ejected soil," he said.

The minister said, "The government has started an anti-dust campaign to prevent pollution from dust blowing in

Delhi. Under which the government has issued necessary guidelines and strict action will be taken on its violation. Particularly, the departments should take caution in the way the pollution crisis is increasing within the city."

Rai said that instructions have been issued that all the concerned departments should take immediate action on the complaints of dust blowing.

"A detailed guidelines have been issued by the Delhi government regarding the reasons for which dust pollution can occur. All the agencies will have to follow it strictly and if not done, stringent action will be taken against them," he said.

A layer of haze hung over Delhi and its neighbouring areas on Thursday and the air quality slipped to "very poor" levels. Delhi recorded an air quality index (AQI) of 315 at 11:10 am. The last time the air quality hit such a poor level was in February.

PENDING SALARIES

NDMC hospitals' resident docs to protest at Jantar Mantar today

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Resident doctors of three North Corporation-run hospitals on Thursday decided to hold a joint protest at Jantar Mantar on October 16 over their pending salaries.

Doctors of the Hindu Rao Hospital, Kasturba Hospital and Rajen Babu Tuberculosis Hospital. The members of the Resident Doctors' Association of the Hindu Rao Hospital have been protesting for the past several days and had gone on an indefinite strike, seeking release of salaries due for the past three months. The resident doctors of the Kasturba Hospital are on a week-long strike over their pending salaries too since Wednesday.

"The RDA of Hindu Rao Hospital stands in solidarity



Resident doctors of three North Corporation-run hospitals on Thursday decided to hold a joint protest at Jantar Mantar on October 16 over their pending salaries.

with the RDA of Kasturba Hospital and RDA of Rajen Babu TB Hospital in the ongoing agitation on the grounds of non-payment of salaries for almost four months. We cumulatively would like to state that there hasn't been any resolution to our issues," the RDA of Hindu Rao Hospital said in a statement on Thursday.

"Therefore, we all North MCD residents would like to join hands on a common platform to demonstrate our affliction with the administration due to strict non-compliance.

Considering the above situation, we would have to resort to hold a peaceful protest at Jantar Mantar on October 16 to symbolise our agony," it said.

North Delhi Mayor Jai Prakash in a tweet late Wednesday night had claimed, "Today, salaries released of all doctors, nurses, paramedics

and group C and D staff and for the rest it will be released soon."

Prakash, when contacted, said salary has been released for the 'month of July'.

A doctor at the Hindu Rao Hospital said "only one month's due salary has been given". The hospital RDA's president Abhimanyu Sardana, however, on Wednesday had said, "the protest will continue".

The RDA of Rajen Babu Tuberculosis Hospital also issued a solidarity statement and joined the call for protest here on Friday.

Prakash, in a statement on Wednesday, had claimed that doctors and nurses of Rajen Babu Tuberculosis Hospital had withdrawn their strike.

The Municipal Corporation Doctors' Association (MCDA) also issued a statement expressing solidarity with their agitating colleagues -- resident doctors -- of Hindu Rao Hospital and Kasturba Hospital, both under the NDMC.

Hindu Rao Hospital is the largest municipal hospital in Delhi with 900 beds, and was recently removed from the list of dedicated COVID-19 facility. Many of its healthcare workers had contracted the infection earlier.

The BJP, which controls the NDMC and ruling AAP have sought to blame each other for the situation.

AAP slams BJP-ruled MCD for non-payment of salaries to staff

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and MCD in-charge Durgesh Pathak and senior leader Nitin Tyagi on Thursday lashed out at the BJP-ruled MCD against the non-payment of the salaries of their employees and for blaming the Delhi Government for the failures of the MCDs.

Pathak said that the BJP

and Municipal Corporations ruled by it have ruined Delhi in the last 14 years. "If the BJP believes that for their incompetence the AAP government should take the responsibility then the MCDs should be handed over to the Delhi government," he said.

"The BJP-ruled MCDs do not have any moral right to stay in the power because they are unable to pay their own employees for the last several

months. The budget of the MCDs is more than Rs 18,000 crore but they utilise this money in their corruption," he added.

Pathak said, "The BJP has been in the power of MCDs of Delhi for the past 14 years but it completely ruined Delhi. In the past 14 years, the BJP did not keep any promise of their own manifesto."

"The cleanliness survey done by BJP's own central

government has claimed that the MCD has transformed Delhi to a city of garbage. In the past 14 years, the BJP has gifted Delhi three mountains of garbage," he said.

The AAP leader said, "Today the condition of the BJP ruled MCD is such that the employees of the MCD are not getting their salaries for the last several months. This is happening due to the rampant corruption of the BJP and its lead-

ers."

The teachers, doctors, engineers and others are not getting salaries in the MCD. Being the capital of India many foreigners come to Delhi every month and when they witness the condition of the capital due to the corruption of BJP our heads get bent in shame, he said.

"The AAP believes that the BJP has no moral right to stay in the power of the MCD

anymore. The doctors in the time of Covid pandemic are protesting at the Hindu Rao Hospital for the non-payment of their salaries. Former MLA Nitin Tyagi said, "In the last 10 years, only some facilities of the BJP used to get the tickets from the BJP to fight the MCD election. Tyagi said that the citizens of Delhi have already decided to throw out the BJP from the power in the coming election."

Sisodia congratulates students, teachers, parents for achieving 99% passing percentage

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Education Manish Sisodia congratulated the Delhi Government school students, teachers, and parents for achieving 99 per cent passing percentage in CBSE Class 12th compartment examinations, and 93 per cent passing percentage in Class 10th examinations.

Sisodia said, "It is a moment of pride for the Delhi government to see teachers deliver such excellent

CBSE CLASS X, XII EXAMINATIONS

academic results in these difficult times also".

The CBSE compartment results for 2020 show an improvement for class 12 students which went from 98 per cent pass percentage to 99 per cent pass percentage. Similarly, for class 10 students, the pass percentage showed a drastic increase from

83 per cent to 93 per cent in the before and after compartment examinations respectively.

This marked a huge improvement for class 12 students bringing them to almost 100 per cent pass percentage, and bringing the class 10 students into the 90 per cent bracket. Shri Sisodia said this reflects the



commitment and dedication shown by the teachers, school students, alongwith their parents.

Despite the pandemic that disrupted the preparation for compartment exam, Sisodia expressed his joy in seeing this exceptional result. "The transformational impact this is going to make on the children who've not only been able to finish their schools, but also go to the next grade is huge. I am feeling extremely proud that our government school students have performed so well by overcoming such challenges," he

said.

"This result makes huge difference to the lives of 16,864 students who move to the next grade this year itself. It was made possible because of our concern and commitment towards every child", said Sisodia. Of the 1734 students who appeared in class 12 compartment exams, 1290 passed. Similarly, of the 25400 students who appeared in class 10 compartment exam, 15574 passed," he added.

Sisodia also expressed his gratitude towards the Delhi government

school teachers who have played a huge role in guiding these students, and encouraging them. The results, therefore, are a culmination of this hard work and guidance in the academic journey of the students, he said.

Earlier this year, Delhi Government schools secured 98 per cent pass percentage in Class 12 Board exams. The results also showed an improvement from 71.6 per cent in 2019 to 82.61 per cent in 2020 for class 10 CBSE board examinations.

Rlys issues policy on development of goods-sheds at road-side stations through pvt investment

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aiming at augmenting terminal capacity through private participation by allowing setting up of new goods-shed facilities and developing

existing goods-sheds (which Railways are unable to do due to lack of resources) at a larger number of stations, Indian Railways have issued a policy on development of goods-sheds at road-side stations through private investment.

A senior railways official said that the salient features of the policy including private parties permitted to develop goods wharf, loading or unloading facilities, facilities for labour (resting space with shade, drinking water, bathing

facilities, etc) approach road, covered shed and other related infrastructure. The facilities are to be developed by the private party through its own investment.

"All developments for the proposed facility will be as per approved Railway designs, and constructed to approved standards and specifications. Railways shall not levy any departmental or any other charges for the construction. The facilities created by the private party shall be used as

common user facility, and no preference or priority will be granted to the traffic of the party over the traffic of other customers," he said.

The official said that responsibility for maintenance of assets and facilities created shall be vested with the party during the agreement period. "Incentives under the scheme such as share in the Terminal Charges (TC) and Terminal Access Charges (TAC), as the case may be, for all the inward and outward

traffic dealt at the goods-shed for five years, from the date of completion of the work. The party seeking the least share (TC/TAC) shall be selected through competitive bidding, to be done at divisional level," he said.

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traffic dealt at the goods-shed for five years, from the date of completion of the work. The party seeking the least share (TC/TAC) shall be selected through competitive bidding, to be done at divisional level," he said.

Kerala gold smuggling scam: NIA finds D-link

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) probing the Kerala gold smuggling case has told a special court in Kochi that it suspected the link of underworld don Dawood Ibrahim's gang in the sensational racket.

Arguing that the detention of all the accused in judicial custody up to 180 days was absolutely necessary to carry forward the investigation in the case, the agency on Wednesday said there were intelligence inputs regarding probable use of proceeds from the gold smuggling for anti-national and terrorism activities.

Through the additional counter of the nexus between the gold smuggling case accused and Dawood at the Special NIA Court, Kochi the

agency strongly opposed the bail pleas of all the accused arrested in connection with the case. The case relates to smuggling of gold through diplomatic channel.

Ramees, fifth accused in the case, during custodial interrogation, has revealed that he had attempted to start a diamond business in Tanzania and that later he had attempted to obtain a gold mining licence in Tanzania, the NIA said.

He had also stated about having brought gold from Tanzania and sold the same in UAE, it said and quoting UN Security Council Sanctions Committee's narrative summary on Dawood and fact sheet published by the US Department of Treasury specifically mentioned about his gang's activities in Africa. Recent news reports have



also specifically mentioned the diamond business of Dawood Ibrahim in Tanzania, managed by his associate 'Feroz', considered a south Indian by intelligence agen-

cies, the agency said in the report, indicating the suspected link needed to be probed.

NIA further said the Central Economic Intelligence

Bureau (CEIB), the apex intelligence body for economic agencies in India, had sent a report to the Director General of NIA during October, 2019 regarding the probable use of

proceeds from gold smuggling in Kerala, for terrorism and other anti-national activities.

The agency submitted the intelligence report to the Court in a sealed envelope. "It is submitted that the facts now emerging during investigation, regarding the charges under Sections 17 and /or 18 of the UAPA Act against accused with otherwise apparently minor roles, indicate that the intelligence input received from CEIB, leading to NIA investigation in this crime, is gaining credence."

In the report, the NIA also said the 12th accused Mohammed Ali was a member of "fundamentalist organisation Popular Front of India" and was charge-sheeted by police in the Kerala professor hand chopping case in 2010 but acquitted as more than 90

prosecution witnesses had turned hostile during trial. It said the scrutiny of data retrieved by C-DAC from the seized mobile phone of Ali has revealed that he had formatted his phone on July 19 after his role in the smuggling case surfaced. However, from the limited data retrieved by C-DAC, pictures of paper slips depicting details of huge cash transactions amounting to several lakhs of rupees, including one transaction of ₹15 lakhs specifically attributed to one "Jalal", have been retrieved, NIA said. His suspicious cash transactions need to be ascertained further through custodial interrogation after advanced forensic analysis and extraction of more data from his formatted mobile phone, the agency added.

Leaders of the Opposition parties in Kerala on Thursday

slammed Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan after the NIA's revelation of the Dawood connection in the gold smuggling case.

Kerala's BJP chief K Surendran accused the government of shielding the smugglers and demanded that the Chief Minister resign as he has "lost moral rights to continue." "The relationship of the accused in the Gold Smuggling Case with D-company and ISIS has been established," he said.

Reacting to the revelation, Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala said, "It is very shocking that the main culprit in the gold smuggling case has connections with Dawood Ibrahim. It is one of the biggest crimes that happened in Kerala. Unfortunately, the state government was supporting the culprits."

BJP MP accuses Cong leaders of looting 29K-acre Waqf land

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP MP Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Thursday dished out an eight-year-old report of the Karnataka Minority Commission to allege a 29,000-acre Waqf land fraud in Karnataka allegedly involving political leaders like Mallikarjun Kharge and CM Ibrahim.

Addressing a press conference here, the MP who is also a national spokesperson of the BJP, said the land donated to Waqf Board is only to be used for poor Muslims and according to a Supreme Court ruling, the land can "never be sold, converted or used for other purposes"

Chandrasekhar alleged that 29,000 acres in the State were put to commercial use and not for building hospitals, educational institutions or for other charitable works for the poor of the minority community.

Taking a dig at former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, whom he quoted as saying that 'minorities have the first right on the country resources', the BJP MP wondered why Singh could not look at the exploitation of Waqf land and the "long process of exploitation of poor Muslims for vote bank politics."

It is also an economic and financial exploitation of poor Muslims, he said.

The BJP spokesman said several political leaders including those from Congress like Kharge and Ibrahim were named in the report which alleges "massive Waqf land fraud."

The BJP leader demanded investigations into all waqf Boards including those of Karnataka, Maharashtra and

Chandrasekhar alleged that 29,000 acre in Karnataka were put to commercial use and not for building hospitals, educational institutions

Uttar Pradesh.

The BJP Government in Karnataka had on September 23 this year tabled the 2012 report in the Assembly on encroachment of Waqf properties across the state.

This was at a time when the ruling BJP government had come under attack from Congress members in the state Assembly over alleged corruption charges in the procurement of COVID-19 related medical equipment and in management of the pandemic.

The state government apparently sought to turn the tables on the opposition by tabling the eight-year-old report that incriminated several senior Congress leaders over the misuse of Waqf properties.

The 7,500-page report, which was prepared by BJP spokesperson Anwar Maniappad from Mangaluru when he was chairman of the minorities commission during the party's previous regime, highlighted gross encroachment of Waqf properties.

The report also named MLA NA Haris, former ministers Tanveer Sait and Roshan Baig and former Rajya Sabha member Rehman Khan.

Late Chief Minister Dharam Singh and late former Union minister C K Jaffer Sharief were also said to have been named in the report.

Managing Covid-19 through 'herd immunity' dangerous fallacy: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Managing Covid-19 by allowing herd immunity to develop in low-risk populations while protecting the most vulnerable is "a dangerous fallacy unsupported by the scientific evidence," an international group of 80 researchers have warned.

In an open letter, published in The Lancet journal, the authors noted that any pandemic management strategy relying upon the population to develop immunity from natural infections for Covid-19 is flawed and currently there is no evidence for lasting protective immunity to SARS-CoV-2 after natural infection.

The statement from the researchers from various fields comes days after the World Health Organisation (WHO) also advised against any attempts to achieve herd immunity or to hope that it will eventually save us. "Herd immunity or natural population immunity is not an option. Let's put our energy, focus, workforce, actions into what works," Maria Van Kerkhove, Covid-19 Technical Lead, WHO had said.

They pointed out that natural infection-based herd immunity approaches risk impacting the workforce as a whole and overwhelming the ability of healthcare systems to provide acute and routine care.

In the face of a second wave of infection in several parts of the world, the scientists including Devi Sridhar from the University of Edinburgh in the UK, said there is currently renewed interest in herd immunity approaches allowing a large uncontrolled outbreak in low-risk populations while protecting the vulnerable.

2.4 lakh tuberculosis patients went unreported in India in 2019: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In India, only 2.40 million out of an estimated 2.64 million cases of tuberculosis were reported to the Government, that is, 2,40,000 TB patients went unreported in 2019, according to the recently released WHO Global Tuberculosis Report 2020.

Following the imposition of national lockdown amid the Corona triggered lockdown, the weekly and monthly number of TB case notifications in India fell by more than 50 per cent between the end of March and late April, said the report. Compared with the first six months of 2019, monthly notifications in the first six months of 2020 were approximately 25-30 per cent lower in India, Indonesia and the Philippines.

The reporting of TB cases, however, has significantly increased over the years in India: from 1.74 million in 2015 to 2.40 million in 2019. Notifications of people newly diagnosed with TB rose from 1.2 million to 2.2 million between 2013 and 2019 (+74%) while in 2018, the country had an estimated 2.69 million TB patients.

The number of laboratory-confirmed multi-drug resistant TB cases has increased from

58,347 in 2018 to 66,255 in 2019, said the report.

On TB funding in India, the report says findings say that the national TB budget in 2019 was \$497 million of which 85% came from domestic sources and 15% from external and donor agencies. About 77% of the total budget of \$583 million came from domestic resources.

"This is a significant increase as compared to 2016 numbers when the national TB budget was US\$ 280 million and only 38% of it coming from domestic resources." The Global TB report has collated data from over 200 countries that has shown significant reductions in TB case notifications.

While some have argued this approach could lead to the development of infection-acquired immunity in the low-risk population, which will

eventually protect the vulnerable, the researchers explained such uncontrolled transmission in younger people risks significant ill-health and death.

CBI rubbishes media claim that it reached SSR case conclusion



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Thursday yet again clarified that it continues to investigate the death of film star Sushant Singh Rajput and rubbished media reports claiming the agency has reached a conclusion in its probe in the case.

"There are certain speculative reports in media that the CBI has reached a conclusion. It may be reiterated that these reports are speculative and erroneous," it said in a statement on Thursday. This is the third clarification given by the CBI in nearly one and a half months.

The clarification comes after media reports on Thursday claimed the agency's probe has veered around the suicide theory as pointed out by the AIIMS medical board and the CBI will accordingly submit the report before the concerned court soon. The "speculative" reports also claimed there was no foul play. The media report comes days after the AIIMS medical board ruled out murder theories and concluded that Sushant Singh Rajput's death was a result of suicide.

In its report submitted on September 29, the Dr Sudhir Gupta-led AIIMS panel re-examined Rajput's post-mortem and viscera reports and concluded that it was a case of suicide. The report ruled out the possibility of any foul play or murder angle in the case.

"The Central Bureau of Investigation is conducting



In its report submitted on September 29, the Dr Sudhir Gupta-led AIIMS panel re-examined Rajput's post-mortem and viscera reports and concluded that it was a case of suicide

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

On September 3, the CBI had said, "The CBI is conducting investigation related to death of Sh. Sushant Singh Rajput in a systematic and professional way. Certain media reports attributed to CBI investigation are speculative and not based on facts. It is reiterated that as a matter of Policy, CBI does not share details of ongoing investigation. CBI spokesperson or any team member has not shared any details of investigation with media. The details being reported and attributed to CBI are not credible."

SC notice to Centre on PIL to regulate OTT platforms

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Thursday sought the Centre's response on a PIL for regulating OTT platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Prime by an autonomous body.

A bench comprising Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian issued notices to the central government, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Internet and Mobile Association of India.

"We will issue notice," the apex court said while hearing the plea filed by advocates Shashank Shekhar Jha and Apurva Arhatia seeking a proper board/institution/association for the monitoring and management of content on different OTT/Streaming and digital media platforms.

"With cinemas theatres unlikely to open anytime soon in the country, OTT/Streaming and different digital media platforms have surely given a way out for film makers and artists to release their content without being worried about getting clearance certificates for their films and series from the censor board," the plea said.

At present, however, there is no law or autonomous body governing the digital content to monitor and manage these digital contents and it is made available to the public at large without any filter or screening, it said.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
 DEPARTMENT OF MATERIALS MANAGEMENT (Imports Section)
 SOURA, SRINAGAR, JAMMU & KASHMIR- 190011
 Email: ammoimports@skims.ac.in, Fax: 0194-2403404
 e-NIT No: SIMS-324- NIT 17 (IMPORTS) of 2020
 Dated: 13-10-2020

Subject: Abbreviated Notice Inviting Tenders for supply, installation, testing & commissioning of Video Assisted Thoracoscopic system with 3D Imaging/ recording with instruments, accessories & other items for the department of Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgery Department Skims.

On behalf of the Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir through Director, Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, Soura, Srinagar, e-tenders are invited from the original manufacturers/their Indian subsidiaries/Indian Agents on the authorization of principal manufacturers/Indian Subsidiary if 100% subsidiary of foreign principals (for imported equipment) and manufacturers/ their authorized dealers for the J&K (for indigenous equipment) for supply, installation, testing & commissioning of Video Assisted Thoracoscopic system with 3D Imaging/ recording with instruments, accessories & other items as per following :-

Group	Name of the item	Qty	Tender fee	EMD
A	Video Assisted Thoracoscopic system with 3D Imaging/ recording with instruments & accessories.	01	Rs.1000	2,00,000

The detailed tender document is available on www.jktenders.gov.in & on SKIMS website www.skims.ac.in. The NIT schedule is as per following :-

Last date for submission of online bids	17-11-2020 upto 4:00 PM
Opening of Technical bids	20-11-2020 at 12:30 PM

Complete bidding process will be online on e-tendering portal www.jktenders.gov.in & the tenders should be submitted strictly in accordance with the provisions of the detailed NIT.

No: SIMS-324-e-NIT 17 (Imports) 2020-3236-42-5477-79
 Dated :- 13/10/2020

Sd/- Asstt. Materials Management Officer (Imports)
For & on behalf of Chief of Materials Management

711 incidents of stubble burning reported from 3 States on October 14 alone

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The burning of paddy crop residue continued in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh as satellite images detected 711 incidents, the highest in a single day this year, on October 14.

The images showed 616 in Punjab, 87 in Haryana and 08 in Uttar Pradesh. This year, 4015 incidents were detected in three states between October 1 and 15 as compared to the 2119 incidents in 2019 and 2151 in 2018. The highest incidents have been reported in Punjab (3029), followed by Haryana (737) and UP (249). As per data, Haryana and UP have recorded less incidents of farm fires as compared to the last year.

Flagging off 50 inspection teams of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for field visits to keep a watch on pollution hot spots, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar on Thursday said that only 4 per cent pollution is due to stubble burning and 96 per cent of it is due to local factors like biomass burning, garbage dumping, unpaved roads, dust, construction and demolition activities.

"I appeal to the Punjab government to swing into action and curb stubble burning. I went to attend a programme in Ludhiana last year. On my way back, my throat choked due to the smoke from stubble burning even when I was in an air-conditioned car," the minister said.

The data showed that 247 incidents were detected on October 13; 362 on



October 12; 333 on October 11; 238 on October 10; 310 on October 9 and 126 on October 9. The incidents of farm fires were recorded 856 in 2019; 774 in 2018; 2731 in 2017 and 4339 in 2016 during the same period (between October 1 and 14) in the State. Majority of farm fires cases are reported in Amritsar, Tarn Taran and Patiala, Gurdaspur and Ferozepur districts.

With 779 farm fire incidents, Amritsar district ranks on the top, closely followed by Tarn Taran (743 incidents), Patiala (322 incidents) and Gurdaspur (208 incidents), (Ferozpur 195) districts, as of October 12, 2020.

The satellite images showed 737 incidents in Haryana and majority of them from Kurukshetra, Karnal, Fatehabad, Yamunanagar, Sirsa, Sonapat, Hisar and Ambala regions. The farm fire incidents are less this year as compared to the last year of 992 in 2019; 965 in 2018; 1647 in 2017 and 2074 in 2016. With 164, Kurukshetra is top in the list, followed by Karnal (154 incidents), Ambala (110 incidents), Kaithal (99), find (43 incidents) and Fatehabad (58 incidents) so far.

Just like human beings, cows prefer face-to-face chat also: Research

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Just like many human beings, cows also prefer a face-to-face chat, a team of researchers said after they found that the four-legged cattle were actually more relaxed when spoken to directly by a live human, rather than when listening to a recorded voice via a loud-speaker.

How did they find that the bovine animals were happy? The study published in journal Frontiers in Psychology said, "Heart rate variability was higher when cattle were spoken to directly, indicating they were enjoying themselves."

"After this treatment, heart rates were lower than after listening to a recorded voice, showing that the animals were more relaxed following the live chat."

"Cattle like stroking in combination with gentle talking," said Annika Lange of the University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, Austria. "In scientific contexts, a recording of a human voice speaking gently could be used to relax the animals, because it can be difficult to repeat the same phrases in the same way during experiments."

Using a recorded voice means conditions are as similar as possible in each trial, following a concept known as



"standardization" -- an important principle of scientific experimentation.

The team worked with a herd of 28 cattle, comparing the benefits of either stroking the animals while playing a recording of an experimenter's voice, or stroking while speaking to the animals directly. After monitoring the animals' responses during the experiments, they found live talking was the best mood enhancer for their bovine friends.

How does a chilled cow behave? "When relaxed and enjoying the interaction, the animals will often stretch out their necks as they do when they groom each other," says Lange. "Additionally, it is thought that ear positions may indicate mood: hanging ears and low ear positions appear to be linked to relaxation."

Lange calls for further research to see if results are also valid for different herds and situations, such as with cows that are more fearful of humans.

Rahul asks Twitterati question, launches veiled attack on Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday morning asked twitterati about what is common between countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan and Vietnam, Iraq, Korea and Syria. Later in the day answering his own question, Rahul Gandhi said that leaders of these countries divided them internally, which made these countries battleground between dominant powers. During the day it was taken as a veiled attack on the Narendra Modi Government by drawing parallel with the leaders of the above-mentioned countries.

The Gandhi scion on Thursday morning tweeted, "Can anyone guess what's common between these countries: Pakistan, Iraq, Korea, Vietnam, Syria and Afghanistan". Answering his own tweet later in the evening, he said, "Their leaders divided them internally and let their countries become battlegrounds between the dominant powers of their time. Their people paid for the leaders' actions with blood and tears."

On Wednesday also, Rahul Gandhi took a dig at Narendra Modi over the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) comparison of the country's per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with that of neighbouring Bangladesh.

TRP SCAM

BARC temporarily suspends channels' weekly ratings

Mumbai: Following the fake Television Rating Points (TRP) scam, the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) on Thursday announced a temporary suspension of weekly ratings of news channels across languages.

The council intends to review and augment the current standards of measurement to improve on "statistical robustness", and the exercise will result in a "pause" in the

weekly ratings for up to 12 weeks, an official statement said.

At least five people have been arrested by the city police which busted the scam earlier this month.

Those arrested include news channel employees, while the police is also questioning executives of Arnab Goswami-led Republic TV with regard to the case. Republic TV has denied any wrongdoing. **PTI**

10 killed as rain plays havoc in Maha

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

At least 10 persons were killed, heavy inundation was reported from many towns and villages and road and rail transport was affected in parts of Maharashtra on Thursday, as heavy rain battered several parts of the state ahead of the passage of cyclonic storm over the state on Friday.

While six persons were killed when a wall crashed in the pilgrim town of Pandharpur in Solapur district in western Maharashtra, three persons drowned in floods in Pune. In another incident, one person was killed after a car carrying three persons washed away in swollen waters of Solapur.

Following the release of excess water from the Ujani and Veer dams, Pandharpur faced a major flood situation. The released dam water inundated many villages around Pandharpur, crippling normal life and paralysing traffic

in the area.

Reports reaching the state headquarters said that as many as 8,400 living in the areas in and around Pandharpur were shifted to safe areas by the police.

Among the districts that were affected by heavy rains and the consequent floods were Solapur, Kolhapur, Sangli, Pune and Satara in western Maharashtra and Latur, Osmanabad and Beed districts in Marathwada region.

Talking to media persons after reviewing the flood situation in the state, Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray said that the Army, Navy and Air Force had been kept on high alert to deal with the flood-affected areas in the state. "The teams of National Disaster Response Force are currently engaged in rescue and relief operations in Osmanabad, Solapur, Pandharpur and Baramati," he said.

The chief minister said that he had

directed the revenue authorities in the flood affected areas to do panchnama of the destroyed crops and damaged property.

Many big and small rivers like Chandrabhaga (Solapur), Panchganga (Kolhapur), Terna (Latur & Osmanabad) and a few rivers in Pune have been in spate since Thursday morning.

Following heavy overnight night rains and release of excess water from Ujani and Veer dams, vast tracts of agricultural land lay under thick sheets of water leading to extensive damage to standing crops.

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has sounded a 'red alert' for the next 48 hours in the coastal Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg districts which are likely to witness heavy rain and thunderstorms, and fishermen on the entire coastal stretch have been advised against venturing into the Arabian Sea.

Mobile app for devotees of Mata Vaishno Devi launched

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, who is also Chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board on Thursday launched a Mobile App for the devotees of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji at the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar.

This new initiative has been taken by the Shrine Board with a view to maximise the use of available technology and digitization for the larger facilitation of the devotees of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji. The mobile app would provide the opportunity to the worshippers across the globe to have an individual experience of godliness and bliss. During the upcoming Navratras, live streaming of Shat Chandi Maha Yagya being performed at the Holy Cave Shrine will also be available on this App. In the first instance, the Mobile

App has been launched on Google Play Store only which will later also be available on IOS platform.

Speaking on the occasion, the Lt Governor said that the Mobile App will be of immense help to the devotees worldwide to have the live darshan of Maa Vaishno Devi, besides availing various other facilities made available by the Shrine Board through this medium.

Referring to the recently launched home delivery of Pooja Prasad by the Board, he said that it has been widely appreciated by the devotees. He also stressed that during the current situation due to COVID-19, the adoption of online services need to be promoted in a big way to maintain social distancing and other preventive measures to control the spread of pandemic. **PNS**

Reconsider stay order, CBI's plea to HC in LIFE Mission case

Kochi: The CBI on Thursday approached the Kerala High Court with a plea to reconsider the stay ordered by the court into the allegations of corruption and money laundering in the LIFE Mission project of the Kerala Government.

The Court has stayed the CBI probe into the allegations against LIFE Mission Chief Executive Officer U V Jose even as it allowed the agency to go ahead with the probe against Unita, the project implementing concern.

The CBI in its petition told the Court that the stay on the probe against Jose was affecting the entire investigation process including the violation of Foreign Currency Regulation Act (FCRA). The High Court is expected to take up the case on Monday.

Meanwhile another bench of the court on Thursday issued an order against the arrest of M Sivsankar, the former Principal Secretary of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan by the Enforcement Directorate till October 23 in connection with the gold smuggling case. Sivsankar was questioned by the ED in its Kochi office on Thursday. **PNS**

Calcutta HC questions Didi doles to Durga Puja clubs

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Calcutta High Court on Thursday delivered a rap on the Trinamool Congress Government's knuckles asking why the State doled out ₹50,000 each to the various committees organizing Durga Puja and why in the first place the Government allowed organisation of community Pujas when the schools and colleges remained shut in a pandemic situation.

The Division Bench of Justices Sanjib Banerjee and Arijit Banerjee was hearing a petition challenging the grant of doles by the State Government to various Puja committees.

Wondering the Government doled out similar grants for the other festivals such as Eid, the Court asked whether there were any guidelines for making such expenditure, that too amid various au-

terity measures taken by all concerned during the corona times.

When Advocate General Kishore Dutta said that the grants were made to the committees for raising public awareness and to purchase provisions like masks, sanitisers to fight corona pandemic a task which in any case was being undertaken by the State police as had earlier been claimed by the Government.

The Court wondered when the Police were doing such jobs why then grants had to be made to the clubs.

On the reasonability of allowing mass organization of Durga Pujas like any other normal occasion attracting crowds the court also asked whether any blueprint for crowd control during Durga Puja -- which is barely a week away had been put in place by the government to prevent the spread of the virus that had already killed more than 5,000 people in Bengal.

AMMK leader dies of Covid

CHENNAI: AMMK treasurer and former MLA P Vetrivel a close confidante of party founder TTV Dhinakaran, died in a private hospital in Chennai on Thursday where he was under treatment for Covid-19.

Vetrivel, who was elected to the assembly from Perambur constituency in the 2016 election as an AIADMK candidate was disqualified by Speaker P Dhanapal in 2017 when he along with 17 other MLAs withdrew support to Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswamy at the instance of Dhinakaran. **PNS**

Case filed against Union Home Min on BJP manifesto

PNS ■ ALIGARH

A case has been filed in CJM court against Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The Court has appointed the date of November 12 for a hearing on this case.

In the suit filed by advocate Khurshidur Rehman, resident of Alam Bagh Bhamola of Civil Line area, it is stated that during the Parliamentary Lok Sabha election of 2014, the BJP said in its manifesto "Sabka sath, sabka vikaas". In the rallies and meetings, they promised 100 new cities, developing backward districts, formulating comprehensive national energy policy, building gas grids, building a national Wi-Fi network and won votes by such kind of promises.

When, after 5 years, the information related to the completion of the announcements was sought, it was found that the promises and works have not been done.

Parliamentary panel calls top MHA officials over crime against women

New Delhi: In the wake of the alleged case of gangrape in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras, a parliamentary panel has called top Union Home Ministry officials to appear before it next week and brief the members on 'Atrocities and Crime Against Women', sources said on Thursday.

They said the home secretary has been called to appear before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs and is expected to brief it on the issue of crimes against women. Besides this, the recon-stituted panel will also discuss issues related to the management of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs chaired by senior Congress leader Anand Sharma will be briefed by the officials of the Home Ministry on October 22 on the subject of 'Atrocities and Crime Against Women', according to a notice

issued by Rajya Sabha Secretariat.

India recorded on an average 87 rape cases daily in 2019 and overall 4,05,861 cases of crime against women during the year, a rise of over 7 per cent from 2018, according to the latest government data. The country recorded 3,78,236 cases of crimes against women in 2018, the data compiled by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) showed. A total of 32,033 cases of rape were lodged in 2019, which was 7.3 per cent of all crimes against women during the year.

In 2018, as many as 33,356 rapes were recorded across the country, up from 32,559 in 2017, according to the data from corresponding years. The NCRB, which functions under the Union Home Ministry, is tasked with collecting and analysing crime data as defined by the Indian Penal Code and special and local laws in the country. **PNS**

Akkitham, Jnanpith winner, passes away

Kochi: Akkitham Achuthan Namboodiri, the Maha Kavi (Great Poet) of Malayalam, breathed his last on Thursday morning. He was 94 and was admitted to a corporate hospital in Thrissur on Monday following urinary infection.

More than a poet, Akkitham, as he was known, was a social reformer who fought against social evils like untouchability, gender discrimination, and religious fundamentalism.

He was awarded the Jnanpith Prize, India's greatest literary honour, in the year 2019. It may be a strange coincidence that the poet was presented the award in the last week of September 2020.

For more than six decades, Akkitham remained as a beacon of hope for Malayalam literature which lost its way because of the invasion by ultra-modern literature. "He was the eternal rebel.

He revolted against the age-old dogmas and traditional chauvinism. All his poems were creative conflicts and he was the Prophet of Love," said Prof P G Haridas, long-time associate of the late poet. According to the veteran professor, Akkitham was the manifestation of Buddhist teachings. "While Budha tried to revolutionise the society through stories and speeches, Akkitham represented it through poetry," he said. **PNS**

Engineering Dept fined ₹30 lakh for negligence in construction work

Aligarh: In the beautification construction work of Anchalat, RED (Rural Engineering Department) got fined of ₹30.50 lakhs for negligence in the payment of the contractor. On the directions of the High Court, the Commerce Court has recovered this amount from the department. The High Court has given these instructions following the order of the Arbitration Court of Agra. However, the hearing appeal from the department is still pending in the High Court.

The district administration sent a proposal to the tourism department for the renovation of four places including Achleshwar. In 2007, the tourism department released about five crore rupees on this proposal. **PNS**

Maha Minister sentenced to 3 months jail in assault case

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The MVA Government suffered a jolt on Thursday, as a district court in Amravati of eastern Maharashtra sentenced Maharashtra Minister for Women and Child Welfare and Congress leader Yashomati Thakur to three months' imprisonment and imposed a fine of ₹15,000 for allegedly assaulting a police constable eight years ago.

District and Sessions Judge of Amravati Urmila Joshi also convicted three others, comprising her Thakur's driver and two of her party associates, in the eight-year-old case and sentenced them to three months' imprisonment and imposed a fine of ₹15,000 each on them.

Aligarh: Classes 9 to 12 to start from October 19

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

After the lockdown, finally schools and colleges are going to open from October 19. Precautionary classes are being prepared to conduct classes from 9 to 12. In this regard, DM took a meeting and instructed the operators to ensure sanitizer, hand wash, thermal screening and system of first aid in the campus. Also, orders have been given to sanitize the entire school premises. He also said that covid help desk should be established in every school and college.

DM Chandra Bhushan Singh said that if any student teacher or other personnel have cough and cold, symptoms of fever, then they should be sent home after first aid. At the time of entry in the school and leaving, all need to ensure compliance of social distancing at the main gate. He said the students should not to be discharged simultaneously at a time.

School buses, other transport vehicles should be sanitized daily and social distancing in the seating arrangement should be ensured. It will be mandatory for the employees to wear mask.

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority

NOIDA

Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, (UP)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from firms/contractors registered with 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 & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/ amendments & corrigendum etc.

A)

Sl. No.	Job No./Work name	Amount
1.	103/D(H)/DD(H)-III/20-21, Two year M/o Park Hosiery complex, A-34, C-106 D-121 & Sector-83, A-5, A-78 Parks.	Cost Rs.48.38 Lacs
2.	112/D(H)/DD(H)-III/20-21, M/o Master Green Belt in Hosiery Complex, with two year maintenance	Cost Rs.37.90 Lacs
3.	99/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, M/o RSP (Vertical Garden) with One year maintenance, Sector-15, 16, 18 Metro Station Pillars and MP-IInd under the Elevated Road Pillar No. 4, 37, 38, 39, 40, 56 and 57, Noida	Cost Rs.36.66 Lacs
4.	100/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, M/o RSP (Vertical Garden) with one year maintenance, in Kalindi Kunj Bridge and DND Fly Over.	Cost Rs.33.69 Lacs
5.	203/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2018-19, M/o Park, (open Zym) sector-22, C-Block (Village Chaura) and D-Block, Park Sector-63 (Village Chhijars) with five year maintenance	Cost Rs.56.94 Lacs
6.	158/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2020-21, D/o Park with two year maintenance Sector-100A, B, C Block.	Cost Rs.44.04 Lacs
7.	161/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2020-21, D/o RSP Sector-94 (Underpass) with two year maintenance	Cost Rs.48.71 Lacs
8.	64/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, M/o Park with two year maintenance in Sector-2, 3, 4, Block-B, Sector-10, Block-B & Sector-06 DTC Park & Sector-5 near water Compound, Harola near Sharma Market and near Barat Ghar Park.	Cost Rs.57.23 Lacs

Which can be uploaded by date **22/10/2020** upto **5.00 PM**. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date **23/10/2020** at **11.00 AM**.

B)

Sl. No.	Job No./Work name	Amount
1.	107/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, C/o site store and Toilet block in different location of Horticulture Division-I.	Cost Rs.85.11 Lacs
2.	114/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, D/o Park & Green Belt Sector-11, 55, 56, 63, 63A, 64, 69, 70 & 71 (Submersible Boring & Pump)	Cost Rs.37.93 Lacs
3.	116/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, D/o Green Belt with two year maintenance Sector-64 & 66 Noida.	Cost Rs.74.03 Lacs
4.	117/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, D/o RSP (Anti Carbonation Paint) on the beams of elevated road Pillars	Cost Rs.45.93 Lacs
5.	122/D(H)/DD(H)-III/2020-21, Two year M/o Park Plot No. 11, LIG, MIG Flat & Pocket-06 & 12 in Sector-82	Cost Rs.41.46 Lacs

Which can be uploaded by date **29/10/2020** upto **5.00 PM**. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date **02/11/2020** at **11.00 AM**.

Director (Hort.)
Noida

Office Sector-39

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

PHYSICAL POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Physical Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Deepak Goel/ Ruchika Goel/ Pankaj Goel LBDEL00003943771 LBDEL00003943772	Villa No- TPU- G- GV- GV 07, The Palm Springs, Sec- 54, Situated in Revenue Estate Of Village Wazirabad, Tehsil & District Gurgaon, Haryana/ October 14, 2020	November 22, 2019 Rs. 6,08,72,618/-	Delhi

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : 16-10-2020
Place: Delhi NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI

IIInd FLOOR, KASHMEERI GATE, DELHI-06

(Women Empowerment Cell)

F.60(748)/DWCD/WEC/Misc.Matter/2018-19 **Date: 09.10.2020**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Support Systems in NCT of Delhi for Women in difficult Circumstances, destitute women or women in need of care & protection

S.No	Programmes	Services
1.	Institutional Services- (24x7)	03 Govt, and 12 NGO run Women Homes/Shelter Homes. 02 shelter homes for destitute pregnant & lactating women
2.	181- Women in Distress Helpline- (24x7) & 9350-181-181 Whatsapp Helpline (24x7)	Woman affected by violence/distress /needing rescue/ any other advise can call toll free Helpline Number or send a message on Whatsapp Helpline.
3.	Sakhi- One stop Centre Scheme- (24x7)	Any aggrieved woman or women affected by violence can approach Sakhi One Stop Centre set up in each Distt. of NCT of Delhi. Support & assistance will be provided for psycho-social counselling, legal assistance, registration of FIR, medical care centre also gives temporary shelter for immediate relief.
4.	Implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005	Protection Officers have been appointed to assist the Mahila Courts for better & effective protection of the rights of women guaranteed under the constitution that are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

A woman in distress can avail above facilities directly or through 181 Helpline, Police or any Social Worker. Details are available on dept's website: www.wccdelhi.in

Sd/-
DIP/Shabdarth/0362/2020-21
Director, WCD

Mehbooba returns

The PDP leader intends to pivot the larger alliance of all local parties for a resolution of the Kashmir issue in totality



If the intention behind incarcerating former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader Mehbooba Mufti for over 14 months was to break her spirit, then the Government has clearly failed to do so. For hours after her release, she went beyond what the National Conference leaders, Farooq and Omar Abdullah, pledged to do as part of what they call a united Gupkar Declaration, namely restoring the special status of the erstwhile State. She wanted a long-term political resolution of the Kashmir issue in its entirety and though she has now joined hands with the Abdullaha for a larger cause, she seems determined enough to carry

on her movement and reclaim her space in conversations. It remains to be seen whether her grandstanding is meant to blunt Farooq Abdullah's recent belligerence against the Centre and his wild missive that China could help in restoring Kashmir's special status or whether she is genuinely trying to reclaim lost political space and emerge as a power player. Is she negotiating her own role as a pivot in the changed apparatus? At some level, all the leaders know that a retraction of the Valley's status would be almost impossible, considering that even major world powers have endorsed India's position of acting within its constitutional space. Besides, they would have to challenge Kashmir's changed status in the Supreme Court. Interestingly, there is less mention of Article 370 as such but an emphasis on the Centre's "onslaught" on Kashmir's "identity and status." The message clearly is to get as many parties as possible on common ground and set an agenda acceptable to all. This way all can stand up to the Centre and challenge it head-on rather than being scattered and directionless. It is their as well as the Government's litmus test. Mehbooba, incidentally, is the last of the mainstream political leaders to have been set free after they were charged under the Public Safety Act (PSA) ostensibly because of their track record of incendiary speeches that, the Government thought, would provoke people against the abrogation of Article 370. The fact is, the Government miscalculated their appeal greatly and disregarded that they were democratically elected leaders who had been in alliance with New Delhi, acted as a buffer between the Centre and the militant movement and still had enough ground support, one that has prevented the legitimacy of alternate structures and leaders. Besides, for all the filters, curfews and lockdowns in Kashmir, militancy hasn't abated and remains a draw for disenfranchised youth. And for all its promises of bridging the trust deficit by accelerating development, economic revival or civil engagement, without the participation by locals and their endorsement, Kashmir's integration with the mainstream is increasingly looking like an exercise in political egoism, a tool that is more disempowering than engaging, a punishment for history than an incentive for moving on. Politically, too, the BJP has been at the receiving end of non-cooperation, what with a spike in hitback killings of its leaders and *sarpanches*, the latter seen as extensions of Central authority. Only 7,528 of the 19,582 *panch* and *sarpanch* seats in Kashmir went to polls in 2018. Yet a majority of the elected are hiding out in hotels in Srinagar for fear of being attacked for participating in an electoral process that the Centre initiated. The BJP had hoped to build an alternative political pyramid with friendly leaders at the local level and devolving power to them. But that was not to be. Over 12,000 seats are still empty, affecting local administration and despite the changed status, nobody is ready to engage till all known elected representatives are freed from detention. With credible leaders redefined as public enemies, as bad as militants, and basic rights and connectivity denied to locals, there is confusion, disenchantment and fatigue everywhere, one that can congeal to become a violent force if left to fester.

Perhaps, that's the reason why the Government has changed its tactics and is returning the people's representatives to them as it were. It is even expected to hold elections in the remaining *panchayat* seats by the end of the year, risk any outcome and build connect strategies from there. For the political vacuum is costing it heavy and only lionising the likes of the Abdullaha and the Muftis. It is with this larger agenda that a seasoned politician like Manoj Sinha was made the new Lt Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. A low-key politician, his mission is to work out ways of connecting with people without disturbing the BJP's overall schematics in the Valley and even negotiate with all political parties. The Government has realised that it cannot make any claim of transformative intent till it gets some kind of mediatory presence of local parties. The BJP-created Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP), drawing rejects from the PDP and NC, lacks credibility. The Government could meet the old leaders half way, involving them in a reconciliation process on the condition that they wouldn't play a dual strategy with Pakistan. Some could be amenable to working the middle ground over time. But first, it should restore normalcy and mainstream internet connectivity. The youth are already feeling punished for being left out of the digital education revolution and we cannot let them be radicalised. E-commerce and online filing of tax and other financial transactions have been badly hit. The economy is in shambles with disruptive clampdowns affecting the supply chain and the services sector. Even the traditional sectors like the apple trade, tourism and handicrafts have wilted. There must be an enabling climate or Kashmir could slip into a deeper trough, worse than ever imagined.

Yet another silly idea

The ban on generators is another one in a list of impractical ideas to control pollution that skirts the central issue



The ban on using generators in the National Capital Region (NCR), when air quality levels hit hazardous highs, must have been thought up by someone who lives in a ground floor apartment. Or that must have been the line by someone living in a penthouse on the 13th floor of a highrise apartment block that would have cost the equivalent of half a million US dollars. While the overall electricity situation has improved in Delhi dramatically over the past decade, there are still power-cuts in Gurugram and Noida, both of which are home to millions who have spent their life savings on fancy apartments. To be then told that they will have to climb 12, 13 or 14 storeys because the lights are out, because there is an illogical ban on gensets, is unreasonable. Even if they manage the climb up, they cannot use the internet or possibly even run their kitchens, thanks to almost everything running on electricity. This is not to argue against the continuing incompetence of electricity providers in being unable to assure guaranteed 24-hour electricity in India, although that situation is improving, but the impracticality of this decision has to be made clear to the powers that be.

This also highlights how authorities are charging at windmills while ignoring the elephant in the room as farmers in Punjab and Haryana continue to burn fields, many with political patronage. There are several causes for why the farmers burn their fields, from a lack of cheap labour to changing crop patterns, but it is contingent upon the Government to at least give them subsidised equipment to remove the stubble. Hundreds of crores of rupees have been collected as a green cess over the past few years and that money should be deployed to resolve this problem instead of sitting in the bank. This could give impetus to agricultural equipment manufacturers as well as improve the electricity situation in multi-storey buildings. Yes, poor air quality is a serious problem in the capital but we must not end up cutting off our nose to spite the face. Not allowing gensets in the current time is a stupid idea that will inconvenience more people than solving the pollution crisis. Setting strict pollution norms for generators will help more.

Atmanirbharta in defence

Despite the minor setback in the indigenous ATAGS programme, India must forge ahead in the nation's interest and for the Army's sake



Lt Gen JP SINGH

The Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS) programme began in 2012, spear-headed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), with two strategic partners — the Bharat Forge Limited (BFL) and Tata Power Strategic Engineering Division (SED). The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) had ratified the procurement of 150 ATAGS in August 2018. However, the process of developing them started way back in 2013 and concluded by 2017. The howitzer gun system was developed in a record time of 30 months and has gone through extensive trials over the last four years and performed admirably with remarkable consistency.

The ATAGS is one of the most advanced and perhaps the world's first gun which is capable of delivering Bi-Modular Charge System (BMCS) zone seven propellants. With a firing range of 48 km — a record of sorts in the 155 millimetre/52 calibre family — the ATAGS is an appendage to the indigenously developed 155 millimetre/45 calibre artillery gun *Dhanush*.

Dhanush is a derivative of the FH-77B 155mm/39 calibre towed howitzer, previously built by the Swedish defence contractor Bofors. The Indian Army procured a total of 414 Swedish howitzers between 1987 and 1991. *Dhanush* howitzers have a maximum effective range of 38 km in salvo mode as compared to the 48 km of the ATAGS.

The India-made ATAGS consists of a duel power system where hydraulics is used for mobility and gun in/out action whereas electrical power is used for the Gun Laying and Ammunition Handling System (AHS). The system is configured with an all-electric drive that ensures maintenance-free and reliable and secure operations over a long period of time. The gun system has automatic setting up, laying with a high-end Inertial Navigation System (INS) and automated AHS, which loads shell, charge and primer simultaneously with a manual back-up for the laying system. The gun system's hydraulic drive provides effective manoeuvrability in different terrains — on roads, cross country, in the



desert and in high altitude areas. The high power Auxiliary Power Unit (made in India) also renders effective self-propelled speed, rapid deployment and short response time.

The ATAGS has greater than 95 per cent indigenous components. The complete supply chain, from raw materials to end product, lies within the country, making it a true embodiment of a "Make in India" in defence system. The ATAGS gun system comprises 7,463 components, of which 4,977 are manufactured parts involving about 30,000 manufacturing processes and more than 2,00,000 inspection parameters.

The project is now in the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) stage 10 (as per the DRDO TRL stages), after being put through mandatory trials over the last five years. Earlier this month, it entered into its last stages of trial — viz the Preliminary Staff Qualitative Requirements (PSQR) trial, which is done prior to its induction into the arsenal system. The gun has already been through a rigorous pre-PSQR trial with the users and DRDO teams. In these trials, the BFL-developed gun system fired a total of 130 plus rounds, mostly in zone seven, and the feedback was that the system has lived up to the parameters.

The gun fielded by Tata Aerospace and Defence

“
 THE ATAGS
 SYMBOLISES
 NATIONAL PRIDE.
 WE OWN THE
 DESIGN, ITS IP AND
 ALL THE DATA
 CONCERNING
 THE OVERALL
 WEAPON SYSTEM.
 FOREIGN
 ASSISTANCE IS
 COSTLY AND IT
 WILL BE
 FOOLHARDY NOT
 TO BUILD ON THE
 SUCCESSSES THAT
 WE HAVE ALREADY
 ACHIEVED SO FAR
 ”

Limited succeeded in firing 99 rounds. At the 100th round, which was fifth of the rapid-fire practice, the gun tube sheared off, triggering the first unfortunate incident. The cause is currently being investigated. Some experts blame it on ammunition, while the others want to zero in on the tube and the immense pressure it has been made to withstand. It must be noted that the guns, which have till now fired almost 2,000 rounds between them, can easily tolerate pressure levels up to 560 megapascals and are the only ones to fire munitions in zone seven. As part of the process, an investigation to identify and rectify the causes behind the "shear and structural strain" is a must. It would be detrimental to the cause of *Atmanirbhara Bharat* to delay or disrupt the processes of development of the ATAGS.

This is the first weapon platform which has been designed and developed from scratch and can boast of being truly Indian. Developed by the DRDO and two major Indian industry partners, nurturing a well-networked ecosystem of Indian vendors and sub-vendors, the ATAGS symbolises national pride. We own the design, its IP and all the data concerning the overall weapon system. Foreign assistance is costly and it will be foolhardy not to build on the successes that we have already achieved

so far, notwithstanding minor setbacks. Most of the guns coming from the US, France, Germany, Israel and the Czech Republic, have encountered similar incidents at lower zones of firing, involving lower pressure, during trials. Thus, blaming higher pressure in ATAGS is a bit far-fetched. It is worth mentioning that none of these guns were fired in zone seven and neither fired as many rounds as the ATAGS.

It is a good opportunity to examine the quality and efficacy of the ammunition basket being produced in India as they are relatively new in making artillery munitions, fuses and charges (BMCS in this case). Given the extremely high pressure, every part of the munition, be it the shell, driving bands of the projectile or the fuse, which has to withstand extremely high angular velocity, every component must respond in a zero error manner. All said and done, precision and expertise come with real-time experience and trials. It is unlikely that a foreign vendor will part with core technologies or requisite data to make India *atmanirbhara*. In the nation's interest and with the singular objective of giving more teeth to the Army, let us learn to take such incidents in our stride and resolve to forge ahead. India's ATAGS must succeed.

(The writer is former Deputy Chief of Army Staff. Views expressed are personal)

SOUND BITE

(Robert) Destro will lead US efforts to promote dialogue between the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives; to protect the unique religious, cultural and linguistic identity of Tibetans.



US Secretary of State —Mike Pompeo

Delhi is trying to combat pollution. For this, we have launched a new campaign called, Red light On, *Gaadi* off. I request everyone to join the campaign.



Delhi CM —Arvind Kejriwal

We cannot afford to let our guard down, especially considering the fact that the paddy harvesting is on, as also the Government procurement.



Punjab CM —Amarinder Singh

Sourav Ganguly and I talk about it most days and we are already planning when we can catch up once he and the team get over here (Australia).



Australian cricket chief —Earl Eddings

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Defying protocols

Sir — Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray are in an open war of words about the re-opening of temples in the State. Koshyari mockingly asked Thackeray if he had turned "secular", provoking the latter to remind Koshyari that the word "secular" is in the Constitution he had sworn to protect when he took oath of the office in Raj Bhavan. Additionally, the CM said that he did not need his Hindutva credentials certified by a puppet. However, this isn't the first time when a Governor appointed by the Centre has been at odds with the State Government. But what was shocking in this case was the intemperate language used by the Governor, who in an attempt to do his bit for the BJP, defied protocols. The Governor is behaving like the agent of the Central Government to harass the State CM by playing dirty politics.

Bhagwan Thadani
 Mumbai

Single exam system

Sir — It is surprising to see students scoring 100 per cent in sub-

Implement laws in letter and spirit

In yet another shocking incident of sexual assault reported from Uttar Pradesh, a 17-year-old girl was allegedly thrashed and raped inside a Government college hostel in Jhansi. The incident took place on October 11 during the UP Provincial Civil Services (PCS) preliminary exam 2020 at the Jhansi College. The victim, a class X student, alleged in her complaint that around a dozen students of the college forcibly took her inside the campus where one of them raped her while others filmed the gruesome act and even robbed her of ₹2,000.

On the same day, in yet another incident, a woman was gang-raped and her five-year-old child murdered in Ojha Baraon village in Bihar's Buxar district. The woman and her child were on their way to a bank when they were abducted by a few men. The woman was then gang-raped. She was later tied up with her son and thrown into a river. Locals came to their rescue when she shouted for help but the child had died by then.

These two cases are among the ones that were



reported but many such crimes go unreported as either victims or their family fear social backlash. Rape is the fourth most common crime against women in India. In such terrifying times, we need to implement the law in letter and spirit. The Government should not let the situation worsen.

MN Musaeed
 Mumbai

jects like Hindi as some State Boards have literally made a mockery of the whole scoring system. A similar exam following the pattern of the National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (NEET), Joint Entrance Examinations (JEE) and Common Aptitude Test (CAT) will be a good solution to select the right candidate rather than just banking on the senior sec-

ondary board examination system. And the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) rightly proposes a single national school-leaving exam to resolve this issue. Politics should be kept out from such crucial issues. And hopefully, all States will come on board and accept it for the larger interest of the students and the education sector. We cannot have these appalling cut-offs

year after year with students from certain Boards getting the benefit of entering top colleges in Delhi University.

Bal Govind
 Noida

Next on the hot seat

Sir — Preparations for Bihar Assembly elections are at a peak and they will be taking place in

unprecedented circumstances over three phases, starting from the last week of October till the first week of November. It will be the first State to conduct polls after the outbreak of the pandemic. For Chief Minister and Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar, it is a chance to convince his people that he is still good enough to deliver after having failed to handle the Corona outbreak and the returnee migrants' crisis. For the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad, this is a chance to prove that his son has it in him to continue his political movement and more importantly, that he is still a leader who matters in reshaping the political discourse. It will be interesting to see how Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader Chirag Paswan performs in the elections, now when his mentor and father Ram Vilas Paswan has passed away. Will Chirag uphold his father's legacy or will he end up squirming for seats with JD(U) and BJP? Overall, the Bihar elections pose a serious challenge for all political parties and only time will tell which one wins.

Mohd Najib
 Patna

Send your feedback to:
 letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Lockdowns and terminal decline

The pandemic will accelerate the fall of the West unless we abandon our irrational approach to the virus



ALLISTER HEATH

Please, please, Prime Minister, do not lock the UK down again. Do not listen to the unidimensional, anti-economic, risk-averse groupthink from Sage. Ignore Sir Keir Starmer and Sadiq Khan's shameless politicking. A "circuit-breaker" is doublespeak for another lockdown, and cannot be a sustainable answer: The virus would only be temporarily suppressed, with transmission bouncing back as soon as the restrictions were lifted again. A vicious circle of stop-go lockdowns would be a catastrophic indictment of Government policy, an admission of total defeat, a victory of fear and emotion over reason. We would no longer be a free society tolerating an exceptional, temporary shutdown to allow our scandalously unprepared establishment to learn to manage a terrible situation. Instead, we would have transitioned to a world of permanent emergency, a wartime society whereby individual rights and lives were permanently suppressed for an ill-defined, ever-shifting "national interest." A new principle would have become established: That the Government has the right and even the obligation to lock us down at the first sign of any new epidemic, even one that doesn't truly threaten the survival of our society. The main rationale for a "circuit-breaker" — that it would buy yet more time for "one last push" on testing, the app, tracing and a vaccine — is tragically delusional. Even the French and Germans have failed to introduce effective testing and tracing, suggesting that the endeavour may be an elusive El Dorado, at least for now.

Yes, a few deaths might be avoided by spreading out ICU admissions to our hopelessly ineffectual National Health Service. Yes, a few others — maybe even up to 20,000 in a best-case scenario — might be saved as a result of multiple lockdowns if an effective vaccine suddenly, miraculously materialises by April 2021. But, in reality, most deaths would not be avoided, merely delayed, and there will be plenty of additional fatalities caused by the lockdown itself — including out of despair — to set against that. Unemployment would have surged, tens of thousands more businesses ruined, family and community life laid to waste, and immense misery created. What kind of society is ready to destroy so much to save so little?

If he agrees to the lockdown fanatics' every demand, Boris Johnson's legacy would have been to sweep away the Eurocrats, and cut back on the juristocrats, just to replace them with a new medicocracy. A gang of well-meaning scientists and doctors would be empowered to impose their narrow vision of the good on the rest of us, the first therapeutic, zero-risk State in world history.

But public health experts don't have the full perspective. We can't go on like this for much longer. The first lockdown probably increased our debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio by 20 percentage points; adding yet another 20 per cent over the winter would weaken us severely. We could survive that, of course, but what firepower would we have left when the next calamity hits us? What about another virus? And the one after that? Or what about the next bad flu season? We would be all but bankrupt by 2030, with a Dollar, Sterling and Euro crisis on our hands.

Lawrence Summers, the economist, estimates the cost of COVID will reach 90 per cent of the GDP for America alone — a mind-boggling \$16 trillion or \$2,000,000 per family. This is "four times larger than the output loss of the Great Recession, twice the cost of all wars since 9/11, and roughly the cost of climate change in the next 50 years." We need to find ways of minimising this cost for future pandemics, or we will be condemned to impoverishment, social decay and geopolitical decline.

This latter point is ably demonstrated by the International Monetary Fund's latest forecasts. It expects the UK to suffer a 9.8 per cent fall in GDP this year, identical to France, better than Italy or Spain. Germany and America will shrink but by less. Astonishingly, however, China's economy will actually grow this year. This pandemic has accelerated many trends, not least the transfer of power from the West to the East. South East Asian countries are among the few to have kept the costs of the virus to manageable levels, and China is laughing.

Britain and the West have two choices. We could relearn to live with death, as we did in the post-World War years when big flu epidemics killed tens of thousands. The alternative is to embrace the South Korean approach. We will need to invest a fortune in pandemic preparedness and technology, and pounce on the next virus as soon as it emerges. Ruthless, brutal quarantining, isolation and hugely superior tracking and tracing will be necessary.

Can we do it? Would we have to give up too much privacy and liberty? Are we nearing the twilight of the West, defeated by its fragility, its inability to cope with the kind of virus that our forebears shrugged off? If we don't get our act together, this will not just be Asia's century but also the West's last as any kind of beacon to the rest of the world. Boris Johnson needs to show that Britain, for one, hasn't yet given up.

(Courtesy: The Telegraph)

SAMVAD SAMMELANS ARE OUR POLITICAL PROGRAMMES AND WE HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO EXPLAIN TO FARMERS THAT THE FARM LAWS HAVE GREAT BENEFITS.

—SPOKESPERSON OF PUNJAB BJP
ANIL SAREEN

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



NO MINISTER HAD THE TIME TO MEET FARMERS EARLIER WHILE AN ARMY OF (BJP) MINISTERS IS CONDUCTING VIRTUAL RALLIES IN PUNJAB.

—FORMER UNION MINISTER
HARSIMRAT BADAL

Win some, lose some

This surrender of outbound LTC travel would negatively impact the tourism sector, which is already floundering. It is a demand swap; the present with the future, FMCG with tourism



SUBHASH CHANDRA PANDEY

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently announced two special offers for Central Government employees, which she hopes can also be suitably modified and extended for State Government staff and availed even by private sector workers employed in the organised sector. In short, the Centre announced a fresh stimulus for the ailing economy, focussing on demand. This includes optional use of the Leave Travel Concession (LTC) facility for spending on consumer items, one-time restoration of festival advance and additional capital expenditure by the Centre and States. However, the alternative for LTC could be a damp squib as the condition of higher spend may not find many takers.

As per the announcements, Central Government employees can choose to get some ready cash if they forego their LTC entitlement for the block year of 2018-2021. In addition, every Central Government employee, irrespective of rank, will get a prepaid Rupay card loaded with ₹10,000. Swipe it for any expenditure by March 31, 2021 (no cash draw) and repay the advance in 10 monthly instalments. No interest, no tax on deemed benefit. Under the LTC scheme, Central Government employees get reimbursement of the cost of some personal travel undertaken by them and their family members. For civilian staff, it is a trip to their hometown once in two years and to anywhere within the country in the next block of two years. For defence personnel, it is the annual hometown visit and in the alternative year to anywhere in India in lieu of hometown travel. There are similar provisions of LTC benefits for the judicial and legislative branch of the State with a different set of entitlements and rules.

The current LTC block year is 2018-2021. During this four calendar years' period, a civilian Central Government employee can avail reimbursement of fare for two trips from his place of duty, one in 2018-19 and another in 2020-21. Both trips can be to his hometown or one to the hometown and the other to anywhere else in India.

The concession admissible for a particular block of two years, which is not availed during that time period, can be availed in the first year of the next block. So, if someone hasn't availed LTC during January 2018-December 2019, he can do so by December 2020. Likewise, the LTC due for 2020-21 can be availed by December 2022, subject to certain conditions.

To promote tourism to remote areas, the Government has been allowing its staff to use their hometown LTC to visit specified remote areas. It has been allowing air travel to these areas to even those employees who are not normally permitted to travel by air at Government cost. This has been a hugely popular move. This special scheme has now been extended up to September 25, 2022. The conversion of hometown LTC is allowed for travel to the North-Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Air travel to these destinations is permitted for all workers. Also, such trips in lieu of hometown LTC are permitted even by private airlines as an exception because the rule is that a trip at Government cost must be by Air India only. (Those Government servants whose hometown and place of posting are the same are not allowed this conversion.)

Whenever a LTC journey is undertaken, the Government allows 10 days' earned leave to be encashed. A total of 60 days' earned leave encashment with LTC is allowed during the whole service. Employees get earned leave of 30 days every year and if not availed cannot be accumulated

LTC IS NOT AVAILED BY EVERYONE. THERE ARE MANY WHO DON'T FIND TIME AND MANY OTHERS WHO FIND THAT THEY CANNOT AFFORD NON-FARE EXPENSES DURING TRAVEL. IF THE GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO GIVE CASH IN LIEU OF LTC, IT WOULD GIVE IT TO EVERYONE, EVEN TO THOSE WHO WOULD NOT HAVE AVAILED OF LTC ON THEIR OWN. FOR THEM, THE CASH EQUIVALENT IS A BONANZA



beyond 300 days.

The Finance Minister has announced that an employee can choose not to travel on the LTC for block year 2018-21 and instead get some tax-free cash in lieu. Category I/II/III employees entitled for business class air travel/economy class air travel/rail travel will get up to ₹36,000, ₹20,000 and ₹6,000, respectively for each family member who forgoes one LTC, subject to the following conditions.

The employee must produce proof of having spent ₹1,08,000/₹60,000/₹18,000 by March 31, 2021 through digital means on buying Goods and Services Tax (GST)-invoiced goods/services with a minimum GST of 12 per cent.

The employee must also produce proof of having spent the entire amount of 10 days' earned leave by March 31, 2021 through digital means on buying GST-invoiced goods/services with a minimum GST of 12 per cent. Spending less means pro rata cut in the actual cash benefit to be disbursed.

Most processed, packaged food items, healthcare, medicinal items, toiletries, cosmetics and so on attract 12 per cent GST. Telecom services bills, insurance premia, both life and general insurance, ULIPs and so on attract 18 per cent GST. Then, of course, there are the "sin goods" in the high GST bracket. So even without buying any expensive white goods/gadgets/car, it should be possible — except for some very frugal souls — to produce eligible GST invoices for monthly average spending of less than ₹21,600/₹12,000/₹3,600 for Category I/II/III employees from now till March 2021. The few who might struggle to get sufficient invoices may buy goods for others. Petty invoices don't even carry the buyer's name and there are limits to how many checks can be there to stop misuse.

There have been intermittent sugges-

tions in the past that the Government should give some lump sum cash in lieu of LTC benefit and save itself the hassle of processing the LTC claims. Moreover, not all of them are genuine. Long ago, many employees in an office were found to have submitted fake LTC claims for long distance travel by road. The trip was actually not undertaken as there was no entry of the quoted private bus having crossed various toll booths. Dozens were dismissed from service in a severe disciplinary action. After that, the Government made a rule that road travel by private bus would not be eligible for LTC reimbursement.

Cases of LTC claims based on fake air travel — even by some high public functionaries — forced some offices to introduce the provision for submission of proof of the actual trip in case of air travel, like some photographs and so on, all of which can also be manipulated in this age of technology. Some private airlines used to misuse the LTC to include even hotel stay and so on in the packaged fare because only the fare is reimbursed. All other costs of boarding and lodging at the destination are expected to be borne by employees. To overcome this fraud, the Government introduced standard LTC fares and restricted travel to Air India only (except for the North-East and so on). Frauds by a few dishonest end up making life miserable for everyone, with the Government being forced to come out with stricter regulations. Checking LTC fraud is an administrative hassle and some argue that it is better to unconditionally give cash in lieu of LTC. So far, this argument has not carried weight for two reasons.

First, the Government wants employees to rejuvenate themselves through travel and promote domestic tourism. Second, LTC is not availed by everyone.

There are many who don't find time and many others who find that they cannot afford non-fare expenses during travel. If the Government decides to give cash in lieu of LTC, it would give it to everyone, even to those who would not have availed of LTC on their own. For them, the cash equivalent is a bonanza.

The Central Government hopes that the State Governments and the private sector will take a cue and offer similar schemes, with the Centre promising not to tax the cash equivalent of the LTC. Many States limit their LTC scheme to travel within the State and so the financial impact would also be limited. For private sector employees, tax concession on LTA can be a big incentive. All they have to do is produce GST invoices for three times the LTA. Spending three times the LTA by March 2021 may not be burdensome for most. Typically, the LTA is equal to one month's salary and so one is being asked to spend three months' salary by March to save income tax on LTA. Of course, there is the option of buying for others. In a country like ours, governments put riders and creative minds invent workarounds.

Giving cash in lieu of LTC or giving tax concession on LTA subject to certain minimum spending of a certain type will certainly boost short-term consumption demand. Some of it would be mere displacement of expenditure that would have happened with or without the concession. This surrender of outbound LTC travel till December 2022 would negatively impact the travel and tourism industry which is already floundering. It is a demand swap; the present with the future, FMCG with travel and tourism. It is like robbing Peter to pay Paul.

(The writer is a retired IAS officer, and former Special Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry)

Assam must fix its high MMR burden soon

A hub and spoke model and a 100 per cent non-remunerative blood donation structure will help India and Assam reduce deaths

National Health Policy 2017, the target for MMR per 1,00,000 live births by 2020 is 100.

Figures from a special bulletin released by the Office of the Registrar General's Sample Registration System (SRS) in July this year show that MMR in India stood at 113 in 2016-18. Although it has seen a reduction from 122 in 2015-17 and 130 in 2014-2016, the number is way behind the SDG target. The most disturbing figure comes from Assam where MMR is at 215. However, if one compares it to the 2012-13 data of the State, it has been significantly brought down from 301. Nevertheless, given India's SDG commitment, immediate intervention is needed to bring down the ratio further.

As recently as July, Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the keynote address virtually at the high-level segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) session, wherein he highlighted that India's developmental motto of "Sabka saath, sabka vikaas, sabka vishwas" (Together,



for everyone's growth, with everyone's trust") resonates with the core SDG principle of leaving no one behind. He also emphasised that India's success in improving the socio-economic indicators of its vast population has a significant impact on global SDG targets. Hence, addressing individual health indicators like MMR is certainly critical in improving the country's public health and meeting targets set by the SDG.

The role of individual States is also critical. For example, it is important for a State like Assam with a high MMR to tackle the problem on a priority basis. According to an *Epidemiological study of maternal death in Assam*, data show that 21.3 per cent of the deaths were due to haemorrhage, 17.3 per cent due to pregnancy-induced hypertension and 10 per cent due to sepsis. Blood loss of 500 ml or more within 24 hours after birth is known as postpartum haemorrhage. Such deaths can be brought down significantly by developing a robust blood transfusion system, which provides universal access to safe and adequate blood. The annual blood collection in Assam in 2018-19 was 2,34,488 units whereas the State needed 2,42,000 units against the total number of hospital beds in 2019. As per a State-wise ranking, which maps the annual requirement to actual collections of blood units, Assam comes at the bottom five. With 82 blood banks in the State, it is regrettable that shortage of blood remains an area of concern.

Another crucial aspect is the quality of the blood available. The National AIDS Control Organisation revealed that around 1,342 people contracted HIV infection due to blood transfusion in 2018-19 pan India. This information raised several questions on the existing blood transfusion system in the country. An effective solution to ensure availability of safe blood involves shifting to 100 per cent voluntary help and doing away with replacement donation. Recruitment of donors becomes one of the most crucial features of blood transfusion services and a system supported by healthy, responsive and motivated voluntary blood donors can significantly reduce the associated quality issues. The percentage of voluntary donation in Assam is 47.9 per cent, which is way below the national average of 71.9.

Another problem that exists in a developing country like India is a fragmented blood transfusion system. For effective operation of the 3,321 blood banks in the country, it is imper-

ative that there is transparency and guaranteed quality systems. But ensuring surveillance of 3,321 blood banks for effective operation is not practically feasible. However, empirical data from developing countries show that adopting a centralised hub and spoke model can help in accessing safe blood to a great extent.

Sadly, such a centralised blood transfusion system is currently non-existent in India, even though it prevents wastage of extra blood collected, particularly now that bulk transfers between banks have been permitted by the National Blood Transfusion Council. It enhances access, too, as blood can be redirected from the hubs to wherever there is a shortage. In case of emergencies, the collection of blood becomes simpler, too. A hub and spoke model and a 100 per cent non-remunerative blood donation structure will help India and States like Assam to reduce the MMR burden.

(The writer is a public policy consultant, Chase India)



FOREIGN EYE



HONOUR THY FARMER

The Nepal Government has done nothing to change its anti-farmer policies. The way it favours businessmen over sugarcane farmers is one instance of crony capitalism. The Government must ensure that the economic equality and social justice enshrined in the Constitution also reflect in practice. (The Kathmandu Post editorial)



SAYANTANI CHATTERJEE

The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 seeks to ensure health and well-being for all as a social capital. SDG 3, more specifically SDG 3.1, aims to reduce the global Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) to less than 70 per 1,00,000 live births by 2030. As per the World Health Organisation (WHO), maternal death is the demise of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management. As per the goal laid down in the

Will give citizenship to 11 mn illegal immigrants if elected: Biden

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has vowed to provide citizenship to 11 million illegal immigrants if voted to power in the November 3 presidential election. Biden identified this as one of his priorities in addition to beating the coronavirus pandemic, rebuilding the economy and figuring out how to restore American leadership around the world.



"If the American people elect me, we're going to have an enormous task in repairing the damage he's done," Biden said, referring to the policies of Trump, a Republican.

"We have to be beating the virus, rebuilding the economy and figuring out how to restore American leadership around the world," Biden said. Biden said he would move to quickly implement his plan to deal with the pandemic and reopen safely. The Democratic presidential candidate also made a note of the challenges facing "the so-called Z. Generation, the very young." "They've really gotten screwed since they got out of school," Biden said. "The jobs aren't there," he said. "But guess what? They're the most open, progressive and the brightest generation we've ever had," he added.

"And we have to embrace them. They know the change we need to make and how we need to be much more, much more integrated in everything we do," he said. Biden was critical of the policies of President Donald Trump.

"The rest of the world is wondering, what in the Lord's name is happening? What we're living through today is not normal," he said. He reiterated his attacks on Trump's handling of the coronavirus pandemic,

nothing more than 215,000 Americans have died, and criticised the president for backing away from stimulus talks.

"He didn't walk away. He never was part of 'em," Biden said. "Three days later, after he said he was walking away, he said he's coming back ... One day, he's tweeting that the relief package is too big ... next day it's too small. The longer he's president, the more reckless he gets," he added.

The US is the worst-hit nation by the deadly coronavirus, with the total number of infections standing at 7,916,100 and deaths at 216,872, according to Johns Hopkins University. While talking more broadly about the stakes of the election, Biden noted he just got off the phone with top US investor and philanthropist Warren Buffett. "We have to refuse to postpone what America has to do, the work we have to do. There's nothing beyond our capacity for God's sake," Biden said.

"Just got off the phone with Warren Buffett and talked about how ... we're in a position, unlike we were 50, 70, 80 years ago, to lead the whole damn world in a way that no one else can. There's no limit to America's future. The only thing that's going to tear America apart is America itself," he said.

Trump admin 'greatest failure' in US history: Harris

Washington: Democratic vice-presidential candidate Kamala Harris has said that the Trump administration has been the "greatest failure" of any presidential administration in the US history as she condemned President Donald Trump for "failing" to handle the coronavirus crisis.

Harris said millions and millions of people are suffering due to Trump's failure and the US needs a new president "who

will embrace science, who will be guided by fact and truth and speak truth to the American people and have a plan." Harris, in an interview to MSNBC on Wednesday, said that Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has a national plan for testing and for treatment and for vaccines, which will be free.

"The president and this administration have been the greatest failure of any presi-

dential administration in the history of our country. You just go back to what they knew and when they knew it, and let's start with January 28 when the president, the vice president were informed that this thing was deadly, that it could hurt children, that it was five times more deadly than the flu, that it was airborne, and they covered up that information. They didn't share it with the American people," Harris alleged.

Over 7.9 million people have tested positive for COVID-19 in the US and 2,17,000 people have died so far. "And you put that in the context of the president's failure to tell the American people what was going on so they could protect themselves and their families, much less so that we could have a president and leadership in our country who had a plan to deal with it," she said. **PTI**

'A little bit concerned': Trump looks to boost Iowa support

AP ■ DES MOINES, IOWA

President Donald Trump on Wednesday sought to shore up support from constituencies that not so long ago he thought he had in the bag; big business and voters in the red state of Iowa.

In a morning address to business leaders, he expressed puzzlement that they would even consider supporting his Democratic challenger, Joe Biden, arguing that his own leadership was a better bet for a strong economy. Later, the president held his third cam-

paign rally in three nights, this time in Iowa, a state he won handily in 2016 but where Biden is making a late push.

Trump claimed to be leading in the most recent poll he saw. "For me to only be up six, I'm a little bit concerned," he asserted. Multiple polls have shown a much closer race.

Biden, for his part, held a virtual fundraiser from Wilmington, Delaware, and delivered prepped remarks to American Muslims.

He did not have any public campaign events, unusual for just 20 days out from

Election Day.

The Democratic nominee used his appearance at the fundraiser to say that Trump was trying to rush through Amy Coney Barrett, his nominee for the Supreme Court, to help his efforts to repeal the Obama health care law, calling that "an abuse of power."

Biden was expected to spend much of the day preparing for a town-hall-style TV appearance in battleground Pennsylvania on Thursday, which was to have been the night of the second presidential debate.



Over 5,600 Afghan families displaced by fighting in south

AP ■ LASHKAR GAH, AFGHANISTAN

Renewed fighting between the Taliban and Afghan government forces in southern Helmand province has forced more than 5,600 families to flee their homes, officials said Thursday, the latest flareup that could undermine US efforts to broker peace in the war-torn country.

The fighting comes as Afghan government representatives and the Taliban are holding peace talks in Qatar, where the Taliban have for years maintained a political office. The negotiations, envisaged under a US deal signed with the insurgents in February, are meant to end Afghanistan's grueling 19-year war and are seen as the country's best chance at peace. The Trump administra-

tion has pledged to pull out American forces from Afghanistan but US officials have stressed that the Taliban have still not met requirements to reduce violence against the Afghans, a key element of the US withdrawal plan.

In Helmand, Omar Zwak, the provincial governor's spokesman, said Afghan security forces were trying to regain areas lost to the Taliban over the weekend, while local officials were scrambling to provide food and shelter to the growing number of civilians fleeing from nearby districts to the provincial capital, Lashkar Gah. Ajab Gul, 25, and his family have been in the city for four days. "The Taliban have taken over our village and both sides in the battle are using light and heavy weapons, so how could we stay there?" he said.

Thailand declares emergency after unprecedented protest

AP ■ BANGKOK

Thailand's Government declared a strict new state of emergency for the capital on Thursday, a day after a student-led protest against the country's traditional establishment saw an extraordinary moment in which demonstrators heckled a royal motorcade.

After the pre-dawn declaration, riot police moved in to clear out demonstrators who after a day of rallies and confrontation had gathered outside Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha's office to push their demands, which include the former general's stepping down, constitutional changes and reform of the monarchy.

Several top leaders of the protest movement were taken into custody, with one later declaring on his Facebook page that he had been denied access to a lawyer and was being



forced onto a helicopter and taken to a city in the country's north. Police said they had made 22 arrests.

Despite a new ban against large public gatherings, several thousand people answered calls to rally again in another area of the city later Thursday.

The text of the emergency declaration said it was needed because "certain groups of per-

petrators intended to instigate an untoward incident and movement in the Bangkok area by way of various methods and via different channels, including causing obstruction to the royal motorcade."

The protest Wednesday in Bangkok's historic district, not far from glittering temples and royal palaces, was the third major gathering by student-led

activists who have been pushing the boundaries of what is considered acceptable — and legal — language by publicly questioning the role of Thailand's monarchy in the nation's power structure.

Thailand's royal family has long been considered sacrosanct and a pillar of Thai identity. King Maha Vajiralongkorn and other key members of the royal family are protected by a lese majeste law that has regularly been used to silence critics who risk up to 15 years in prison if deemed to have insulted the institution.

The protest — held on the anniversary of a 1973 student-led uprising against a military dictatorship — was complicated by the presence of royalist counter protesters who had gathered both to show support for the government and to greet the royal family as they traveled to and from a religious ceremony in the area.

CPC in consistent violation of most basic, fundamental human rights of own people: Pompeo

Washington: The Communist Party of China (CPC) is in consistent violation of the most basic and fundamental human rights for its own people, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Wednesday.

The violation of human rights and curbing the freedom of its people are the core challenges that the US has identified from the CPC, he said.

"They are in consistent violation of the most basic and fundamental human rights for their own people," Pompeo told reporters at a news conference here.

"This is what Communist parties have a history of doing. It's what President (Donald) Trump has directed us all to work to try and preserve; as much freedom, as much dignity, for every citizen of China

as we possibly can when they are confronted with these massive human rights violations that are being conducted by the Chinese Communist Party," he said.

That is true, whether it is Xinjiang, what is taking place there, whether it is Tibet; and the inner Mongolians' simple desire to live in freedom and exercise their own understandings of what freedom and human dignity look like, he said.

"In each of those places, and I'd add Hong Kong, in each of those places, we simply are demanding from the Chinese Communist Party what we ask of every nation, is to preserve basic freedom, human dignity, religious freedom for every one of their citizens. **AP**

INTRODUCTION OF NEW SPECIAL TRAIN BETWEEN PORBANDAR AND DELHI SARAI ROHILLA

This is notified for the information of passengers that Railways have decided to run following Special train as per details given below :-

Train No.	From-To	Frequency	Date of Commencement	Stoppages & Timings Accommodation
09263	Porbandar - Delhi Sarai Rohilla Special Express	Bi-Weekly	17.10.2020	Same as Train No. 19263/19264 Porbandar - Delhi Sarai Rohilla - Porbandar Express
09264	Delhi Sarai Rohilla - Porbandar Special Express	Bi-Weekly	19.10.2020	AC-2 Tier, AC-3 Tier, Sleeper & Reserved Second Class

NOTE : All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

For any kind of information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in

Please join us on

Security Helpline No. 182

Integrated Helpline No. 139

NORTHERN RAILWAY

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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Top Russian diplomat skeptical about N pact extension

Moscow: Russia's top diplomat voiced doubt Wednesday that Moscow and Washington could negotiate an extension of their last arms control pact still standing, even as the United States offered a more optimistic view.

Speaking in an interview with several Russian news outlets, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that Russia can't

accept the conditions put forward by the United States for the extension of the New START treaty. "I personally don't see the prospect," Lavrov snapped when asked if the extension is possible before the pact expires in February. "We will never say that we will shut the door and cut all contacts. But we explain that it's impossible to talk on the basis of

an ultimatum they put forward that fully ignores the principles which were acknowledged as the basis for all our agreements for decades," Lavrov's pessimistic view contrasted with the statements from U.S. diplomats, who said that Moscow and Washington were close to a deal.

"We would welcome the opportunity to complete an

agreement based on understandings that were achieved over the last couple weeks about what the range of possibilities look like for an extension of New START and an outcome that benefits the entire world, increased stability of the most dangerous weapons in the world," US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said. **AP**

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED GIRL

General public is hereby informed that this girl namely Chetna D/o Diwan Singh R/o WZ-34, Rajeev Nagar Extn., Begumpur, Delhi Age : 17 years 3 months, Height : 5'2", Complexion : Fair, Face : Round, wearing white colour top and grey colour jeans has been kidnapped since 02.10.2020. In this regard FIR No. 308/20 dated 03.10.2020 u/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Begumpur, Delhi.

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

E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in SHO : P.S. Begumpur, Delhi
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> Ph. : 011-25951431, 25951432
Fax: 24368639
Tel.: 24368638/24368641

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

See Section 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Pankaj S/o Surrender, R/o Barsan Panna, Tikri Kalan, New Delhi has Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under FIR No. 263/19 u/s 376-D/506 IPC has been registered at P.S. Mundka, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Pankaj cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Pankaj has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Pankaj of FIR No. 263/19 u/s 376-D/506 IPC has been registered at P.S. Mundka, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 21.12.2020.

By order
Ms. Babita Puniya, MM-06,
West District, Room No. 355, 3rd Floor,
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/466/OD/2020

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P. C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Rohit Behal S/o Harkesh Behal R/o Flat No. 1004, Tower B-6, RPS Sawana, Sector 88, PS BPTP Sector-76, Greater Faridabad, Haryana has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under case FIR No. 498/19 dated 31.12.2019 U/s 406/420/467/468/471 IPC, has been registered at P.S. Vikas Puri, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said Rohit Behal cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, Rohit Behal has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused, Rohit Behal FIR No. 498/19 dated 31.12.2019 U/s 406/420/467/468/471 IPC, is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 25.11.2020.

By Order,
Sh. Deepak Vats, MM
Room No.09, Ground Floor,
Dwarka District Courts Sector-10, New Delhi

DP/227/WD/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that one girl Namely: Anupam Kumari, D/o: Ravinder Mandal, R/o: King Park Street Under Raja Garden Flyover Rajouri Garden, New Delhi, Age: 12 Years, Height: 5', Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Oval, Built: Normal, Wearing: Yellow & Red Colour Suit Salwar and Blue Colour Chappal in Feet has been missing from the area of P.S. Rajouri Garden, New Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 834/20, U/s-363 IPC, Dated 28.09.2020, has been lodged at P.S. Rajouri Garden, New Delhi.

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

Web-site: <http://cbi.nic.in> SHO
E-Mail ID: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph.: 011-23011334
Fax: 011-23011334 P.S. Rajouri Garden, New Delhi
DP/225/WD/2020 Ph.: 011-25453990, 25448885

DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, DELHI 4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI- 110001, PROCLAMATION OF SALE

SALE NOTICE

The under mentioned Assets will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues as per court orders, in the following cases:-

Case Details	Asset Details	Reserve Price	EMD Amount (10% of reserve price)	Place of Auction	Date and Time of auction
IA NO 1002/19 AND OA NO 304/2108, ICICI Bank Vs Sukhija Hospitality Private Limited	Vehicle no-HR830801, Manu yr- 2014, Make and Model- JAGUAR XJL	27,00,000/-	2,70,000/-	Godara Yard, Khewat No: 166/1, Near Atul Kataria Chock, Behind Gyan Devi School, Sec- 17, Sukhrali, Gurugram- 122022	03-Nov-2020 From 11 AM to 2 PM
IA NO937/19 & QA NO 154/2017, ICICI Bank Vs Lalit Mohan	Vehicle no-HR12J0038, Manu yr- 2012, Make and Model- BMW X1 SDRIVE 20D	3,78,000/-	37,800/-	Godara Yard, Khewat No:166/1, Near Atul Kataria Chock, Behind Gyan Devi School, Sec-17, Sukhrali, Gurugram- 122022	03-Nov-2020 From 11 AM to 2 PM
OA/387/2019 IA NO.2610/19, ICICI Bank Vs Jalan Transport Pvt. Ltd.	Vehicle no-UP13AT9166, Manu yr-2017, Make and Model-AL 4923	11,25,000/-	1,12,500/-	ShriramAutomall, Vill-Mamurpur, PloManiyari Road Narela, New Delhi, Narela, Delhi, 110040.	03-Nov-2020 From 11 AM to 2 PM

EMD: DD/PO of EMD amount to be made in favour of ICICI Bank Limited, payable at Delhi.
Contact Person - Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/ Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)

Terms of Sale

The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participant/s are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself / themselves/ itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids. All bidders are required to come at site with original DD/PO of EMD amount along with original KYC proofs to participate in the auction.

Successfully approved bidder shall have to deposit sale amount (Excluding EMD amount) within 5 days from the auction date by the way of pay order/demand draft/RTGS/NEFT.

The intending bidders may visit at ICICI Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, SD Tower, Community Center, Plot no-7, Rohini Sector-8, New Delhi-110085, for details and inspection of the said hypothecated vehicle.

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Around the Globe

People with blood type O may have a lower risk of infection from the SARS-CoV-2 virus, that causes COVID-19, and reduced likelihood of severe outcomes, including organ complications, if they develop the disease, two new studies suggest. The studies, published in the journal Blood Advances on Wednesday, add evidence that there may be an association between blood type and vulnerability to COVID-19.

Dr Anthony Fauci is criticising a declaration by a group of scientists that supports the concept of "herd immunity," which the White House is using to bolster a push to reopen schools and businesses.

Scientists have analysed 176 reported cases of novel coronavirus infections in newborn infants, and found that while 30 per cent of the babies may have contracted the virus from the mother, breastfeeding was not associated with Covid-19.

The head of the World Health Organization's Europe office said the exponential surge of coronavirus cases across the continent has warranted the restrictive measures being taken across the continent, calling them "absolutely necessary" to stop the pandemic. In a press briefing on Thursday, Dr. Hans Kluge warned that even more drastic steps might be needed in such "unprecedented times."

Singapore and Hong Kong have agreed on a bilateral air travel bubble, which will exempt travellers from the mandatory quarantine upon arrival, as the rate of coronavirus infection declines in both regional aviation hubs. To avail the flights, travellers will have to test negative in the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for COVID-19, Singapore's Ministry of Transport (MOT) on Thursday.

London to move into Tier 2 of 'high' Covid-19 alert level from Saturday

GST compensation: Govt to borrow ₹1.1 L crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Central government will borrow up to ₹1.1 lakh crore on behalf of the states to bridge the shortfall in GST collections, the Finance Ministry said on Thursday.

A slowdown in the economy since last fiscal has resulted in a drop in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections, upsetting the budgets of states which had given up their right to levy local taxes such as sales tax or VAT when GST was introduced in July 2017.

To make up for the shortfall, borrowing from the market was proposed. In a statement, the Union Finance Ministry said states were offered a special window to borrow ₹1.1 lakh crore over and above their existing limits, to bridge the shortfall.

"Under the Special Window, the estimated shortfall of Rs 1.1 lakh crore (assuming all States join) will be borrowed by Government of India in appropriate tranches," the

statement said. "The amount so borrowed will be passed on to the States as a back-to-back loan in lieu of GST Compensation Cess releases."

The release, however, did not say who will service the interest and principal payments. The Centre borrowing on behalf of states is likely to ensure that a single rate of borrowing is charged and this would also be easy to administer. The borrowing, the statement said, "will not have any impact on the fiscal deficit of the Government of India."

"The amounts will be reflected as the capital receipts of the State Governments and as part of the financing of its respective fiscal deficits," it said. Borrowing of the shortfall by the Centre will avoid differential rates of interest that individual states may be charged and will be an administratively easier arrangement, it added.

"It may also be clarified that the General Government (States+Centre) borrowings will not increase by this step," it said. "The States that get the benefit from the Special Window are likely to borrow a considerably lesser amount from the additional borrowing facility of 2 per cent of GDP (from 3 per cent to 5 per cent) under the Aatma Nirbhar Package."

When the GST was introduced in July 2017, states were promised a 14 per cent incremental revenue over their last tax receipts in the first five years of the GST rollout.

This was to be done through a levy of a cess or surcharge on luxury and sin goods, but the collections on this count have fallen short with the slowdown in the economy since last fiscal.

To make up for this, the Centre suggested that the states can borrow against future compensation receipts.

The Finance Ministry had earlier this week stated that 21 states have accepted one of the two borrowing options suggested by the Centre.

World facing new Bretton Woods moment: IMF MD

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Facing the twin task of fighting the coronavirus pandemic today and building a better tomorrow, the world is experiencing a new Bretton Woods moment, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said on Thursday.

Addressing the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund's Board of Governors, she said that what was true at Bretton Woods, when allies at the end of World War II gathered for a conference to create the institutions that would use economic cooperation to prevent future conflicts, remains true today.

"Today we face a new Bretton Woods moment. A pandemic that has already cost more than a million lives. An economic calamity that will make the world economy 4.4 per cent smaller this year and strip an estimated USD 11 trillion of output by next year. And untold human desperation in the face of huge disruption and

rising poverty for the first time in decades," she said.

"Once again, we face two massive tasks: to fight the crisis today and build a better tomorrow," she said.

Prudent macroeconomic policies and strong institutions are critical for growth, jobs and improved living standards, she said.

Strong medium-term frameworks for monetary, fiscal and financial policies, as well as reforms to boost trade, competitiveness and productivity can help create confidence for policy action now while building much-needed resilience for the future, she added. "We know what action must be taken right now. A durable economic recovery is only possible if we beat the pandemic. Health measures must remain a priority. I urge you to support production and distribution of effective therapies and vaccines to ensure that all countries have access," Georgieva said.

She urged countries to continue support for workers and businesses until a durable exit from the health crisis.

"We have seen global fiscal actions of USD 12 trillion. Major central banks have expanded balance sheets by USD 7.5 trillion. These synchronised measures have prevented the destructive macro financial feedback we saw in previous crises," she said.

"But almost all countries are still hurting, especially emerging market and developing economies. And while the global banking system entered the crisis with high capital and liquidity buffers, there is a weak tail of banks in many emerging markets. We must take measures to prevent the build-up of financial risks over the medium term," she said. The IMF expects 2021 debt levels to go up significantly - to around 125 per cent of GDP in advanced economies, 65 per cent of GDP in emerging markets; and 50 per cent of GDP in low-income countries, Georgieva further said.

Need to have more disease-specific health insurance products: Irda

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Irda Chairman Subhash Khuntia has urged health insurance providers to develop disease-specific products which could help policy holders in preventing different ailments.

"I would urge insurers to develop more disease-specific products like for diabetics or for heart or kidney related issues," Khuntia said at a health insurance summit organised by CII.

Under such focussed products, insurance companies can bring together medical experts to make aware policy holders on steps to be taken to prevent various diseases, he said.

The chairman said the insurance sector, for too long, has concentrated on tertiary care or hospitalisation and now there was a need to focus more on primary and secondary care, the outpatient care and more on to have preventive care.

'India needs to firm up quality control, improve R&D to become global hub for PPE kits'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India needs to strengthen quality control and step up R&D efforts to realise its potential of becoming a global manufacturing hub for PPE kits, said a report released on Thursday.

"It will bring more consistency into the quality of the PPEs manufactured, reduce the testing and rejection overheads post-delivery and allow local manufacturers to scale up their production to reach not only domestic markets but also global markets," said the report by the Institute for Competitiveness.

It points out that even though India achieved self-sufficiency in terms of localised manufacturers and production of PPE body coveralls, PPE fabric and seam tapes, the country still relied on imports for procuring a critical component like seam sealing equipment.

India needs to indigenize the production of critical equipment and machineries.

Sensex snaps 10-session rally, crashes 1,066 pts amid global selloff

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Snapping its 10-session winning run, equity benchmark Sensex plunged 1,066.33 points on Thursday as investors pressed the exit button amid a massive selloff in global markets.

The 30-share BSE index plummeted 1,066.33 points or 2.61 per cent to end at 39,728.41.

The broader NSE Nifty crashed 290.70 points or 2.43 per cent to 11,680.35. Global equities cratered as hopes faded of a pre-election stimulus deal in the US, while multiple countries in Europe braced for a second round of lockdowns to curb rising COVID-19 cases, jeopardising the already shaky economic recovery.

Back home, market participants were also eager to book profits after the recent rally amid already stretched valuations, traders said.

Barring Asian Paints, which inched up 0.32 per cent, all Sensex constituents closed in the red.

Bajaj Finance was the top loser, tumbling 4.68 per cent,

Rupee ends 5 paise lower at 73.36 against USD

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Indian rupee on Thursday settled 5 paise lower at 73.36 to the US dollar as weaker Asian peers and fund outflows from domestic markets weighed on investor sentiment.

Additionally, importers' mid-month dollar demand also put pressure on the local unit, analysts said. At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened on a steady note but was caught in volatility as the trade progressed.

During the session, it hit an intra-day high of 73.22 and a low of 73.41 against the US dollar. It finally closed at 73.36, lower by 5 paise over its previous close of 73.31.

Foreign institutional investors turned net sellers in the capital market as they offloaded shares worth Rs 604.07 crore on Thursday, exchange data showed.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.34 per cent to 93.69.

No plan to do away with sleeper class: Railway Board chief

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Railways on Thursday refuted reports that it was going to discontinue the sleeper class on mail and express trains and said that the aim behind introducing three-tier coaches was to make journey of passengers more affordable and comfortable.

Addressing a virtual press conference, Railway Board Chairman and CEO V.K. Yadav said: "We will continue with sleeper class coaches. There's absolutely no ambiguity related to it."

Noting that the railways plans to increase the speed of trains on its network and soon, trains on the New Delhi-Mumbai and New Delhi-Kolkata routes will run at 130 kmph, while work to upgrade tracks to enable trains run at 160 kmph has also started, he, however, said that with the increased speeds, passengers in sleeper class coaches will face difficulties and discomfort.

"So, we have decided to make a new AC-3 tier coach which will be introduced next year. Our aim is to make AC travel more affordable for the passengers and fare will be

Govt buys 62.42 lakh tonne kharif paddy at MSP in last 19 days

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

About 62.42 lakh tonne of kharif paddy worth ₹11,785 crore was purchased at the minimum support price (MSP) from 5.33 lakh farmers in the last 19 days, the food ministry said on Thursday.

Paddy procurement commenced in Punjab and Haryana from September 26 due to early arrival of the crop, while in other states it began from October 1.

More than 80 per cent of the country's paddy crop is grown in the kharif season. The government through the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and state agencies undertakes procurement of paddy at MSP.

"Paddy procurement in the 2020-21 kharif marketing season is going on smoothly in the procuring states of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Chandigarh and J&K," the food ministry said in a statement.

Till October 14, about 62.42 lakh tonne of paddy was procured at MSP value of ₹11,785 crore, it said.

For the current year, the Centre has fixed the MSP of paddy (common grade) at ₹1,868 per quintal, while that of A grade variety has been fixed at ₹1,888 per quintal. In case of cotton, state-owned Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) has procured 89,592 bales at MSP value of ₹25,399 lakh from 18,618 farmers till October 14.

Besides, the government through nodal agencies is buying pulses and oilseeds at MSP under the Price Support Scheme (PSS), which gets operationalised when market rates fall below the support price.

Till October 14, about 686.74 tonne of moong and urad at MSP value of Rs 4.94 crore was procured from 639 farmers in Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

Similarly, 5,089 tonne of copra at MSP value of Rs 52.40 crore was procured from 3,961 farmers in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu in the said period.

In respect of copra and urad, rates are ruling at or above MSP. Respective state governments are making arrangements for commencement of procurement in respect of moong.

ED POWERGRID awarded 'IEC 1906 AWARD' by IEC

Gurgaon: B N De Bhowmick, ED (TD) POWERGRID and Expert of IEC Technical Committee 122, UHVAC Transmission Systems has been awarded the prestigious IEC 1906 Award by the International Electrotechnical Commission. It recognises the major inputs made in furthering standardisation in the field of electrotechnology.

The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) created the IEC 1906 Award to commemorate the founding of the Commission and to honour those who have made an exceptional recent technical contribution to the development of a specific IEC work project. This is now the seventeenth occasion on which this award has been made.

This international award from IEC, was presented on the occasion of World Standardisation Day 2020 at BIS in a ceremony attended by Smt. Leena Nandan, IAS, Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, Shri Pramod Kumar Tiwari, IAS, Director General, Bureau of Indian Standards, Smt. Nidhi Khare, IAS, Additional Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs (GoI), Shri N. K. Kansara, Deputy Director General (Policy Research and Training), BIS.

India's exports rise 6% to \$27.58 bn in Sept

New Delhi: India's exports increased 5.99 per cent year-on-year to USD 27.58 billion in September, according to the government data released on Thursday.

Exports stood at USD 26.02 billion in September 2019.

PTI

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Ram Kumar Singla and Smt. Sushila Devi R/o E-4/199, Sector-16, Rohini, New Delhi has disowned their son Madhur Singla and his wife Nisha Garg from their movable and immovable assets, my clients will not be responsible for any kind of acts, done by them in future.

Pardeep Bansal (Advocate)
Ch. No. C-328, Lawyers Chamber Block Karkardooma Courts Delhi

Before the Central Govt THE REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES Registrar, Delhi

In the matter of sub-section (3) of Section 13 of Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008 and rule 17 of the Limited Liability Partnership Rules, 2009

In the matter of the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008, Section 13 (3) AND in the matter of M/s. Aappo, New Coders LLP having its registered office at RZ-31, First Floor, Indira Park, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059, Petitioner

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the LLP proposes to make a petition to Registrar of Companies, 4th Floor, IFCI Tower, 61, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 under section 13 (3) of the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008 seeking permission to change its Registered office from the state of "Delhi" to the state of "Gurugram".

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the LLP may deliver or cause to be delivered or send by Registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of objection supported by an affidavit to the Registrar of Companies, 4th Floor, IFCI Tower, 61, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019, within 21 (twenty one) days from the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the petitioner LLP at its registered office at the address mentioned above.

For APPSOLEUT CODERS LLP
B-3, 1137 - 1140, Spaze I Tech Park, Sec-49, Sohna Road, Gurugram - 122018

UJVN LTD.
H.O.: 'UJJWAL', Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808 & Fax: 0135-2763507
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866 Web: www.ujvn.com

Letter No. 631
E-Tender Notice Dated 09.10.2020

Office of the Executive Engineer (G), Chilla Power House invites online bids from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:
Tender No.: 05/EE(G)/Chilla/2020-21.
Name of work: Annual Maintenance of electrical works of Chilla Power House.
Estimated cost: Rs. 15,99,028/- Plus GST extra.
Date of availability of bid document on website: 10.10.2020 from 16:00 Hrs.
Last date for submission of bids on website: 31.10.2020 up to 16:00 Hrs.
For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal <http://uktenders.gov.in>
Executive Engineer (G)

"Avoid Wasteful use of Electricity"

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No-23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi-110005

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of immovable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s) / Co-Borrowers / Guarantors / Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Nidhi Garg (Borrower), Vikas Garg (Co-borrower) (LBDEL00001803519)	Plot No SH - 207, F/F, Block - H, Sec-16, GMP Shastri Nagar, Ghaziabad 201001	Rs. 88,87,472/- (as on September, 28th 2020)	Rs. 23,00,000/- Rs. 2,30,000/-	November 06, 2020 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM	November 17, 2020 From 11:00AM to 01:00 PM

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link-<https://disposalhub.com>) of our auction agency **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited**. The Mortgagors/noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **November 16, 2020 before 05:00 P.M** else these secured assets will be sold as per above schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at **ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No-23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi-110005** and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **November 16, 2020 before 05:00 P.M** along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at **ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No-23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi-110005** on or before **November 16, 2020 before 05:00 P.M**. Earnest Money Deposit DD/P.O should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Delhi.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited on 932730494** or **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited on 9710029933/9810029926/01244233933**

Please note that Marketing agencies 1. **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited** 2. **Augeo Asset Management Pvt Ltd** have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4ps

Date: October 16, 2020
Place: Delhi/NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

E-TENDER NOTICE
GUJARAT MARITIME BOARD
"Sagar Bhavan", Sector 10/A, Chh' Road, Opp. Air Force, Gandhinagar 382 010
Phone 079-2323 8346/47/48/51

Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) invites E-tenders from the agencies for the following works.

Name of Work
"Conducting hydrographic survey at GMB Ports and empanment of agencies for the survey work"

Details

Bids downloading commencement	16-10-2020
Date	from 16:00 hrs
Last Date for On-line submission	17-11-2020 up to
of Bids through www.nprocure.com	18:10 hrs

Detailed terms and conditions and other related information is given in Bid documents. For Bid documents and more details, please visit website www.nprocure.com or www.gmbports.org or contact Deputy General Manager (Env), Environment Cell, Gujarat Maritime Board, Gandhinagar. Mobile No 9925153099 and E-mail ID: atul.sharma@gmbports.in

No/INF/VPN/2020/G/1086

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice is hereby given in accordance with the Para 5 of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Notification No. DNBS, (PD)/029/GM(CDS-2015) dated July 9, 2015 that the Directors and shareholders of BKP Commercial India Private Limited (the Company), a Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 (CN No. U55993DL1995PL002657) having its Registered office: 308, 8th Floor, GD-II, Tower, B-08, Netaji Subhash Place, Pitampura, Delhi North West - 110034, India and having Certificate of Registration bearing No. B-14.01873 obtained from the Reserve Bank of India as non-deposit taking Non-Banking Financial Company, propose to transfer the management and control of the Company to Ms. Priya Madhavan Vijayakumari, Mr. Subramanyarunni and Mr. George Zachariah. Accordingly the Company has obtained prior approval from the Reserve Bank of India vide Letter No. DOS.ND.No.334/CMS-IV/05.02.088/2020-21 dated 30th September, 2020 for change in Management and control.

The reason for change of management and control is because the proposed acquirers intended to invest in the equity share capital in addition to acquisition of equity shares from the existing shareholders and take control of the management with a view to scale up the business.

The Company is registered as Non-Deposit taking Non-Banking Financial Company and do not propose to accept public deposits. Any clarifications / concerns in this regards may be addressed directly to the Department of Supervision, 6, Sansad Marg, Reserve Bank of India, New Delhi - 110 001 and also to the Registered Office of the Company along with a copy marked to the above address within 30 days from the date of publication.

For Transferees
Sd/-
Mr. Basant Kumar Poddar
Sd/-
Mr. Lakshmi Prasad Poddar

For Transferees
Sd/-
Ms. Priya Madhavan Vijayakumari
Sd/-
Mr. Subramanyarunni
Sd/-
Mr. George Zachariah

If any person has any objection or concern with respect to the change in shareholding and management, they may approach the undersigned within 30 days of publish of this notice

For BKP Commercial India Private Ltd,
Sd/-
Basant Kumar Poddar
Director
Email: bkp17.adv@gmail.com, Contact No: +91 9811166137
Date: 12/10/2020
Place: Pitampura, Delhi North West

Trend Blazer

'There are new challenges everyday'

Actor **RASIKA DUGAL** feels the careers of no two actors can be the same and no actor can have the same experience as others in the profession.

She says that she doubts herself almost everyday. "I just think that because I have had many years of experience I know how to possibly manage my self doubt around certain things a little better than others, but as the years go by your career changes. There are new challenges everyday," said she.

Rasika made her Bollywood debut in Bollywood in 2008 with *Tahaan*. She was then seen in projects like *Tu Hai Mera Sunday* and *Hamid*.



'I am thrilled to be back on the sets of Prithviraj as I awfully missed the set life. I look forward to be on shoot every day because I'm absorbing a lot and I'm loving it. I was excited to be on sets with Akshay sir as I've learnt so much from him and there is so much more to learn. I am fortunate to be working with the team, every one has been wonderful.'

—Manushi Chillar

Actor **VAANI KAPOOR** is excited to start shooting her next, a progressive love story starring **Ayushmann Khurrana**.



The actress is thrilled to collaborate with Abhishek Kapoor and reveals that the director is a 'master of human emotions.'

Says she, "Abhishek is a master when it comes to capturing human emotions. He has done it brilliantly in films like *Rock On*, *Kai Po Che*, *Kedarnath* among others. The way he dissects the nuances in relationships is what fascinated me about his filmmaking. I was awed by the way he depicted the story of three friends in *Kai Po Che*."

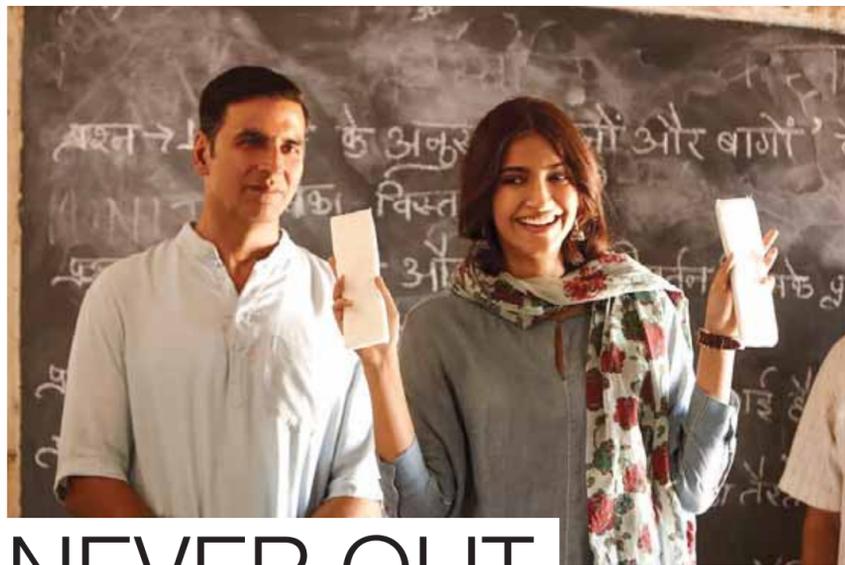
Jones for breast cancer awareness

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and actor **JANUARY JONES** has been urging women to keep a check for the malady regularly.

Taking to Instagram, Jones posted a picture of herself posing in pink bra, vowing to stand with those in her family fighting the disease.

"October is Breast Cancer awareness month. Please don't procrastinate getting your mammograms/ultrasounds ladies," she wrote.

Jones added, "Sending love to all who have fought and are currently fighting... I love you and am standing with you!"



NEVER OUT OF TREND

HARSH NARAYAN, founder and creative director of the Indus Valley International Film Festival tells **SAKSHI SHARMA** that he will continue with a digital version even in the post-COVID era because online is the standalone robust future

It is that time of the year when most of us would expect the film festivals to be buzzing with stars flaunting designer's outfits and latest trends. But we are quick to adapt to the digital versions of the festivals as an alternative to the physical ones, given the novel Coronavirus and the restrictions that followed.

There are various film festivals that have taken a fresh approach and have launched themselves online for people to enjoy their couch-side versions. One such is the Indus Valley International Film Festival.

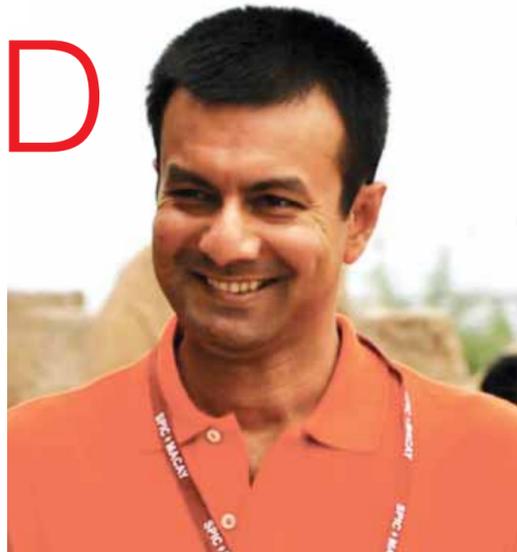
After successfully executing its first edition during the lockdown, the organisers were soon ready with the next. The second edition of the digital festival hosted nine days of films, interaction with celebrities, workshops on filmmaking, masterclasses, scriptwriting, theatre acting and direction. It presented films from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and India. There were also films in International Panorama segment, comprising films from Italy, Spain etc.

It opened with R Balki's film *PadMan* and closed with Vishal Bhardwaj film *Rangoon*. Actor Himanshu Malik was the 'Master of Ceremony', who also announced the list of 25 awards in various categories, selected by jury. The jury comprised of Supriti – a diversity & inclusion consultant, Vineet Chopra – a theatre director and Harsh Narayan, a filmmaker. Organised by SAFACH (South Asia Forum for Art & Creative Heritage), the screening at the festival brought forward the rich diversity and legacy of South Asian films.

Founder and Creative Director of the festival, Harsh Narayan, shared about the new offerings this time, the challenges of holding a grand festival online and the way forward. Excerpts:

◆What would you say about the second digital edition of the festival?

This edition gave us much higher visibility and reach. When we do a physical film festival, its reach is limited to the city its being held. But this time we had active



participants from various countries and registrations from USA, Africa, Europe and all South Asian countries. People attended our sessions and watched films online through our digital film portal. Until the last day we received online registrations, including from USA. The participants were enthusiastic as they were able to watch recorded sessions and films through VoD after the festival officially ended.

This gives us confidence that digital festival is not just a stop-gap during Corona times but it has a standalone robust future. We now seek to continue with a digital version of the festival, even in post-COVID era, with a simultaneous physical film festival.

◆What new did the festival offer this time?

We organised workshops and masterclasses on filmmaking, scriptwriting and documentary filmmaking online through the festival portal. We received registrations from students and cinema enthusiasts who attended them from their respective universities or homes. Apart from this we also organised panel discussions on *Filmmaking & Creative Collaborations in South Asia* and *Music Collaborations in South Asia*. There were leading filmmakers and musicians from neighbouring countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, attending the respective sessions. These were engaging discussions where people agreed and emphasised on the need for a digital body which can facilitate collaborations, co-productions and joint ventures in the industry.



◆What were the underlying challenges of holding a grand festival like this online?

The main challenge, initially, was to convince filmmakers, producers and studios to give their films for this digital version. Rightly so, all the digital rights of the films are sold, or preserved to be sold. Therefore, producers are usually apprehensive about giving their films for the digital film festival fearing piracy; although they hold festival screening rights with themselves.

To mitigate their concern, we established a secure and private IVIFF digital festival portal, to be accessed only by the registered participants. Also, with our past credibility, we were able to convince filmmakers and producers with our plan. And finally some of top production houses and studios came on board.

◆Do you think conducting the festival online helped more?

Yes. Since we had participants from various countries, it would have been a gruesome task to bring all of them together at one platform physically. The process of procuring visas and getting clearances is another hectic task which can be avoided online. Another thing was that the filmmakers and actors had the liberty to appear for the festival from their homes or workplaces only for the duration of their talks or sessions, giving them a lot of time in hand to continue their other stuffs. In a physical festival, usually they have to travel to the city, spend at least a day/night, taking away a lot of their time.

◆How do you think such festivals foster art and creativity amid the pandemic?

People have been distressed, sad and depressed for a while now with all the negative news around, be it related to the pandemic, war,

suicides, depression, drugs, social unrest or political frictions. We wanted to give public a creative solace and a ray of hope to look at the brighter sides of life, despite the challenging times around. We must remember that at the darkest of times, creativity kindles our hearts with light. Art and creativity helps repair our souls. It also strengthens our faith in the power of love and compassion, rejuvenating the societal conscience.

◆You mentioned that, "On a regular basis, film screenings, talks, workshops or panel discussions should be organised under Indus Valley..." What more can be done on the same lines to retain the momentum?

We have planned to create Indus Valley as a permanent digital platform to connect artists, musicians and filmmakers from across South Asia and later expand it to South-East Asia as well. It will help them connect, collaborate and plan co-productions. They will also be able to showcase their creative works and charge an amount for it. The platform will also give them access to a wider market and connect with best talent and tech resources available around our neighbouring countries.

We have also decided to bring leading and forthcoming talented musicians from across South Asia to produce and promote collaborative music productions. A suggestion also came that we create a South Asian Cinema fund to facilitate development of promising film scripts selected from all South Asian countries, and take them to a level where they could be produced as a successful screen content. A committee will be formed to deliberate upon and facilitate these processes.

TWO TO TANGO

The new reflects the old

Nice but all about the badge

In the wake of LeBron James winning his fourth NBA title with the Los Angeles Lakers the inevitable comparisons between him and Michael Jordan began again. After all, Jordan's Chicago Bulls won six titles in the 1990s. Earlier, this year, when sports was shut, Jordan reminded us of his and his team's greatness with the Netflix documentary *The Last Dance*. It is often disingenuous to compare cars from two different generations because over the years, the rules and standards have changed. Yet, they are easy pegs for a story. Personally, as much as I love Jordan and the Bulls, LeBron has achieved his success on different teams with different coaches and supporting players in today's hyper-competitive age where he has won against the dynasty of the Golden State Warriors.

Basketball players and other athletes are one thing, but what about cars? Is it fair to compare cars from even the 1990s to cars in 2020? Keep in mind, we had completely different notions of safety, technology and even luxury back then compared to today. But because cars from that era were so much lighter, electric seats for example didn't exist and nor did the heavy-duty and weighty motors to run them. They were so much more enjoyable to drive, light and sharp around the corners. Sure, advanced variable geometry turbochargers didn't exist either and if you told



someone in 1995 that a two-litre diesel motor would produce close to two hundred horsepower, you'd be sent to the funny house.

Cars, like athletes, are the products of their eras. As much fun as I have driving old cars, I like having digital displays, ventilated seats and music on demand. After all, the average commute takes longer today despite more roads around and I want to be comfortable. I don't mind having a bit of fun on weekends but honestly for most buyers they'd be quite happy to sacrifice fun for convenience and comfort. But then, I recently drove the BMW 220d Gran Coupe and you realise that you do not always have to make that sacrifice. Yes, this is the first front-wheel drive BMW sedan to go on sale globally (the F52 1-series sedan was a China-only

product) but the driving dynamics and engine performance of this car is spectacular. I wanted to take this car out more and the 24-hours I had with it were painfully short.

I'm not saying that other BMW's are not comfortable as well as sporty, but this 220d had a great combination of performance and comfort. And much like LeBron's domination of today reminds people of Jordan, the F44, the model code for the 2-series Gran Coupe reminded me of the 1990s E36, the model code for the 3-series of that era. That was a brilliant car to drive, but this one conforms to all the safety features and creature comforts of our age. Heck, the digital instrument cluster on this car is a revelation with BMW's integration with Apple CarPlay being the best of any car.

Yes, at ₹39.3 lakh if there is any problem with this car other than the fact that there is no petrol engine variant at launch, it is the price. In fact, the M Sport line variant I drove with adaptive suspension cost ₹41.4 lakh, far too close to entry-level variants of the 3-series (in fact, BMW India has a fantastic offer on the 3-series GT right now). Personally, the 2-series Gran Coupe is more fun than the 3-series even with the same engine. BMW India is offering some attractive finance and buy-back offers for those who buy this car. Also, BMW is smartly loading even the 'Sport' line variant with a lot of creature comforts and even smartphone integration (the base 'Sport' line variants on many BMW's do not have full smartphone integration). But my honest bottom-line is that I loved this car.

Over at Audi, things have been a bit challenging over the past few months. The company has refreshed their range of performance cars, the RS7 and RSQ8 have made it onto Indian shores but pickings are slim for the time being. The A3, A4, A5, Q3, Q5 and Q7 are currently not on sale as BS6 versions of all those cars are pending. With Audi's corporate parent Skoda Auto Volkswagen India Private Limited deciding to withdraw from diesels altogether, Audi has been unable to access a large proportion of the luxury car market that continues to swear by diesels, albeit a number that is decreasing.

So it was a pleasant surprise when I discovered that Audi is bringing the Q2 into the Indian market. No Q3 meant that Audi was missing the critical entry-point product, this might help the carmaker. Now, there are some top-of-mind issues with the Q2. First and foremost, the car being launched in India is not a new model, it has been in the market for four years globally and as such is similar in size and overall kit to the recently launched Skoda Karoq and Volkswagen T-Roc. Unlike those cars which have a 1.5 litre 150PS turbocharged petrol engine, the Q2 has the 190PS 2-litre petrol engine.

And that shows when you take the Q2 on the road, it is fast and how!



While it is ostensibly an SUV, even with Audi's Quattro all-wheel drive system, it handles very well indeed. So it ticks the boxes for lightness and agility, and it also has a decent amount of kit with the 'Virtual Cockpit' display, which on the Q2 is a lot better than the T-Roc for example, (I'm yet to drive the Karoq), this is a fun car to drive. Of course, the question — whether it will be worth the extra dosh you will pay out for the additional 40PS of power — is the pertinent one. Of course, there is the power of the Audi badge, which touchingly is colloquially known as *Char Choori* in North India. The baby Q2 has

badge value that its siblings do not have. With Audi throwing in free service and maintenance for five years, if you pre-book the car, it becomes a better value.

What is interesting though is Audi's strategy in India. So far in 2020, they've addressed the top of the market and now, the Q2 addressing the entry into the luxury market. Of course, this has been made easier with the decision to allow limited volume imports into India without the need for homologation. At the time of writing I didn't know the price of the Q2, but it ought to be an attractive entry-point to brand Audi.

A GATEWAY TO CULTURE

On World Food Day, chef KIRAN CHAUHAN shares how different eating practices originated at various locations and continue to shape one's cultural identity

Cuisines act as an expression of cultural identity as they are passed on to other generations as tradition. With every geographical shift, we come across new people and with them, their countries' or native places' food. In fact, cooking their traditional cuisine at a different place becomes a way for them to keep their culture alive as they migrate to newer locations. Every platter has different methods of preparation and flavour preferences, which can be an intimation of the specific region or from the people who make it. This knowledge can be used by the chef to tap into the subconscious associations that guests have about their own cultures, such as comfort flavours.

For a very long time, the promotion of traditional food is one of the main components of the relationship between food, culture and tourism. Even though food and culture are two separate worlds but they go well together. The world treats culture as an embodiment of people's traditions and ways of life as it is always illustrated in their food, rituals, dances, festivals, sculptures, building designs, religion, clothing and other practices.

However, if we notice, the fusion of cultures is more common now than ever. Due to migration being a popular trend, there is also a rise in fusion foods, which, though it might look like, do not take away the origin of the society which they were originally born in. According to the area and different cultures, the types of food eaten by millions of people around the world vary. This diversity did not start like this but it gradually evolved to balance our society and the resources available. Therefore, we study how culture influences food choices and vice versa, to understand or have a deeper understanding of various food cultures.

European & Indian influences
There have been several changes post the Renaissance in food in both India and Europe. With the origin of the innovative cooks in Italy, it brought the use of wheat, barley, sesamum and brassaica in India.

By that time, humans had also learnt to tame buffaloes, goats and sheep as they started becoming useful for agriculture. Slowly and steadily, the time marked the overall development and led us towards a civilised world, with a more scientifically managed lifestyle. Food in ancient India ultimately depicted the cultural development from ancient history as earlier Indians ate food from readily available nature. The principal food items of the nomadic dwellers were fruits, wild berries, meat, fish, etc.

People settled down with the advent of civilization and began to farm, which led to food crops, pulses, etc, being discovered. Now, the food was grown around the fertile river valleys in India. Rice, lentils, vegetables and meat were consumed as staples. Thus, the Indian civilisation period and the Renaissance in Europe are powerful examples of how culture influences food preferences.

Modern culture's influence

Popular food rituals are eroding and patterns of meal preparation are shifting. People are mostly eating alone and we don't eat three square meals a day anymore. Snacks are now almost equal to the number of meal opportunities, 49 per cent versus 51 per cent. Today's signs of food quality have to be fresh, real and less-refined because consumers want to know and understand what all ingredients are incorporated in their food and the story behind the particular dish being served. Consumers are seeking simplicity, hence, they want minimally processed food. Nowadays, transparency is a new trend driving change in the food industry. Digitalisation is also readdressing our relationship with food because people are now using their smartphone to order food or to book or review restaurants online from anywhere in the world and rely on good food pictures as well. The rise in the millennial generation and their behaviour pattern has shown us that they are more concerned about their health, community, social issues and humane treatment of animals more than their older counterparts. Also, there is another opportunity we see



as in the face of dining out, such as breakfast, small bites, the absence of additives/preservatives, organic casualisation (and its expansion into all stages of food service) as well as all-day snacking.

In this modern age, traditions are taking a back seat and convenience is becoming the focus. With this mantra being the driving force, food is itself changing to keep up with the fast-moving lifestyle. Asian cuisines have always encouraged family meals and thus, have different ways of consumption. For example, China uses chopsticks since having a family meal means a widespread on the table and chopsticks help to slow down your eating pace and tricks you into feeling full. Since families now hardly have time for each other. Hence, the meaning behind these small cultural aspects are getting lost.



Languages and food

The culture and customs revolve around food and language because among other slightly less important factors, early humans were more likely to develop their societies to keep themselves fed. Language is also riddled with phrases and idioms linked to food since the invention of communication was a survival strategy in large regions. Today, as we see food and language continue to be an important aspect of our lives and culture, there are tonnes of food idioms in many languages that reflect local cuisine because why wouldn't they? In many restaurants, while catering to international visitors, the role of including local language in the menus has been adopted by the local linguists from region-specific dishes to keep up with the branding and make them distinctive in terms of their menu offering.

For example, a famous idiom in Hindi — *Thotha Chana Baaje Ghana* — is an indication towards how a learned man is always humble. There are many phrases that show us how food has been observed and incorporated into our lives in a way that we don't even notice.

Thus, aromas and visual signals can jog people's memories from their childhood relating to their favourite food, without even tasting it. This depicts how food can remind you of your traditions even if you're overseas. It's a way of coming home and feeling at peace. Most of the time chefs use this tactic to make their patrons feel more welcomed and homely. The best way to sell a house is by baking a fresh batch of cookies because the sweet and warm smell gives the house a homely vibe.

The differences among cultures' significance are very much the differences we can see in food, which also affects the personality of the people who live there. Now it's easier to access cuisines from distinct cultures as the world becomes more globalised. We all should accept our heritage through the food of our country but also try and explore other regions' food and become more educated about other cultures and traditions as well. It is important to note that in the culture, to which it belongs, each dish has a special place and is even more special for those who prepare it. Food is, and it should be viewed as such, a gateway to culture.

(The author is the head chef of Krua Thai.)

R E C I P E S



SOM TOM (RAW PAPAYA SALAD)

WHAT YOU NEED

- Raw papaya: 100 gm
- Red chilli: 1
- Garlic: 4 cloves
- Peanuts (optional): 20 gm
- Carrot (optional): 50 gm
- Fish sauce/light soya sauce: 15 ml
- Lemon juice: 30 ml
- Brown/ palm/ date sugar: 30 gm

METHOD

- Cut raw papaya and carrot in julienne fashion.
- Pound chilli and garlic together.
- Cut vegetables of your choice into one-inch size.
- Crush the peanut (optional).
- Mix it all together.
- Add lemon juice, fish sauce or light soya and sugar.
- Mix everything together again and serve.

Courtesy: Kiran Chauhan, Head Chef, Krua Thai.

GERMAN STOLLEN BREAD

WHAT YOU NEED

- Flour: 500 gm
- Lukewarm water
- Yeast: 10 gm
- Raisins, cranberries, chopped citrus peel, nuts: 100 gm
- Rum: 30 ml
- Sugar: 50 gm
- Salt: 10 gm
- Cinnamon: 5 gm
- Egg: 2
- Marzipan: 150 gm
- Melted & cooled butter: 150 gm
- Powder sugar for dusting

METHOD

- Soak the dry fruits in rum and cinnamon for few days, preferably one month.
- In a bowl, beat sugar and butter. Add eggs and beat again.
- Mix the yeast in lukewarm water and add flour and salt and make a dough.
- Mix the rum-soaked nuts and dry fruits in the dough. Also add the sugar butter mixture.



- Keep the dough aside for 15 minutes.
- Roll the dough into small portions and fill marzipan and wrap it.
- Keep the rolled bread again at the room temperature for 30 minutes.
- Bake the bread in OTG at 170 degrees for approximately 25 minutes.
- Take out the bread. Let it cool.
- Brush it with butter and sprinkle powder sugar for dusting. Enjoy!

Courtesy: Honey & Dough.

RAW BANANA, COCONUT & SAGO KEBAB

WHAT YOU NEED

- Raw banana: 600 gm
- Fresh coconut (grated): 250 gm
- Soaked sago pearls: 300 gm
- Almonds (crushed): 40 gm
- Black peppercorn: 1 tbsp
- Salt to taste
- Green chillies (chopped): 5
- Ghee: 20 gm

METHOD

- Wash, boil and cool banana. Grate it.

- Grate the fresh coconut.
- Heat ghee in a pan and when hot, add grated coconut and cook till golden brown in colour.
- In a mixture grinder, grind half of the roasted coconut. Keep aside.
- Fine chop green chillies.
- Mash half of the sago pearls. Keep the rest for coating kebabs from both sides.
- Assemble all the above ingredients in a bowl and mix well.
- Divide the mixture in small balls.

- Make round and flattened kebabs.
- Spread soaked sago pearls on a plate. Place flattened kebabs on sago and firmly press so that the sago can coat the kebabs. Do this for both sides.
- Heat ghee in a non-stick pan.
- When hot, put kebabs and cook them from both sides till golden brown in colour.
- Serve hot.

Courtesy: Michelin Plate Winner, Chef Dayashankar Sharma.



ABSOLUT LIME MOJITO

WHAT YOU NEED

- Part Absolut lime: 1½
- Part lime juice: ½
- Part simple syrup
- Soda water
- Mint: 1 leaf
- Lemon: 1 wedge
- Crushed ice

METHOD

- Fill a highball glass with crushed ice. Muddle.
- Add Absolut Lime, lime juice and simple syrup.
- Top up with soda water.
- Garnish with a mint leaf and a lime wedge.

Courtesy: Pernod Ricard India.

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



IPL 2020
KL Rahul | 448 runs
Kagiso Rabada | 18 wickets

We take pride in our bowling. Tonight it didn't come off and we have to accept it and take responsibility. There's always something to learn to go back and understand

The courage he (Deshpande) showed, the line and length he bowled was amazing. He took the very important wicket of Stokes and from there the momentum changed for us

We're in the top-four. And I don't think we've played anywhere near our best cricket yet, we haven't played that complete game that blows a team out of the water

When I used to play, many players carried drinks for me now when deserved players are in the field it's my duty to return favours. It isn't about me playing or not, it is about my team winning

Gayle storm hits Sharjah

KXIP finally find way to win after Universe Boss & KL's six-hitting competition

PTI ■ SHARJAH

KL Rahul played a captain's knock and Chris Gayle fired in his first game since January as Kings XI Punjab finally ended their five-match losing streak with an eight-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bangalore in an IPL match here on Thursday.

Chasing 172 in a must-win game, the in-form opening pair of Rahul (61 not off 49) and Mayank Agarwal (45 off 25) got off to a flying start before Gayle (53 off 45) joined his skipper in the middle to get KXIP close to the finishing line.

Needing seven off the final two overs with nine wickets in hand, KXIP somehow managed to take the game to the last ball with Nicholas Pooran finally hitting the winning six.

Both Rahul and Gayle smashed five sixes each, rendering the opposition attack helpless.

Batting first, skipper Virat Kohli top-scored with 48 off 39 balls in his 200th game for RCB before Chris Morris' 25 off 8 in the death overs took the team to 171 for six.

It was a rare all-round effort from KXIP who had failed to close out games earlier in the competition.

Mohammad Shami (2/45)

conceded 24 runs in the final over that spoiled his figures after he got rid of Kohli and AB de Villiers but overall it was a much improved bowling effort by KXIP especially in the death overs.

Leg spinner M Ashwin struck twice and pacer Chris Jordan took his first wicket of the tournament.

The run chase was supposed to be straightforward after Agarwal took the opposition to the cleaners in the powerplay before Rahul took over. As usual, the 41-year-old Gayle, batting at three, took his time early on before going ballistic.

Earlier, KXIP conceded only 25 runs from over 16-19 before Morris and Isuru Udana hammered Shami for three sixes.

Rahul experimented by opening the bowling with Glenn Maxwell (0/28 in 4 overs). He was

slog swept by his Australian teammate and close friend Aaron Finch on the final ball.

Other opener Devdutt Padikkal (18) also went for his shots with his best hit of the night being the whip off Shami that went for a six over deep square leg.

However, both Padikkal and Finch could not build on their starts. Padikkal was foxed by a slower one from left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh to be caught at cover, while Finch missed a fast leg-break from M Ashwin, leaving RCB at 62 for two in the seventh over.

With Kohli looking good at the other end, AB de Villiers was expected to come in at his usual number four spot but with two leg-spinners in operation, left-handed batsman Washington Sundar was sent ahead of

Decision to push AB down didn't work: Kohli

PTI ■ SHARJAH

Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli on Thursday admitted the decision to push AB de Villiers down the order didn't work but said his bowlers should have been able to defend 171 against Kings XI Punjab.

De Villiers, who had smashed a 33-ball 73 against Kolkata Knight Riders in their last match, was expected to come in at his usual number four spot but with two leg-spinners in operation, left-handed batsman Washington Sundar was sent ahead of the South African.

RCB couldn't accelerate in the death overs and if it wasn't for the 8-ball 25 by Chris Morris in the last over, the total would have been below 160.

"We had a chat, a message from outside about left-right combination and we wanted to go with it because they had two leggies. Sometimes things don't

something to learn to go back and understand."

KXIP captain KL Rahul heaved a sigh of relief after the win, admitting it got too close for comfort in the end.

"I don't even have words. We knew that we had to scrap and get over the line once and that would give us the confidence. We're a far better side than bottom of the table. Towards the end it got too close for comfort but happy that we made it."

It was only KXIP's second win in the tournament and Rahul admitted it has been frustrating for the team to lose some close matches.

"Our skills were very good, probably didn't capitalise in the big moments starting with the first game at Delhi. It's part of the IPL, it's part of cricket. There are ups and downs and this has been the kind of rollercoaster that's been crazy but on a positive note we needed this win."

conceding just 20 runs to put pressure on the opposition.

RCB needed to move on and southpaw Shivam Dube provided the timely strike, dispatching Ravi Bishnoi to consecutive sixes to amass 19 runs from the over.

Following Dube's dismissal in the 15th over, De Villiers finally joined Kohli for the late assault, which was eventually provided by Morris.

MI start favourites against KKR

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

An explosive batting line-up and a lethal-at-death bowling attack will give defending champions Mumbai Indians a definitive edge over Kolkata Knight Riders when the two teams clash in an IPL game here on Friday.

The defending champions are on a roll having won their last four games, while there are problems aplenty for KKR, who were decimated by RCB by 82 runs in their last game.

For KKR, questions remain as to whether their key spinner Sunil Narine, who has been once reported for suspect bowling action, will play or not. He had missed the game against RCB even as KKR hoped for an "early resolution" to the issues surrounding his controversial action.

In the event of Narine missing out again, Mumbai will fancy their chances even more at the Sheikh Zayed stadium, where skipper Rohit Sharma has scored both his half-centuries this sea-

son.

Sharma (216 runs), on his day, can pummel any attack to submission and particularly enjoys playing against Kolkata. When the two teams met last, Mumbai rode on his belligerent 80 to register a 49-run win.

Apart from Sharma, the Mumbai top and middle-order is in good form — be it Quinton De Kock (191 runs) or Suryakumar Yadav (233 runs), who would like to continue in the same vein.

Mumbai Indians coach Mahela Jayawardene would be pleased with the likes of Hardik Pandya and swash-buckling Kieron Pollard, who have been launching into the opposition attack with their big-hitting prowess along with

Krunal Pandya.

Given the trio's abilities, they can rip apart the KKR attack, especially one sans Narine.

On the bowling front too, Mumbai looks a settled unit with Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah providing early breakthroughs. They are complemented by Australian James Pattinson and the trio has accounted for 31 wickets.

Spinners Rahul Chahar and Krunal will be again looking to contain the KKR batters.

Meanwhile, the biggest drawback for KKR is the inconsistent performance of their batsmen, particularly Andre Russell, who has just managed a meagre 71 runs from seven games.

There was talk of Russell being promoted up the order, but he continues to bat down and hasn't done justice to his abilities.

Kolkata also possesses a number of batsmen who can take any attack to cleaners. It comprises the young and elegant Shubman Gill, England's World Cup-winning captain Eoin Morgan, Nitish Rana and skipper Dinesh Karthik, but they have not got going barring the odd game.

The management would be hoping that come Friday, they fire in unison to reduce pressure on young guns Rahul Tripathi and Tom Banton.

KKR bowlers did well to fashion narrow victories against Kings XI Punjab and Chennai Super Kings, but were profligate against RCB.

KKR may also look to play Kuldeep Yadav, who was dropped after playing just three games, in place of a third pacer.

He can come in handy along with mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy, who was economical in the game against RCB.

Mahela wants to continue with pace-heavy attack

"I cannot say that right now because the fast bowlers still have a bigger role to play in this competition — be it in the Powerplay, middle overs and the backend," Mahela said when asked if they would re-think their strategy against KKR.

"So, trying to keep that balance as long as they are making contributions, penetrating through opponent batting line-up, it does not matter what kind of surfaces we play on," he said.

The former Sri Lankan batsman said the quality of their fast bowling, led by Jasprit Bumrah, creates enough opportunities for them.

"We have got very good spinners, who are operating right now within the playing eleven. There are a few guys who are at the wings, who we might look at giving certain positions and match-ups. If the conditions suit, we will look into that but right now, I am happy with the combination we have and the way they have operated," said Mahela. **PTI**

Tracing Tushar Deshpande's journey from Parsee Gymkhana to IPL via Shivaji Park

MUMBAI: From standing in a long selection queue for aspiring batsmen at the iconic Shivaji Park Gymkhana to shining on his IPL debut as a pacer, Mumbai rookie Tushar Deshpande has come a long way.

The 25-year-old bowler held his nerve to help fashion a 13-run victory for Delhi Capitals against Rajasthan Royals on Wednesday night.

"In 2007, I along with three-

four boys had gone for selection for BPL loop academy of Shivaji Park Gymkhana from Kalyan. There was a big queue for batsmen, around 40-45 players were lined up and 20-25 batsmen were padded up."

"... And the bowler line had only 15-20 aspirants. It was around 3.30 PM and the selection was till 6-6.30.

"I thought with so many players lined up for batting, I won't get a chance, but at the same time I was not keen to return empty handed and hence I stood in the bowler's line," Deshpande recalled on Marathi chat show *Coffee, Cricket Aani Barach Kaahi*.

The speedster, who claimed figures of 2-37 from his four overs on his IPL debut, has also played a part in Mumbai winning its first Vijay Hazare Trophy title in more than a decade.

Continuing about the selection trial, he added, "Till then no one had told me that I bowl quicker than the average boys.

The bowler line moved fast, and after my number came, I fortunately got the new ball.

"I marked the run-up and bowled a ball. It was a superb banana out-swing and even kicked

after landing. Paddy sir (Padmakar Shivalkar) said: 'well bowled, bowl the same ball again.'

"I didn't even know who he was, but I bowled again, bowled 6-7 balls and was shortlisted," he recalled.

"The same process went on for the second and third day. After Paddy sir and Sandesh Kawle sir gave me confidence, I decided to play for the Gymkhana and became a pacer," he quipped.

Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) apex council member Khodadad Yazdegardi remembered how despite suffering a breakdown during a police shield game, Deshpande came back strongly.

"A year before last he was called for trials with Kings XI Punjab. But in two weeks' time the Ranji season was starting. I got a call from him saying he won't be going for the trials as Ranji was starting and he would like to play the police shield game.

"He played that game, but while bowling broke down, and was out for a month. But he always kept faith in himself that he would recover and play again. He is mentally very strong," Khodadad, who is an office-bearer of Parsee Gymkhana, told **PTI**.

Srikanth sails into Denmark quarters

ODENSE: Ace Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth stormed into the Denmark Open quarterfinals with win over Canada's Jason Anthony Ho-Shue but it was curtains for Lakshya Sen here on Thursday.

Srikanth, seeded fifth, took 33 minutes to get the better of his Canadian opponent 21-15, 21-14 in the men's singles second round of the \$750,000 Super 750 tournament.

"It was close until 11 in both games. I'm just happy that I could continue that form throughout the match. I had to be alert to get back his shots," Srikanth told BWF.

Lakshya, however, endured a tough day on the court, going down 21-15, 7-21, 17-21 to experienced local challenger Hans-Kristian Solberg Vittinghus in 55 minutes.

Srikanth will now face world number two Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei, who beat Ireland's Nhat Nguyen 21-8, 21-16.

"He's (Chen) been playing well the last few years. It's definitely a match where I can understand where I'm at. That's the whole idea of playing this tournament," the 27-year-old said.

"He hits hard, he's someone who has an overall game, he has a hard smash, he knows when to attack and when to defend. He has matured. It's always good when you play a top 4 player." **PTI**

Maguire sees red in England's defeat

AFP ■ LONDON

England's prospects of returning to the finals of the Nations League suffered a big hit as Gareth Southgate's side lost 1-0 at home to Denmark on Wednesday, while Kylian Mbappe gave World Cup holders France a 2-1 victory in Croatia and Portugal won without Cristiano Ronaldo.

Harry Maguire was sent off for England in the first half at Wembley for two clumsy yellow cards, and Christian Eriksen then converted a 35th-minute penalty on the occasion of his 100th cap to put the Danes ahead.

They held on to inflict a first home defeat on England in two years, with the hosts also having young Chelsea full-back Reece James sent off for dissent after the final whistle.

"He is a top player, he is a massive part of what we do," Southgate said in defence of Maguire, who has struggled for Man United since his involvement in a brawl on the Greek island of Mykonos in August.

"He is having a period where he is having a lot of stick thrown his way and he is big enough to deal with that."

England got to the four-team finals of the inaugural Nations League last year but their chances of getting there again this time are

DUGOUT

MOTION PICTURE



Indian skipper Virat Kohli played his 200th game for Royal Challengers Bangalore on Thursday



Rajasthan Royals pacer Jofra Archer spends quality time with his parents in Dubai



Rajasthan Royals co-owner and brand ambassador Shane Warne spends time with budding cricketers at Royals camp in Rajasthan Royals UAE Academy

IPL SHOULD BAN KOHLI AND ABD: KL

On the eve of their high-profile IPL match between RCB and KXIP, captains Virat Kohli and KL Rahul engaged themselves in a hilarious chat show, which was shown Live. During the *Puma India Instagram Live* chat show, the batting stars talked about various things, including possible changes in review rules. But the best part came when Kohli asked Rahul, "What is that one rule which you like to change in the T20 format, to your advantage?" "I would ask IPL to ban you (Kohli) and AB de Villiers for the next season," replied Rahul to the laughter of Kohli. The KXIP captain on a serious note, also demanded that if a batsman hits a big six, which is over 100 metres, it should be given more runs.

VIKAT'S BATTING SUPERSTITION

Team India and RCB captain Virat Kohli, whether it is international cricket or IPL matches, is always seen playing in white shoes. He himself explained why he comes out to bat wearing white shoes. During *Instagram Live*, he told Manchester City footballer Pep Guardiola that I like to play in white shoes. It is like superstition for me. Virat said, "I love playing in white shoes, batting specially. It's more of a superstition for me. When I bat, it's my zone and time to be absolutely close to myself and perform," said the 31-year-old, who made his international debut in 2008.

POINTS TABLE

	P	W	L	NRR	PTS	
1	DC	8	6	2	+0.990	12
2	MI	7	5	2	+1.327	10
3	RCB	8	5	3	-0.139	10
4	KKR	7	4	3	-0.577	8
5	SRH	8	3	5	+0.009	6
6	CSK	8	3	5	-0.390	6
7	RR	8	3	5	-0.844	6
8	KXIP	8	2	6	-0.295	4



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very much in the balance with Belgium two points ahead of Southgate's team and the Danes atop League A, Group 2.

Belgium won 2-1 in Iceland on Wednesday with Romelu Lukaku scoring twice. They host England in Brussels on November 15.

In Zagreb, PSG star Mbappe missed an open goal early on but got the winner in the 79th minute as France beat Croatia 2-1 in their latest re-run of the 2018 World Cup final.

Antoine Griezmann had put France ahead with Nikola Vlasic equalising in the second half for Croatia before around 7,000 fans.

Les Bleus have still never lost to Croatia and are level with Portugal on 10 points at the top of League A, Group 3.

DOUBLES FOR JOTA, LEWA

Portugal, winners of the inaugural Nations League, shrugged off the absence of Ronaldo because of a positive Covid-19 test as they beat Sweden 3-0 in Lisbon.

Liverpool's Diogo Jota set up Bernardo Silva for the opener then scored two of his own, one either side of half-time.

Meanwhile, the prolific Robert Lewandowski scored a brace as Poland beat Bosnia and Herzegovina 3-0 in Warsaw. Karol Linetty got the other goal and Poland are top of Group A, a point above Italy and two ahead of the Netherlands.

The Dutch came from behind to draw 1-1 with Italy in Bergamo, with Donny van de Beek netting for Frank de Boer's side after Lorenzo Pellegrini put Italy ahead.