

WORLD 7

I VOTED FOR A GUY NAMED
TRUMP, SAYS PRESIDENT

MONEY 8

FY19 GST RETURNS FILING
DEADLINE EXTENDED TILL DEC 31

SPORT 10

KKR BEAT DELHI
BY 59 RUNS

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USUAL SUSPECTS
SWAPAN DASGUPTACan Modi's appeal do
wonders for Nitish?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

KITCHEN BUDGET GOES FOR A TOSS

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

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

across India.

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

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

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

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

*PRICES AS PER MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
FOR OCT 24

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

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

of summer," he added.

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

The national acreage for rabi onions last season was 10 lakh hectares as against 7 lakh

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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I-T returns filing deadline
extended till December 31

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



compliance relief to taxpayers.

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

The due date for furnishing

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

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

CAPSULE

FREE VACCINE PROMISE
PERFECTLY IN ORDER: FM

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

FAROOQ TO LEAD
GUPKAR ALLIANCE

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

RISHI SUNAK 'BARRED
FOR LIFE' FROM UK PUB

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

P7



Corona attack on BJP Bihar election drive

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

Now campaign incharge Fadnavis tests +ve

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

Before Fadnavis, Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister Sushil

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

Covid-19
IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 78,63,139

DEATHS: 1,18,552

RECOVERED:

70,74,807

ACTIVE: 6,68,470



STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	16,38,961	43,152	14,55,107
Andhra Pradesh	8,04,026	6,566	7,65,991
Karnataka	7,98,378	10,873	7,00,737
Tamil Nadu	7,06,136	10,893	6,63,456
Uttar Pradesh	4,68,238	6,854	4,33,703
Kerala	3,86,088	1,307	2,87,261
Delhi	3,52,520	6,225	3,19,828
West Bengal	3,45,574	6,427	3,02,340
Odisha	2,79,582	1,282	2,62,031
Telangana	2,30,274	1,303	2,09,034
Bihar	2,11,443	1,042	1,99,521
Assam	2,03,967	902	1,82,791
Rajasthan	1,84,422	1,826	1,65,496
Chhattisgarh	1,74,591	1,793	1,48,899
Madhya Pradesh	1,66,298	2,875	1,51,946
Gujarat	1,66,254	3,685	1,48,685

India vows to save Himalayan abode of snow leopards

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

"The Government is committed to landscape restoration

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

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

According to an estimate,

there are around 7,000 leopards, found in 12 countries — India, Nepal, Bhutan, China, Mongolia, Russia, Pakistan,

Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In India, the geographical



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

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

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

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HOME THEATRE

Mirzapur 2 as good or bad as 1



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

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

Thrones with just a tad less history to it. The man who will be King of Mirzapur has to be powerful, with no chinks of vulnerability in his demeanour. He should be able to kill at will even if it is his favourite and loyal servant for decades or his own father! Corruption of the system matches up with the corruption of the mind, boy and soul of all its main characters who have, come to think of it, done a pretty good job if you hate them all in equal measure. Will not be able to call *Mirzapur* riveting but yes it draws your blood to your temples, makes you curdle in fear and cringe in disgust with such pointed venom and force that it automatically qualifies for a binge watch. The end is predictable and similar to the first season, the characters have matured and the violence here prevails only to push the story into a state of no repair and the climax sets up the window for the next season with the polish of a veteran. *Mirzapur* will be watched in the third season too. How watch-worthy is such content can be a topic for debate on another platform. Meanwhile waiting avidly for the sequel of *The Family Man*.

Short & sweet

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

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

potent, telling and interesting category. It deals with the issue of bedwetting by an adult girl who has a marriage staring down her face, a hysterical family and the prospect of it coming out in the open in her *sasural*. The film has been treated with a lot of acumen, tender loving care and slick production which keeps you hooked from the beginning to the end. It also delivers a powerful message on human weakness and ailments that are often treated with insensitivity and indifference. This head turner film is neither insensitive nor indifferent to the issue it has at and must watch.



Worth a watch

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

Many of us over the last 27 years would have tried to reach out to a copy of *A Suitable Boy* only to balk at the sheer size of the novel — 1349 pages. This alone was a good enough for a large number of people to stay away from one of the longest novels published in a single volume. But thanks to Mira Nair, one can now find out why the book had created quite a stir when the book was out in 1993. The subject was enough to make it the talk of the town — a mother's quest to look for a suitable boy for her youngest daughter. Even though there are a few misrepresentations of how women behaved back then and what they wore, one can give them a miss and instead concentrate on how Nair has brought the 1951s era alive once again on the screen. The six-episode limited series takes one on a journey on what it was like to live in a post-Independent India. A few clippings give us a sneak peek of what it was like when people voted for the very first time. But the mini-series and the book is not about post-Independent India but the lives of people in that time and how a mother

goes about choosing a husband for her daughter and rejecting many because they are — of course — not suitable. A mother knows best the adage which comes across loud and clear. Despite the fact that Tanya Maniktala's character keeps smiling even though there is an internal turmoil, she does a great job as the daughter who has to do the choosing. Tabu, Ishaan Khatter and Ram Kapoor



do a brilliant job in supporting roles. In fact, they are the backbone of this mini-series. While many may not agree with the whole concept with a mother looking for a suitable boy given that we are living in the 21 st Century. But the truth remains that arranged marriages and a parent choosing husband/wife is not such an alien concept even today. Overall, the mini-series is entertaining and keeps you glued wanting to know what comes next and who is finally the suitable one. — Shalini Sakesna

Of magic and life lessons

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

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

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

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

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

TELLY TALE

KULFI TURNS HOST
Popular child artist Aakriti Sharma *aka* Kulfi is all set to co-host Star Plus' upcoming singing reality show *Taare Zameen Par* alongside ace comedian Sugandha Mishra. The talented duo will enthrall viewers with various performances on stage, enabling a fun-viewing experience. Premiering on Monday, November 2, the show will highlight the musical journey of 20 children who will be nurtured, supported and encouraged by 3 celebrated mentors Shankar Mahadevan, Tony Kakkar and Jonita Gandhi. Little Kulfi *aka* Aakriti Sharma has won many hearts with her innocence in her earlier show *Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala* and she is a pro at portraying emotions with much ease and perfection. *Kulfi Kumar Bajewala* fame Aakriti Sharma embarks on a new journey and she says: "I am happy and excited to host/anchor my first show on television. The



entire team has been kind and helpful especially Sugandha *di di*, she has been the best partner to me. I get to learn so many things while shooting for this show since singing is my favorite hobby. In the coming days, I wish to learn the music from Shankar Sir who is the mentor on our show." Gear up to watch a unique show which explores the talent, personality and goofiness of young singing wonders. **THE UNBREAKABLE JODI** Sony SAB's widely acclaimed historical fiction show, *Tenali Rama*, continues to win viewers' hearts by reviving the ancient tales and anecdotes of the legendary scholar and poet Tenali Rama and taking them right into the heart of Raja Krishnadevaraya's Vijayanagar. The show continues to gain immense love and support for its engaging and values driven storyline that offers entertainment across all ages in a family. Talking about the glorious success on television and sharing their experience so far, Krishna Bharadwaj — everyone's beloved



Pandit Rama Krishna and Tarun Khanna — the celebrated king Krishnadevaraya, get candid about their journey so far as artistes and a lot more. Krishna Bharadwaj, better known as Pandit Rama Krishna since past three and a half years shared key highlights of the journey so far: "I have lived this character for so long that I do not even remember my life before Tenali Rama. Pandit Rama Krishna is a part of me, and I am so glad that I have had the opportunity to adopt all the noteworthy qualities of Rama. This show has given me immense love and support from the fans, and it is indeed a heartwarming feeling when a character succeeds in creating a positive change in someone's life. A lot of fans reach out to me talking about how the show made them smile or helped them cope with difficult times. As an actor, it is really fulfilling." Tarun, while sharing his views on the reasons behind the success of this show, said: "Since my childhood till now, I have never come across a show that is a total family entertainer and at the same time high on values. Tenali Rama is a show that familiarizes the audience with our Indian culture. In my family my six-year-old son and my 75-year-old father-in-law watch this show together. There are hardly any shows that can bring such distinct age groups together. The characters have been so beautifully and cleverly designed that even a character like Amma who has no dialogues in the show has been loved. The characters are so well rounded and unique that makes him stand out in any situation. This is immense hard work and dedication that has determined the success of this show. Sharing about their experience of working with one another, Krishna said: "I feel Rama and Krishnadevaraya's character are like Lord Krishna and Sudama. Rama practically worships Krishnadevaraya and would do anything for him. So, the chemistry between these two characters are really important for the show. After Tarun's arrival on the show, we never lacked the chemistry. It was there since day one." Adding further, Tarun said, "I was thrilled to be a part of this show as it is fulfilled my childhood dream of being a part of the world of Tenali Rama. Before joining the show, I had not watched any of the episodes and I

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



Puja. The actress says she feels nostalgic about being away from all the festivities in Kolkata. However, the popular show *Barrister Babu* and the upcoming two-hour long special segment Shandaar Ravivaar are helping the actress cope up! Sayantani will be seen celebrating Durga Pooja and doing the traditional dance in both the shows. Commenting about the same Sayantani Ghosh said: "The ambience during Durga Puja in Kolkata is totally different. The festival fever is unmatched and everyone is gripped by the festive fervour. I miss the noise of the dhak (drums) and wearing new clothes. These were yearly rituals for me wherein there used to be one pandal in every single lane in Kolkata! This year, I am feeling a bit sad as I will not be able to go due to COVID-19. Although the flights are open now, I do not want to risk travelling especially because of the current situation as my parents are senior citizens and I do not want to risk their health. In our show the current track is around Durga puja and so is my performance in Shandaar Ravivaar and the atmosphere around is really making me feel more nostalgic. Hopefully next year, by the blessings of Maa Durga, I'll be able to go there!"

‘Interesting to play traditional father’

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

■ **What is your role in the show?**

The show represents three generations — grandfather, father and son. I play Pratap Ratan Bansal who is the eldest in the family. He lives his life according to what he thinks is right. He doesn't belong to the era where the father is not a friend but someone who needed to be heard when he spoke without being questioned. According to him each relationship is defined and need not be merged. ■ **What is the best thing about your character?** It is his quirkiness that is interesting. It is not as if he is in a foul mood all the time. However, the other person may think otherwise. He is a fun person to be with. He has fun with this grandson. But he has a grudge. He wanted his grandson to be a cricketer but he could be one. So, Bansal keeps taunting him about this. But he loves his family. ■ **Was it tough to go back to shooting after the lockdown opened?** Yes, definitely. Before the show started its shoot, we had a virtual meeting with a doctor. He told us that while on the sets, we must always think that the person in front of us is asymptomatic. He told us that despite all the precautions the production house takes, we must not let our guard down. But doing this was so tough and scary. When we reached the set, the normal was to hug and greet each other. But on the first day, nobody exchanged more than two lines. Each one of us was scared that more conversation will mean a hand on the shoulder and we had to maintain distance. We avoided talking to each other. It will take time to get things back to normal. ■ **You have played the role of a father a few times, how is this different?** The first thing is that I have never played a father who is from the 40s and the 50s. Till now, I had played the role of a progressive father. Here I play a traditional father which is interesting. Also, the way I deliver the dialogues is different, language here is different. The character is Marwari. I don't know anything about the accent or how they behave. ■ **You have been in the industry for over two decades now. How have things changed?** Back then there were fewer people in the industry but we managed to get things done. Now, there are a lot more people and jobs are defined. Earlier, a verbal agreement was enough. Now everything has to be done via emails — it has become a corporate set-up



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

now. This could be because there is far more work involved. ■ **Does this mean that competition has increased?** Yes, there is competition. But it also means that there is much more work in the industry. Many youngsters now don't have to struggle for work. There is theatre, there is TV, there is web and films that offer all kinds of diverse work. There is no dearth of work today. This means one gets to do varied work. Even cinema has changed. This is because the younger generation has access to more information. ■ **You have done TV shows and films. How are the two different when it comes to acting?** There is no difference. For each platform, be it theatre, TV or films, I have always done my work honestly. The only difference is that in cinema, one gets more time to prepare for the character. The director has time to pay attention to how the character needs to go forward. In TV, this is not possible since the director has little time. So here, I have to be prepared 90 per cent before I reach the set. ■ **How did your acting career begin?** It began with Marathi theatre. I met Satish Kaushik and ended up doing more theatre. In time, I ended up with a Marathi serial. Since I didn't have any Godfather my previous work propelled me further. Wherever I am today, is due to the people I met in my work and I am grateful to them for it. ■ **What are your future plans?** I am working on two shows. One, of course, *Tera Yaar Hoon Main* and the other is *Mere Dad Ki Dulhan* on Sony Entertainment Television. In between, if I get a film, I will do that as well. Also, I love to work with new-age directors. Working on web series doesn't involve too much time since they are finite.

CM opens newly-constructed Seelampur-Shastri Park flyover

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday inaugurated the newly-constructed Seelampur-Shastri Park flyover, which will be a major relief to commuters between Welcome in northeast Delhi and Kashmere Gate and Delhi Uttar Pradesh border.

Congratulating the people of Delhi and the Public Works Department (PWD) officials and engineers for the completion of the project, Kejriwal said that the sanctioned cost of the construction project was Rs 303 crores but it was completed in Rs 250 Cr and Rs 53 Cr were saved in the construction of the high-quality infrastructure.

Kejriwal said, "I want to congratulate the residents of East Delhi for these two flyovers. The people of East Delhi

used to face long traffic jams for longer hours but now, the journey from ISBT to UP border can now be completed within a span of 10 minutes without any traffic jams and with a smooth ride."

"We laid the foundation stone for the new state of the art wing, a 1500-bedded medical block at LNJP Hospital on Friday. In India, governments are known to build hospitals worth ₹1500 Cr with each bed costing around Rs. 1-1.5 Cr. For instance, a 1000-bedded hospital would cost around Rs 1500 Cr at a cost of Rs 1.5 Cr per bed. But, we are building a hospital consisting of 1500 beds, cutting edge technology, fully air-conditioned at per bed costing of only Rs 30 lakhs," he said.

"Now, these Rs 53 crores which are saved through this construction, was earlier used

by ministers to fill their own pockets or as bribes. This was the money that came from the innocent citizens of Delhi. But we do not indulge in bribes and take money from officials or engineers, and we are saving the money of the citizens. It is with this money of the people that we save, that we are able to provide free amenities, healthcare, medicines and quality education to our citizens," he said.

The chief minister further said "I am certain that these flyovers will contribute further towards providing them a hassle-free ride. In the last five years, a lot of progress has taken place in this area, including establishing water and sewer connections, etc," he said.

PWD Minister Satyendar Jain said, "Today two flyovers were inaugurated by the chief



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal along with PWD Minister Satyendar Jain during the inauguration of newly-constructed Shastri Park flyover, in New Delhi on Saturday
Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

minister. The Azad market flyover constructed by municipal Corporations took 10 years and cost Rs 700-800 Cr. Whereas, PWD took 1.5 years, out of which if we exclude six months of Covid and three months of GRAP (Graded Response Action plan), it took only 9-10 months to build that itself is an achievement. The CM has also envisioned a children's park under the flyover and very soon that vision too will be transformed into reality."

The foundation stone for the newly-constructed flyover was laid on 10th February 2019. Due to the rising levels of pollution and the implementation of GRAP guidelines in

2019, construction projects were banned during the night which brought the flyover construction to a standstill. However, the flyover was 70 per cent completed until October 2019 and despite the implementation of anti-construction guidelines and a six month halt due to the Corona lockdown, the project was completed in a time duration of 19 months.

The Shastri Park flyover consists of six lanes and is constructed at a length of 700 meters, whereas the Seelampur flyover is constructed at a length of 1200 meters and eases the commute of vehicles traveling over the Dharampura crossing towards Shahdara. The construction of the new flyover will bring relief to around 1.5 lakh vehicles which seem to travel through the route daily.

Four of a family arrested for duping several banks

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the arrest of four members of a family including two women, the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Delhi Police on Saturday claimed to have busted a gang of cheats who allegedly mortgaged the property, which was acquired by Delhi Metro, to several banks by creating forged chain of

documents.

The accused have been identified as Ashwani Arora, Vijay Arora and their wives.

According to Dr O P Mishra, the Joint Commissioner of Police, EOW, a complaint was received from Zonal Manager of Punjab & Sind Bank, in which he alleged that a Riya Enterprises availed ODP (Overdraft against Property) limit of up to 70 lacs.

"This limit was released against the equitable mortgage of property which was in the name of Ashwani, who is also the guarantor in this loan. These limits were granted by Punjab & Sind Bank, Karol Bagh, Delhi. Further, Kunj Aluminium Pvt. Ltd. (proprietor Vijay and his wife) over the years availed ODP limit of Rs.225 lacs on the same land," said the Joint CP.

"The accused also availed home loan, car loan, personal loan and loan against LIC policies. Later on, complainant bank gave in writing that car loan and loan against LIC have been adjusted in the meantime. The complainant bank alleged that the properties were already mortgaged with other banks. Hence, after enquiry the case was registered and investigation was taken up," said the Joint CP.

"During investigation, it emerged that all the accused persons hatched a criminal conspiracy and prepared forged chain of property papers and on the basis of these forged chain of documents they succeeded to register the property fraudulently before the Registrar Office either in their name or in the name of their interested persons," said the Joint CP.

"Further on the basis of these chain of forged documents they availed loan multi time on same property from many banks. By the same modus operandi they succeeded in availing loan from the complainant bank and after some time they stopped the payment of interest to the Bank and duped the complainant bank to the tune of Rs six crores," said the Joint CP.

Anti-dengue drive to garner support from celebrities

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The eighth week of the 10 Hafte 10 Baje 10 Minute anti-dengue campaign will garner support from celebrities including Shankar Mahadevan, who will be encouraging the citizens of Delhi to religiously follow the dengue prevention guidelines.

Last year, similar cooperation and support from prominent celebrities such as veteran cricketer Virender Sehwag and others had made the campaign of the Delhi government a huge success. This year as well, the campaign seeks to engage several celebrities and social media influencers, to take part in the campaign by recording themselves following the good practices advised during the campaign and share the content for the people through various channels.

Kejriwal had also said that

with the collective efforts of all the Delhiites, "We have to stop the breeding of dengue mosquitoes and protect our family and the entire Delhi from Dengue," he said.

Last week, Kejriwal encouraged the business and traders to prevent dengue by inspecting their shops and surroundings for signs of accumulated water. He tweeted, "This time, the business community of Delhi also took part in our fight against dengue by checking at their shops and surroundings and changing the stagnant water. By doing so, they are protecting themselves and their customers from dengue. Delhi is defeating Dengue again. #10Hafte10Baje10Minute"

This year, the Delhi government has also launched a dengue helpline - 01123300012 and WhatsApp helpline - 8595920530 to assist the general public.

Crime & Covid review meet held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Commissioner, S N Shrivastava on Saturday held a Crime and Covid-19 review meeting to discuss the law & order and security arrangements for festival season and police responsibility in spreading Covid awareness in the National Capital.

During the meeting the CP

also rewarded personnel from Special Staffs of North, Outer, North-West and Dwarka districts in recognition of outstanding and exemplary works done by them during the past few days.

With ongoing festive season and to ensure people while visiting markets follow COVID-19 norms, the Delhi Police is focusing on security in the city's high-

footfall markets. Police said they are also holding meetings with market associations and urging them to ensure social distancing.

Khan Market, Karol Bagh, Chandni Chowk, Sadar Bazaar, Connaught Place, Janpath, Lajpat Nagar market and Sarojini Nagar are among the markets in the national capital that draw high footfalls.

Man found hanging inside hotel room

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 42 year-old man was found hanging inside a private hotel room in Central Delhi's Paharganj area. Police said that they have recovered a suicide note which is being analysed by the police team.

The deceased has been identified as Balvinder Singh, a resident of Mandi in Himachal.

According to Sanjay Bhatia, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Central district, a police control room (PCR) call was received from hotel Lal's Haweli in which they stated that a customer was not opening his room's door since morning following which a police team was dispatched for the spot.

"Upon reaching the hotel's room Balwinder Singh was found hanging from the ceiling fan with his turban. He was rushed immediately to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital where

he was declared brought dead," said the DCP.

"Ligature material was seized and deposited in the Malkhana of police station. Suicide note, running 10 pages of a notebook, was also recovered wherein he informed that no one is responsible for his death. However suicide note is being analysed," said the DCP.

"Police has initiated action

under section 174 of Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) at Nabi Karim police station and the dead body has been preserved at mortuary of RML Hospital for next 72 Hours," said the DCP.

"Relatives of deceased including his brother were examined and statements were recorded wherein no foul play was expressed by them," said DCP.



CM, Sisodia congratulate performers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his Deputy Manish Sisodia interacted with students of the Delhi Government schools, who have performed outstandingly well in the NEET-JEE examinations and congratulated the parents and teachers for the record-breaking achievement of the students.

Applauding students for their commendable performance in NEET - JEE despite the on-going Corona crisis, Kejriwal said that the students who have gotten into IITs and have secured top ranks in NEET-JEE exams must become a role model for the entire government education system.

"The entire education department is proud of their achievements and they must continue to contribute towards the betterment of the nation," Sisodia said that 'Shikshit Rashtra, Samarth Rashtra' is the dream of the Delhi government, and said that all passing students must take the responsibility of guiding their juniors about NEET-JEE exams.

This week, Kejriwal had announced that around 569 students from schools run by the Delhi government qualified for the exam, out of which 379 are girls.

Around 443 students from government schools cleared JEE Mains and 53 have qualified for JEE Advanced and have secured a seat in IITs. Four girl students from Delhi government schools have qualified JEE Advanced. Five students from RPVV, Paschim Vihar have qualified, which is the highest from any single Delhi Government school.

Several students interacted with the CM and the Deputy CM during the event. Ayush Bansal, from Government School, Paschim Vihar, whose



father works in a book depot, secured 189th rank, has secured admission in Electronics and Communication Engineering at IIT Roorkee.

He scored 95 percent in Class XII Board and said that he could not have achieved success without the support of his parents and teachers.

Raj from government School Surajmal Vihar, whose father is a street vendor, secured 1819th rank and has secured admission in Computer Science and Engineering course at IIT Roor.

Shalu, a student of Govt School, Yamuna Vihar, whose father is searching for a job post-COVID, has secured 306th rank and admission in Electrical Engineering at IIT Mandi.

She said that she was the first in her family to have been pursuing Engineering. She says she hopes to study well in IIT, and secure herself a well-groomed job so that she can support her family during any crisis.

Akanksha Gupta, a student from Govt School, Molarband, lost her parents at a young age and lives with her uncle and aunt. She secured 10,239th rank in NEET and scored 90.4 percent in Class XII Board.

Akanksha said, "It was my uncle's dream to see me in IIT. I want to thank him and all my teachers who have supported me in my journey."

Himanshi, from Government School, Nand Nagri, whose father works as a driver, secured 1,181st rank in NEET 89 percent in her 12th board exams. She said, "The toughest phase is when you think to yourself that you will not be able to crack the exam. But when you get past that phase, you always come out as successful. I wanted to be a doctor because if you can save a life, there is nothing more you can want from your life."

Tamanna Goyal, a student of government School in Rohini, is a daughter of a single mother who works as a housemaid and secured 11th rank in NEET. She credited her mother for her success and for keeping her basic needs at the backfoot to support her education.

Congratulating the students, Dy CM and Education Minister Sisodia said, "I want to congratulate the students for making us feel proud, and officials, teachers, etc for this achievement. When the AAP government was formed 5-6 years back, the government schools were in a pitiable con-

dition. This time, the Delhi government school students have attained 99 percent in CBSE, and now our students have attained top ranks in NEET-JEE. We have tried to improve the system of education in Delhi.

"Our CM is himself an IITian, and now many of you will be joining IITs. Your contribution to the service of the nation must not stop. This is a long journey and many people have worked hard to reach this stage. Our dream is 'Shikshit Rashtra, Samarth Rashtra.' We will only be able to strengthen our nation through a strong education system, and not big democratic institutions and buildings in Delhi. I would also like to request you all to guide your juniors, take responsibility for at least 10 children from families just like you, and explain to them the significance of NEET-JEE. When you become a doctor or an engineer, please work with all honesty and dedication."

Kejriwal said, "You all are a source of inspiration for us, and listening to the stories of children, parents, and teachers have made us proud of all of you. I can understand how difficult the journey must have been for each one of you, because of the circumstances you all have been in, your parents had to struggle to give you a good education and make you successful. You all passed the exam without coaching. I reminisce my time."

Sharing his own experiences, Kejriwal said, "I appeared for the JEE exam. I belong to Hisar, and I remember that only 1-2 people were able to clear the exam every year in my time. Today, a single school has five students clearing JEE and 24 clearing NEET exams. This makes us and the entire Delhi proud."



DELHI POLICE
SHANTI SEWA NYAYA



Attention!

Hon'ble Supreme Court Guidelines

FOR SALE & USE OF FIRECRACKERS

▶▶

No item(s) other than the Reduced Emission firecrackers (Improved crackers) and Reduced Emission firecrackers Green crackers: Safe Water and Air Sprinklers (SWAS) as prescribed and approved by the Petroleum and Explosive Safety Organization (PESO) shall be sold in the premises.

▶▶

Categories of firecrackers banned/not permitted

- **Joined Firecrackers (series crackers or laris)**
- **Fireworks containing barium salts/lithium/arsenic/antimony/lead/ mercury**
- **Firecrackers manufactured earlier but non-permissible as per above Hon'ble Supreme Court judgement.**
- **Possession and sale of fireworks of foreign origin.**
- ▶ **Incidence of possession and sale of above fireworks may be reported to nearest police station.**

▶▶

Only those crackers permitted to be sold whose decibel (sound) level are within the permissible limits (125 dB(AI) or 145 dB(C)pk at 4 meters from the point of bursting)

▶▶

Bursting of fireworks not allowed in silence zones : Silence Zone is an area comprising not less than 100 meters around hospitals, educational institutions, courts, religious places or any other area which is declared as such by the competent authority.

▶▶

Timings of Firecracking as per directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court:

From 08.00 PM till 10.00 PM	on Diwali Days
From 04.00 AM till 05.00 AM	on Gurburab
From 09.00 PM till 10.00 PM	
From 11.55 PM till 12.30 AM	on Christmas Eve & New Year Eve.

▶▶

Community fire cracking to be undertaken at pre-identified areas/fields as far as possible.

ALL CONCERNED TO PLEASE NOTE & ABIDE.

National directives for COVID-19 management shall be followed during community Fire-Cracking viz. :

- 1. Wearing of face cover is compulsory in public place.**
- 2. Individuals must maintain minimum distance of 6 feet in public place.**
- 3. Spitting in public places will be punishable with fine.**

FOR IMMEDIATE POLICE HELP CALL 112

TO SHARE INFORMATION CALL 1090

DP/9257/2020

Pakistan violates ceasefire along LoC in Poonch

Jammu: Violating the ceasefire agreement, Pakistan resorted to unprovoked firing and shelling on the Line of Control (LoC) on Saturday in J&K's Poonch district.

At about 6.30 p.m. on Saturday Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling with mortars along the LoC in Degwar sector of Poonch district, said defence ministry spokesman Colonel Devender Anand.

The spokesman said Indian army retaliated befittingly.

So far this year, Pakistan



has violated ceasefire over 3,190 times in which 24 civilians have been killed and over 100 have been injured near the LoC in J&K. **IANS**

Mafia dons fear to return as Yogi Govt sweeps UP clean

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Yogi Adityanath government's crackdown on the mafiosi in the state has left such elements running for their lives. Many of them are behind the bars and their illegal properties have been demolished, showing them the place they belong to.

In an official communiqué released on Saturday, the government spokesman said that the Yogi Adityanath government's steely resolve to eliminate mafia and their crime have borne fruits in the recent past.

The action against Mukhtar Ansari, Sunder Bhati and now Atiq Ahmad has given a strong message for these anti-socials in a big way.

Atiq Ahmad, presently lodged in Sabarmati jail at Ahmedabad, has cited various ailments, including kidney complications, high blood pressure and diabetes, to get exemption from personal appearance in court instead of asking for court attendance in Prayagraj through video conferencing. Clearly, it indicates his fear psychosis in the wake of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's police action.

Atiq Ahmad has also referred to the distance between Ahmedabad and Prayagraj (1,450 kms) in his request for video conferencing through his lawyer.

It may be mentioned here that last month, the district administration of Prayagraj had razed the illegal properties of Atiq Ahmad's associates.

The exercise included demolishing of a two – storey lodge of one Bhutto and the houses of Arshad and Kammu, all of which were illegally constructed on state land.

Another house worth over Rs 30 crore belonging to Atiq Ahmed was also demolished by the authorities in Prayagraj in September and properties worth Rs 39.80 crores were also freed.

Besides Atiq Ahmed, the state government is also busy cracking the whip on mafia Mukhtar Ansari and his associates. In August last, Rakesh Pandey, one of his associates and a co-accused in the 2005 murder of Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Krishnanand Rai, was killed in a cross-firing with the police in Lucknow.

An illegal slaughterhouse belonging to Ansari's associates was also razed in the Mau district in August and the Gangsters Act was also slapped on Ansari's wife, Afsa Ansari, and her two brothers, Sharzal Ansari and Anwar Shahzad. Illegal properties of Ansari and his henchmen worth over Rs 45 crore have also been seized in eastern Uttar Pradesh, including Varanasi, Ghazipur, Mau, Jaunpur, Azamgarh and Lucknow, the government release added.

Moreover, the gang's annual earnings of over Rs 45 crore was also stopped and 96 of his gang members were arrested in the recent past.

Besides the ongoing crackdown on these mafia and their associates, as many as 17 mafiosi have been identified and marked by the authorities for further action.

Mission Shakti completes its first phase

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Launched by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to ensure safety, dignity and empowerment of women and girls, Mission Shakti, completed its first phase with active participation from 24 government departments, private establishments, social organisations and NGOs. The ambitious programme was launched on the first day of Sharadiya Navratra on October 17.

The Mission Shakti, to be continued for the next six months till Basant Navratra, witnessed a series of events in conformity with its theme and created awareness not only among women but the society in general.

An official communiqué confirmed on Saturday that some major decisions and endeavours initiated during the first phase reaffirmed the CM's commitment towards protection of women's rights and their rightful place in the society.

At the outset, Yogi had directed to identify 100 role models among women and girls in every district aiming to showcase their achievements and contributions which could be inspirational for others to emulate.

The communiqué said that a series of decisions were also taken to further the cause of



Women taking selfie in front of Devi Durga idol installed at a community puja pandal Kali Bari at Chitrtranjan Park in Delhi on Saturday **Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer**

Prez Dussehra wish: Protection from corona

New Delhi: While greeting citizens on the eve of Dussehra, President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday wished for their protection from the evil effects of the ongoing pandemic Covid-19.

In his message, the President said, "On the auspicious occasion of Dussehra, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to all the fellow citizens in India and abroad.

"This festival symbolises the triumph of good over evil. The festival is celebrated throughout India in different forms. This festival strengthens the cultural unity of India and inspires us to live in harmony, following the path of virtue and shunning evil."

This festival is also associated with the life and values of Maryada Purushottam Shri Ram. His life is a shining example of morality and righteousness.

"May this festival of joy and happiness protect us from the evil effects of the ongoing pandemic and bring prosperity and affluence to our countrymen," the President extends his message.

After dipping below 47,000 four

Meghalaya parties urge Centre to resolve border disputes with Assam

Shillong: After inter-state border disputes between Assam, Mizoram and Tripura, various political parties including the BJP in Meghalaya have urged the Centre to resolve its border issues with Assam, party sources said on Saturday.

Assam-Meghalaya shares 885 km inter-state border. With two legislators, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), an ally of the Meghalaya's National People's Party (NPP) led coalition government, has urged the Central government to resolve the long pending inter-state border disputes with Assam.

BJP MLA Sanbor Shullai in a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah demanded Central government's intervention in resolving the long pending border disputes with Assam.

Shullai in his letter said that the Centre's earlier decision to resolve border disputes among the northeastern states by 2021 is a perfect step but Assam-Meghalaya border disputes must be solved at the earliest.

"There are many patches between Assam and Meghalaya where border disputes are very often causing clashes, tension and hostility among the people living in both sides of the border," the BJP MLA said adding that people in the "disputed areas" are facing hardships.

"In some occasions the Assam-Meghalaya border disputes spills over into the other parts of the state affecting lives of other people and disrupt the ethnic harmony," the BJP lawmaker said.

There are at least 12 disputed patches along the Assam and Meghalaya borders and both states had earlier informally decided that one state cannot carry out developmental activities in these areas without informing the other.

Chief Ministers and Chief Secretaries of Assam and Meghalaya have held a series of meetings but the issues remained unresolved.

Besides Shullai, other BJP MLA is Alexander Laloo Hek, who is Health Minister of Meghalaya, where the saffron party is supporting the Meghalaya Democratic Alliance government led by Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma, who is also the President of NPP.

The Regional Democratic Alliance (RDA) and Hill State People's Democratic Party (HSPDP) have recently meet Sangma and suggested the urgent need for Meghalaya and Assam to resolve the border issues between the two states, which has been a major bone of contention among the northeastern states.

The RDA and HSPDP leaders told the media in Shillong separately that the Centre should not remain silent on the vital issue. Assam shares 2,616 km inter-state borders with six northeastern states excluding Sikkim and with every state there are border disputes.

Meanwhile, after a series of meetings and following the interventions of the Centre, the fortnight long Assam-Mizoram border troubles earlier this week have been tamed as the border hitch took an ugly turn with around 20 shops and houses being burnt and over 50 people injured in the attacks

Covid recovery improving, Yogi advises caution

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that Covid -19 recovery rate in the state was fast improving but negligence should be avoided till the vaccine arrived.

The chief minister said that all district officials have been directed to ensure that Covid protocol was not violated during festivals, especially in Puja and Ram Leela pandals, where a large number of people congregate.

Yogi also told officials to ensure that no programmes were held in Containment zones and that the number of visitors to any venue be restricted for ensuring social distancing norms. The Chief Minister appealed to the people that due to the spread of Covid and Dengue, they should keep their localities clean to prevent any kind of pandemic.

Meanwhile, Additional Chief Secretary, Health, Amit Mohan Prasad said in Lucknow on Saturday that Covid 19 recovery rate further improved to 92.62 percent in the state and on Friday, a total of 1.39 lakh samples were tested in the state.

Prasad informed that 2277 new cases were reported in the last 24-hours taking the number of total active cases to 27,681 in the state. He said that the active case percentage had also dipped to 59.43.

The top official revealed that in the last 24-hours, 2852 patients were discharged and so far, 4.33 lakh patients were successfully treated. He said that till now, 2.63 lakh patients got treatment in home isolation and 2.50 lakh recovered fully.

Prasad further said that 1.46 lakh surveillance teams visited 4.32 lakh areas across the state visiting 2.77 crore homes and checked the health of 13.63 crore people of the state. Besides, 1.60 lakh were provided medical consultation through E-Sanjeevani Portal.

The officials said that the government would also run a special drive in November to vaccinate 4 lakh children, who missed out in the last phases.

"Between November 2 and 11, a campaign against TB will also be run in 31 districts of the state. Earlier, 41 districts were covered under similar campaigns. Those villages left to be included under Ayushman Scheme will now be covered through the special drive. Besides, residents of 7000 more villages will be provided Golden Card in the next month," informed Prasad.



UP ranks 1st in disbursing loans under PM Swanidhi Scheme

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In another first to its credit, Uttar Pradesh has secured the first rank in implementing Government of India's one of the most ambitious schemes – the PM Atma Nirbhar Nidhi Scheme (Swanidhi scheme).

The state was ranked first in all the categories – Applications, Sanctions and Disbursements. The scheme was launched on June 1, 2020, by the Central Government to help the street vendors resume their livelihood activities that were impacted by COVID-19.

As per the official statistics of UP, loans under Swanidhi scheme will be disbursed to 2.51 beneficiaries by October 27, 2020 when the Prime Minister will address the street vendors and handlers of the State.

It aims at facilitating working capital loan up to `10,000 at a subsidised rate of interest, incentivising regular repayment of the loan and to reward digital transactions. The scheme aims at providing benefits to street vendors or hawkers in urban, pre-urban and rural areas.

As many as 6,22,167 applications were received under the scheme in UP, the most in the country, out of which sanctions were given to 3,46,150 applicants while the loans were disbursed to 2,26,728 beneficiaries. Seven cities of UP also find place in the list of top 10 cities of the country with latest additions of Ghaziabad and Kanpur.

Varanasi, Lucknow and Aligarh are the top three cities in the list even as other cities of the state include Allahabad (4th), Gorakhpur (7th), Ghaziabad (9th) and Kanpur (10th). Other Indian cities in the list are Indore (5th), Bhopal (6th) and Hyderabad (8th). As far as the entire list of states is concerned, MP is in the second slot with loan disbursements to over 1.25 lakhs beneficiaries followed by Telangana (53,777), Gujarat (18,747), Andhra Pradesh (15,992), Maharashtra (13,021), Chhattisgarh (8,993), Tamil Nadu (8,389), Jharkhand (6,413) and Rajasthan (5,533).

Yellow alert for 16 K'taka districts as rain in store

Bengaluru: The Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNDMC) on Saturday issued yellow alert for 16 districts, including Bengaluru.

The KSNMDC also issued a thunderstorm warning in these districts, while warning of isolated heavy to very heavy rains likely over interior Karnataka, Malnad and the coastal regions.

For Bengaluru, the agency predicted that widespread light to moderate rains with isolated places and heavy rains, associated with thunder activity, likely over BBMP area for next two days till October 26.

The alert was issued to the Deputy Commissioners of Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru Urban, Chikkaballapura, Chikkamagaluru, Chitradurga, Davangere, Ramanagara, Shivamogga, Tumkur, Dakshin Kannada, Udipi, Uttara Kannada, Belagavi, Dharwad, Gadag and Haveri. **IANS**

India vows to save...

From Page 1

Similarly, the Gangotri National Park in Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand is home to 15 species of mammals that include some of the rare and endangered species such as snow leopard, ibex, tahr, bharal, Himalayan snowcock and Himalayan monal.

The Khangchendzonga National Park is one of the 18 Biosphere Reserves of India situated in the North and West Sikkim districts. And the Namdapha National Park of Arunachal Pradesh is the third largest national park in India, in terms of area and one of the richest protected areas in terms of biodiversity. The park is home to a great diversity of mammal species including the 4 big cat species that includes snow leopards, clouded leopards, common leopards and tigers along with other large predators such as dholes, wolves, and Asiatic black bears.

IPL betting racket busted by Delhi Police, 2 arrested

New Delhi: The Delhi Police has busted an IPL betting racket in Greater Kailash-1 here and arrested two persons.

The accused, identified as Mohit Verma and Deepak Verma, used the ZOOM app on a LED TV, wherein the live rate of betting on the match that the other players were offering was being shown on the top right corner of the TV.

During the interrogation, the accused revealed they also used betting assistance WMC application on the laptop.

A raid was conducted on the intervening night of Thursday and Friday and two people were arrested for being involved in betting during the match between Rajasthan Royals and Sunrisers Hyderabad. A laptop, LED TV, router and six mobile phones were seized from the place, the police said.

"During sustained interrogation, one of the accused admitted that he had taken the said premises, House No. 11, servant quarters on the second Floor, Hemkunt Colony, Greater Kailash-I, New Delhi, on rent for Rs 27,000 per month with his partner," said Atul Thakur, DCP South Delhi.

The accused also revealed that applications were being run through Internet with the help of a wireless router. **IANS**

Everybody in India must get Covid vaccine free: Kejriwal

New Delhi: According to the Delhi Government, every Indian must get the Coronavirus vaccine free of cost, whenever it is ready.

The BJP has included the promise of providing the Covid-19 vaccine free of cost in its manifesto issued for the Bihar assembly elections, stirring up a political controversy.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Saturday, "The entire country must get a free vaccine. It is the right of every citizen in the country," Kejriwal said on the sidelines of an event in which he inaugurated two flyovers.

Earlier, the Aam Aadmi Party had said that those who do not vote for the BJP must also get free vaccine.

More than 3.48 lakh corona infections have been reported in Delhi so far. Over 6,000 persons have died of Corona in Delhi. There are more than 26,000 active cases in the national Capital.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said in Bihar's election manifesto that every person in Bihar would be given free Covid-19 vaccine once it is ready. **IANS**

KITCHEN BUDGET...

From Page 1

To cool down the price of pulses, the Centre recently released 40,000 tonnes of tur from the buffer stock in open market sale (OMS) in small lots, so that the releases may reach the retail market at a faster pace and help in cooling off rising prices. Dhuli urad is being offered at Rs 79 per kilo for K-18 (stock of kharif-2018), and Rs 81 per kilo for K-19.

Cashback of extra...

From Page 1

Hearing the matter on October 14, the Supreme Court observed that it was concerned about how the benefit of interest waiver would be given to borrowers and said the Centre has taken a "welcome decision" by taking note of plight of the common man, but authorities have not issued any order in this regard.

"Something concrete has to be done," a Bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan had said, adding, "Benefits of waivers to borrowers up to Rs 2 crore must be implemented as soon as possible."

The top court, which posted the matter for hearing on November 2, told the advocates appearing for the Centre and banks that "Divali is in your hand".

The Centre had told the apex court that going any further than the fiscal policy decisions already taken, such as waiver of compound interest charged on loans of up to Rs 2 crore for six months moratorium period, may be "detrimental" to the overall economic scenario, the national economy and banks may not take "inevitable financial constraints".

The top court is hearing a batch of petitions which have raised issues concerning the six-month loan moratorium period announced due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Bench, also comprising Justices RS Reddy and MR Shah, said when authorities have decided something then it has to be implemented.

THE PIONEER
CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Bharti S/o Chaman Lal R/o 3248, Galli Nal wali Arya Pura sabzi mandi, Malka ganj S.O Delhi-110007, that in my education document my father's name is Chaman Lal Bharti wrongly mentioned where all legal and future the correct name is Chaman Lal.
PD(8787)A

Public Notice

To be known to all that I Narendra Kumar Kharbanda S/o Madan Lal Kharbada R/o Flat No.45A GF Pk-JR Rajgun Garden, ND allottee of DDA LIG Flat No. 45A, G.F.Pkt.-JA,Rajgun Garden New Delhi-64 has applied for conversion of the aforesaid flat from leasehold to freehold vide application no. 214215 dated 04.02.20 in DDA. One of the original document i.e. allotment cum Demand Letter of the above flat have been lost. An FIR against this effect has been lodged in police station. Any persons claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write or contact with above named person at above address/9820992422 within 15days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform/write to Dy. Director (L&B) or Director (H-F, D-Block, 3rd floor, North Tower, A-99), NSP Delhi-110034 or contact at 9068701172/9918228636

Public Notice

This is to inform public that in News Paper dated 23.10.2020 a publication regarding mortgage of property Western side (RHS), measuring 95 sq. yds., on Ground Floor, Entire First Floor & Second Floor, with roof rights measuring 207 sq. yds. on Property no. R-311, village Naraina, Indraprastha, New Delhi by Mr. Shalini Gupta, Mr. Vikas Garg and Gian Chand H.U.F. through its karta Mr. Gian Chand was wrongly published. The above owners have sold the above property to Mrs. Ayana Gupta vide Sale Deed dated 22.10.2020 who has mortgage the property with SHR Ram Housing Finance Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 7 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Chawani (Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Veritas, Unit no 405, G2-T1, North Tower, A-99), NSP Delhi-110034 or contact at 9068701172/9918228636

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

Farooq Prez, Mehbooba VP of Gupkar Alliance

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A rag-tag coalition of six Kashmir based regional political parties 'unanimously' elected Farooq Abdullah, who is also a sitting member of Parliament from Srinagar, as president of the Peoples' Alliance for Gupkar Declaration while Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chief Mehbooba Mufti was elected as its vice president on Saturday.

In addition to this, the Peoples Conference Chairman, Sajjad Lone was named as spokesman of the alliance while CPI(M) leader MY Tarigami was elected as its Convenor and another JKNC MP Justice(Retd) Hasnain Masoodi was elected as its coordinator. The Kashmiri leaders, gathered at the residence of PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti, also adopted the flag of the

erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir as its party symbol.

All the participants who attended the meeting also reiterated their resolve to carry forward their struggle to ensure restoration of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir.

Announcing the decision soon after the maiden meeting ended, Sajjad Lone told waiting media persons, "the flag of erstwhile J&K will be the symbol of the alliance and on November 17, there will be a convention in Srinagar followed by another meeting in Jammu within two weeks".

"A document will be prepared within a month via which we'll present facts behind the lies that are being propagated. An impression is being given that all the corruption had happened in Jammu and Kashmir only," Lone said. It'll

be a tribute to people of J&K who are being slandered," he said.

Addressing the media, Dr Farooq Abdullah said, "It's not an anti-national Jamat, our aim is to ensure that the rights of people of J&K and Ladakh are restored."

He further said that attempts of dividing them in the name of religion will fail and said that "It's not a religious fight."

The National Conference president also said that they will issue a white paper or document within one month to counter the propaganda of the BJP.

Earlier, Farooq met Jammu based leaders of the NC at his residence in Srinagar and deliberated on the prevailing political scenario. Later, he also paid a visit to the Durganag temple in DalGate area on the occasion of Mahanavmi.

Pak's quadcopter shot down by Indian Army in Kupwara

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

A shot down a Pakistan Army quadcopter along Line of Control (LoC) in Keran sector of Jammu & Kashmir's Kupwara district on Saturday.

In the evening, Pakistan initiated 'unprovoked' ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling mortars along the line of control in Degwar sector of Poonch district. In response, the Indian army retaliated effectively.

It is after a gap of almost one month the Pakistani troops have managed to steer a quadcopter along the line of control for reconnaissance of the forward posts.

In the past, Pakistani troops had attempted to smuggle arms and ammunition consignment and narcotics using drones in the region. Around half a dozen attempts have been reported across Jammu region

in the recent months. Confirming the report, Twitter handle of a Srinagar based Chinara Corps tweeted, "A quadcopter (DJI Mavic 2 Pro model) has been shot down today morning by the Indian Army in Keran Sector, Kupwara district along the Line of Control".

Official sources revealed the quadcopter was on a reconnaissance mission inside the Indian territory when it was shot down around 8.00 a.m in the Keran sector.

Indian army is already maintaining a tight vigil in the forward areas to prevent any action by the Border Action Team of the Pakistan army. Official sources said, "Efforts are also being made to infiltrate small batches of trained terrorists before the mountain passes are blocked due to seasonal snowfall in the higher reaches of North Kashmir in Kupwara district".

Andhra equips farmers with crop advance register to remove middlemen

Amaravati: To protect farmers from middlemen, the Andhra Pradesh government has enabled them to register their agricultural produce in advance to sell it at procurement centres, so that the support price can be credited directly into the farmers' accounts.

Some 75,805 farmers have already registered their crops on the Comprehensive Monitoring of Agriculture Prices and Procurement (CMAPP) portal for this kharif season.

Six crops such as maize, bajra, ragi, korra, cotton and onion have been registered for crop procurement through Marketing Federation Limited (MARK-FED).

"Due to heavy rains and floods, farmers are concentrating on safeguarding their crops, considering which the government extended registration date till October 26," said a senior Agriculture Marketing department official.

The government expects more registrations from farmers by the end of the registration date, he added.

He said, "To enable farmers to sell their agriculture produce at their village level, Agricultural Marketing department is taking measures to set up more number of procurement centres across the state."

According to him, for the first time in Andhra Pradesh, 8,256 procurement centres have been set up in linkage with Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) across the state to procure crops in the current kharif season.

Farmers are required to register their details at RBKs before selling their produce at the procurement centres.

Once the registration is done, farmers' details will be fed into the procurement centre's online database, following which farmers will directly start receiving information on their mobile phones.

IANIS

Campaign in Kerala for Trump's victory

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

For the first time in modern times, an organization has come forward in Kerala exhorting all Indians who hold US citizenship to vote for Donald Trump in the November 3 presidential election.

Though presidential elections in the US always evoke interest in Kerala society, the discussions were confined to tea shops in village squares and in the studios of satellite TV news channels, for which there are no dearth in the State.

Christian Association and Alliance for Social Action (CASA), an umbrella organi-



zation incorporating various sects of the Church has set up a giant billboard at the busy Jose Junction in Ernakulam's MG Road exhorting all persons of Indian origin in the US to vote for Donald Trump and his deputy Mike Pence.

In a release to the media, Jensen, the spokesperson of CASA, said that for the continuation of world peace, it was imperative that Trump and Pence win the 2020 election. "While he declared his opposition to war of any kind,

he remained steadfast in his uncompromising stance against terrorism. Globally, President Trump set up new initiatives by holding peace talks with North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong un and paving the way for the signing of the Arab-Israel peace treaty," said Jensen in the release.

He also welcomed Trump's support for pro-life movements and his strong stance against abortion. "The last four years of Trump administration saw the US returning to the original Christian values. He was friendly with India. All US based Indians with voting rights should vote for Trump

and Pence in this election so that the Christian values could be saved and ensure that India has a friend in the White House," said Jensen.

Roshni Rose, a law student said that she was surprised by the campaign undertaken by the CASA.

Jaison Mazhuvancherry, a Catholic activist based in Perumbavoor said this was the first initiative of its kind in Kerala. "There are many families in the Christian community having links with people in the US. We hope this message would reach US through this relations and yield good result," said Jaison.

Aligarh Police recover 840 Kg marijuana

Aligarh: In a joint operation of Sadabad Police and SOG team, a raid has been carried out in a plot in front of Bhargava Colony on Hathras Road in which police recovered 840 Kg of illegal marijuana along with a truck, a Honda Amaze car and two mobile. According to the police, the cost of this stock in the international market is Rs 4.20 crore. At the time of raid, some people were putting the stock in the truck and inside a car parked in the plot. Seeing the police, these people managed to escape by taking advantage of the night.

As per the order of SP Hathras

Vineet Jaiswal, the team of Sadabad Police and SOG under the leadership of CO Sadabad Brahma Singh raided the under-construction plot in front of Hansraj's house in Bhargava Colony.

When the police team searched the spot, a large amount of marijuana was found in the truck and car and some in the foundation of the plot. The police team recovered a total of 840 kg of illegal marijuana and a truck UP 83 T-6519 and a Honda Amaze car number UP 80 EL-1331 and two mobile phones from the spot.

PNS

Riot conspiracy makers under STF lens in UP

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Under the cover of Bulgadi's issue, the people doing conspiracy to incite violence in the state is under the target of STF.

STF has started investigating both the case registered in the chandpa police station and took custody of the case diary. Conspiracy to create caste-based violence was planned during the uproar in Bulgadi. Police registered a case in 20 serious sections including sedition at Chandpa police station. Recently, in Mathura, PFI and 4 members of his association CFI were caught while going to Hathras. The names of Atiqur Rehman of Muzaffarnagar,

Siddiqui from Kerala, Masood Ahmed of Bahraich and Alam of Rampur has been registered in this case.

Another case has been filed against Congress leader Shyoraj Jeevan who gave provocative statements and he has also been questioned. STF has taken all the documents regarding his case into their custody.

The CBI team again visited the victim's village and investigated there. Questioned Chhotu, who claimed to be the eyewitness of the incident. The officials of the team, who are investigating since 12 days, are hoping that frequent talks can reveal the truth of the incident. The team led by the investigating officer, Seema Pahuja

reached the village and inspected the crime spot. Talked to the people harvesting there. The team also visited Mitthan Singh of the village and questioned the women over there. After this, they visited the house of two neighbors of the Victim and interacted with the women. Later, they also visited the house of the accused Sandeep, Ramu and Ravi.

Tehsildar Nidhi Bhardwaj visited the deceased house on and inquired about the government's help from the father. The father of the deceased wrote that he needs money because his financial situation is not good. His all work is off. Recently, the family demanded justice.

Sex workers will get ration card without identification

PNS ■ ALIGARH

In the district, ration cards will be issued to the sex workers without their identity cards.

On the instruction of the Department of Food and Distribution, the department has started identifying sex workers. For this, the department is taking the help of NGOs and NACO. Last year, ration cards were issued to half a dozen families out of 21 identified sex worker's families, the process of issuing balance ration cards is starting again.

Following the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Food and Distribution commissioner Manish Chauhan issued a directive to all DMs

and DSO to issue ration cards to all sex worker's families identified by NACO and distribute ration to them as per the 2003 Act.

Details of the sex worker's families identified by NACO available in the District Legal Services Authority and the Uttar Pradesh AIDS Controller Society have to submit to the government by 26th October based on 6 points. On receiving this order, the department has started collecting the information of sex workers. After not getting the information from NACO's office in the district, now the department's last hope is the District Legal Services Authority from where it can get the number of families of sex workers.



Reflection of the face of Devi Durga idol on the diya (lamp) during Sandhi puja at a community puja pandal, in Kolkata on Saturday

BJP suffers jolt as Independent MLA-supporter Geeta Jain joins Sena

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Opposition BJP suffered a jolt on Saturday, as its supporting Independent MLA Geeta Jain joined the ruling Shiv Sena.

Fifty-six-year-old Geeta, who had been elected to the Maharashtra Assembly from Mira-Bhayander constituency of Thane district, called on chief minister Uddhav Thackeray at the latter's private residence "Matoshri" and joined the Shiv Sena in the presence of Uddhav, who is also Sena's President.

Apart from Uddhav, party leader and Tourism Minister Aditya Thackeray was also present on the occasion.

During her visit to "Matoshri", Geeta had been



accompanied by Thane district guardian minister Eknath Shinde and MLA Pratap Sarnaik.

A BJP rebel, Geeta had won from the Mira Bhayander constituency in October last year by trouncing the BJP's

Narendra Mehta. After her victory, Geeta had announced her support to the BJP.

An influential leader from

the business community, Geeta is a popular leader in her constituency. Geeta's entry to the Shiv Sena came a day after a former senior BJP leader and minister Eknath Khadse joined another ruling MVA constituent in the State—NCP.

Informed sources said that Geeta had been in touch with the Shiv Sena leadership for the past several months and had expressed her desire to join the Sena.

Geeta is the second MLA to have joined the Shiv Sena in the recent months. Earlier, Krantikari Shetkari Paksh's MLA and State Water Conservation Minister Shankarrao Gadakh, who had won from the Nevasa assembly constituency, had joined the Shiv Sena.

J&K: 577 new cases take total tally past 91K

IANIS ■ SRINAGAR

With 577 new Covid-19 cases on Saturday, the total tally in Jammu and Kashmir crossed 91,000 mark.

A statement issued by the information and public relations department said that with 577 people tested positive on Saturday, the total number of Covid-19 cases jumped to 91,329 of which 82,219 have recovered completely.

Out of 577 new cases, 213 were reported from Jammu division and 364 from Kashmir division.

733 patients were discharged from different hospitals on Saturday after recovery.

Maha records 6,417 new corona cases, 137 deaths

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a clear pointer to the flattening Covid-19 curve the infections dropped to 6,417 while the deaths came down to as low as 137 in Maharashtra on Saturday.

A day after Maharashtra on Friday logged 7347 new infected cases and 184 deaths in various parts of the state, the state health authorities heaved a sigh of relief as the infections and deaths dropped further in the state.

With 6,417 fresh infections, the total infected cases jumped from 16,32,544 to 16,38,961. Similarly, with 137 deaths, the total number of deaths mounted from 43,015 to 43,152.

As 10,004 more 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 14,55,107.

The recovery rate in the state rose from 88.52 per cent to 88.78 per cent.

Of the total 137 new deaths reported on Saturday, Mumbai accounted for a maximum of 50 deaths, while there were 14 deaths in Pune and 10 deaths in Thane.

In the lower range, there were 8 deaths each in Solapur and Nagpur, 5 in Jalgaon, 4 each in Sangli and Yavatmal, 3 each in Ahmednagar, Latur,

Beed, Nanded, Wardha and Chandrapur, 2 each in Raigad, Satara, Kolhapur, Sindhudurg, Jalna and Osmanabad and one death each in Palghar, Ratnagiri and Washim.

In addition, one person from outside the state died in Maharashtra.

With 50 deaths, the Covid-19 toll in Mumbai shot up from 10,009 to 10,059, while the infected cases rose by 1,257 to trigger a jump in the infections from 248,802 to 250,059.

Meanwhile, the mortality rate in the state stood at 2.63 per cent. The number of "active cases" in the state dropped from 1,43,922 to 1,40,194.

Pune district, which continued to be the worst-affected city-district in Maharashtra, saw the total number of cases increase from 3,28,397 to 3,29,205, while the total number of deaths in Pune increased from 6581 to 6595.

Thane district remained in the third spot --after Pune and Mumbai -- after the total number of infections from 2,16,596 to 2,18,352, while the pandemic toll rose from 5258 to 5,268.

Out of 85,48,036 samples sent to laboratories, 16,38,961 have tested positive (19.17 per cent) for COVID-19 until Saturday.

Currently, 25,03,510 people are in home quarantine while 14,170 people are in institutional quarantine.



People through the Besant Road market for shopping on the eve of Dassehra festival in Vijayawada on Saturday

AP arranges buses at Telangana border to facilitate festival travel

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) has arranged special buses at all check-posts between the state and Telangana to facilitate the homeward journey of people into the interiors of the state for Dasara festival.

Transport Minister Perni Venkatramaiah said these special buses have been arranged to facilitate the travel of people originating from Andhra Pradesh.

The deadlock between both the Telugu states' road transport corporations has become an impediment to the travel plans of hundreds of people rushing home for Dasara

festival, leaving them high and dry with no direct buses.

Passengers are disembarking at the border of both the states to take another bus to reach their destinations in the neighbouring state.

At some places, people are paying Rs 30 autorickshaw fare just for half a kilometre ride to catch an APSRTC bus at a nearby bus station to reach home.

Dasara, Diwali and Sankranti festivals are the time when thousands of AP people living and working in Hyderabad return home for celebrations, generating a rush at all modes of transportation.

Meanwhile, Venkatramaiah justified the

state government's decision to hike traffic violations' penalties.

"It was unfortunate that Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leaders and a section of the media were crying hoarse against the move. The Centre had amended 31 sections of the Motor Vehicles Act which gives some discretionary powers to the state, which includes penalties," he pointed out.

Questioning those people criticizing the penalties, the minister asked if the government will ever penalize those following the rules, adding that a section of the media was unnecessarily creating an issue out of it and writing against the government.

IANIS

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

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"It's a grouping of countries

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

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

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

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

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

In November 2017, India,

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

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

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

September 2019.

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

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

Beijing claims sovereignty over all of the South China Sea.

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

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

I voted for a guy named Trump, says President

AP ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

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

Trump said at a Florida rally



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

on Friday that he likes being able to vote in person. "I'm old fash-

ioned, I guess," he said. The President has a busy Saturday,

with rallies scheduled in North Carolina, Ohio and Wisconsin.

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

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

He said that if elected, he would direct the federal government to "bulk-purchase as many doses as necessary of the COVID-19 vaccine so we can provide it free to those who are uninsured, under-insured or Medicaid-eligible." "COVID-19 dwarfs anything we've faced in recent history and it isn't showing any signs of slowing down. The virus is surging in almost every state. We passed 4.8 million cases. And when Trump was asked this week what he'd do differently to get the pan-

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

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

AP ■ OKLAHOMA CITY

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

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

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

President Donald Trump,

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

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

Teens behind latest art damage on Berlin's Museum Island

AP ■ BERLIN

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

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

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

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

any obvious sign of anyone applying the liquid.

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

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

Poland's President tests positive for coronavirus

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

Rishi Sunak 'barred for life' from UK pub

PTI ■ LONDON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Big suicide bombing in Kabul kills 18 at education centre

AP ■ KABUL

The death toll from the suicide attack Saturday in Afghanistan's capital has risen to at least 18 killed and 57 people wounded, including students, the interior ministry said. The explosion struck outside an education center in a heavily Shiite neighborhood of western Kabul, Dasht-e-Barchi.

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

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

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

with the attack.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE RAJASTHAN SMALL INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Rajasthan Undertaking)
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CIN : U91110RJ9615G0001118 GSTIN : 08AAACR6761L12Y

TENDER NOTICE
UBN is : RS12021SSOB000007

Sealed bids are invited from reputed e-marketing services providers for providing e-marketing services for Rajasthan Handicraft Products on various leading e-marketing portals with 3 years maintenance services.
Last date of Bid Submission is 10.11.2020 at 1.00 PM and opening of Tender is 10.11.2020 at 3.00 PM.
Interested tenderer can submit their bids only on **eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in** details can be seen of tender on our official website **industries.rajjasthan.gov.in/rajsico**
Raj, Samwad/C/2020-21/6023 **Managing Director**

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

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

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

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



S.H.O
P.S. Kashmir Gate, Delhi
Ph: 011-23967889, 23968730
DP/669/N/2020

FY19 GST returns filing deadline extended till Dec 31

New Delhi: The government on Saturday extended the deadline for furnishing GST annual returns for FY 2018-19 by two months till December 31. The government had last month extended the last date for filing GST annual return and audit report for the 2018-19 fiscal by a month till October 31, 2020. In a statement, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said the government has been receiving a number of representations regarding need to extend due date for filing Annual Return (Form GSTR-9) and Reconciliation Statement (Form GSTR-9C) for FY 2018-19. The representations have been made on the grounds that due to the COVID-19 pandemic related lockdown and restrictions, normal business operations have still not been possible in several parts of the country, it said. The statement said it has been requested that the due dates for the same be extended beyond October 31, 2020 to enable the businesses and auditors to comply in this regard.



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

Annual Return (Form GSTR-9/GSTR-9A) and Reconciliation Statement (FORM GSTR-9C) for Financial Year 2018-19 from October 31, 2020 to December 31, 2020," the CBIC said. GSTR 9 is an annual return to be filed yearly by taxpayers registered under the Goods and Services Tax (GST). It consists of details regarding the outward and inward supplies made or received under different tax heads. GSTR-9C is a statement of reconciliation between GSTR-9 and the audited annual financial statement. Furnishing of the annual return is mandatory only for taxpayers with aggregate annual turnover of above Rs 2 crore while reconciliation statement is to be furnished only by the registered persons having aggregate turnover above Rs 5 crore. **PTI**

Base year revision for CPI-industrial workers suspicious: AITUC

New Delhi: The All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) on Saturday said the labour ministry's move to revise base year for consumer price index for industrial workers (CPI-IW) is "suspicious". The AITUC further said that it is of the view that the move will lead to "depression" in dearness allowance (DA) paid to workers. The labour ministry has recently revised the base year for CPI-IW from 2001 to 2016. The retail inflation measured in terms of CPI-IW is the single most important price statistics with financial implications. The CPI-IW is primarily used to regulate the dearness allowance of government employees and the workers in the industrial sectors. It is also used in the fixation and revision of minimum wages in scheduled employments besides measuring the inflation in retail prices. In a statement issued on Saturday, the AITUC said that "the Centre's move to shift base year for calculating DA is suspicious". The Labour Bureau of the Ministry of Labour sent out emails announcing revision of base year for calculating CPI-IW from 2001 to 2016, on October 22, 2020, it claimed. This decision follows the earlier pattern practiced by the labour ministry: making a show of consulting stakeholders at the eleventh hour and then completely ignoring the responses received, it alleged. The entire lot of central trade unions had opposed through a written, signed communication, the recommendations of the Labour Bureau point by point, only to discover that they have simply been brushed aside, the AITUC said. The so-called consultations on labour codes, including recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Labour, met the same fate, it added. "Since the present decision of shifting the base year to 2016, linking factor of 2.88, proportions of items of household expenditures, points of data collections, all are going to result in depression of dearness allowance payable to industrial workers, the employers stand to gain that much as their profits," it opined. **PTI**



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

New Delhi: After registering record sales in the seven-day period to kick off the festive season after pandemic-induced lockdowns, ecommerce marketplaces like Amazon and Flipkart have announced the second round of online sales to keep up the momentum. Amazon on Saturday announced its 1/2 Happiness Upgrade Days' where customers will get special offers on a wide range of products across categories from top brands till October 28. The e-commerce platform is offering up to 40 per cent off on latest smartphones from top brands, 65 per cent off on large appliances and TVs and up to 80 per cent off on Amazon fashion and home and kitchen products. The sale brings over 6,000 deals on consumer electronics and accessories, up to Rs 30,000 off on laptops, up to 75 per cent off on headphones and up to 60 per cent off on camera devices, the company said in a statement. "The customers can save big with a 10 per cent instant bank discount on Axis Bank, Citibank and ICICI Bank credit and debit cards and EMI transactions. They can get 5 per cent instant discount plus up to 5 per cent reward points with Amazon Pay ICICI Bank credit card. Flipkart has also started Dussehra sale from October 22 till October 28 and after that, the ecommerce platform will begin its 1/2 Big Diwali Sale'. According to industry reports, the seven-day sales likely witnessed over \$4.8 billion (nearly Rs 35,273 crore) in sales. According to Bengaluru-based market research firm RedSeer, \$3.1 billion (about Rs 22,000 crore) of goods were sold online from brands and sellers in the first four-and-a-half days of the online sales event that started from October 15. Online retailers are expected to generate approximately \$6.5 billion (Rs 47,751 crore) in sales during the festive month (October 15-November 15), with around 5.5-6 crore online buyers participating, according to a Forrester report. **IAN S**

'IBC raised confidence of all investors in Indian economy'

New Delhi: The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has not only strengthened the banking system by helping them resolve outstanding debt piled over years but has also come as a big booster of confidence of national and foreign investors in the Indian economy, a senior SBI official said on Saturday. In his address as the Guest of Honour in the inaugural session of the international conference (online) on "Insolvency Resolution Paradigm: Global Headwinds and Responses", State Bank of India's Managing Director, Commercial Clients Groups, Arijit Basu, said that earlier banks only had "loan structuring" option which used to take five to six years. "Now, the IBC has provided equal opportunity to corporate sector and banks. It has changed the relationship between borrowers and creditors and provided a mechanism of insolvency. "Unsustainable debt is a symptom of fundamental issues in the 'business model' of the concerned company. In case if you don't have a viable resolution plan, we (banks) have a viable resolution plan under IBC," he said. However, Basu expressed satisfaction that the big corporate houses in India have efficiently managed their cash flow during Covid-19. The event was organised by the Indian Institute of Insolvency Professionals of ICAI (IIIPi). In his address, Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) President Atul Kumar Gupta highlighted the role of CAS as being played in IBC ecosystem as insolvency professionals (IPs). "About 62 per cent of insolvency professionals are CAS. Besides, IBC has opened several new opportunities for CAS in the form of valuer, liquidator, technical experts in the NCLT, the NCLAT, high courts, and also the Supreme Court, and also various kinds of advisory services," he said. Gupta also appreciated the initiatives of the Central government in helping businesses to wade through the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. In the session titled "Perspective on Global Insolvency Regime", Joint Secretary, Corporate Affairs, Gyaneshwar Kumar Singh said: "IBC has not only served corporates but livelihoods also. As per estimates, the total value of insolvency cases amount to about Rs 5.63 lakh crore. If it had undergone through liquidation, only about 7 per cent of the money would have been recovered. This would have adversely impacted the Indian economy." "With IBC in place, there will be no sick companies and sick banks in the future". In the same session, Paul Bannister, Head (Policy), Insolvency Service, UK, appreciated the response of India in handling the economic crisis caused by Covid-19. "These are very difficult times. We already have a world-class insolvency regime but we are developing further against the context of crisis and changing international context including Covid and UK's exit from the European Union," he said. **IAN S**

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

Weak demand from power sector pushes up CIL's e-auction of coal

New Delhi: India's healthy debt to GDP ratio has created scope for raising investment funding for 'National Infrastructure Pipeline' through borrowings from overseas markets. According to Sanjay Aggarwal, President, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, although, early signs of recovery are visible from the recent data on economic and business indicators, the need of the hour is to put the policy attention on refueling consumption demand in the country to regain the lost growth momentum. "Since the lockdown caused by Covid-19 in the month of March 2020, Government has very well addressed the investors' and the industry's sentiments, the focus should now be on fuelling consumption growth, which is one of the key engines of economic growth," Aggarwal was quoted as saying in a PHD Chamber statement. "At this juncture, the next stimulus package should prioritise demand creation measures to attain a positive growth trajectory in the later quarters (Q3 / Q4) of this financial year 2020-21." Besides, he said that demand creation will have multiplier effects on the other sectors of economy including enhanced production, increased investments and employment creation. "The increased spending on infrastructure will give a multiplier effect to rejuvenate the aggregate demand in the economy and to mitigate the daunting impact of Covid-19 on the economy," said Aggarwal. **IAN S**

With weak demand from the power sector in the wake of Covid-19 disruptions, the country's largest coal producer Coal India Ltd shifted its attention to the non-power sector to see around six-fold increase in the sales of the dry fuel. In the first half of the current fiscal (FY21), CIL's fuel allocation under the exclusive e-auction scheme for the non-power sector rose close to six times at 13.44 million tonnes as against a mere 2.31 million tonne during the same period of previous year. Lockdown in various parts of the country and continuing sluggish economic conditions dried up demand for the dry fuel pushing CIL to explore new avenues for growth. The government had earlier asked state-run power companies such as NTPC to reduce coal imports needed for blending purpose and look more at the domestic sources. The CIL has also set up various washeries to supply good quality coal that could replace imports. **IAN S**

PHD Chamber: Refuel demand to attract pvt investments

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

New Delhi: The pump prices of auto fuels petrol and diesel remained unchanged on Saturday as softer global crude and product prices prevented oil marketing companies from carrying out any revision in prices. With this, Petrol prices have now been unchanged for 32 days at a stretch while diesel prices were the same for the 22 consecutive days. Price of petrol in the national capital stood at Rs 81.06 per litre. In Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, the fuel was sold for Rs 87.74, Rs 84.14 and Rs 82.59 per litre, respectively. Diesel prices in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata continues to be at Rs 70.46, Rs 76.86, Rs 75.95 and Rs 73.99, respectively. Oil sector experts said that with global oil prices under pressure from slowing demand

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

auto fuel consumers in India by way of a fall in retail price of petrol and diesel. Global crude prices are holding close to \$42 a barrel now. It has been hovering between \$40-42 a barrel for over a month now. But with lower oil demand and rising inventory, there is fear among oil producing companies that crude prices may start falling again. **IAN S**

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED BOY



Ankit Kumar

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

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

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

SEARCH FOR MISSING



Yogita D/o Mukesh

General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Yogita D/o Mukesh**, R/o C-1325, Jahangir Puri, Delhi, **Age**: 22 years, **Height**: 5', **Complexion**: Wheatish, **Face**: Round, **Built**: Strong, wearing Grey colour Frock and Black Leggie or Chappal in feet, has been missing from the area of P.S. Jahangir Puri, Delhi. In this regard **DD No. 111A, dated 13.10.2020 has been registered at P.S. Jahangir Puri, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned.

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

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Regd. Off. : 43/5, Bahalgarh Road, Sonipat - 131021 Tele : 0130 – 2216666, Fax : 011-66173923						
CIN : L24302HR1985PLC022758 Website : www.jaschindustries.com , Email : accounts@jasch.biz						
Extract of Standalone Reviewed Financial Results for the Quarter ended 30 th September, 2020. (₹ in Lakhs)						
Sl No	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Half Year Ended	
		30.09.20	30.06.20	30.09.19	30.09.20	30.09.19
		Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations.	2645.23	1488.66	3117.23	4133.89	6597.24
2	Profit before Interest, Depreciation & Taxes (EBITDA)	331.08	181.40	59.79	512.48	1154.72
3	Net Profit for the Period (before Tax and Exceptional Items)	245.53	85.37	(74.25)	330.90	172.13
4	Net Profit for the Period before Tax (after Exceptional Items)	245.53	85.37	(74.25)	330.90	172.13
5	Net Profit for the period after Tax (after Exceptional Items)	183.73	63.88	(60.99)	247.61	123.80
6	Total Comprehensive Income for the period ((Comprising Profit) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	183.73	63.88	(60.99)	247.61	123.80
7	Equity Share Capital	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00
8	Reserves	4904.18	4387.64	4326.65	4904.18	4326.65
9	Earnings Per Share (of ₹10/- each)	1.62	0.56	(0.54)	2.19	1.09
	Basic & Diluted:					4.00
Notes :						
1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Financial Results are available on the website of Stock Exchange at www.bseindia.com and also on Company's website at www.jaschindustries.com .						
2. The Company has prepared these results in accordance with the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 (Ind AS) prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013.						
3. Figures for the previous periods have been regrouped, wherever necessary, to conform to the current period's classification.						
Sd/- (J. K. GARG) MANAGING DIRECTOR						
Sonipat, 24th October 2020						

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

Bengaluru: In a major victory for investors, the High Court of Karnataka on Saturday restrained Franklin Templeton (FT) India's decision from winding up its six debt schemes without obtaining the consent of unitholders. Pronouncing the verdict in petitions challenging the winding-up of six debt fund schemes of FT, a division bench of Chief Justice A.S. Oka and Justice Justice Ashok S. Kinagi directed that trustees should not take any action on the winding up of the six schemes till a simple majority consent of unit holders is obtained. "We hold that no interference is called for in the decision of trustees to winding up of the said schemes. We hold and declare that the decision of the trustees to winding up the six schemes cannot be implemented until consent from the unitholders is obtained in accordance with Sub Clause C of Regulation 15. Hence, we restrain the trustees to take any further steps based on the notice April 23, 2020 and May 28, 2020, issued till the consent of the unitholders is obtained. It will open for trustees to obtain the consent of unitholders and to take further steps," the division bench stated in its 330-page order. Market regulator SEBI should have played a more active role in the matter and it failed in its duty towards taking prompt actions, the court noted, adding that the forensic audit report in the case is tentative and doesn't include final findings. In view of the Supreme Court's vacation, the operation of the order has been stayed for six weeks to give time to FT

India to appeal the order, the Karnataka High Court ruled, directing that status quo on refund and redemptions should be maintained till then. It also restricted the asset management company and trustees from taking on any fresh borrowings in the six debt schemes, which were shut in April. Reacting on the High Court order, Franklin Templeton said: "Court has upheld the authority and decision taken by the Trustees to wind-up the schemes under regulation 39(2)(a). As per the judgement, for operationalising such a decision, approval of the unitholders will be required under regulation 18(15)(c). "We are considering the order and will take appropriate steps in consultation with our legal experts in the best interest of the unitholders. Our focus remains on maximizing value for unitholders in these schemes and returning monies as soon as possible," said FT in a statement. Notably, on April 23 amid severe redemption pressure and illiquidity, Franklin Templeton had decided to shut down its suite of six debt schemes, affecting 3,00,000 investors adversely and assets under management of Rs 26,000 crore. **IAN S**

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

Chennai: Hailing the Karnataka High Court's verdict that upheld the rights of unit-holders of the Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund (FTMF), the Chennai Financial Markets and Accountability (CFMA), an investor's protection organisation, said it would approach the Supreme Court to safeguard the entire interests of investors. The Karnataka High Court has directed Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund to not proceed with the winding-up of its debt schemes without obtaining the consent of its unit-holders. It clarified that the consent of unit-holders as per the regulations is to be obtained before going through the winding-up process. Stating that the half-battle

was won wherein rights of unit-holders are upheld by the Karnataka High Court, Nithyaesh Natraj, the counsel for the CFMA, noted: "There are few areas which the court has not decided upon (which) may set a wrong precedent for the Mutual Fund Industry." He pointed out that it has been rightly observed by the court that the SEBI has failed to be proactive in this case and reiterated that the CFMA would challenge the order in the apex court so that the entire interests of unit-holders are protected further. "Leaving the fate of three lakh unit-holders at the mercy of trustees without knowing the content of forensic audit will set a bad precedent," he added. **IAN S**

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

WESTERN RAILWAY
(SURVEY & CONSTRUCTION)

E-TENDER NOTICE

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



There are many workers who risk their lives just so that we can keep going. They are mostly never noticed. Women waste pickers are among one of them. The Body Shop and Plastic For Change have launched Project NARI which aims at making a difference in their lives. MUSBA HASHMI speaks to these frontline workers to bring you a report

At 23. She has seen the worst

Monsoons laden one danger

Plastic is merely a matter of waste for us, but to them it is as precious as it can be. Meet a 23-year-old Mangalore-based woman waste picker, Roopa who has been collecting waste from a landfill in Pachanady for about a year now.

A mother to a young daughter and having a big family to take care of, Roopa had no option but to join her mother in the profession after her husband met with an accident, that left him bed-ridden.

“Collecting waste at the landfill is very much a part of my family’s history — my grandparents used to do it, then my parents and finally I got into it as well,” she says.

Fortunately, Roopa doesn’t have to go through a lot of indifferent behaviour from the society and doesn’t hold any grudges against anyone, but there are a few incidents that did bother her at some point.

“I didn’t face any real issue from my community, but when I would visit my grandparents — during the time I used to collect waste from the landfill — their neighbours used to insult me. They called me names. They asked me if I didn’t have a better job to do. Some even behaved like we were untouchables. But I stood strong and doesn’t let their taunts make much difference in my life. I bravely stood my ground and told them that what we were doing was honest labour and that there is nothing to feel ashamed about. What kept me going all this while was the belief that no job is big or small and every occupation deserves equal respect,” Roopa tells you.

Spending atleast seven hours at the landfills, surrounded by every kind of waste, under the scorching sun, earned Roopa, not more than ₹500 a day. Only if we would be able to imagine the ordeal she had to go through

“All what we could do with this money was to eat food and cover ourselves,” she says.

During COVID, she says, the prices of the material we would collect from landfills and sell to scrap shops plummeted and so our income reduced dramatically. We didn’t even have proper rations at home.

Though there were a lot of apprehensions in Roopa’s mind when she took up the job, she never had any fear of catching infections. “Before COVID-19, it didn’t hit our mind that we could fall sick. It was only when the pandemic hit that we realised about the danger that lies ahead of us,” she explains.

Not that she never felt like quitting. There were a dozen times when she thought of giving up the job and do something else.



Roopa, a 23-year-old waste picker, who is now working as a Quality Engineer with Plastic For Change

I DID NOT FACE ANY REAL ISSUE FROM MY COMMUNITY, BUT WHEN I WOULD VISIT MY GRANDPARENTS, THEIR NEIGHBOURS USED TO INSULT ME. THEY CALLED ME NAMES. I STOOD STRONG AND DID NOT LET THEIR TAUNTS BOTHER ME — ROOPA

“Since I had completed my PUC, I had initially refused to go to the landfill because I wanted to get a better job, but because of our family’s financial circumstances I was forced to help support my mother and start collecting waste along with her. I did it with a heavy heart. There were quite a few times in between when I wanted to give up this job, but then I was laid back each and every time because of these financial issues,” she tells you.

However, not all is lost in Roopa’s story. Her life changed when Plastic for Change identified her and extended a helping hand to her and family. “Plastic

For Change reached out to me and offered me a job role as a Quality Engineer at their factory. Ever since I have started working with them, all the insults that I had received in my life, stopped right then and there. I love my new job and I couldn’t have asked for more. It gives me a feeling of pride that I am able to do something different in life now and can make way for a bright future of my children,” she tells you with a smile.

She adds that the initiative by The Body Shop and Plastic For Change has helped her in many ways. “Whether it was the new jobs we were offered or the PPE kits we received and the installation of the water supply — the intervention of these brands is making a difference in our community,” she tells you.

Having seen all the hardships in her lives at an early age, Roopa feels that everyone should be treated equally, regardless of their background. “I hope that my children doesn’t have to go through all that I had to endure while growing up. It is disturbing. It tears our confidence into shreds. I wish my children get best of the education and grow up to do a job that they like. I just want them to make and earn a better life for themselves with all the respect from the society and passion towards their work,” she says.

She has a request to make to the Government. “It’d be great if the Government recognise our work and could provide some support in helping me build a house for my family,” she says.



Manjula, a 30-year-old Mangalore-based waste picker, is happy that her life has changed for the better

Roopa is not an exception here. A 30-year-old Mangalore-based Manjula too has to go through the same situation in life. But unlike Roopa, she has been into this profession for more than three years now.

“It was when our family was going through financial crisis that I started collecting waste from the landfill. A few of my neighbours used to go there to earn a living and that’s how I began as well, since I thought it’d be a good source of income,” Manjula, who lives with her husband and a 14-year-old daughter, tells you.

Since most of her community is involved in the same kind of work, Manjula haven’t faced any real indifference in the society. “However, while I used to collect waste from the landfill many would show sympathy towards me and questioned why I hadn’t tried out some other profession, since I was educated till PUC,” she says.

Like Roopa, her life changed and for the better when Jayanthi, a member of Plastics For Change reached out to offered a job to her. “I am extremely grateful to Jayanthi

ma’am who gave me the opportunity to work as a Quality Engineer. The job not only solved my financial worries but also saved me from working long hours at the landfill,” she tells you.

Getting a role as a Quality Engineer has definitely caused a major positive difference in her life.

“The tuition classes and the nutritional food that they provide to my daughter is another major help for my family. I’m also grateful to see the number of other social schemes that Plastics For Change and The Body Shop is bringing to my community,” she adds.

Only if one could imagine the ordeal of these women waste pickers who spend more than half of their day at the landfill collecting all types of waste and then return home only to cook for their family.

“There is no chance that anyone could like this work. But it was not as if we have an option. It makes us feel like puking. The smell sometimes become unbearable, especially during the monsoon. If I would go on to describe the scenario, one would be left disgusted,” she explains and tells you that she used to spend

THERE WERE TIMES WHEN I MADE UP MY MIND THAT I WOULD LEAVE THIS WORK BUT THEN I REALISED THAT I COULDN’T AFFORD TO. THE RAINY SEASON IS MOST HAZARDOUS FOR US, NOT JUST BECAUSE IT IS AN UNCOMFORTABLE TIME TO WORK OUTSIDE BUT ALSO BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY OTHER RISKS INVOLVED — MANJULA

nothing less than five to six hours daily at the landfill while collecting waste.

It goes without saying that many a times, Manjula thought of quitting this work, but it was not easy. “Like I said, I have a family to take care of. There were times when I made up my mind that I would leave this work, but then I realised that I couldn’t afford to. The rainy season is the most hazardous for us, not only because it is an uncomfortable time to work, but also because there are so many other risks involved. One can also meet with an accident. Even when I recall that time, a tear or two won’t stop from falling down my eyes,” Manjula, who earned ₹4000 a week, tells you.

She says that she was well aware about all the risks involved at the landfill and hence, she took all the necessary precautions while working. “I was aware of the risks that collecting waste involved, and so I would be very cautious and ensure I wore boots and gloves. I’d also take a bath and wash my clothes as soon as I returned from the landfill,” she tells you.

To be able to live a dignified life, she says, is the everyone’s right and women waste pickers should be no exception. “Everyone should be able to live a dignified life. I hope that those who are still working in landfills would be able to gain better livelihood for themselves and respect in the society,” she says.

While having a home to live, clean water to drink and electricity are nothing but our daily needs, for these waste pickers it is nothing less than a luxury that they have to ask from the Government. “I hope the Government can provide some support in helping me build a house for my family. And for my community it’d be great if the Government could set up public washrooms and toilets, since there aren’t any, as well as a stable power supply,” she tells you.

It shows how one of the most important part of our society are struggling hard to live a normal life, which is obviously not so normal for them.

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

IPLT20.com

DC trapped in Varun's Chakravyuh

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

'Our most complete performance so far'

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

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

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

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

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

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

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

our team.

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

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

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



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

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

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

ship.

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

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

RCB look to seal play-off berth

PTI ■ DUBAI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Virat Kohli & Ab de Villiers

IPLT20.com

the table toppers MI and Delhi Capitals.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kings fighting escape

PTI ■ DUBAI

Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) on Saturday successfully defended a measly target of 127 and pulled off an extraordinary 12-run win over SunRisers Hyderabad (SRH) at the Dubai International Stadium.

With SRH taking their time chasing down the low target, KXIP kept the pressure on them and turned the screws in the death overs. They took as many as seven wickets in the last four overs and conceded just 15 runs. Chris Jordan and Arshdeep Singh bowled the last two overs in which they got two wickets each.

With Arshdeep dismissing Priyam Garg to claim his second consecutive wicket in the 20th over, Khaleel Ahmed puzzlingly defended the hat-trick ball to off-side with SRH needing 13 to win off the last three balls. He



The Kings XI Punjab celebrate the win during Indian Premier League

©IPL

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

then dabbled the next ball to point and started strolling towards the non-striker's end. He sped up only when he spotted the fielder sprinting towards the ball but by then it was too late and he was run out.

Earlier, SRH turned the screws in the last five overs, conceding just 38 runs and taking two wickets. KXIP ended their innings on 126/7 in their 20 overs. KXIP have thus won their fourth consecutive win of the season and continue their pursuit of a playoff spot.

One last chance for Royals

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

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

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

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

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

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



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

©mipaltan

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

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

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

sition.

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

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

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

For Rajasthan, the biggest

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

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

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

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

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

On the bowling front too, RR lack consistency.

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

Virat most complete player across formats: Root

PTI ■ LONDON

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

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

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

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

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

he's weaker against spin or pace."

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

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

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

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

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

DUGOUT

MOTION PICTURE



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

©KKRiders



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

©mipaltan



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

©SunRisers



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

©chetans1987

GAME WAS ALMOST OVER IN POWERPLAY

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

POINTS TABLE

		P	W	L	NRR	PTS
1	MI	10	7	3	+1.448	14
2	DC	11	7	4	+0.434	14
3	RCB	10	7	3	+0.182	14
4	KKR	11	6	5	-0.476	12
5	KXIP	11	5	6	-0.103	10
6	SRH	11	4	7	+0.029	8
7	RR	11	4	7	-0.620	8
8	CSK	11	3	8	-0.733	6



Sergio Ramos celebrates after scoring Real's second goal against Barca

3 goals, 3 points

Zidane maintains stunning Camp Nou record as Real beat Barca in El Clasico

AFF ■ BARCELONA

Real Madrid averted a crisis in the best possible way on Saturday by beating Barcelona 3-1 in the first early Clasico, landing an early blow in La Liga's title race.

Barca had the chance to inflict a third consecutive defeat on their rivals and increase the pressure on Zinedine Zidane.

Instead, Madrid's win earns them a six-point lead over the Catalans, having played one game more.

Sergio Ramos' penalty and a late Luka Modric goal finished off Barcelona after Federico Valverde and Ansu Fati had traded early strikes in a frantic game that defied those expecting further evidence of two heavyweights in decline. Barcelona might feel hard done by, especially as Ramos' penalty was awarded after a check by VAR and a hugely exaggerated fall by Madrid's captain after Clement Lenglet tugged his shirt.

But aside from an impressive spell in the first half, when an inspired Lionel Messi threatened to win the game on his own, Madrid were dominant for longer spells and pulled away when it mattered.

This was Ronald Koeman's first Clasico as Barcelona coach and some of the pressure Zidane would have felt from a loss is now transferred to the Dutchman, who has overseen only three wins from his first six games in charge.

Barcelona face Juventus on Wednesday in the Champions League, without the suspended Gerard Pique.

Every Barca set-back is now seen through the lens of Messi's future too. The Argentinian, who failed in his attempt to leave last summer, has still to score from open play this season.

MADRID REBORN

In the previous week, Real Madrid had lost to Shakhtar Donetsk and newly promot-

ed Cadiz, while Barcelona were beaten by Getafe last weekend.

Yet a dip in quality does not have to mean a drop in drama and any doubts about the thrill of this fixture were answered in eight minutes, as both teams had scored.

Madrid made the start they dreamed of when Karim Benzema drifted deep into the right channel and was allowed to turn, with the sprinting Valverde going beyond him.

Valverde pierced the gap before lifting a curved shot past Neto and into the far corner.

Madrid celebrated as if their confidence had been reborn, but within three minutes, Barcelona were level.

Messi, from almost left-back, chipped a ball over the top freeing Jordi Alba who fired into the front post where Fati had nipped ahead of Ramos and turned in.

It was fast and open for the rest of the half, with Messi enjoying a golden spell. He glided past Casemiro and then swerved around Ramos, but onto his right foot, the finish stabbed into Thibaut Courtois at the near post.

Benzema should have scored too, Madrid finished the stronger before half-time but Barca were better after. Fati flashed just wide and Philippe Coutinho missed a free header at the back post.

Their momentum was checked by Lenglet's error, a tug in the box clear enough that Ramos' shirt was stretched, even if the fall was comically exaggerated. Referee Juan Martinez checked the monitor. Ramos found the corner.

Barca wanted a penalty themselves when Ramos booted a ball into team-mate Raphael Varane's arm, but this time there was no whistle.

Ramos and Valverde both could have made it three in the final minutes before substitute Modric did, finishing beautifully after Neto rushed out.

Hamilton on pole for record win bid

AFF ■ PORTIMAO

Lewis Hamilton claimed a thrilling last-gasp pole position on Saturday to give him the perfect launchpad for his bid to win a record 92nd Formula One race in Sunday's Portuguese Grand Prix.

In denying his Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas in the final seconds of qualifying, Hamilton moved to within three of his 100th career pole as his team claimed its 12th pole from as many races this season.

The six-time world champion, who had trailed the Finn in all three practice sessions and in the two opening parts of qualifying, reeled off a stunning best lap in one minute and 16.652 seconds at the new Algarve International Circuit.

It was enough to outpace the Finn by 0.102 seconds and, as so often this year, to deliver heartbreak again after the pair had swapped from soft to medium tyres for their final runs.

Hamilton's ninth pole of the season sets him up to move clear of Michael Schumacher's 14-year-old record of 91 race wins which he equalled in the Eifel Grand Prix at Nurburgring last time out.

"It's amazing, I can't tell you how hard that was today," said Hamilton. "I guess we have a great car, but you have to drive the nuts off it to pull out a lap."

The Mercedes pair did battle throughout while Max Verstappen, who ended up in third for Red Bull, tried and failed to break up the F1 duopoly.



Ajax players celebrate after scoring goal against VVV during Eredivisie clash on Saturday. The Dutch team defeated their opponents 13-0



Rafael Nadal plays a shot as he took part in the Balearic Championship in Mallorca on Saturday

TT camp from Oct 28 to Dec 8

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A national table tennis training camp, featuring four-time Commonwealth Games Gold-medallist Sharath Kamal along with 10 other players, will be held in Sonepat from 28 October to 8 December, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said on Saturday.

SAI has sanctioned ₹18 lakh for the camp, which will be the first national camp for the sport since the announcement of the nationwide lockdown in March.

"The Sports Authority of India has approved the national coaching camp for Table Tennis, which will commence on 28th October till 8th December," SAI said in a statement.

Mendy, Maguire & masterclass

Foden rescues Cityzens from Hammer blow; Chelsea-Utd play goalless draw

AFF ■ MANCHESTER/LONDON

Erling Haaland made his debut off the bench as Manchester United's home struggles continued with a dour 0-0 draw against Chelsea in an underwhelming Premier League clash at a rainy Old Trafford.

Marcus Rashford and Juan Mata had the best of the first-half chances but were unable to get the better of Edouard Mendy, the latter's attempt coming after Harry Maguire contentiously avoided conceding a penalty for a clumsy challenge on Cesar Azpilicueta.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer sent on Cavani before the hour mark and the 33-year-old striker, who was signed as a free agent on deadline day, almost scored with his first touch for United.

Neither side was able to find a winner, with Chelsea sitting sixth in the table and United 15th, though they are only separated by two points.

After a sluggish opening half an hour, the highlight of which was Mendy almost passing the ball into his own goal, the game finally came to life in the final 10 minutes of the opening period.

Mendy recovered from his earlier error by using his foot to keep out a low drive from Rashford, before springing to his right to push a curling attempt from Mata behind.

Those shots came either side of Azpilicueta — who featured on the right side of a three-man defence — appealing for a penalty when Maguire climbed over him, while Thiago Silva went unpunished for clipping Rashford in the area in the 41st minute.

Mata and Daniel James were sacrificed for Paul Pogba and debutant Cavani, who narrowly missed out on making an immediate impact when he flicked Bruno Fernandes' cross into the side-netting.

Mason Greenwood returned for United as a late substitute and Mendy



Man United's Harry Maguire, left, and Scott McTominay, right, jostle for position with Chelsea's Cesar Azpilicueta, second right, and Reece James during Premier League clash at Old Trafford

produced another stunning save to deny Rashford, who produced the first and only shot on target of the second half in stoppage time.

FODEN RESCUES CITY

Pep Guardiola admitted concerns over the points dropped by Manchester City after Phil Foden came off the bench to rescue a 1-1 draw against West Ham.

Guardiola's side fell behind to Michail Antonio's superb overhead kick in the first half at the London Stadium.

Foden came on at half-time and produced an instant equaliser, but City couldn't deliver the knockout blow and have now won just one of their last four Premier League games.



Injury-hit City, without Fernandinho, Aymeric Laporte, Nathan Ake and Gabriel Jesus, rarely reached peak form in the latest of a growing list of inconsistent displays.

While Arsenal and Porto were beaten in their previous two matches, City still don't seem to have completely recovered from their 5-2 thrashing by Leicester in September.

They are already five points behind leaders Everton, who play Southampton on Sunday, and look more vulnerable than at any time since Guardiola's first season in charge.

Normal weekend for Robert

Lewandowski hits hat-trick as Bayern Munich beat Frankfurt 5-0

AFF ■ MUNICH

Robert Lewandowski took his hot scoring streak as Inter battled to a 2-0 victory over Genoa at the Stadio Luigi Ferraris to snap their three-game winless run.

Inter lost 2-1 to bitter rivals Milan last weekend, either side of draws with Lazio and Borussia Monchengladbach, and they made hard work of overcoming Genoa on Saturday.

The Nerazzurri failed to register a single shot on target in the first half of a league game for the first time under Antonio Conte, who has been under increasing pressure.

But Inter made the breakthrough thanks to Lukaku's 10th goal in eight matches this term for club and country, which Danilo D'Ambrosio added to 11 minutes from time as the visitors moved up to third.

Inter defender Danilo D'Ambrosio discussed the Nerazzurri's important 2-0 win over Genoa in the Serie A in an interview with Italian broadcaster Sky Sports Italia moments after the game.

"In the Serie A no game is

brief cameo, before England Under-17 midfielder Jamal Musiala also came off the bench to net the fifth.

However, Bayern's victory could come at a price as Canadian left-back Alphonso Davies was in clear distress after going off early with an ankle injury.

Lewandowski underlined his status as one of the world's best strikers last

scoring a career-best 55 goals in 47 games, including 34 in the Bundesliga.

The Polish international opened the scoring on 10 minutes when he fired home after a Thomas Mueller pass.

Frankfurt goalkeeper Kevin Trapp couldn't do anything to stop Lewandowski's header from a Joshua Kimmich corner in the 26th minute.

Bayern had a penalty appeal turned down when Douglas Costa's cross clipped the hand of Frankfurt's Makoto Hasebe.

Lewandowski wrapped up the victory on the hour mark with a clinical finish from another Costa cross.

After sitting out the last two games, Sane ghosted past a defender and drove a shot into the bottom corner with 18 minutes to play.

Manuel Neuer pulled off a great save to deny Frankfurt striker Bas Dost before Musiala grabbed the final goal as

the visitors suffered their first league defeat of the season.

LEIPZIG FIGHT BACK

Leipzig came from behind to seal a 2-1 win over Hertha, whose Colombian striker Jhon Cordoba scored in the eighth minute.

Leipzig drew level when defender Dayot Upamecano fired home from a free-kick on 11 minutes, but Berlin were reduced to 10 men after the break when substitute

Devoaisio Zeefuik was shown two yellow cards within four minutes of coming on.

Leipzig made the man advantage count when Marcel Sabitzer converted a penalty with 13 minutes left.

Hertha were lucky not to finish with nine men when another sub, Jessic Ngankam, scythed down Leipzig left-back Angelino and the referee changed his decision to a yellow card having initially showed a straight red.

At Signal Iduna park in Dortmund, Borussia Dortmund beat Schalke 3-0 in Revierderby.



Inter pass Genoa test

AFF ■ GENOA

Romelu Lukaku maintained his hot scoring streak as Inter battled to a 2-0 victory over Genoa at the Stadio Luigi Ferraris to snap their three-game winless run.

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Inter's players celebrate after Danilo D'Ambrosio scores during Serie A match between Genoa and Inter Milan on Saturday

easy. I agree with the coach, no one has ever dominated us and so far, we have collected less than we've deserved.

"Today we dominated for 90 minutes, we did well in not conceding goals and for bringing home three points that do us good."

The Italian then commented on the importance of teamwork when defending.

"To be able to push up high, you need teamwork on a defensive level. Not conceding goals is important and does not mean playing defensively."

Finally, D'Ambrosio spoke about the Nerazzurri's upcoming Champions League group

game against Ukrainian side Shakhtar Donetsk.

"Very important game. We have already faced and beaten Shakhtar Donetsk, but they have a lot of quality especially up front."

"We will have to face them as we did in the Europa League."

The 32-year-old Italian defender, who is contracted to the Nerazzurri until the end of the season, made his fourth appearance of this campaign under coach Antonio Conte, with his total minutes now being 281.

In that time, he has scored one goal and helped the side keep one clean sheet.

Pak-Zimbabwe T20s shifted to Rawalpindi

PTI ■ LAHORE

The Pakistan Cricket Board has shifted next month's three T20Is against Zimbabwe from Lahore to Rawalpindi citing the deteriorating air quality here.

The three T20Is, which were earlier scheduled at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore, will now be held at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on November 7, 8 and 10.

"Following the sudden deterioration in air quality and now further expected air pollution in November, we have made a swift decision to move the matches scheduled in Lahore," PCB chief executive Wasim Khan said in a statement.

"The early onset of hazardous pollution and subsequent poor air quality meant that the risk to keep matches in Lahore at this stage was too great."

The rescheduling also affects the remaining four Pakistan Super League matches which will now be held in Karachi.

Earlier this month, the ODI leg of Zimbabwe tour, beginning on October 30, was moved from Multan to Rawalpindi due to logistical and operational challenges.



‘It’s a matter of perception on how to value artwork’

■ What is Nazarband about?

It is essentially a love story. I was reading short stories by Ashapurna Devi, an eminent author. Her stories are predominantly indoors and deal with middle-class households. But this story, *Chuti Nakoch* is an outdoor story. The story grabbed me by the jugular. I immediately got the rights to the story and started developing a screenplay. It is a psychological road movie. The two marginal characters are an unlikely pair of jailbirds who

embark on a harrowing and unpredictable odyssey drifting across Kolkata. The film is a visceral look at their resilience and how they navigate different kinds of oppression. It is a heartfelt exploration into the depths of companionship and the meaning of rejection and acceptance.

■ How tough a decision it was to put the film online for the Busan International Film Festival?

Busan is a physical festival, not virtual. The films will be screened in proper theatres and Korean people will watch them on big screens. But Busan is unable to invite international guests this year because of the strict quarantine rules. However, the directors will be talking to the audience online immediately after the screening. That’s great. But still feeling bad for not being able to be present in the theatre for the world premiere. I decided to submit *Nazarband* to very selected festivals, Busan is of course one of the most important festivals in the world. An official selection is a great boost for the film.

■ You are a known face of the Civil Society Movement in West Bengal. How much of this finds its way in your

movies?

I am always a socio-politically active person. I am aware of the socio-political paradigms or movements happening in society. As an artist, I always try to find my response to the burning debates or contexts in my films and theatre works. It is inherent in the narratives I choose or the characters that inspire me. I cannot remain passive or turn my face away from socio-political issues which are significant in our times. I think it is my primary duty as an artist to participate actively in socio-political movements. But I must say the issues always don’t come, directly, but sometimes subliminally like Herbert and Kangal Malsat have strong political overtones.

■ You recently did a Zee5 original feature film Posham Pa. Can you tell us about the film?

The movie is a psychological thriller. The script is brilliantly written by Nimisha Mishra. The film stars Mahie Gill, Sayani Gupta, Ragini Khanna, Imaad Shah, and Shivani Raghuvanshi. The story of the film is based on a true story of serial killers Anjana, and her two daughters Seema Gavit and Renuka Shinde who kidnapped more than 40 children and murdered around 12 children. Seema and Renuka received the death penalty in 2014 for committing the mass murder of 12

children while their mother Anjana died in 1997 while serving her punishment at the prison.

■ What is the reason why films that find their way in the film circuit, don’t do so well when released commercially?

A commercial release is a matter of huge money and resources. Small producers and independent films can’t afford to spend that money. Our distribution system is controlled by big money and the Government policy does not have any provisions to support the independent films. There is no alternative system to distribute the films bypassing the so-called industry parameters. I believe these are predominant factors that block a sensitive or non-starrer film from coming into attention of the audience.

■ If the film is unable to make money, why make them?

Unfortunately, our world is ruled by money. So, the success or failure of a film is only judged by the yardstick of money it has made. But I think if we look at the history of cinema, it is evident that we can boast about the great cinematic achievements globally where the films are not judged by its financial success only. It’s a question of perception on how one would value an artwork.

■ You have done theatre productions

ranging from European drama to major adaptations of Bengali works. Usually, adaptations lose their essence. Would you agree?

I disagree with this kind of general inference that in adaptations the originals lose their essence. I believe that the paradox lies in the question itself. When an adaptation happens from a literary piece for stage or for films it is an act of transcendence, a grand metamorphosis. One can’t draw a simplistic comparative study. Does that mean Shakespeare’s or Brecht’s plays should not be staged at all? We have seen brilliant interpretations of literary works by master directors.

■ Is Bengali cinema changing?

Yes, it has gone through major changes. But I am quite not sure these changes are for good or bad. Because finally the films that came out through these changes are not exciting enough except for a few.

■ What next?

I am working on *Eyes and Feet* (previously titled as *Paradise in Flames*), based in Kashmir. The script is done, now I am looking for funds and seeking co-production. It is a very difficult film to make. I also have a long-cherished dream to make a film on Manik Bandyopadhyay’s novel *PutulNaacher Itikatha* (Annals of Dolls’ Dance). I am working on that also.

MUSBA HASHMI chats with VIKAAS GUTGUTIA, Founder & MD, FernsNPetals, about his latest venture — Last Journey — a funeral service, how the idea hit him and what the future holds for the industry



FOR A BEAUTIFUL FAREWELL

It goes without saying that the year 2020 has tested us on all levels — mental, physical and emotional. While many of us lost a lot in the year, be it jobs, businesses or our loved ones, some did try to find hope even in the smallest of the joys.

And when one talk about losses, there is no way one can compensate for a loss of a loved one. However, what we can do is to become a part of their sorrow and help them sail through it, if not more. Taking up this cause, FernsNPetals launched a new venture — Last Journey, a service which will help one conduct dignified last rites for their loved ones, while one mourn the loss.

Vikaas Gutgutia, Founder & MD, Ferns N Petals, tells you that professional help is needed for anything and everything and that is why they came up with Last Journey. “I realised that there is a huge vacuum in funeral organising segment. All the rituals are done by the families themselves. But now with more nuclear families coming up and time scarcity being a real issue, I thought professional help would be required for people to go through this process smoothly,” he explains.

From transportation and ambulance facility to informing friends & relatives and from bookings and arranging items for cremation services to floral and freezer box arrangement, everything is taken care of in the service.

“Not only this but the service also covers organising prayer meetings

such as *chautha/tehravin* ceremonies, hygienic food arrangement for the guests, booking of *bhajan* singers, personalised remembrance ceremony, writing and publishing obituaries, priest/*pandit* booking and *asthivisarjan* services too,” Gutgutia tells you.

The cost of the services depends on what all facilities one is looking forward to. They start from ₹5,000 and go up to ₹5,00,000.

Every new business teaches one thing or the other and so is the case here. “There is a new learning with every case that we handle. In these last four-five months we have learnt about new rituals and traditions. We are getting to know about the different communities and their way of saying goodbye to their loved ones,” he says. It goes without saying that the service caters to every religion, cast and community.

He tells you that initially when they started Last Journey, people were not organising prayer meets because of the pandemic. But now, it has started with limited numbers. “As we move forward, we will actually get to see the true colour of Last Journey. Also, at present the service is only for Delhi-NCR but in the coming few months we plan to extend it to the metros first and then Tier-II and Tier-III cities as well. May be we will take the franchising route to expand the services quickly,” he says.

With Last Journey, Gutgutia’s aim is to be a game-changer in the segment. “We are constantly working



I realised that there is a huge vacuum in the funeral organising segment. All the rituals are done by the families themselves. But now with more nuclear families coming up and time scarcity being a real issue, I thought professional help would be required for people to go through this process smoothly — Vikaas Gutgutia

on to improve the quality and features of everything. We see a lot of possibilities of newer ideas and innovation to make it smoother and more desirable,” he says.

Till date, he says, the brand has organised at least 800 funerals.

“We are not handling Corona-related cases, that is solely the Government’s part to do. But there are certain cases wherein a patient died in home quarantine because of some complication so we do handle such cases. In fact, out of these 800 cases one or two have been COVID cases but otherwise it is under the Government only,” he adds.

He tells you that the team reaches the place within an hour or as soon as possible depending on how far the place is.

“We have a 24 hours hotline. One can call up and book the services anytime. One can book the service for a day or two or may be for more days, as per their requirement,” he says.

Gutgutia says he didn’t have any apprehensions before launching the venture, even though it was during Corona.

“There were no apprehensions as such. Because it is the time people are exploring options that are easy and can give them time and space to mourn the loss. On the contrary, the Corona situation has helped us grow faster,” he says.

He says that there is a kind of thought process involved when one enters into this business.

“There are some people who

would ask what kind of a business is this? You are making money out of someone’s death. But I feel that this is a big business in foreign countries and is widely accepted there. We celebrate everything in life, but when death is considered it is nothing but a taboo. It is the time when a beautiful soul leaves the earth, it’s the final journey of a person and how can we run away from this fact of life. I feel we are helping the grieving families with this service and people have accepted it nicely. In the coming few years, we wouldn’t be surprised to have more funeral planners than wedding planners in our country,” he tells you.

Ask Gutgutia if it is hard to handle so many deaths daily and he is quick to reply — not at all. “Death is an emotion that we weren’t connected with at all. But now, the day you arrive into the world and the day you leave, FernsNPetals is with you all through. Death is not a taboo. You live everyday, but you die one day. It is very important to celebrate that day,” he says.

However, there are a few employees in the team who are laid down by fear but others work just fine. “There have been a couple of employees who said: Sir, *mujhey to shamshaan ghat ke sapney aate hain main nahin kar paunga*. We can’t do anything about them and they are free to go but the others are fine. And generally, we have received positive feedback from our clients and they feel that this service was very much required today,” he tells you.

‘I shifted to NY to explore international music’

Music director ATIF AFZAL, who has recently shifted base to New York, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA how his journey began and how he came on board for series NCIS: Los Angeles



■ How did you go from working at KPMG as an engineer to becoming a music director?

I always had one belief — dreams don’t work unless you do. I was making good money for my age while working with one of the best firms in the world — KPMG. But I had bigger dreams. I was making music since childhood and it evolved into a concrete passion. I wanted to pursue it. I also realised that I would not be able to sail in two boats — work at KPMG and make music. I quit my job and went all out. I didn’t have anybody who could guide me or show me the way. It was like being thrown into the open sea — either I learnt how to swim or drown.

■ Was it tough to get a break?

Yes. It was beyond tough especially when you don’t have anybody in the industry. It was just me and had to figure everything on my own. Sometimes it felt like why I was here and whether I had taken the right decision. I believed in myself but there are points where one questions the challenges. Ten years back I had no clue that I would end up in Bollywood one day. Now, 10 years down the line, I am working on Hollywood projects. Now, that I look back, it feels good but it was a tough decision to make. My first break was for a Salman Khan film in 2011 and worked on it for six months but it was shelved. Then I got Prague and music got noticed and started getting work.

■ Did you train professionally?

A lot in fact. When I stepped into composing, I knew that I would be tossed all kinds of projects and genres and films. I knew I had to have knowledge of all kinds of instruments and music from around the world. I couldn’t have the luxury to say that I didn’t know something. My knowledge has made it possible for me to sit here in New York. I trained for piano, guitar, Hindustani classical and Carnatic Classical to understand the difference. There is so much to learn in each category. For example, I know every aspect of the flute and can instruct the flautist what I actually want. I have extensively trained and continue to do so.

■ You recently shifted base to NY. Any particular reason?

I wanted to explore the international market though I had already started working on international projects while in India. I had worked on two documentaries — one American, *Horn Please* and the other *A Hero Comes Along*, UK. Then I did Gift, a German project. I worked on a couple of games as well. I would visit the US to increase my network. I met people who opened other gates and kept showcasing my music. But I still work on Bollywood projects.

■ How did you come on board for the series NCIS: Los Angeles?

This was quite a shocker. I got a straight mail. It took three months to finalise though. Though I don’t follow the show, my friends here in the US have been doing it for years. It is one of the longest running and popular shows on CBS network and grabbed the opportunity. I knew it would open more doors and it did. I am working on other CBS projects.

■ You have worked in Bollywood and now working with Hollywood and European films. Is there a difference?

There is a huge difference in the process of making music and getting it through. The creative involvement here and in Europe is minimal. They hire you because you are the best fit for that project otherwise, they won’t hire you. This elevates your morale since you are the captain of the ship. In India, the director is the captain of the ship and things work a bit differently.

■ What is the biggest challenge of working out of NY?

It is the best city that I have been to. I love it more than Los Angeles and comes with challenges. I have been here for the last three years and took me the first two of them figuring things out — like protocols to follow in the recording. Things here are different. One thing that I have learnt is that while in India, we prepare but improvise when in the studio. Here, the cost is so high, one can’t enter without fully preparing. Not that one can’t improvise but one has to be sure of what one wants to do.

‘WE TAKE PLEASURE IN WATCHING THE DARK SIDE OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR’

KANISHK VARMA, director of Footfairy which has released on &pictures yesterday, speaks with MUSBA HASHMI about the film and why he chose to release it on TV

■ What is Footfairy about?

The film is about a hunt for a serial killer. He specifically hunts girls who travels along western railway line. He is a very smart killer who doesn’t leave any footprints or fingerprints whatsoever. This becomes a challenge for the cops to trace him down. The story is about whether he gets caught or not.

■ Why release it on TV?

This was absolutely the producer’s call and we felt this was the right direction to go towards. After many years, a film has been released directly on TV. We were confident that this movie has the right blend of everything and can be released as &pictures original.

■ Some memories from the sets.

It was like a blast. The best I could remember is that sometimes we didn’t feel the pressure of the time or the budget constraint. It was like a well-oiled machine, everything was well-planned and executed. The actors performed brilliantly and it helped me as a director as well. The schedule of the movie was for 34 days, but we managed to finish it in 30 days only. The entire process was fun. The most fun part was that I got to shoot at a railway station and a full train was under my control.

■ Crime thrillers are one of the most popular genres. What makes them so sought-after?

Mystery and crime thrillers are

popular for decades now. As a society we like to watch the dark part of the human behaviour. We don’t want to experience such a thing, but as a society we take pleasure in watching such things. So is the case with gangster movies. We get attracted towards bad things, but we are only happy about it till we see it from a distance.

■ What next?

I was busy shooting for *Inside Edge Season 3* for Excel and Amazon. It is currently in the post-production stage and should be out soon. There is another show which I am developing for Viacom and is based on Burari murder. Then there is a feature film which I can’t talk about in detail right now.

Heart-warming Kiwi hospitality

SHALINI SAKSENA ■ NEW DELHI

Traveling is definitely not on many people’s agenda due to the present pandemic but that doesn’t mean that one can’t see the world. While for many it may not be the same thing but it can give one a sneak peek and get them interested in traveling to that country when things are a lot better. With this aim in mind, Tourism New Zealand virtually launched its campaign Messages from New Zealand.

The aim of the campaign, which was launched in the presence of Steven Dixon, Tourism New Zealand’s regional trade marketing manager, Asia and David Pine, New Zealand’s High Commissioner to India, is to feature a video message of hope and care with their international family (whanau). Each video shared will present a unique Kiwi perspective about what is important to them.

The Tourism New Zealand partnering with its Indian family highlights their own personal experiences and connec-

tions with the country. Dixon said that since the travel industry has been impacted by the COVID-19, it is important now more than ever, that we stay connected to visitors and our travel trade friends in India. “New Zealand is a place where guests become a family. These relationships are something that we are proud of and want to celebrate and continue in perpetuity. Through this campaign we are staying in touch with our international family and letting them know that we are waiting to welcome them to our shores again when the time is right and borders reopen,” Dixon tells you.

An example of how Tourism New Zealand has been keeping connections strong in India, is its response to a survey conducted in May 2020 among travel trade representatives. The survey highlighted that 99 per cent of travel trade contacts were interested in attending hosted webinars during the lockdown period. And hence, conducted 10 webinars which saw 5,000 travel agents participation across India.



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

2



4

Season of empowerment

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

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



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

THE RETURN OF DELHI SMOG

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

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

WHAT'S BEHIND THE DELHI SMOG?

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

CONTRIBUTION OF STUBBLE BURNING TO DELHI SMOG

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

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

According to Government's analysis of Delhi

smog during 2019, the contribution of stubble burning was variable, only peaking at 44% once. However, it will be pertinent to quote Supreme Court mandated agency, Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) on the issue, "even if it is not the only cause of pollution in the region, there is no doubt that the transportation of pollutants from burning fields is the tipping point that makes winter's already unhealthy air quality into a public health emergency."

CASE OF STUBBLE BURNING

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

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

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

SUPREME COURT IN ACTION

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



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



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

ACTION BY EPCA, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND NEIGHBOURING STATES

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

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

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

TOWARDS A SMOG FREE DELHI

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

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

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

STEPS TAKEN BY DELHI GOVERNMENT

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



WHAT'S GRAP (GRADED RESPONSE ACTION PLAN)

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



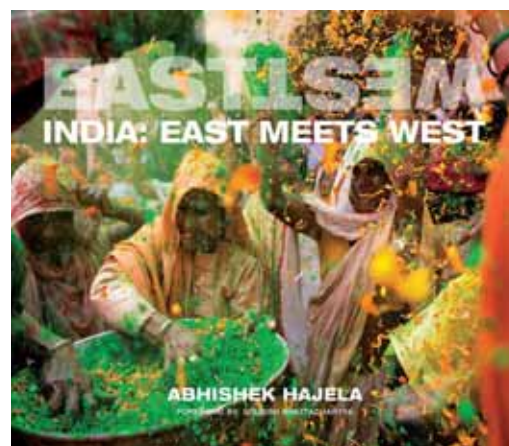
IT'S NOT THAT GOOD
DOESN'T TRIUMPH OVER
EVIL, IT'S THAT THE POINT
SPREAD IS TOO SMALL
—BOB THAVES



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

DUSSEHRA

OF KULASEKARANPATINAM, TUTICORIN



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

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

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

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



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



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



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

Larger than life US elections and Trump's comeback

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

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

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

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

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



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

AP

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

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

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

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

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

In the contemporary times,

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

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

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



MANAN DWIVEDI

PERSPECTIVE

Hard task ahead for charismatic Jacinda

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



MAKHAN SAIKIA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

AP

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)

