



FASHION IS
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12 VIVACITY

No more lantern in progressive Bihar: PM

Modi says NDA rule has ended jungle raj in Bihar, seeks vote for development

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Kick-starting his poll campaign by raising the developmental pitch in three back-to-back rallies in Bihar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday contrasted it with the "jungle raj" under Lalu Prasad, though without naming him or his party, and said the lantern (BJD's election symbol) has given way to electricity under Chief Minister Nitish Kumar-led NDA regime in the State.

He hit out at the Opposition on issues of nationalism, security and Ram Mandir and accused it of misleading the farmers on the farm laws brought in by his Government.

Extending his congratulations in advance to the people, he said the voters have taken a

resolve that they would not vote for those "who have a history of making the State Bimaru" and "did not allow" Nitish to work for 10 years.

Modi said all surveys predict that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) would return to power in the State. "I want to congratulate the people of Bihar, as they have announced their decision well in advance. Some people try to spread rumours at times and suggest that some 'new power' is emerging, but people of Bihar are not going to be fooled by such acts," said the Prime Minister.

He said the NDA rule has ended lawlessness in Bihar, which is far developed now with electricity doing away the need for lanterns for lighting homes.

"People who are voting for the first time, they don't know how far Bihar has come. But, there was a time when people wouldn't go to their homes after disembarking trains in the night. There was a time when electricity was only available to rich people. Poor people in Bihar were dependent on diyas. But now, there is no need for lanterns in Bihar," Modi said in his second rally at Gandhi Maidan, Gaya, complimenting BJP-JDU Government in the State.

The Prime Minister kicked off his election campaign from his first rally at Sasaram and later addressed rallies in Gaya and Bhagalpur for the first phase of poll, next week. Kumar and top BJP and JD (U) leaders were in attendance.

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Rahul raps Modi on migrant crisis, Chinese aggression

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hitting the ground in Bihar Mahagathbandhan in the upcoming Assembly polls, former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi on Friday targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi over issues ranging from the migrant crisis to the Chinese aggression to farm Bills, and the BJP over its election promises like of providing 19 lakh jobs which, he said, was similar to that of depositing ₹15 lakh in the bank accounts of the people.

Rahul and RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, who is the leader of the Opposition alliance, addressed a joint rally at Nawada, coinciding with Modi's first day of rallies in Bihar with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

With the PM citing the bravery of the jawans from Bihar in their clash with Chinese soldiers at the Galwan valley, Rahul accused Modi of having "insulted" the soldiers with his comment that nobody had intruded into Indian territory in Ladakh, and demanded that he tell the country when will the Chinese "be thrown out".

Addressing his first rally during the Bihar Assembly elections, Rahul claimed the Chinese army had indeed intruded into Indian territory. He said, "They have seized



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi along with RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav during an election meeting at Hisua in Nawada district on Friday

PTI

1,200 km of our land. But when the Chinese army intruded, why did our Prime Minister insult our soldiers by saying that nobody entered into the Indian side?"

"The question is, Modi, when will you throw out the Chinese soldiers sitting in our territory," the Rahul said.

"Don't lie to the people of Bihar, Modi. Did you give jobs to people of Bihar? Last elections, PM promised 2 crore jobs, no one got them. In public, he says I bow my head to Army, farmers, labourers and traders. But once he reaches home, he only works for Ambani and Adani," the Congress leader said.

He also attacked the Centre over the migrant crisis trig-

gered by the pandemic-induced lockdown, alleging when workers from Bihar were being "chased away" from other States the Prime Minister did nothing to help them. He demanded that the Prime Minister tell people of Bihar how many jobs he gave them and when.

A huge gathering was seen at the Hisua rally venue, with people also crowding the roof of a college building where it was held.

RJD's Yadav, the chief ministerial candidate of the Mahagathbandhan, said the elections that were under way will not be fought on the issue of caste or religion but unemployment and poverty.

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10 cr Covid tests in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Friday crossed the 10-crore Covid-19 tests mark after testing a record nearly 14.50 lakh samples, the highest in a single day. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) said 5 crore samples were tested in the last 45 days with an average testing of more than 10 lakh samples per day in the last 17 days.

Terming the record testing as "a positive indication that we are moving in the right direction", Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, however, warned that the next three months are going to be decisive in determining the coronavirus situation in the country and urged people to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour in the coming festival season and winter months.

The Minister said that high level of comprehensive testing on a sustained basis has also resulted in bringing down the national positivity rate. In the last 24 hours, 14, 42,722 sample were tested taking the total tally to 10,01,13,085.

Vardhan, who reviewed the Covid-19 preparedness with the Health and Medical Education Ministers and other senior officials of Uttar Pradesh, also highlighted that the number of active coronavirus cases in the country are less than 7 lakh and the doubling rate has increased to 97.2 days.

He said in the last three

Record 14.5 lakh people tested in a day; recovery rate now touches 90%



months, the country has seen significant improvement in the Covid parameters but next three months are crucial.

"From recording over 95,000 Covid-19 cases in a day, they have been substantially reduced to less than 55,000 per day. The recovery rate of India is nearing 90 per cent. The Case Fatality Rate (CFR) is also declining. CFR stands at 1.51 per cent and is moving towards the target of being less than 1 per cent," he said.

"For a big State like Uttar Pradesh, it becomes important that maximum thrust is given to simple precautionary measures which are effective in preventing the spread of the disease to a large extent like wearing masks/face cover, especially in public spaces, and following hand and respiratory etiquettes," he added.

As many as 15 States and Union Territories, including Maharashtra, Kerala, Chandigarh, Goa, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Delhi, are exhibiting higher Covid-19 positivity rate compared to the national figure, indicating the need for higher levels of comprehensive testing in these regions.

Higher testing across wide regions has resulted in early identification of positive cases, prompt tracking through efficient surveillance and tracing, and timely and effective treatment in homes/facilities and in hospitals for the severe cases.

These measures in tandem eventually lead to lower mortality rate, said a senior official from the Ministry.

House panel warns penalty if Amazon disobeys summons

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

E-commerce giant Amazon has refused to appear before a Joint Committee of Parliament looking into the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 on the grounds that its "subject matter experts are overseas" and that there are travel risks.

Taking it very seriously, the Committee has warned that if Amazon does not appear before the panel on October 28, "coercive action will be initiated" against it.

"The panel is unanimous in its opinion that coercive action can be suggested to the Government against the e-commerce company," said panel head Meenakshi Lekhi, reacting to Amazon's non-cooperative stand.

"Amazon has refused to appear before the panel on October 28 and if no one on behalf of the e-commerce company appears before the panel it amounts to breach of privi-



lege," she added.

The Committee is looking into the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019, following concerns expressed by the Congress. It has called all stakeholders, including Facebook and Twitter, to get an overview. The Committee is trying to seek "oral evidence" on the issues of data protection and privacy.

Facebook officials gave their presentation before the panel on Friday while Google, Twitter and Paytm have to do so on October 29. Facebook's public policy head Ankhi Das appeared before the Committee and was asked some tough and searching questions by the panel, sources said.

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Govt sets stock limit for onion traders to check its prices

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With onions now more expensive than some exotic vegetables and fruits, including apple, grapes, gooseberry and orange (imported) across India, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs on Friday imposed a stock limit of two tonnes for retailers and 25 tonnes for wholesalers till December 31 to improve the domestic availability of the commodity and provide relief to consumers. The Ministry has also supplied 35,000 metric tonnes of onion to State and Union Territories to maintain certain stability in prices.

Despite a ban on export, onion prices have seen a sharp rise over the last few days with staple vegetable now retailing for ₹100-110 per kg in Hyderabad, Mumbai, Nashik, Pune, Adilabad, Bengaluru, Pallakad, Puducherry, Suryapet, Thrissur, Panaji, Kota, Chennai, Cuddalore, Dharwad and Kozhikode. In



Thiruvananthapuram, Jammu, Srinagar, Ludhiana, onions are at ₹90 per kg. Besides, the prices of potato touched ₹50 a kg while tomato is selling at ₹70-80 a kg across metros.

Consumer Affairs Department Secretary Leena Nandan on Friday said that retailers can stock onion only up to 2 tonne, whereas wholesale traders are allowed to keep up to 25 tonne till December 31. She said the Government had to invoke the Essential Commodities (Amendment) law — which was passed last month in Parliament — that allows it to regulate perishable commodities in the extraordinary price rise situation.

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Maha announces ₹10k crore flood relief for farmers

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Government on Friday announced a ₹10,000 crore relief package for the farmers who suffered huge crop losses during the heavy rain and the consequent floods witnessed in various parts of the State between June and October.

Talking to media persons after reviewing the situation arising out of heavy unseasonal rain and consequent floods in various parts of the State, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray unveiled a relief package for the affected farmers in western Maharashtra, Marathwada and Konkan regions in the State.

He said that the relief package would be disbursed to the farmers before the Diwali festival.

Merit only criterion for jobs in UP: CM Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Asserting that merit was the only criterion for jobs in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that fairness and transparency in recruitment was the hallmark of his administration.

"There is no scope left for irregularities in recruitment in the state. Despite this, if corrupt practices are found in the process, jail will be the only destination for the guilty," the chief minister said addressing a virtual function to distribute posting letters to the newly-appointed assistant teachers in Lucknow on Friday.

The chief minister reiterated that the transparency with which appointments were made was proof of his government's commitment towards ensuring a free

and fair process in this regard. Recalling corruption in UP Public Service Commission (UPPSC) during the previous regimes when appointments were made on the basis of caste and religion, Yogi Adityanath said that those days were gone and now merit was the only consideration for jobs.

"Today, everyone needs to be technically updated as technology is the key to transparency. If the government lags behind, it will be impossible to extend benefits of pension, Kisan Samman Nidhi and other allowances to people in tough times like this. The way education is being imparted on-line today could not have been possible if we were not technically updated," the chief minister said. On the occasion, the chief

minister also spoke with newly-appointed assistant teachers Jagmohan Singh, Nikhat Pravin, Hemprabha Ojha, Smita Jaiswal, Manish Kumar Mishra, Manisha Thapliyal and Jyoti Gaur.

Playing guide and guardian, Yogi Adityanath told them that teachers were guides to children and thus their responsibility increased manifold.

"If a teacher imparts education with passion and energy, his/her students will have the ability to bring about positive change in society," the chief minister asserted.

Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma said that regularisation of educational sessions, exams, timely declaration of results and exams sans copying were the achievements of the Yogi government.

Kapil Dev suffers heart attack, on the mend after critical angioplasty

STAFF REPORTER/PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's first World Cup-winning cricket captain Kapil Dev underwent an angioplasty after suffering a heart attack here on Friday but is "well on the road to recovery" and likely to be discharged in the next couple of days.

The 61-year-old, who is based in Delhi's Sundar Nagar area, complained of chest pain on Thursday following which he was taken to Fortis Escorts Heart Institute emergency department in Okhla.

"Kapil Dev suffered a heart attack. He was evaluated and an



emergency coronary angioplasty was performed in the middle of night...Currently, he is admitted in ICU and under close supervision of Dr Atul Mathur. Kapil Dev is stable now and he is expected to get discharged in a couple of days," the hospital said after only mentioning chest pain in its initial statement.

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Pak remains in terror watchdog's grey list

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's hopes of satisfying the global watchdog on terror financing and money laundering, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), were dashed on Friday as it ruled against taking Pakistan off the "grey list" and gave February 2021 deadline to comply with its 27-point action plan.

The decision was taken on Friday during the virtual plenary meeting of the FATF.

"Since June 2018, Pakistan made a high-level political commitment to work with the FATF and the APG to strengthen its AML/CFT regime and to address its strategic counter-terrorist financing-related defi-

ciencies. Pakistan's continued political commitment had led to progress in a number of areas in its action plan.

"Taking action to identify and sanction illegal MVTS, implementing cross-border currency and BNI controls, improving international cooperation in terrorist financing cases, passing amendments to the ATA to increase the sanctioning authority, financial institutions implementing targeted financial sanctions and applying sanctions for AML/CFT violations, and controlling facilities and services owned or controlled by designated persons and entities," read the FATF decision.

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Covid takes shine off Delhi's famed Ramleela celebrations

No Ravana's effigies, light & sound effect for Ravana Dahan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Citing lack of time for preparations and pending permissions amid Covid-19 pandemic, major Ramleela committees in the city have shelved burning of Ravana effigies, while others plan to employ light and sound effects to recre-

ate "Ravana Dahan" this Dussehra.

Also the Ramleela Ground at Red Fort, the hub of Dussehra festivities attracting commoners as well as dignitaries, including the Prime Ministers and Presidents every year, will be deserted this Dussehra.

"We had applied for booking the venue at Ramleela Maidan about three months back, but the permission has not yet been granted by the Archaeological Survey of India.

It is impossible to celebrate Dussehra with burning of Ravana effigy on October 25 this year as there was no time for preparation due to Covid-19," said Ravi Jain of Shri Dharmik Ramleela Committee.

Some organisers, however, are trying their best to celebrate the day by cutting down on the scale of festivities as per the standard operating procedures for holding big gatherings amid the pandemic.

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CAPSULE

FEMA CASE: PUNJAB CM'S SON SUMMONED

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's son for questioning in an alleged foreign exchange violations case, official sources said on Friday.

DELHI COP ABDUCTED BY BUS DRIVER FROM ISBT

New Delhi: A Delhi Police constable was allegedly abducted by the driver and attendants of a private bus from Kashmere Gate area here and released more than 250 km away in Uttar Pradesh's Firozabad, officials said.

All PS to have SGRs to assist female assault victims to speak up

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aiming to encourage sexual assault victims to feel safe and free to report their ordeal, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed the Police top brass to build secret glass rooms (SGRs) in each police station of the state.

These transparent rooms will be equipped with all basic facilities and will enable victims to speak without hesitation to female police personnel/officers.

Inaugurating the Women Helpdesk at all 1535 police stations of UP under Mission Shakti campaign from his official residence in Lucknow on Friday, Yogi Adityanath said that all emergency helpline numbers (1090, 181, 112, 1076, 1098 and 102) should be inscribed at Women's Helpdesk or secret glass rooms so that any victim could call in case of emergency. "However, warning will also be mandated for those misusing these numbers," he said.

The chief minister further said that respecting women had to be made a ritual and for this, Mission Shakti had to be taken to schools, colleges and other institutions.

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"Make people aware of this during morning prayers and any cultural events. For this, liberal women should step forward for getting better results," he said.

The chief minister said that a lot had changed during the week-long Mission Shakti campaign and the elements trying to blow incidents out of proportion were now on the back foot.

"The UP Police has done a good job during this period. Activities of various departments related to the campaign



Adityanath spoke to some women and public representatives at Women's Helpdesks set up in Noida (Gautam Buddha Nagar), Agra, Lucknow, Varanasi and Meerut.

Women representatives opined that the government has committed to protect, honour and make women self-reliant. They felt that various steps had brought about a sense of security and confidence in women and the process would be enhanced with the Mission Shakti campaign.

Earlier, DGP Hitesh Chandra Awasthi said that the entire effort was aimed at realising the concept of Mitra Police and the men in khaki would leave no stone unturned in making Uttar Pradesh a safe state.

The state police chief informed the police minister about the progress of the Mission Shakti campaign so far.

Meanwhile in Etah, project officer, programme officer and Aganwadi workers enlightened women folks about prevention of child marriage and legal rights to fight against this. Women were also informed about various punitive provisions relating to crime against women.

and future action plan should be reviewed by the chief secretary and chief minister's office," he said. The chief minister said that Mission Shakti should be taken in a broader context as it was a campaign to change people's thinking and values towards women.

"This will happen only when more people join it. When people from society connect with governance and administration of any campaign, the results are definitely better," he said.

On the occasion, Yogi

SHGs distributing sanitary pads in Gorakhpur

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Officers in Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's home district Gorakhpur initiated a novel move by roping in self-help groups (SHGs) for distribution of sanitary napkins through them.

Creation of over 3.71 lakh SHGs across the state has helped women, including thousands of migrants, cater to the needs of their families with financial self-reliance.

The message of Mission Shakti got assimilated with women empowerment with the Gorakhpur district administration hitting upon the idea of distribution of sanitary napkins through women SHGs.

A sanitary napkin manufacturing unit is running in Gorakhpur Industrial Development Authority (GIDA) and its owners have been asked to raise public awareness in rural/backward areas under

corporate social responsibility (CSR) during Mission Shakti campaign that was launched on the first day of Shardiya Navratri — October 17.

Nodal officer of Gorakhpur, Manisha Trigathia, visited the factory and the chief executive officer of GIDA was directed to implement gender equality and related laws and provisions in the units located in the area.

To promote Mission Shakti in the chief minister's home turf, various events were held, including a webinar organised by the Department of Women Welfare and Bal Vikas Sewa Evam Pushtahar. Issues relating to gender equality, saving women from domestic violence and dowry harassment were discussed.

Anganwadi workers coordinated with ASHA workers and ANMs and spread awareness among women about gender equality and their rights. Not only women,

men folks too participated in the event.

The Basic Education department too organised a webinar on women empowerment and teachers were directed to ensure that women were made aware of Child Helpline and Women Helpline services. Special emphasis was laid on creating awareness about maintaining hygiene among women.

The Health department too organised an awareness meet while the Higher Education department discussed in detail self-defence and various legal rights of women.

Meanwhile, in Mirzapur, an awareness programme was organised at Reserve Police Lines where women and girls were informed about 1090, 1098 and 112 helpline numbers.

It was also decided that one woman cop would be deployed at every police station to receive women complainants.

CM orders FIR in UPCBL, UPCIS appointments anomalies

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Accepting the Special Investigation Team's report on corruption in appointments in the Cooperative department during the previous Samajwadi Party regime, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has given directions to register an FIR against the officers and employees who have been found guilty.

As per the directives, FIR under various sections of the Indian Penal Code will be registered in connection with the appointments of assistant manager (general) and assistant manager (computer) of Uttar Pradesh Cooperative Bank (UPCB) who were appointed in 2015-16.

FIR will also be registered against the officers and employees of the then management committee of UP Cooperative Bank Limited (UPCBL) and UP Cooperative Institutional Service Board (UPCIS) in connection with the anomalies in appointments on the posts of manager and assistant/cashier in 2016-17.

The recruitment agency, Axis Dignet Technologies Private Limited, will also face the heat as directions have been issued to register an FIR against it.

The chief minister has also instructed the SIT to submit the reports of its ongoing investigation into the appointments of Uttar Pradesh Warehousing Corporation (UPWC) in 2013 and Uttar Pradesh Cooperative Rural Development Bank (UPCRDM) in 2015-16 within a month.

Clerics flay suspension of bearded cop

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Clerics of Islamic seminary Darul Uloom Deoband were up in arms against SP of Bagpat, Abhishek Singh for suspending a Muslim sub-inspector for sporting a beard. Terming the act as 'wrong,' they demanded action against the SP of Bagpat.

Sub-inspector Intesar Ali post-

Ayodhya Deepotsav not to be low key due to pandemic



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The annual Deepotsav in Ayodhya on Diwali will not be scaled down due to the coronavirus pandemic. In fact, it will be held on a grander scale this year, even though there will be minimal public participation.

Since this is the first Deepotsav after the start of Ram temple construction in Ayodhya, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath wants the celebration to be grander than before.

At a high-level meeting in Lucknow on Friday, Yogi Adityanath asked the Culture department brass for a detailed presentation on Deepotsav.

"The chief minister wants the Deepotsav this year to be a memorable event. We will ensure that people see the event virtually around the globe," an official said.

Deepotsav was started by the Yogi Adityanath government at Ayodhya in 2017 which saw residents, volunteers and devotees coming together and lighting a record number of 1.76 lakh earthen lamps (diyas).

Last year, Ayodhya created a world record by lighting 5.51 lakh diyas that earned it a place in the Guinness Book of World Records.

This year, however, it is unclear whether the number of lamps being lit would be increased or not.

Sources said that the UP Tourism department was looking to beautify Ayodhya in an

"THE CHIEF MINISTER WANTS THE DEEPOTSAV THIS YEAR TO BE A MEMORABLE EVENT. WE WILL ENSURE THAT PEOPLE SEE THE EVENT VIRTUALLY AROUND THE GLOBE"

eclectic way and installation of LED light boxes was a near surety.

Made of acrylic sheet, the LED light boxes would illuminate the area in a new way. Also, the city roads would witness a stunning life-size structure depicting 'Ram Darbar' on a chariot with an independent lighting arrangement.

Besides, Ram Darbar would also be set up at Ram ki Paidi on the Saryu river banks. The 18-foot-tall structure will have carved pillars and other decorative elements.

The state government has already granted the status of State Fair to the Deepotsav in Ayodhya. With the new found status, the Deepotsav will now be planned by the district magistrate of Ayodhya.

Last year, approximately Rs 1.33 crore were spent by the state government on Deepotsav.

RFC at Gkp suspended for irregularities

Lucknow (PNS): The Uttar Pradesh government on Friday suspended Regional Food Controller (RFC) of Gorakhpur, Rammurti Pandey, for irregularities in awarding contracts for transport of food grains for National Food Security Mission.

On Thursday, the government had cracked the whip on RFC of Bareilly, Pramod Kumar Srivastava, for irregularities in paddy procurement in the districts in Bareilly division.

Several representations were made to the RFC Gorakhpur about irregularities in transport of food grains which Pandey chose to ignore. The contracts for transport of food grains were awarded in an opaque manner.

Online Diwali Mela

Lucknow (PNS): The Uttar Pradesh government has organised an Online Diwali Mela along with FICCI and EHCP that will continue till October 25. This online fair gives the buyers an opportunity to buy traditional and exclusive ODOP products at affordable prices directly from the artisans or manufacturers. The exhibition has items of home decor such as beautiful chandeliers, bouquets, crockery, curtains and wind chimes at very reasonable prices. This is a UP government initiative to make the markets safe from overcrowding yet give the feel of a mall at homes (Just click and register <https://vs.ficci.com/odop/>), according to an official communique released on Friday.



NOTICE

My High school mark sheet year 2016, roll number 1162652/047 ICSE board, college PLAY WAY ENGLISH SCHOOL, District fatehpur up, was lost. I have many attempt to search every where but not found. DEVANSH PATEL s/o Rajesh kumar R/o vill. madaripur po. kandhi district. fatehpur UP

NOTICE

To whom it may concern, inform to all that my daughter's name Ku. Anjali date of birth 08/06/1996, Son's name Abhishek Kumar date of birth 22/06/1999 wrongly mentioned in my army records to be correct and recognize as daughter's actual name Anjali Yadav (08/06/1996), Son's actual name Abhishek Singh Yadav(22/06/2002) and wife's actual name Shobha Devi. Uma Shankar S/o Sarju Prasad Onjinal Address vill. Baru Kheda, Post kotiya Gunir, tahsil Bindki, District fatehpur, Current Address Prathi Puram, City Fatehpur.

BSP all set to play Dalit card in RS polls

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati is all set to play the Dalit card in the ongoing Rajya Sabha biennial elections by fielding her party's candidate.

The BSP has just 19 MLAs in the 403-member UP Assembly but still it has cleared the name of party's national coordinator Ramji Gautam for the tenth Rajya Sabha seat from UP.

According to sources in the party, the candidature of Gautam was finalised in a meeting of party MLAs on Thursday.

"We have taken a nomination paper for Ramji Gautam with the signatures of 10 MLAs and he will file his nomination on Monday," a BSP leader said on condition of anonymity.

The Assembly secretariat confirmed that a nomination paper was collected in the name of Ramji Gautam.

Sources said Gautam was likely to file his nomination papers on October 26.

The election is scheduled for November 9. According to sources in the BSP, Gautam's selection is crucial as he belongs to the Dalit community, a vote bank which Mayawati needs to consolidate her party's position before the next UP Assembly elections.



However, the BSP, which won 19 seats in 2017 UP Assembly polls, now has an effective strength of 15. Three BSP MLAs — Anil Singh, Ramvir Upadhyay and Mohammed Aslam Raini — have rebelled against the party and are openly supporting the Bharatiya Janata Party while another legislator, Mukhtar Ansari, is in jail.

According to an Assembly secretariat official, at present there are 395 MLAs and it is necessary to secure votes of around 37 members to win a Rajya Sabha seat from UP.

The ruling BJP, having 304 members in the UP Assembly, is set to win eight to nine seats, and the main opposition Samajwadi Party with 48 MLAs will easily secure one seat.

The Apna Dal has nine members, the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party four and five MLAs are Independents.

Interestingly, against 37 votes needed to win a Rajya Sabha seat, the BSP has only 15. Sources in the party said the BSP game plan was to corner the other opposition parties.

The Samajwadi Party will be left with 10 surplus votes after getting its candidate, Prof Ram Gopal Yadav, elected and the Congress has an effective strength of five legislators. Two of its MLAs, Aditi Singh and Rakesh Singh, have already revolted against the party.

"By fielding a candidate, the BSP leadership will ask the opposition parties to support its Dalit candidate and if they

refuse, their anti-Dalit mentality will stand exposed," said a party functionary.

"Parties like Congress and Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party do not have the numbers and the Samajwadi Party too with its present strength is not in a position to get its second candidate elected. If they all want to stop the BJP, they will have to support us though we have not yet held any discussion with them," the BSP leader added.

Ramji Gautam, was named the BSP national coordinator in June 2019. He worked at a private firm as a chemical engineer before joining the party in 2015. Currently, he runs a business of pesticides and agriculture-related chemicals and belongs to Lakhimpur Kheri district.

It may be mentioned that among the 10 Rajya Sabha seats from Uttar Pradesh falling vacant on November 25, the BJP held three, Samajwadi Party four, Bahujan Samaj Party two and the Congress one.

The 10 retiring members are Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri, Arun Singh and Neeraj Shekhar of the BJP; Chandrapal Singh Yadav, Ram Gopal Yadav, Ram Prakash Verma and Javed Ali Khan of the SP; Rajaram and Veer Singh of the BSP; and Panna Lal Punia of the Congress.

POLICE RECOVER MURDER WEAPON

After the arrest of prime accused and Bharatiya Janata Party leader Dharendra Pratap Singh in the shooting incident at Ballia recently, the police managed to recover the murder weapon, a licensed revolver, from his native Durjanpur hamlet on Friday. Arrested by the Special Task Force (STF) from Lucknow on Sunday, Dharendra Pratap Singh is presently on police remand.

Singh opened fire in the presence of a sub-divisional magistrate and a circle officer at Durjanpur during a meeting in which ration shops were to be allotted. His rival Jai Prakash alias Gama Pal died, while several persons from both sides were injured in the incident.

Two commit suicide in Banda

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Out on bail in a criminal case, a 45-year-old man ended his life by hanging himself at his house in Mahuta village in Banda district on Thursday.

As per reports, Saurabh Shukla was accused in 10 cases, including kidnapping, and was lodged in Chitrakoot Jail. He managed to walk out of the prison after procuring a bail in a kidnapping case last week.

However, on Thursday, the history-sheeter's body was found hanging from a ceiling fan at his house.

Shukla's wife Rani told the police that he needed money to contest his case and wanted to sell a property over which there was a dispute.

In another incident reported from Banda, an unidentified man was found hanging from a tree in a forest area near Ken river on Thursday. On being informed, the police sent the body for autopsy.

While no suicide note was recovered from the spot, the police were trying to ascertain the identity of the deceased and the motive behind the death.

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Covid-19: Over 10L houses covered under surveillance

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

As many as 10,95,013 houses in Lucknow district have been covered by the surveillance teams for coronavirus under containment activities. According to a senior official at CMO office, 47,92,332 persons have been covered under surveillance. However, the figures are inclusive of repeat visits to houses made by the surveillance teams, as there are many containment zones which the teams visit off and on. The focus is more on RT-PCR tests and surveillance was being done by health teams that are generating data of the persons covered.

A feedback from some of the Covid patients in Lucknow has revealed that it took them over a month to test negative after getting infected. A government employee said he had tested positive for coronavirus on September 3 and got rid of it only on October 2 even as the infection affected his lungs.

"I had opted for home isolation and am facing breathing problems after testing negative, and it took me almost a month to test negative," he said. Nodal officer for Covid-19 Dr D Himanshu from KGMU said there were many such patients who took a longer time than usual to test negative after getting infected.

"There have been some patients who became asymptomatic but their test reports came out positive, and some of the patients took up to three months to get rid of the virus. At KGMU, we have seen patients who tested negative in

252 test positive, 319 recover

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

As many as 252 persons tested positive for coronavirus in the city on Friday as the virus graph appears to be plateauing in the state capital. Besides, 319 patients recovered, taking the recovery figures to 56,944. The death total stands at 845.

A senior official at CMO office said the new patients included 28 from Gomtinagar, 25 from Rae Bareilly road, 20 from Indiranagar, 14 each from Talkatora & Aliganj, 11

about 20 days," he said.

"The reason for long time taken by patients to test negative is that although the virus is dead, the test picks up nucleic acid which stays for a long time in a dead virus and hence patients keep testing positive. The viability of the dead virus is very difficult to determine and can be done only in BSL-4 labs. A study was done in Korea and it was discovered that most of them were dead viruses. It is advisable that one should not go for a re-test because it can keep catching dead virus for three months," he said.

He further said that chronic fatigue syndrome is seen in patients who have recovered from coronavirus. "Patients feel severe fatigue for a period of three months and this is very well documented. It is not age-dependent and even those who had mild symptoms have reported fatigue for a long time," he

from Ashiyana, and 10 each from Hazratganj, Vikasnagar & Chinhat.

There were 14 deaths in the city and the deceased included three from Lucknow and 11 belonged to other districts such as Rae Bareilly, Muzaffarnagar, Sitapur, Gonda, Shahjahanpur, Balrampur, Maharajganj, Basti and Hardoi.

Across the state, 2,298 persons tested positive, including 150 from Prayagraj, 99 from Gorakhpur, 132 from Gautam Buddh Nagar and 128

pointed out. However, he added that in most of the cases, it was seen that it was improving on its own. "Even in case of the lung problems, we have seen that it is improving on its own like any viral infection, although it takes time," he said.

Meanwhile, People's Health Organization secretary Dr Ishwar Gilada said getting past the peak was important even though there could be a second wave as seen in several European countries.

"With India being a vast country, some states may have peaks in different phases. The fresh surge in Kerala cases post-Onam is a lesson to be learnt for the rest of India as far as the Dussehra and Diwali season is concerned. We can ill-afford to let our guards down. Wearing masks and ensuring social distancing is the key till we have a vaccine or cure, or both. Decline in number of deaths is seen after

from Varanasi, taking the UP tally to 4,66,060. There were 40 deaths in the state, including 10 in Meerut, three in Kanpur, two each in Prayagraj, Gorakhpur & Ghazipur, and one each in Aligarh, Ayodhya, Barabanki, Lakhimpur Kheri, Muzaffarnagar, Jaunpur, Hardoi, Gonda, Sultanpur, Mirzapur, Etah & Banda, taking the toll to 6,830.

Besides, 3,025 patients recovered, taking the recovery figures to 4,30,962, while the active cases in the state are 28,268.

two weeks as patients will recover and some will die too. Hence, deaths during this month are important to observe," he said. He further said that the global scientific community endorsed PHO views that India got past the peak in mid-September.

"After over eight months, People's Health Organization (India) came to a conclusion that India finally achieved the first important goal, on September 16-17. A presentation by PHO to this effect titled 'Positioning of India in Global Covid-19 Scenario' was made at a virtual conference on 'The COVID-19 impact on Science', organised by the Geneva-based World Federation of Scientists (WFS). Conference chairman Dr Franco Buonaguro from Naples (Italy) and chairperson of 'Permanent Monitoring Panel (PMP) on Infectious Diseases and Cancers at the WFS endorsed our views," he said.



Obseance being paid to Goddess Durga at a park in front of LMC headquarters on Friday

Pioneer

Plumber hangs self in house



Lucknow (PNS): A 32-year-old plumber, identified as Arun Kumar alias Monu of Gauri Bazaar-2 under Sarojininar police station, hanged himself in his house on Friday. However, no suicide was recovered from the place. His father Kishan Lal spotted the body hanging from the ceiling and raised an alarm. Neighbours rushed to the scene and the body was brought down in the presence of police.

Arun lived with his parents, wife and two sons. Police said only Arun's father was in the house when he committed suicide on the intervening night of Thursday and Friday, as his mother, wife their children were out of station. Kishan Lal said his son had dinner with him on Thursday and went to sleep in his room. Police said they were trying to find out why Arun ended his life.

Meanwhile, police arrested a youth for allegedly threatening a woman to set her house on fire. The incident took place at Kewali village in Gosainganj on October 19. The accused was identified as Ahmed Ali (24) while the complainant as Sufia Bano. It was alleged that the motive was to terrorise the woman over 'mohalla' politics. She lodged a complaint on October 20. She also accused him trying to grab her property. The police swung into action after a case was registered in this connection. Initially, the police were unable to trace his whereabouts, but he was picked up from Bastauli crossing in Gosainganj on Friday morning.

Min inaugurates several facilities at KGMU

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With an aim to provide better facilities to patients, faculty members and students, Medical Education Minister Suresh Khanna inaugurated several projects at King George's Medical University on Friday. The total cost of the projects inaugurated was Rs 92.35 crore.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that the government was committed to providing the best of healthcare services to people of the state.

He said under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the government was developing multiple tertiary medical services throughout the state. He said KGMU has made significant contribution on all fronts starting from lab testing, enhanced ICU facilities on campus and a modern

Covid hospital. KGMU Vice-Chancellor Dr Bipin Puri said they had developed a virtual ICU system and was connecting 58 L-2 healthcare facilities.

Faculty and employee residential complex, developed by Awas Vikas Parishad at a cost of Rs 22 crore and a 100-bed MCH wing of Queen Mary's Hospital, developed by Rajkiya Nirman Nigam at a cost of Rs 23 crore were inaugurated by the minister. A gas plant and pipe facility developed by Rajkiya Nirman Nigam at a cost of Rs 27 crore and the foot overbridge connecting QMH to main KGMU campus were developed by Jal Nigam.

Meanwhile, the research cell of KGMU organised the annual 'Research Showcase' at Selby Hall on Friday. 'Research Showcase' is organised annually where the projects published as

well as ongoing research works of KGMU are displayed.

Faculty incharge, research cell, RK Garg presented the research report of KGMU. Various research awards were given away to the faculty members and students. Dr Mohammed Kaleem Ahmad from the department of biochemistry received the 'Prof Dhavendra Kumar Young Investigator Gold Medal' for the year 2018-19. Dr Vishal Gupta from department of surgical gastroenterology received the 'Eminence of Research Award' for his publication in the highest-impact factor journal. A total of 31 faculty members and two students received 'Eminence in Research' awards. Dr Alka Singh, who completed PhD under the guidance of RN. Srivastava from department of orthopaedic surgery, received the best thesis award.

15-yr-old girl rescued from clutches of kidnappers

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Police rescued a 15-year-old girl from the clutches of kidnappers on Friday. A native of Hazurpur in Bahraich, the girl lives with her parents in Vibhuti Khand area of Gomtinagar. She was kidnapped by unidentified persons on October 21 evening.

Her father lodged a complaint at Vibhuti Khand police station alleging that his daughter was kidnapped and taken away to some unknown place. However, he said he received

no ransom call for her safe release. The police swung into action and sought the help of informers. The location of the victim was traced with the help of electronic surveillance. A raid was conducted at the hideout in Ghazipur area but the kidnappers had escaped, abandoning the girl there.

The girl was rescued and handed over to her parents after medical examination on Friday evening.

Meanwhile, a youth, identified as Deepak Gautam, a resident of New Hyderganj

and history-sheeter of Talkatora police station, was picked up near a school in Thakurganj area late Thursday night.

A country-made pistol, three live cartridges and two empty shells were recovered from his possession. Gautam told the police that he was going to meet the members of his gang who had assembled at an isolated place near the school to decide on their next strike. The gang members fled the scene while Deepak was arrested.

Youth team from IWS focusing on SDGs

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A youth team from Institute for Wildlife Sciences, Lucknow University, submitted a project report focusing on sustainable development goals (SDGs) under Regional Centre of Expertise in Education for Sustainable Development Goals to Western Sydney University in Australia.

The team comprising five students is headed by two project heads, Asif Ahmad Siddiqui and Ruchira Nigam. The group is formally guided by Amita Kanaujia from Lucknow University and Preeti R Kanaujia from CEE (north regional cell).

Project coordinator of the initiative Preeti R Kanaujia said they had taken up the Daliganj slum area and LU as area of their work for sensitisation about SDGs in 2020 with prime focus on SDG-6, which is clean water and sanitation.

"The team took the initial survey to know more about these areas as well as problems of the resident members. Due to this pandemic, they have shifted their work on digital platform as Facebook, Instagram page and website

called 'PRAYAS', where the outreach is about 25,000 views, with 50,000 people directly reaching that can be considered to be good outcome in a short time by the whole team. People's involvement, public views, likes, comments and handprint actions upon SDGs and youth connected through various acts were the main highlights of this initiative," she said. She added that the project's duration was from January to November, with two phases that connected approximately 85,000 youth and community members.

"The final outcomes of the initiative will be submitted for the final evaluation of Asia-Pacific RCE SDG Youth Challenge-2020 in the first week of November, as per guidelines by Brittany Hardiman Coordinator RCE SDG Youth Challenge Initiative, Western Sydney University. The sustainable development goals, also known as global goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and many steps which ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by the United Nations," she said.

‘Moral education necessary for boys, girls’

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

SGPGIMS, under the directives of UP government, organised a programme on 'Rights and safety of women in the workplace' under the ongoing Women Empowerment Week. The programme was conducted through video-conferencing under the guidance of SGPGIMS director Dr RK Dhiman.

Governor Anandiben Patel participated in the programme by sending a video

message. She said it was the vision and commitment of the Central and state governments to take measures for safety of women and to make them economically independent.

"Most of the exploitation against women is in respect to their social rights and because they are economically crippled," she said. She laid stress on the moral education for both boys and girls.

Executive registrar, SGPGI, Dr Soniya Nityanand introduced the speakers,

including additional director-general MS Renuka Mishra and representative faculty, doctors and nursing staff from the institute and outside. Participants from more than 50 medical colleges took part in the programme through video-conferencing. Dr Dhiman emphasised on the need and importance of free primary education for girls.

Former dean and head of obstetrics and gynaecology department (KGMU) Dr Vinita Das said that an edu-

cated and self-dependent woman could play a major role in solving many social problems that exist today. Pediatrician Dr Piyali Bhattacharya said that it was important for working women to recognise their rights.

Chairperson of SGPGI's Vishakha Cell Dr Sarita Agarwal discussed the procedures which exist and which are required to ensure safety and well-being of women working at all levels in hospitals and healthcare settings.

Singh appointed subject expert of ER&WWM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Dean of Academic Affairs, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Rana Pratap Singh has been nominated as the subject expert of Energy, Water, Waste Management (ER&WWM) under Scheme-B (WSOS-B) Women Scientist Scheme (WOS).

This is a flagship scheme under programme KIRAN (Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement Through Nurturing), run by DST. Under this scheme,

women scientists are being encouraged to pursue research in frontier areas of science and engineering on problems of societal relevance and to take up science and technology-based internship, followed by self-employment. Singh, being a subject expert in this committee, will have the responsibility for examining, reviewing and commenting on various projects and programmes under the scheme," the BBAU spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, the placement

cell of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University has arranged campus placement and internship opportunities for the students of mechanical engineering in a private company.

Students selected for the job will be given a package of Rs 4.5 lakh per annum. Second and third year mechanical engineering students can apply for internship programme in the company. The students selected for internship will be given a stipend of Rs 15,000 per month," she said.

PhD entrance exam results declared

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow University declared the provisional merit list of PhD entrance exams for the academic year 2019-2020.

Spokesperson Durgesh Srivastava said a total of 5,261 students applied for admission to the PhD programmes of LU and 3,760 of them turned up for the written tests held in March and September.

"As many as 1,649 students were invited to appear for interviews based on their performance out of 70 marks in the written tests. A total of



1,422 students appeared for the interviews and given scores based on their interview performance out of 30 marks. Candidates have been ranked based on their cumulative marks obtained in the written

test and interview," Srivastava said. Ranks have been assigned only to those candidates who appeared in written tests and interview and were found eligible in the subjects they applied for. "A subject-wise cut-off list will be released soon. All admissions are provisional and subject to verification of documents at the time of reporting in the department. Interviews for Home Science and Computer Science departments will be held later, information of which will be provided accordingly," he added.

against illegal constructions," he said.

CM inaugurates Mahila Help Desk

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday inaugurated the 'Mahila Help Desk' at Chowk police station virtually as a part of Mission Shakti. It is pointed out that the CM had on October 17 launched Mission Shakti, a six-month drive to ensure safety and security of women and children.

The helpline number of Mahila help desk of Chowk police station is 7839556997. The helpline numbers of various help desks are- 1019 (helpline), 181 (Mahila helpline), 1076 (CM helpline), 112 (police emergency centre), 1098 (childline) and 102 (health services). These numbers have been displayed at all police stations.

The CM started Mahila Help Desk at as many as 1,535 police stations of the state and in this order; he inaugurated the same at Chowk police station of Varanasi through video conferencing. He held a dialogue with the Principal of Saraswati College Girisha Singh. The women and girls are facing challenges not only outside but also at homes the CM said and asked the police offi-



Women's Help Desk starts working at Chowk police station in Varanasi on Friday

cers to make women and girls aware about violence against them.

This is a mega drive of inter-departmental coordination of 24 departments and it has so far yielded positive results with the involvement of various social organisations, social workers and veterans. The aim to start the help desk is to check the crime against women effectively and ascertain action against criminals subsequently so as the miscreants could not muster courage to commit such crime further.

The CM directed the police

officers to ensure the rapid redressal of complaints to be received on this helpline number with maintaining the secrecy of complainants. 'This initiative aims to ensure no delay in filing the complaint', he added. Each help desk will have a female police officer so that the complainant could feel comfort while lodging complaints. This help desk will work 24x7 hours. After the police stations, the help desks will be opened at tshisls, industrial establishments, schools and colleges under the next phase where the female cops

will hear the complaint, the CM informed.

The Minister Dr Neelkanth Tiwari and ADG Braj Bhushan, Divisional Commissioner Deepak Agrawal, IG Vijay Singh Meena, DM Kaushal Raj Sharma and SSP Amit Pathak were also present on the occasion.

The help desks were inaugurated at all 27 police stations of the district. And in this order, it was also opened at Shivpur police station. The Zila Panchayat Chairperson Aprajita Sonkar inaugurated it and appealed to the women and girls to put their problems without fear and then their problems could be addressed. The help desk will be a first point of contact for the women who want to lodge complaints at police stations and the complaint will be lodged and addressed on time, the CO, Cantt Abhimaynu Manglik said. It will help the women to put their problem to a police officer without any hesitation and fear and moreover, the identification of women will be kept secret. The social worker and gynecologist Dr Shipra Dhar said was also present on the occasion.

Durga Puja begins amidst COVID-19 restrictions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

With the installation of idols and kalash at all the puja pandals, Durga Puja began in this popularly known 'Mini Kolkata' here on the auspicious occasion of Saptami here on Friday. Though Durga Puja was already started at some places where idols/ kalash were installed either on the first day of Navratra or Panchmi and Shasthi, at majority of places the puja began amidst all traditional gaiety and religious fervour here on Friday, though due to COVID-19 restrictions, grandeur of Durja Puja is missing as a large number of people avoided to visit the pandals as they did in the past.

In the district, as many as 307 pandals have been set up apart from installation of Kalash Puja at 116 places. In the city area, a large number of pandals have been set up in Sigra, Dashasamedh, Chowk, Chetganj, Luxa and some other areas while in rural areas at Rohania, Cholahpur and Choubeypur. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the massive lighting arrangements were not made on roads this time as the pandals were set up in the lanes, instead of main roads.

Due to restrictions and delay in taking decisions by the government to allow the puja



Puja being offered to idol of Goddess Durga at SB Durgotsav Samiti, Bulanala in Varanasi on Friday

Pioneer

committees to install pandals/ idols, many leading samitis could not have sufficient time to make their preparations so that they either installed small pandals or decided to maintain tradition by just doing kalash puja.

Earlier, Vice-Chancellor Prof Rakesh Bhatnagar offered Kalash Puja at Durga Puja pandal at Madhivan in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) on Thursday. In view of the coronavirus pandemic, the university had decided to install only kalash this time, instead of the idol of Goddess Durga. On the occasion, president of Puja Organising Committee Prof NC Karmakar, Prof JB Roy, BK

Ganguli, BK Ghosh, Bhaskar Chatterjee, Murtuja Alam, Sandeep Sand, Candan Baroi, Pinaki Sanyal, Khokan Jana Meena Das Swati Viswas and many others were also present.

DEVOTEES THROG KALRATRI DEVI TEMPLE: Amidst tight security arrangements, hundreds of devotees offered prayer at Kalratrati Devi temple at Kalika Gali in Dashaswamedh area on the occasion of the seventh day of Shardiya Navratra here on Friday. As the temple is near the red zone of Kashi Vishwanath temple, tight security arrangements were made to avoid any untoward incident and check the rush of people

apart from ensuring compliance of COVID-19 guidelines.

This holy city has separate temples of all the nine Devis and nine Gauris where the devotees offer prayer on different days during Shardiya and Vasantik Navratras respectively. As most of the temples of nine incarnations of Goddess Durga are located in old city areas near the banks of river Ganga, they often see a good rush of local residents. Right from the morning hours, the devotees started reaching there to offer prayer at Kalratrati Devi temple.

Besides, rush was also seen at Durga Mandir areas as usual as the devotees were seen in long queues to offer prayers. Rush was also seen at nearby shops to purchase various puja articles including chunaris, sweets, coconuts, sindur and others as the devotees would use the same in their Asthmi puja on Saturday. Apart from this, a good number of families also visited the famous Sheetla Mata Mandir located near Varanasi-Mirzapur border at Adalpur and old Durga Mandir at Ramnagar. Hundreds of devotees through various vehicles also rushed to Vindhyachal in Mirzapur district to offer prayer during the auspicious occasion Navratra at Maa Vindyavasini Devi.

114 COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 114 new COVID-19 patients have been detected in the district on Friday, increasing the total number of cases to 16,238. The day also saw one more death, increasing the toll to 259. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 128 patients and all of them have been recovered from home isolation, increasing the number to12,381 as none of the patients has been discharged from the hospital, the number recovered cases from the hospitals remained at 2,792. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 15,173, leaving 806 active cases. The recovery rate has improved

to 93.44 per cent and mortality rate to 1.59 per cent.

Meanwhile, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. VB Singh has informed that in the first report of the day, 84 positive patients were found out of 2,548 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 2,98,064 and the results of 2,312 are awaited. Out of them, 2,81,856 were negative while 16,208 positive. The total number of samples collected was 3,14,781. With the addition of two new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,261 including 249 red zones. Four green zones have been converted into red zones again. There are 2,012 green zones with a new one.

Earlier, under ongoing mass/ group antigen tests, all 275 tests at Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura, 199 at adjacent Government Women's Hospital, 56 at CHC Shivpur and 45 at Swami Vivekanand Government Hospital, Bhopulpur were found negative. However, three out of 105 at LBS Hospital, Ramnagar and two out of 166 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University were detected positive. Besides, the health department has distributed 2,760 Ivermectin tablets to 345 persons. So far, 11.01 lakh tablets were distributed to 1.37 lakh persons and out of them, 9.11 lakh tablets to 1.13 lakh persons were distributed only

by the Health department while rest of tablets by other departments including Supply and Education departments and Civil Defence so far.

According to Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Amit Pathak, the police of various police stations arrested as many as 21 persons under Section 51 of CrPC, while challaned under Section 188 and took action under Section 51 of Disaster Management Act against 21 persons on Thursday. During checking at various points, 1,817 vehicles were challaned and 14 seized. Apart from this, ₹1,81,400 were realised from 150 vehicles while ₹ 36,600 from 1,174 persons for moving on the roads without wearing masks.

jobs to the unemployed youths. SIS India Limited is a multinational company which provides security services all over the country and abroad. In this camp, security personnel and security supervisors will be appointed.

The camp will be organised maintaining COVID-19 guidelines. These camps will be held at Sewapuri on October 28, Pindra October 29, Badagaon October 30, Arjiline October 31, Kashi Vidyapeeth November 1, Harahuwa November 2, Cholahpur November 3 and Chirigaon on November 4.



Idols of Maa Durga installed at puja pandal in Prayagraj

Pioneer

116 more test positive in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

As many as 116 new patients of COVID-19 was repert in the Prayagraj district within the last 24 hours. At the same time, a total of 125 patients also beat the corona and were discharged from the different Covid Hospitals. Of them, as many as 87 patients were also completed their home isolation on the same day reaching the number of the patients completing home isolation so far is 15,752 in the district so far. One patient also died due to coronavirus.

So far the corona patient admitted in Covid hospitals cannot meet their attendants. This is because they are also at risk of getting infected by it. Tejbahadur Sapru (Beli) Hospital has been made the L2 Covid Hospital. Many serious

patients are also admitted in this hospital, who could not talk to their family members through mobile. In such a situation, the attendants could not get the correct information about the patient. Now they will get relief. Beli Hospital Administration has issued a helpline number.

The hospital's CMS Dr Kiran Malik said that now the patients of Corona will be motivated to do yoga regularly. She said that if they want to know the condition of their patient, then they can call the mobile number 9119800614 for the serious corona patient admitted in Beli Hospital. Psychiatrist Dr Surendra Pratap will be present at this number, the attendants can ask for information about their patients from 10 am to 2 pm.

Corona patients admitted

to Beli Covid Hospital are being offered online exercises from Thursday. Under this arrangement, Vinod Kumar Tiwari, as a yoga instructor, is present in the hospital and is giving information about various yoga asanas through the mic. The corona patients admitted to the ward are practicing various yogasanas in their prescribed ways. Experts believe that doing yoga becomes the most essential to avoid corona.

Meanwhile, when the coronavirus infection seems to be declining in the Pratapgah district, in the mean time a large number of patients start getting infected. It was the same on Thursday. The Chief Veterinary Officer of the district, Dr Vijay Pratap, has also been found infected by antigen testing. They are home isolat-

ed. His report caused panic in the office. Now all personnel will be tested. Along with them, 24 people have been found corona infected in the district.

The coronavirus continues to spread in Kunda Kotwali district. Another female constable is found infected here. Doctors have told her to stay in her own room. A young man from Kunda town has also come in the grip of the pandemic. Both these cases were detected in the antigen detection camp. The remaining two patients are from the city and Raniganj, Patti.

CMO Dr. AK Srivastava informed that necessary facilities have been kept for serious patients in L-2 Hospital. However, there are fewer patients who are in a position to be admitted to the hospitals, the CMO added.

Prayagraj-Vns highway to be operational after Navratri

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Prayagraj-Varanasi highway will be operational after the festival of Navratri. The huge flyover work of about two and a half kilometres being constructed at Gopiganj on the highway is almost left. According to the officials of the National Highway Authority of India, the work of large flyover

will also be completed in two-three days thereafter, the traffic will start here.

Five large flyovers have been constructed between Prayagraj to Varanasi. Four of these flyovers have been operated. While the flyover of Gopiganj remains to be operated. This is still underway. According to AK Rai, the Project Director of the

National Highway Authority, the flyover work is also almost complete. Two to three days' work is still left to be completed. The flyover will then be opened for traffic vehicles. It will start operations till Dussehra.

This large flyover is also very long. Its distance is a quarter to two kilometres. It is the second longest major fly-

over on this highway after Handia Large Flyover. Apart from this, there are three other flyovers, which have already been operated while the construction of the road has been completed. After the completion of two-three flyovers, the highway will be fully operational. People will be given the gift of Dussehra-Deepawali.

Legal notice to news portal, its reporter

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

A Supreme Court lawyer on behalf of the North Central Railway PRO Manish Kumar Singh has sent a legal notice to a news portal and its reporter for defamation and has demanded ₹ 50 lakh as compensation. In case the portal and its reporter do not respond to the satisfaction of the PRO, a defamation suit will be filed, the advocate Bhupendra Pratap

Singh added.

Manish Singh said that a totally false, fabricated and defamatory report was published by the portal, and the same was tweeted to the higher ups of the department to malign him. This was also posted on social media as a propaganda against him.

Clarifying the allegations levelled on the appointment of Manish Singh as PRI and then PRO Advocate BP Singh said

that his client was earlier appointed for RPF, and later he cleared departmental examination to become PRI and then promoted to the post of PRO. Railway had adjusted this post of Agra to the NCR headquarters.

Regarding the role of Manish Singh in empanelment of advertising agencies, the advocate said that such decisions are taken by a committee of higher authorities and it is

not a matter of PRO level.

Some personal allegations were also levelled by the portal against Manish Singh regarding his shares in a hotel where people are entertained, the advocate said and added that there is a partial share of Manish Singh's wife in coffee shop which does not have rooms or other such things to entertain people.

Manish Singh said that it was done to tarnish his image.

Building of Pappu Ganjia demolished

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Palatial three storeyed building of land mafia and criminal Pappu Ganjia at his Naini farm house was pulled down by the officials of Prayagraj Development Authority and district administration with heavy police deployment on Friday.

Pappu Ganjia had been actively associated with the Samajwadi Party, and is at present in jail. He is a historysheeter and cases of murder, attempt to murder, extortion, and land grabbing are pending against him. His rivalry with Bachcha Mahra gang is known to all.

His farm house worth crores of rupees, is situated near the New Yamuna Bridge. Basically a hardcore criminal, Pappu Ganjia became a land mafia during the Samajwadi Government by grabbing precious land and properties. He had grabbed state land to estab-

lish a farm house in Naini where this unauthorised three storeyed building was raised.

MAKEUP ARTISTS HAVE DONE IMPECCABLE JOB.: Ramlila artistes who have played pivotal roles in the city Ramlila for years know that their appearance on stage is the factor that brings their character alive and when it comes to enhancing an artist's character in order to bring it alive before the audience, city make-up artists have always done an impeccable job. A makeup artist's job on a Ramlila set goes far beyond merely beautifying artistes. The primary objective of a makeup artist is not to ttitivate a stage artiste's characters, but to bring them alive on stage before the audiences, said Subodh Singh, director of Katra Ramlila committee.

A makeup artist spends hours to beautify a particular character so that it can appear perfect on the stage, he added. Every character in a Ramlila has a different look and the

prime job of a make-up artist is to bring that look to do complete justice to the character. We spend hours to enhance a prominent character of Ramlila and it takes at least four to five hours to embellish characters when Ramlila is staged, he added. 'Our prime job is not to just beautify actors, but to match it with the respective character. When audiences appreciate the characters, the efforts of backdoor artists are recognised', he added. A team of six make-up artists led by Sanjay Chaudhari is working on Katra Ramlila as it enhances the looks of at least 30 to 35 artists everyday who are playing different roles on stage. Associated with different Ramlilas for the past two decades, Sanjay says, 'When a work is assigned, we start visualising the characters first and then discuss the entire plan to prepare the look of the artistes with the director.'

With over two decades of experience, Sanjay also believes

a lot has been changed in the makeup departments in the past ten years. 'Earlier, a layer of thick makeup was used and it was very evident on the face of the artistes. But the scenario has changed and now you can't figure out if a character has makeup on the face or not because we make it looks very normal', he said. Sanjay has been doing makeup of artistes in Ramlila, albums, theatres and has across the country enhancing the look of the actors.

Meanwhile, the Ramlila lovers of the famous Pajawa and Patharchatti are the most demoralised lot this year in Prayagraj. The world fame Dussehra lightings on roads and streets will not be there, and for the sake of tradition only special pujan will be organised. The Covid guidelines do not permit to organise mela and collect a crowd, so the famous Ramlilas, street lightings and late night processions will not be there.

Gangwar: Govt preparing data base of organised, unorganised labourers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Union Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar, on Friday, said the data of labourers employed in the organised and unorganised sectors would be released soon.

Prior to addressing a public meeting in support of Bharatiya Janata Party candidate for the Ghatampur Assembly bypoll, Gangwar stayed for a while at the residence of party's South City unit president Dr Bina Arya in Barra-2.

Talking to media persons, Gangwar said there were 10 crore labourers in the organised sector

and 40 crore in the unorganised sector.

He said all the governments in the country since Independence had cared for only 10 crore labourers of the organised sector and did not think about the welfare of the 40 crore labourers of the unorganised sector. He added that there could be more than 40 crore labourers in the unorganised sector as there was no latest data available with the government.

The Union minister said now the BJP government was going to prepare a data base of



Union Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar being felicitated by the BJP South City Unit president Dr Bina Arya on Friday.

labourers employed in organised and unorganised sectors for the first time.

Apart from the number of labourers, the data would also show the number of labourers

who have migrated to various states, the number of days they stayed there and for which

work.

Gangwar said letters had been sent to the chief ministers and labour ministers of all the states in this respect.

He said the data collection work was not easy but it would be completed soon.

On completing the data, labourers of unorganised sectors would be given various facilities, he added.

Gangwar said training programmes were being run for the labourers removed from service to enhance their skills.

He said the government had created a corpus fund to meet the expenses on their skill development.

During the training, jobless labourers would also be given half of their last drawn wages. Initially, the training programmes were launched for three months from June, the period of which was extended by three months.

Gangwar was extended a rousing welcome by BJP South City unit president Bina Arya, Shiv Ram Singh, Gyanu Mishra, Ram Bahadur Yadav, Manish Tripathi, Ganesh Shukla, Shivam Mishra, Sanjay Paswan, Ram Shanker Verma, Akhilesh Awasthi and Sanjay Katiyar.

Covid recovery rate 93.28%

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Chief Medical Officer Dr AK Mishra said the COVID-19 recovery rate was gradually improving each day and had reached 93.28 per cent.

He, however, cautioned that it was essential to follow the Covid protocol in the right earnest to avert a second wave of infection that could be more severe.

The CMO said that social distancing and wearing mask was the only way to keep the novel coronavirus at bay until a vaccine came and hence both these preventive measures were mandatory and the police had been asked to

deal with violators with an iron hand.

Dr Mishra said the recovery rate of home isolation COVID-19 patients was very encouraging since it was allowed and even today it was showing good results.

He said there had been a sharp increase in unregistered nursing homes, especially during the COVID-19 peak period, and the registration of several private nursing homes had been cancelled. He said teams had been set up to conduct raids to identify such nursing homes to take action against them.

The CMO said the district administration had decided to

allow hospitals get their registration free of cost. He said under the new plan, no registration fee would be charged. He said the management of nursing homes were required to come with their proper papers and if they fulfilled the mandatory norms, they could get registration for their nursing homes.

He added that nursing homes that were registered at any time could also approach the authorities for renewal of their registration.

The CMO admitted that cases of dengue were being reported but said the situation was well under control and not alarming.

He said in case blood platelets count was 25,000 one need not panic.

Dr Mishra said the government had sent Rapid Antigen kits to the Ursula Hospital and it was carrying out tests with these kits.

It may be mentioned that in view of the sudden spurt in demand for platelets, the blood bank had come under pressure to cater to the daily need of around 80 units.

The CMO said the Indian Medical Association Blood Bank had lent a helping hand. However, he appealed to people to bring a donor if one wanted blood platelets.

Sheiling House School holds inter-school music, dance contest

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Sheiling House School organised a virtual inter-school music and dance competition — The Mike 3 Virtual Platform.

The event was graced by chairman of the managing committee, Rustomji, along with secretary ML Shukla.

The programme began with the lighting of the lamp followed by the welcome address by headmistress, Ms Mali.

Prominent schools of the city like Seth Anandram Jaipuria, DPS Azadnagar, Dr Virendra Swarup Education Centre, Kidwai Nagar, Allen House Public School took part in the competitions.

The solo singing was conducted in two categories of Hindi and English songs and the participants rendered songs in their mellifluous voices.

The second round was solo instrumental, also in two categories of keyboard and guitar.

The panel of judges were prominent people from the music world.

The prize distribution ceremony was held at the end of the function.

The first prize in solo singing category-1 was bagged by Dr Virendra Swarup Education Centre while in solo singing category-2, Dr Virendra Swarup Education Centre, Kidwai Nagar came first.

Dr Virendra Swarup Education Centre, Shyam Nagar won the first prize in solo instrumental category-1 while Allen House Public School stood first in solo instrumental category-2.

Trains to be cancelled, diverted

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

In view of the ongoing agitation of farmers in Punjab the following express and parcel special trains will be cancelled, diverted and short terminated/short originated, CPRO PK Singh said. The 04924 Chandigarh-Gorakhpur special to run from Chandigarh from October 22 to November 4 will remain cancelled. The 04923 Gorakhpur-Chandigarh special to run from Gorakhpur from October 23 to November 5 will remain cancelled. The 02587 Gorakhpur-Jammu Tawi special train to run from Gorakhpur on October 26 will remain cancelled. The 02588 Jammu-Tawi-Gorakhpur special train to run from Jammu on October 31 will remain cancelled. The 05097 Bhagalpur-Jammu Tawi special to run from Bhagalpur on October 29 will remain cancelled. The 05098 Jammu-Bhagalpur special to run from Jammu on October 27 will remain cancelled. The 04624 Amritsar-Saharsa special to run from Amritsar every Wednesday and Saturday from October 21 to November 4 will remain cancelled. The 04623 Saharsa-Amritsar special train scheduled to run from Saharsa every Thursday and Sunday from October 22 to November 5 will remain cancelled.

On the other hand, the 04649 Jaynagar-Amritsar special

train to run from Jaynagar from October 22 to November 3 will be short terminated at Ambala. This train will remain partially cancelled between Ambala and Amritsar. The 04650 Amritsar-Jayanagar special to run from Amritsar from October 22 to November 4 will be run from Ambala. This train will be partially cancelled between Amritsar and Ambala. The 04673 Jaynagar-Amritsar special to run from Jaynagar from October 22 to November 3 will be short terminated in Ambala. This train will remain partially cancelled between Ambala and Amritsar. The 04674 Amritsar-Jaynagar special train to run from Amritsar from October 22 to November 4 will be run from Ambala. This train will remain partially cancelled between Amritsar and Amritsar. The 04653 New Jalpaiguri-Amritsar special running from New Jalpaiguri from October 22 to November 3 will be short terminated in Saharanpur. This train will be partially cancelled between Saharanpur and Amritsar. The 04654 Amritsar-New Jalpaiguri special running from Amritsar from October 21 to November 4 will be run from Saharanpur. The train will be partially canceled between Amritsar and Saharanpur. The 02407 New Jalpaiguri-Amritsar special to run from New Jalpaiguri from October 22 to November 4 will be short terminated at Ambala. It will be partially

cancelled between Amritsar and Ambala.

The 02408 Amritsar-New Jalpaiguri special train to run from Amritsar from October 22 to November 4 will be run from Ambala. It will be partially cancelled between Ambala and Amritsar. The 05933 Dibrugarh-Amritsar special to run from Dibrugarh from October 20 to November 3 will be short terminated in Ambala. This train will be partially cancelled between Amritsar and Ambala. The 05934 Amritsar-Dibrugarh special to run from Amritsar from October 23 to November 4 will be run from Ambala. It train will be partially cancelled between Ambala and Amritsar. The 04651 Jaynagar-Amritsar special to run from Jaynagar from October 21 to November 3 will be short-terminated in Delhi. It will be partially cancelled between Delhi and Amritsar. The 04652 Amritsar-Jaynagar special running from Amritsar from October 21 to November 04 will be run from Delhi. This train will be partially cancelled between Amritsar and Delhi. Meanwhile the 05909 Dibrugarh-Lalgargh special train running from Dibrugarh from October 20 to November 3 will be diverted via Rohtak-Bhiwani-Hisar-Hanumangarh. The 05910 Lalgargh-Dibrugarh special running from Lalgargh from October 22 to November 4 will be diverted via Hanumangarh-Hisar-Bhiwani-Rohtak.

Arrangements for patients reviewed

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Special Secretary for Urban Development and Snodal officer nominated for the district Anurag Yadav at a meeting held at Collectorate on Thursday cautioned the officials that the threat of Corona was still prevalent. During the

meeting the officer reviewed the arrangements made for patients of L1 and L2 hospitals and made it clear that a close watch should be kept on patients under home quarantine not only through phone but through the visit of the field staff too. He directed the authorities concerned to admit those patients in the hospital if their recovery was not satisfactory during home quarantine. He said the patients of the district who were at other places and interested in home quarantine should be allowed to do so with the coordination of the CMO of the district concerned. The ADM was directed to check burning of not only residue of crop but garbage too and for such work SDMs and EOs should be asked to keep a close vigil and impose fines on the culprits. The SP was directed to ensure cent per cent use



of mask and fine those found violating Covid protocol besides adherence to norms even during functions which were being conducted with proper permission. Reviewing the progress of developmental works the CDO was directed to ensure completion of construction of community toilets and panchayat bhawan within the time limit and look into progress at each level from the selection of the land to its completion. The meeting was attended by the DM, SP, SIC of district hospital, officiating CMO and the EOs of Nagar Palikas.

TWO KILLED: Two girls were killed when the wall of a dilapidated building suddenly collapsed in Sothiya village under Halia police station on Thursday. As per the reports, four girls belonging to the village had gone to collect soil from the dilapidated house of Ramavtar Maurya. While they were doing so a wall suddenly collapsed over them. On hearing their cries the villagers rushed to rescue the victims. However, Terisi (18) died on the spot while Champion at the hospital. Besides two other girls are still battling for their lives at the district hospital, last reports received here said.

GM conducts footplate inspection

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

General Manager, NER and GECR Lalit Chandra Trivedi on Thursday conducted a footplate inspection of Patna-Goldenganj-Chhapra section and did the safety check. Trivedi also thoroughly inspected Varanasi division's Chhapra Gramin-Chhapra Junction rail section and Chhapra Junction railway station. He was accompanied by the DRM Varanasi, Vijay Kumar Panjiar, PCME AK Pandey, senior officers of headquarters and division on the occasion, CPRO PK Singh said. GM LC Trivedi did inspection of Chhapra Junction's circulating area, running room, escalator and foot overbridge and from the bridge discussed Chhapra yard remodelling, connecting lines, second entry, island platform, home platform and extension of the foot overbridge expansion plan and reviewed their progress. The GM conducted a thorough inspection of the guard and driver crew lobby outside the platform and guard and loco pilot running room and gave instructions for improving the arrangements for cleanliness and maintenance. He studied the work layout of the underconstruction second entry at the other end of Chhapra station with the officials concerned. He instructed the authorities concerned to expedite the pending works and complete them quickly by ensuring quality. Thereafter, the GM undertook a comprehensive inspection of the Chhapra coaching depot and directed to prepare an action plan for the techni-



cal development of the coaching depot and installation of new technical equipment. He reviewed the functioning of the coaching depot and directed the authorities concerned for the disposal of abandoned scrap. In the newly-developed garden in the coaching depot, GM LC Trivedi and senior officials planted saplings. Trivedi inspected food plaza, unreserved ticket counter, circulating area, station master office, computerised passenger reservation centre, unreserved ticket counter and passenger hall and instructed the officials concerned to ensure that at UTS counter and passenger hall necessary precautions were taken and Covid-19 norms were followed strictly. He said that the construction of newly-constructed bypass line between Chapra Gramin and Khaira had facilitated goods traffic. Attempts to double income through freight traffic on NER are succeeding. Covid-19 norms are being followed at all stations on NER.

INCREASE IN GOODS LOADING: On NER owing to facilities being provided to traders and industries, concessions, almost double the average speed of goods trains and the dedicated efforts of the Business Development Unit constituted at the regional and divisional level the inclination of traders and industries and has shifted towards the railways. As a result there has been an increase of 73 per cent in goods loading during the current month up to October 20 compared to the corresponding period last which is the highest among the all zonal railways, CPRO PK Singh said.

Udhna-Chhapra puja spl from tomorrow

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration has decided to run the 09019/09020 Udhna-Chhapra-Udhna weekly puja special train keeping the convenience of passengers in mind in view of the forthcoming festivals. All coaches will be reserved category and the passengers traveling in it will have to follow the Covid-19 norms, CPRO PK Singh said. The 09019 Udhna-Chhapra superfast weekly puja special will on October 25, November 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 leave Udhna at 23.55 hours, the second day Nandurbar at 02.35 hrs, Jalgaon at 06.13 hrs, Bhusaval at 06.45 hrs, Khandwa at 09.45 hrs, Harda at 10.56 hrs, Itarsi at 12.30 hrs, Pipariya at 13.30 hrs, Jabalpur at 15.50

hrs, Katni at 17.05 hrs, Satna at 18.35 hrs, Manikpur at 20.10 hrs, Prayagraj Chheoki at 21.45 hrs, the third day Varanasi at 02.40 hrs, Ballia at 04.55 hrs and reach Chhapra at 06.15 hrs. During the return journey The 09020 Chhapra-Udhna superfast weekly puja special will on October 27, November 3, 10, 17, 27 and December 1 leave Chhapra at 07:50 hrs, Ballia at 08.50 hrs, Varanasi at 12:40 hrs, Prayagraj Chheoki at 16.25 hrs, Manikpur at 18.02 hrs, Satna at 19.40 hrs, Katni at 21.05 hrs, Jabalpur at 22.35 hrs, the second day Pipariya at 00.40, Itarsi at 02.20 hrs, Harda at 03.13 hrs, Khandwa at 05.18 hrs, Bhusaval at 07.00 hrs, Jalgaon at 07.45 hrs, Nandurbar at 10.20 hrs and will reach Udhna at 12.15 hrs. A total of 22 coaches will be attached in the train.

People encouraged to wear masks regularly

PNS ■ VARANASI



In response to PM Narendra Modi's call for Jan Andolan campaign for Covid-19 appropriate behaviour awareness campaigns are being conducted in DLW everyday. The objective of this campaign is to motivate the DLW personnel and officers to take proper care for preventing Covid-19 such as wearing masks, following social distance guidelines and taking care of hand hygiene. The slogan of this campaign is 'jab tak dawai nahi tab tak dhilahi nahi' (No cal-

lousness till medicine is found). In this sequence the Department of Welfare, DLW, Varanasi, under the Jal Andolan movement against Covid-19 through PA system made nearly 4,000 people of Poorvi Colony aware about it on Friday in which officers, employees and their family members and shopkeepers were included. Under the leadership of Chief Staff and Welfare Inspector Chandan Pandey, Vijay Kumar Gupta and staff and welfare inspector Kamlesh Shrivastva residents of the colony were encouraged to wear masks regularly.

₹20 lakh cash recovered from car in Ghatampur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Static Surveillance Team (SST) set up for the bypoll recovered ₹ 20 lakh cash from a car near Paras Chauraha on Jahanabad Road under Ghatampur police station in the early hours of Friday.

All occupants of the car are residents of Prayagraj.

SST Incharge Raghvendra Singh Yadav along with Sub-Inspector Nagendra Singh of Nazirabad police station, Constable Jitendra Singh of Armapore police station and Sub-Inspector Manoj Bhati of Ghatampur Kotwali stopped a car for checking near Paras Chauraha at around 12.30 am.

During search, the team recovered a bag containing ₹20 lakh cash.

Station House Officer of Ghatampur, Rajiv Singh, also reached the spot and apprised his senior officers about the recovery of cash. The occupants of the car were identified as Sanjay Dwivedi of Kudhsar village under Tharwai police station of Prayagraj; Bablu Sharma of Sangipur village under Olagarh police station and Gulab Chandra Patel of Bhuwanpur village. Circle Officer Ravi Kumar Singh said the Income Tax department had been informed about the recovery of ₹20 lakh. The persons in the car claimed to be associated with a degree college in Hamirpur district. Investigations are on.

VENDOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR SC, ST: A special vendor devel-

opment programme for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe entrepreneurs was organised by the National SC/ST Hub at Agra of NSIC on virtual platform for providing professional support to the SC, ST entrepreneurs thereby enabling them to effectively participate in public procurement process of ordinance factories. More than 40 entrepreneurs participated in this webinar from all parts of the country, including Jammu and Kashmir and north-eastern states. Senior DDG, OEF Group Headquarters, Kanpur, Rajnish Lodwal was the chief guest.

Addressing the participants, threw light on the requirement of various types of raw materials and procurement process involved in OEF

group of factories.

DOG Sudhir Srivastava and Sushil Sinha, DDG graced the event and shared their experiences in the area of procurement. An informative presentation was given by Rajiv Sharma, director, wherein vendor registration process, e-procurement and special provisions for support to SC, ST entrepreneurs in public procurement policies were explained. The webinar was coordinated by Pushpendra Suryavnsi, branch manager, National SC, ST Hub, Agra.

SUICIDE: Being in depression, an inter college teacher committed suicide by hanging himself under the Kalyanpur police station late on Thursday night. Prior to committing suicide, he left a

four-page suicide note which, apart from other reasons, also mentioned the passwords of his mobile phone, credit card, ATM, Laptop etc. Police sent the body for autopsy. According to reports, Ankit (28) son of Vinod Agnihotri of Shiv Nagar, Maswanpur, Kalyanpur, was employed as teacher in an inter college of Ghatampur. On Friday morning, when mother Kadambari Devi visited his room, she found him hanging. Brother Anurag informed the police which reached the spot and recovered four-page suicide note from there. Father Vinod said apart from teaching in an inter college, Ankit was also preparing for competitions. On failing to get success, he had come in depression.

Responding to some tough questions posed by the local media persons, Mehbooba Mufti said, "I will not hesitate to give my blood for the restoration of special status. "Now it is time for leaders to sacrifice for the cause.

Meanwhile the Congress and the BJP upped the ante demanding the resignation of Chief Minister Vijayan.

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Navy ramps up operational readiness

Releases a video of an anti-ship missile destroying a sinking ship with precision

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of confrontation at the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the Armed forces have enhanced their readiness. The Navy in a demonstration of its combat preparedness in strategic sea lanes around India carried out exercises and released a video of an anti-ship missile destroying a sinking ship. The Navy will continue high tempo of operations in the coming months too given the security situation at present.

Giving details of the exercise, the Navy said here on Friday the target was hit with “deadly accuracy” somewhere in the Arabian Sea. The missile was fired from the frontline corvette INS Prabal. This firing was part of a mega naval drill involving aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya and a number of warships, attack helicopters, aircraft and other assets of the Navy.

The Indian Navy



Spokesperson tweeted that the missile homed in on its target, an old ship, hitting with deadly accuracy at its maximum range. “#ASHM launched by #IndianNavy Missile Corvette #INSPrabal, homes on with deadly accuracy at max range, sinking target ship,” he said.

Navy chief Admiral Karambir Singh on Thursday reviewed the operational preparedness of his force at various shore-based locations as well as at sea.

He also addressed a select group of combatants of the Navy’s Carrier Battle Group over a broadcast from the INS Vikramaditya, India’s only aircraft carrier, and reviewed the force’s overall combat readi-

ness, officials said.

In his remarks, Admiral Singh complimented his force for continuously maintaining “peak combat-readiness” and “high tempo” of operations over the past few months, they said.

The Indian Navy has significantly increased its deployment in the Indian Ocean Region, in an attempt to send across a message to China in the wake of escalation in tension between the two countries.

Giving an overview of the prevailing security situation, the Navy chief said the force will continue to maintain a high-tempo of operations in coming months.

“He also complimented the Carrier Battle Group and its

combatants for accurate and effective weapon firings, which left no doubt about the Navy’s readiness to meet any emergent contingencies,” the Navy said in a statement.

A carrier battle group is a

mega naval fleet comprising an

aircraft carrier, accompanied by

a large number of destroyers, frigates and other ships.

“Indian Navy continues to maintain a high tempo of operations and combat-readiness despite the COVID-19 pandemic by adhering to stringent protocols onboard warships, submarines and aircraft squadrons and bases, and is fully prepared to tackle challenges in the maritime domain,” the Navy said.

Captured PLA soldier was carrying sleeping bag, storage device

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Chinese soldier, who was apprehended in Ladakh on Monday and released a day later by India, was found carrying a sleeping bag, an empty data storage device and mobile phone besides his military identity card. He was identified as Wang Ya, an armourer in the People’s Liberation Army (PLA).

Giving this information here on Friday, sources said the soldier was caught in Demchok area of Eastern Ladakh. He was provided immediate medical assistance including oxygen, food and warm clothes given the harsh climatic conditions and high altitude. Both the armies have deployed more than one lakh soldiers besides heavy weapons all along the 1,800 km long LAC in Ladakh including Demchok.

The army on Monday had said the Chinese soldier had “strayed” into India from across the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Various security agencies interrogated him thoroughly for nearly one and



half days and later handed him back to the Chinese at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point.

This goodwill gesture came ahead of the proposed eighth round of Corps Commander level talks between the two armies to find ways to quickly disengage from the stand-off sites now on for the last five months. Incidentally, the last seven rounds since the face-offs began in early May were held at the same border meeting point where the soldier was handed over to the PLA.

The last round was held on October 12 where both the commanders agreed to continue the process of dialogue to ease the situation at the volatile border. The sixth

round on September 21 saw both the sides issuing a statement stating they will refrain from sending more troops to the border.

On Monday, the army also said the Chinese army had requested it on the whereabouts of the missing soldier. It also said the soldier will be returned as per established protocols after going through all formalities.

Following the handing over of the PLA soldier to China, Chinese newspaper Global Times reported that the Indian army’s decision was viewed as a positive sign ahead of the eighth round of military talks.

Despite the diplomatic and military level talks over past few months, there was no breakthrough on the disengagement of troops from the friction points so far.

India has all along maintained that the onus is on China to carry forward the

process of disengagement and de-escalation at the friction points in the mountainous region.

Following the sixth round of military talks, the two sides had announced a slew of decisions including not to send more troops to the frontline, refrain from unilaterally changing the situation on the ground and avoid taking any actions that may further complicate matters.

This round was held with a specific agenda of exploring ways to implement a five-point agreement reached between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi at a meeting in Moscow on September 10 on the sidelines of a Shanghai Cooperation Organisation conclave.

The pact included measures like quick disengagement of troops, avoiding action that could escalate tensions, adherence to all agreements and protocols on border management and steps to restore peace along the LAC.

Covaxin cleared for third phase of clinical trial



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Covaxin, the coronavirus vaccine being developed by Hyderabad-based drug pharma Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has been cleared for the third phase of clinical trials.

The vaccine manufacture had applied to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) on October 2, seeking its permission to conduct Phase 3 trials for its Covid-19 vaccine candidate.

“After successful completion of the interim analysis from the Phase 1 & 2 clinical trials of Covaxin, Bharat Biotech received DCGI approval for Phase 3 clinical trials in 26,000 participants in

over 25 centres across India,” said Bharat Biotech in a statement here.

Covaxin is being developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with ICMR’s National Institute of Virology (NIV).

The pharma firm had sought the DCGI’s permission to conduct Phase 3 randomised double-blind placebo-controlled multi-centre trial of its COVID-19 vaccine, the statement added.

In July, the DCGI had given permission to Bharat Biotech to conduct Phase 1 and 2 clinical trials of its COVID-19 vaccine.

The primary end-point of the late-stage trial, used to determine the efficacy of a vaccine, will be to see if the

Aspirin use may cut death risk in severe Covid patients

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hospitalised Covid-19 patients who were taking a daily low-dose aspirin to protect against cardiovascular disease had a significantly lower risk of complications and death, compared to those who were not taking aspirin, researchers have said.

Aspirin takers were less likely to be placed in the intensive care unit (ICU) or hooked up to a mechanical ventilator, and they were more likely to survive the infection compared to those who were not taking aspirin, the researchers said.

In their study published in the journal Anesthesia and Analgesia, they said that the observation provides “cautious optimism,” for an inexpensive, accessible medication with a



well-known safety profile that could help prevent severe complications.

“This is a critical finding that needs to be confirmed through a randomised clinical trial,” said study leader Jonathan Chow from the University of Maryland in the US.

“If our finding is confirmed, it would make aspirin the first widely available, over-the-counter medication to reduce mortality in Covid-19 patients,” Chow added.

To conduct the study, the research team culled through the medical records of 412 Covid-19 patients, age of 55

on average, who were hospitalised over the past few months due to complications of their infection.

About a quarter of the patients were taking a daily low-dose aspirin (usually 81 milligrams) before they were admitted or right after admission to manage their cardiovascular disease.

The researchers found aspirin use was associated with a 44 per cent reduction in the risk of being put on a mechanical ventilator, a 43 per cent decrease in the risk of ICU admission and - most importantly - a 47 per cent decrease in the risk of dying in the hospital compared to those who were not taking aspirin.

The patients in the aspirin group did not experience a significant increase in adverse events such as major bleeding

while hospitalized.

Doctors often recommend a daily low-dose aspirin for patients who have previously had a heart attack or stroke caused by a blood clot to prevent future blood clots.

Daily use, however, can increase the risk of major bleeding or peptic ulcer disease.

“We believe that the blood thinning effects of aspirin provides benefits for Covid-19 patients by preventing micro-clot formation,” said study co-author Michael A Mazzeffi.

“Those at increased bleeding risk due to chronic kidney disease, for example, or because they regularly use certain medications, like steroids or blood thinners, may not be able to safely take aspirin,” he added.

First-of-its-kind flash flood warning system for South Asian countries launched



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

First-of-its-kind system for South Asian countries—India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan — that will provide alerts for flash floods 6-24 hours in advance was launched at the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday. India also shares cyclone warning alerts with neighbouring countries.

The World Meteorological Department (WMO) has entrusted India with the responsibility of the Regional Centre of South Asia Flash Flood Guidance System for coordination, development and its implementation.

IMD director general Mrutunjay Mohapatra said at the online launch that the system will enable the member countries to issue impact-based forecasting of floods which are very sudden and of short duration at watershed and also city level.

Representatives of the member countries attended the event.

Flash floods are highly localised events of short duration with a very high peak and usually have less than six hours between the occurrence of the rainfall and peak flood.

There is a general lack of flash flood warning capabilities and capacities among countries across the world. Recognising that flash floods have a particularly disastrous impact on lives and properties of the affected populations, the 15th WMO Congress had approved the implementation of a Flash Flood Guidance System (FFGS) project with global coverage.

The system has been developed by the WMO Commission for Hydrology, jointly with the WMO Commission for Basic Systems and in collaboration with the US National Weather Service, the US Hydrologic Research Centre (HRC).

‘India making all-out effort for safe return of Indians held hostage in Somalia’



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is making all efforts for relief and safe return of 33 Indians including 25 labourers from Uttar Pradesh from Mogadishu, Somalia, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here on Friday. They were reportedly held hostage by a company there for the last eight months.

Giving this assurance in a tweet message, Jaishankar said “MEA and our High Commission in Nairobi are working on relief & return of 33 Indians stuck in Mogadishu, Somalia. High Commission of India in Nairobi, Kenya has taken up their predicament with Somali authorities. We are in touch with the Somali Embassy in India.” He also said we “hope for an early resolution.”

Sources said the Indians had joined the company 10 months ago.

In the first two months, the company treated them well, but from the last eight months, the workers were allegedly not paid their salaries.

CBI books persons under POCSO for posting obscene materials online

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a case against a private person of Delhi and unknown others under relevant provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the Information Technology Act, 2000. The accused had allegedly created three accounts and around 20 channels / groups on Telegram App for sale of obscene/objectionable material (videos/photos) including CSAM (Child sexual abusive material).

It was further alleged that out of these, two accounts were for advertising posts / messages

for sale of obscene videos / photos including the CSAM, the CBI said in a statement.

It was also alleged that in response to the advertisement and after bargaining with the customers / seekers, the accused received the payments via Paytm / Google Pay among others.

On receipt of payments, the accused allegedly shared the link(s) of various group(s) / channel(s) of Telegram, in which objectionable material including CSAM, was being shared with members, the agency further said.

The accused allegedly sold the obscene videos / photos including CSAM for an amount of ₹250 by adding the

customer(s) / seekers into these groups / channels.

Searches were conducted recently at the premises of the accused at Delhi. The mobile phone recovered during the searches is being analysed and further investigation is continuing, it added.

A Special Unit “Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention/ Investigation (OCSAE)” has been created in CBI, New Delhi for matters pertaining to online child sexual abuse and exploitation. Apart from receiving various references/information, the unit is undertaking investigation of various offences relating to online child sexual abuse and exploitation.

New Parliament building to be ready by Oct, 2022, construction to begin in Dec

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The construction of the new Parliament building will commence in December 2020 and is likely to be completed by October 2022. The existing Parliament House building will be suitably retro-fitted to provide more functional spaces for parliamentary events, to ensure its usage along with the new building. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla chaired a review meeting regarding the construction of the new Parliament House on Friday along with Union Minister Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri.

The new Building will have

separate offices for MPs. Among other facilities for the Members, each seat for them in the Chambers will be comfortable (with blocks of two seats) and equipped with digital interfaces, which will be a step forward towards a paper-less office.

Besides Chambers of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, the new Building will have a grand ‘Constitution Hall’, which will house, among other things, the original copy of the Constitution, digital displays for showcasing India’s democratic heritage, etc. It was informed that the visitors will be given access to this

Hall to help them to appreciate and understand India’s journey as a parliamentary democracy. The new Building will also have a MP’s Lounge, a Library, six Committee rooms, dining areas and parking space.

During the meeting, Birla was briefed about the progress made in the shifting of facilities and other infrastructure from the area proposed for the construction of the new building. The barricading plan and the various mitigating measures to control the air and noise pollution during the construction process were elaborated.

Ivermectin lacks efficacy in Covid-19 treatment: ICMR study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Widely used for treatment of intestinal parasites and scabies, anti-parasitic drug, Ivermectin, may be off from the list of Union Health Ministry’s Clinical Management Protocol for Covid-19 with a high-level panel of the ICMR citing lack of sufficient evidence on its efficacy based on randomised trials held in India and abroad.

Some states including Uttar Pradesh are already using the drug-off label not only as a treatment option but also as a prophylaxis against the virulent virus that has caused havoc across the world.

Already widely used against intestinal parasites and scabies, it is said to be relatively a safe and cheap drug.

The experts of the ICMR’s National Task Force for COVID-19 and the Joint Monitoring Group held its meeting recently to deliberate on whether the drug should be included in the national treatment guidelines.

“Following deliberations, experts decided not to include Ivermectin in the national clinical management protocol for Covid-19 because of lack of sufficient evidence on its efficacy based on randomised trials held in India and abroad,” said a senior officer from the Ministry.

The Health Ministry has allowed the use of remdesivir for restricted emergency use purposes in moderate cases under “investigational thera-

pies” in the Clinical Management Protocol for Covid-19.

Interestingly, a white paper on Ivermectin drug as potential therapy for Covid-19 prepared by head of King George’s Medical University’s (KGMU) respiratory medicine department Prof Surya Kant and other senior doctors from different states of India in July 2020 had found recognition by the World Health Organization (WHO). The paper published in the Indian Journal of Tuberculosis Elsevier is now a part of the global literature on Covid-19, getting space on WHO’s website.

The abstract of the article states that “A group of senior doctors with vast clinical experience met on July 19, 2020, under the aegis of the Academy of Advanced Medical Education. The panel looked at Ivermectin, one of the old molecules and evaluated its use in Covid-19 management.

“After critical panel discussion, all the attending doctors came to a conclusion that Ivermectin can be a potential molecule for prophylaxis and treatment of people infected with novel coronavirus owing to its ‘anti-viral properties coupled with effective cost, availability and good tolerability and safety.”

Along with KGMU, Dr VK Arora (Delhi), Dr D Behera (Chandigarh), Dr Agam Vora (Mumbai), Dr T Mohan Kumar (Coimbatore), Dr Narayana Pradeep (Kerala) and a team of other doctors published the white paper.

HC ends its blanket order extending bails

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has decided that its blanket order extending all interim stays and bails granted prior to and during the COVID-19 lockdown would not remain in effect after October 31.

All undertakings whose bail period was extended have to surrender in a phased manner between November 2 and November 13, it said.

The court also said that the order would also be applicable to 356 prisoners who were granted bail by the high court and they would have to surrender before the jail authorities on November 13.

The high court on August 24 had extended till October 31 all the interim orders which were to expire on or after August 31 in cases that are before it as also the district

courts in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A full bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and justices Siddharth Mridul and Talwnt Singh said that bail granted by the trial court to 2,318 under-trial prisoners involved in heinous crimes and which was being extended from time to time on the basis of the high court’s blanket extension order, would come to an end on October 31 and all of them have to surrender in a phased manner between November 2 and November 13.

The surrender process would start on November 2 with the prisoners of Central District, Tis Hazari Courts and would culminate on November 13 with the surrender of prisoners from Rouse Avenue Courts Complex, New Delhi, the high court said in its order of October 20.

Vaccine politics

Perhaps the BJP forgot that as a party in governance, it is answerable to all citizens, not just those of poll-bound States



Political adventurism shouldn't trespass reason. And governance is about contextual maturity. Besides, certain issues are just not meant to be politicised, especially something as serious as the Coronavirus vaccine, a hope that's sustaining the entire nation which could still end up being the worst-hit in the world. That, too, at a time when an effective vaccine is like the proverbial El Dorado, as trials are still going on and there is no proof yet that it would work on a mass scale. Even assuming it does, every citizen, graded according to priority and co-morbidities, has a right to be administered a shot. And any smart Government would try to sound altruistic enough about protecting all citizens, if not mean it, only to reap political gains. Agreed politics is all about making tall claims that are rarely achieved. Still, for all the eloquence, there ought to be some sense of prudence and judgment. Most importantly, no party can advocate anything that is morally questionable. In this sense, the ruling BJP has overreached itself a bit much, promising the voters in Bihar free vaccines, without realising that it is implicitly saying that official benefits will now flow selectively among those who vote for it as a quid pro quo. That sounds as bad as a public threat. Worse, its promise is not just another instance of poll populism — it's an attempt to manipulate the anxieties caused by the most lethal pandemic to have ravaged the world in more than a century. And when somebody like Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman makes the announcement, it shows that the Government is desperate about the poll arithmetic of the party it represents than pursuing holistic policies, that it is cavalier about the demands of science and health protocols and is unconcerned about lives, leave alone being compassionate. However, this isn't the first time the party has made such questionable promises. There was talk that Prime Minister Narendra Modi wanted to launch a home-grown COVID vaccine by August 15 to mark the nation's 72 years of Independence. Apparently, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) was under pressure to fast-track clinical trials but widespread criticism about compromising efficacy for the sake of political expediency and pressure from scientists ensured that a life and death question was not made a mockery of. Yet the BJP's claim of free vaccine doses has already trivialised a grave issue into a point-scoring exercise. A similar announcement followed in Tamil Nadu, where the elections are due next year. AIADMK leader and Chief Minister E Palaniswami promised the shots on the basis of his proximity to the BJP. In other words, tradeoffs of this nature will be made to buy the allegiance of federal parties. One wonders what the BJP's stand would be in Bengal, where it is seeking to dislodge the Trinamool Congress? But the BJP's fatal flaw has certainly galvanised the Opposition. Delhi Chief Minister and leader of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Arvind Kejriwal was quick to point out the plight of the people in non-BJP ruled States while National Conference leader Omar Abdullah called the announcement a "blatant populism" that "shamefully exploits COVID fears." He even wondered if the BJP would be paying for these vaccines from the party treasury. So when the Union Minister of State for Health, Ashwini Chaube, tried to clear the air, it was too little too late. According to him, the Centre had prepared an elaborate plan on distributing the vaccine and identifying those who would be given "preference." He even added that every State would be given free Coronavirus vaccines. But Amit Malviya of the BJP's IT cell further complicated matters when he said that like all programmes, the Centre would provide vaccines to States at a nominal rate. And health being a State subject, the Bihar BJP unit had decided to give it free if elected and that other State Governments, too, can decide to do the same. This is not unexpected, as it has become normal for the ruling dispensation to change its stand on what subjects under the State List can be manipulated by the Centre. Except that the Opposition is not buying this narrative with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) urging the Election Commission to restrain the BJP from "signing a poll deal using the vaccine."

The larger concern is that the political parties will still get away making wild claims during the Bihar elections, the results of which will be announced in November. And no trial results will be available before December, leave aside the prospect of a rollout by the beginning of next year. Would the voter bet on something that has still not seen the light of day? The Government should instead focus on the vaccine administration process and set up a seamless cold chain infrastructure, both of which are humongous challenges. Vaccine preservation is a tricky business as wide swathes of vials could go bad if safety norms are not adhered to and the temperature controls are not monitored strictly. The COVID vaccine has to be stored at temperatures lower than other known vaccines. The Serum Institute has already raised questions on the Government's ability to keep aside ₹80,000 crore for the rollout. Is the Government equipped to handle this without roping in the private sector? If so, how much will the private sector be ready to subsidise costs? Besides, how will those at risk be mapped, considering that most Indians have a heavy disease burden and co-morbidities? Vaccine distribution and administration will be no less of a logistical challenge than the general elections and will require the Centre and States to work together. So before it promises the moon, the BJP should realise that gravity is rude and it alone would land with a thud if it doesn't pursue collaborative politics on COVID for its own good.

Filthy air?

US President Donald Trump has a point about Indian air quality and it is no laughing matter



People living in north India, particularly Delhi, under truly choking conditions would not really disagree with US President Donald Trump's statement about India's air being filthy. They should hope that this ultimate repudiation of our ambient quality and pollution in a US presidential debate might force the Central and State Governments to finally do something about it. Like it or not, Delhi's air knocks years off the lives of its citizens and if farmers want the sympathy of the urban populace and the media over the new Acts, they will not get it till they stop burning stubble that leaves a haze and blocks sunlight every morning. The persistently poor air quality in India is now officially a global joke and our politicians' reluctance to deal with the issue holistically because they do not want to irritate their agricultural votebank is an even bigger one. Hundreds of crores have been raised as green cess in Delhi; why is this money not being used to subsidise agricultural machinery for farmers in North India so that they can get rid of crop waste in an eco-friendly manner? The lives of our children are being ruined by chronic pulmonary conditions such as asthma and politicians are trying to blame everything under the sun but the most obvious cause. They can't even attack the automotive industry anymore as it has moved to very low emission BS-6 vehicles now. There could soon be medical evidence to prove a direct connection between high levels of pollution and the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Say what you will about Donald Trump, he does speak about a lot of things without filtering them through political doublespeak. He was proven right about China and he is absolutely right about Indian air quality.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has the political capital to do something about this and he must because inaction on this front will taint his legacy. The right to clean air should be a given and like it or not, this impacts the poor and underprivileged whom Modi and even Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal claim to stand for the most. The chattering classes with access to air purifiers can afford to live with it. So whether Trump remains in office or the US gets a 46th President, the time for Indian politicians to act is now.

opinion08

Recall Frontier Gandhi

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was a rare example of community transition, who showed how easy it was to shed the cult of violence and walk the path of peace



JS RAJPUT

India completed the year-long celebrations of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on October 2. One had the privilege of participating in several learned deliberations on the relevance of Gandhian ideas in the present context. In most of these, it was rather a unanimous conclusion that Gandhi's principles, values and his life could give a healing touch to suffering humanity in a world characterised by wars, violence, distrust, hatred, fundamentalism, terrorism, arms race, hunger, poverty, ill-health and much more. Peace, non-violence and religious harmony remain elusive commodities. And Gandhi successfully demonstrated a non-violent path to human dignity, harmony and liberty. He could influence leading personalities within and beyond India, who plunged headlong into creating a peaceful world by following his values and successfully achieving attitudinal transformation within their communities and nation.

The life of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, also known as Bacha Khan and Frontier Gandhi, presents one of the most scintillating examples of achieving a rare community transition from violence as a cult to the path of peace and love as the value of total commitment. His name may appear just as unfamiliar to most young Indians as his role as a stalwart in the Indian freedom struggle, and after Independence, as a fighter for his people in Pakistan, that he waged till his last breath on January 20, 1988. He finds little resonance even in India for various reasons.

In July 1942, Jawaharlal Nehru issued a statement on the happenings in the Frontier Province — now in Pakistan — clearly indicating how scarce the news from there was, and that too, was "often tainted and contained many wrong allegations." Nehru had personally experienced difficulty, during his own visits to the Frontier Province, in sending out proper news through normal agencies or otherwise. He further observed that restrictions on such news being sent out were stricter in the Frontier Province than elsewhere in India. He then revealed a painful truth: "The result is that the people in the rest of India know little of what is happening in this highly important part of the



country." In this very statement, Nehru wrote about Frontier Gandhi. He said: "Few people know about the work that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan has been carrying on during the last six months. He does not believe in ostentation but he has gone to villages seeing his people, organising them and encouraging them in every way. Thus, he has covered the entire province."

Apart from numerous impediments from various quarters, Khan also had to face false propaganda of vested interests. Born in 1890, he was greatly touched by the devastating misery of his own people which, he concluded, was due to the lack of education and consequent ignorance. He started schools and the British did not like it. He was 19 when he was first imprisoned and then it was a life in and out of jails of the Britishers, and then the Government of Pakistan. His historic movement, Khudai Khidmatgar, was launched to overcome poverty and banish the British from India. He was, till the end of the freedom struggle, for a united India.

Khan was inspired by Gandhi's message of non-violence and he knew how difficult it would be to convince his "freedom-loving" Pathans to execute the idea. He had the courage and conviction to accept the challenge and he achieved this miracle. The type of attitudinal transformation achieved by this charismatic

personality could only be termed unparalleled. He gave a new interpretation of force, courage and valour to his people and the community. This, he could do through his creative leadership, deep and thoughtful interpretation of Islam as a religion of peace. He was a man with a universal message of brotherhood and camaraderie. He knew how vibrant the cultural heritage of his people and the region was, and how this cradle of learning and culture sank "into a state where there was no room left for such good work such as education and learning."

While India was celebrating the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, an erudite scholar of post-Independence history, RNP Singh, was searching literature and sources in libraries and institutions to put up an authentic account of the great Gandhian, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. And how India ignored his contributions which had the potential to bring forth peace not only to the erstwhile North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), Afghanistan and Baluchistan but to the entire Middle East region, and even beyond.

Singh has established, based on his study, how great was the measure of wrong done to this frontline freedom fighter and an exceptional devotee of Gandhi. In his seminal work, *Durand line: Did India Fail Frontier Gandhi*, Singh very

succinctly summarises: "He was among the very few leaders of undivided India who, by dint of their sincere effort and selfless service to their people, rose to eminence and earned a niche for themselves in the top political hierarchy of the country. Yet in spite of having earned a place among the galaxy of eminent leaders, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan never advanced his claims to recognition in the Indian context." One could say without hesitation that India failed Bacha Khan, his Pakhtoon people and the NWFP. There is no other way out of this but to follow the path shown by Gandhi and Bacha Khan.

During the freedom struggle, Gandhi tried his best to persuade the Muslim League and Mohammad Ali Jinnah to give up the two-nation theory. He failed in his persuasion and India suffered the ghastly tragedy of the Partition. And we still need persistent efforts to strengthen our efforts to cement the age-old mutual harmony between the two major communities.

Inspired by the increasing influence of Gandhi, whose persona and ideas had begun to influence the remote North-Western part of the empire and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, young Bacha Khan opened schools for both boys and girls. He organised young people under the banner of servants of God — *Khudai Khidmatgar* —

who, contrary to the prevalent tradition, decided to follow the Gandhian path to achieve freedom for India and its people. To these highly motivated and committed people, his message was, "The fundamental principles of all religions are the same though the details differ because each faith takes the colour and flavour of the soil from which it springs... I cannot contemplate a time when there will be one religion for the whole world." And this came from a devout Muslim who never missed a *namaaz* and who also had "the spirit of brotherhood" innate in himself more than many so-called orthodox Muslims.

Religious fundamentalists and protagonists of the two-nation theory, expectedly, disliked him and his approach and inflicted numerous cruelties on him and his followers once they came to power. The persona of this Frontier Gandhi, sufferings that he endured even after Independence, must be revealed to young Indians, who are working for religious amity as the core value that could lead India to its destination of honour and acceptability in a strife-torn world.

What happened to Bacha Khan or what was done to him is summed up by Mohammed Arif Khan in the foreword to the treatise by Singh: "As an Indian, I feel that what we did to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Pashtuns in 1957 was very unfair. The Pashtuns had voted in 1946 for a united India but the decision of the Indian leadership reduced them to being subservient to the breakers of Indian unity. The result was that Khan and his followers were treated as traitors and he spent more time in jails of Pakistan after 1947 than in British jails before 1947." All this happened in spite of the fact that the top Indian leadership of the freedom struggle was fully aware of the significance of Bacha Khan's contribution and his unflinching commitment to a united India. Sadly enough, India was divided. Even Gandhi, who had declared that Partition could take place only over his dead body, accepted it. All that the great Bacha Khan could say to the Indian leadership that had accepted the Partition of this great country was: "You have thrown us to wolves." He and his people were left at the mercy of those who never liked him for his liberal stance on Indian culture, history and his progressive ideas about religious harmony and social cohesion.

(The writer works in education and social cohesion)

SOUNDBITE

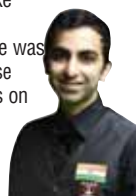
Bihar deserves investment. Who will ensure this? Those who turned Bihar into 'jungle raj' or those who are delivering good governance in Bihar and are dedicated to the State's development?

Prime Minister
—Narendra Modi



When I was 21, I felt like the Asian Games was a different platform. There was a lot of pressure because everybody had their eyes on you and the game.

Cueist
—Pankaj Advani



I don't believe a full lockdown is the right course. To all those enduring these restrictions in all parts of the country, I want to repeat my thanks for your bravery and your patience.

UK Prime Minister
—Boris Johnson



By the end of January, enough vaccines will be available for all of our seniors as well as our healthcare workers and first responders.

US HHS Secretary
—Alex Azar



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BJP's new low

Sir — The BJP has sunk to a new low by promising free Coronavirus vaccine shots for the people of Bihar. This only proves that the party is fearful of being defeated and hence is selling the fear of the pandemic to the people. The fact of the matter is that the Coronavirus vaccine is not the private property of the BJP and it cannot decide which States can have free access to it. Its leaders need to realise that they are also in power at the Centre and the entire country's well-being is their concern and not limited to the States that are or might be under their rule. If they want to give away free vaccines, then they will have to do so in all the States and not only in Bihar. After the dismal performance of the Janata Dal (United)-BJP coalition in handling the pandemic, the returnee migrants' issues and not to forget the floods, the NDA is offering free vaccines to woo the electorate. It should instead focus on improving the conditions in core sectors like education, employment and healthcare.

Noor Ahmad
Hyderabad

Death penalty is not a deterrent

The Karnataka High Court rightly said that an "attack on anybody's daughter is an attack on our daughter." The observation came in the context of upholding the trial court's order of sentencing seven accused to life imprisonment for the gang-rape of a law student on the Jnana Bharathi campus in Bengaluru in 2012. The court noted that the difference between the 2012 Nirbhaya case and the gang-rape of the law student was that in the former, the girl died but in the latter, the survivor discontinued her studies and traumatised, returned to her homeland in Nepal.

The High Court has recommended amending provisions of the Indian Penal Code to include capital punishment for gang-rape in addition to the existing provisions of life imprisonment with fine. The death penalty already exists for rape-cum-murder cases, as in the Nirbhaya case, but is not applicable for cases of gang-rape in which there has been no death. However, studies don't prove that the death penalty is a deterrent. It could also lead to perpetrators making sure that their



victims are left dead or in no state to make a complaint or recognise them. Also, in a larger number of cases, the accused is known to the victim and the looming fear of the former being handed out a death penalty could stop one's family from reporting the crime. Hence, we need to strengthen the process of rehabilitation.

KV Seetharamaiah
Hassan

Noxious haze

Sir — Once again, US President Donald Trump has made a critical reference to India during a presidential debate. Earlier, he had questioned India's Coronavirus data amid criticism of his handling of the pandemic. And recently he called India's air "filthy" while claiming that the US has the "lowest

carbon emission." Contrary to Trump's claim, the US stands second in the world in terms of carbon emission. It leaves a bigger carbon footprint than the majority of the world's population. However, in terms of his comment on India's poor air quality, the truth is that he was just stating a known fact. New Delhi has indeed been blanketed in a noxious haze. Smoke

from stubble burning in its neighbouring States, vehicle fumes and industrial emissions have been turning the Capital's air toxic every winter. It was the world's most polluted capital city for the second straight year in 2019, according to Swiss-based group, IQ AirVisual. Additionally, according to the State of Global Air 2020 study, that was released on October 21,

air pollution caused the death of 4,76,000 new-borns in 2019 and nearly two-thirds of the deaths came from harmful fumes emanating from cooking fuels. The study also highlighted that more than 1,16,000 Indian infants died due to air pollution in 2019. So, while Trump's comment might sting, the Indian Government should take the poor air quality of India, especially Delhi, seriously. The blame game between the Centre and the States needs to stop and adequate steps should be taken.

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

Low-key festivities

Sir — The festive season has started but at no cost should we let our guard down during the ongoing pandemic. We will have to celebrate with caution. Use of face masks, adhering to social distancing and avoiding crowded areas should be everyone's priority. This year, let us pray from our humble abodes.

Rishav Vats
Mumbai

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

An exaggerated clampdown

The youth in the streets of Lagos may not realise that their rebellion could endanger a corrupt system, but those who benefit from it certainly do



GWYNNE DYER

The young Nigerians who were protesting at Lekki Toll Plaza in Lagos recently were not the African touring company of *Les Misérables*. Lekki is one of the poshest suburbs of Lagos, full of gated communities and most of the protesters were literate, media-savvy youths who reeked of urban cool. The army killed them anyway. Or maybe it killed them precisely because of who they were. IZZY@theeventh, who does not explicitly say he was there, tweeted: "They removed the cameras two hours before, turned off the street light and the LED billboard and deployed soldiers to open fire at the crowd singing the national anthem...they brought tanks!! Over 78 people are dead. The Nigerian Army then began to put the dead bodies in their trucks."

The numbers may be exaggerated: One eyewitness told the *BBC* he had counted about 20 bodies and at least 50 injured after the soldiers opened fire. Official sources have denied that anybody was killed, or that the army was even there. But *Channels Television* has videos showing men in Nigerian Army uniform walking calmly up to the barricade and firing into an angry but non-violent crowd. The massacre comes after two weeks of protests, mostly in southern Nigeria, that were initially targeted on the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS).

Almost all Nigerian police forces are corrupt and brutal, but SARS specialised in robbing, torturing and sometimes murdering prosperous and trendy young people. If you were young, had hair of a different colour or tattoos, and were in a flashy car, you stood a statistically significant chance of having an unpleasant encounter with SARS. The protests began two weeks ago after pictures allegedly showing a man being beaten to death by SARS circulated on social media. Muhammadu Buhari, a military dictator 35 years ago and now back at 77 as Nigeria's elected President, recognised the danger and acted fast. Within two days he abolished SARS, promising it to replace it with a kinder, gentler force — but the protesters had heard that story before, and besides they had already moved on to broader targets.

Nigeria is a powder keg at the best of times, and with lengthy lockdowns this is not the best of times. Protests exploded across southern Nigeria, and not all were non-violent. On October 19 a mob burned a police station in Yaba, another upscale suburb of Lagos, and 120 km to the east in Benin City armed crowds freed more than a thousand prisoners from two jails. The State claims that the protests have been infiltrated by criminals and in some places that is clearly true, but that's not why the ruling political class is panicking. That's not why they shot down well-educated, trendy but law-abiding young people in Lekki. It's because those in power fear a youth revolt that could not only transform the country, but split it in half.

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation (200 million people), is really two countries. The southern, mostly Christian half, with all the oil and ports and most of the industry, is around 95 per cent literate. Only one of the 19 northern, mostly Muslim States is over 50 per cent literate, and half the young women in the northern region have no formal education whatever. Naturally, relative prosperity shows the same disparity. Only 27 per cent of the southerners live below the poverty line and 72 per cent of the northerners do. Yet it is young southerners who are on the brink of revolt, because it is the political domination of the north that keeps the ruling kleptocracy in power.

It starts with the army, whose officer corps has been dominated by Muslim northerners since colonial times. That is why Muslim military dictators and elected presidents from the north have ruled Nigeria for 38 of the 60 years since independence, but even Christian presidential candidates from the south are in hock to northern interests. The traditional rulers and religious authorities of the north control the big banks of voters that can be sold to the highest bidder, and it is in their interest to keep those voters ignorant and obedient. The southern kleptocrats, who buy the votes, have an equally strong interest in the system as it lets them go on stealing: One-third of Nigeria's oil revenues over the past 50 years have ended up in foreign bank accounts.

The young men and women in the streets of Lagos may not realise that their rebellion could endanger an entire corrupt system, but those who benefit from it certainly do. Which is why their response has been so extreme. What happens next matters a lot, because 25 years from now Nigeria will have overtaken the US in population and become the third-biggest country in the world. It would be nice if by then it was a stable, well-educated democracy where prosperity extended beyond the south.

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy and Work'.)

I THINK I HAVE GREAT RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALL PEOPLE. I AM THE LEAST RACIST PERSON IN THIS ROOM.
—US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP



HE (TRUMP) POURS FUEL ON EVERY SINGLE RACIST FIRE. THIS GUY HAS A DOG WHISTLE ABOUT AS BIG AS A FOG HORN.
—FORMER US VICE-PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

Dangerous delay

In a country where a majority of patients are diagnosed in the later stages of the disease, the Coronavirus outbreak is further hampering diagnosis and treatment of cancer



VEDANT KABRA

Forty five-year-old Ayesha (name changed), a resident of a small town in west Uttar Pradesh (UP), first spotted a tiny painless lump in her breast in April this year. However, the Coronavirus-induced lockdown and the fear of catching the infection in a healthcare setting prevented her from seeing a doctor. Even when the lockdown was eased, her family was too scared to travel to Delhi to seek medical consultation. By the time she reached an oncologist four months later, her aggressive cancer had already hit Stage III, diminishing the chances of her survival.

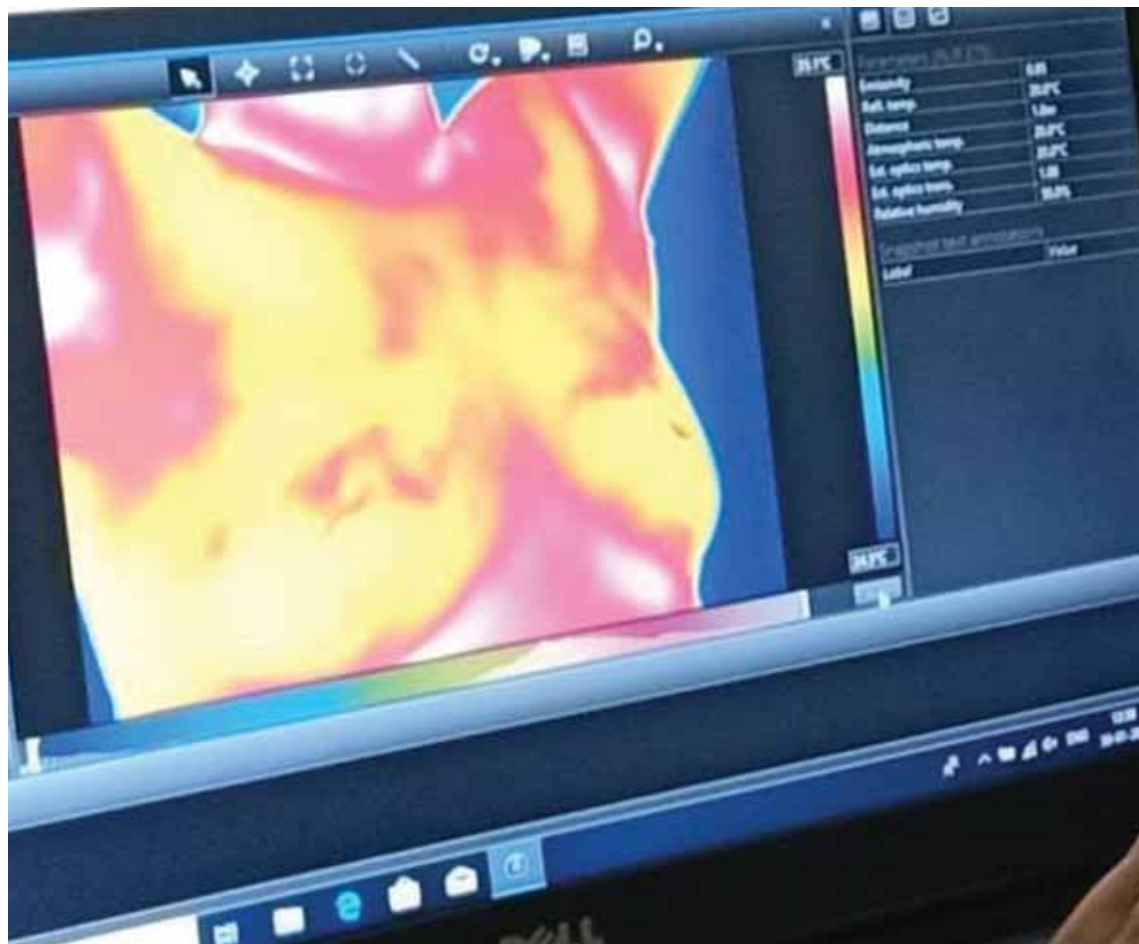
Unfortunately, Ayesha is not a lone case of a seriously-ill patient being deprived of timely treatment due to the ongoing contagion. While we will never be able to collate data of how many such patients suffered delayed diagnosis and treatment this year, it is evident that the number is significant. Patient attendance in oncology clinics fell significantly in the initial months of the pandemic. The number of new cases diagnosed continued to remain relatively low even several months after the total lockdown had been eased. Breast Cancer Now, a British charity organisation, estimated that due to the contagion almost a million British women had missed a screening appointment. This might have led to thousands of cancers going undetected. For a country like India, where a majority of breast cancer detections still happen in the later stages of the disease, the Coronavirus outbreak has further hampered diagnosis and treatment, and is likely to negatively impact survival rates from the disease.

Rising disease burden in India: Breast cancer is the most common form of the disease among Indian women and accounts for an estimated 28 per cent of all cancers. In fact, a woman is diagnosed with it every four minutes while another dies of this disease every 13 minutes in the country. In 2018, it is estimated to have claimed as many as 87,000 lives in India. The incidence of the disease has increased dramatically over the last 25 years due to multiple factors, including increasing urbanisation, adoption of unhealthy lifestyles (smoking, drinking, junk food consumption and so on), increased use of plastic utensils and microwave ovens, rise in obesity, drop in physical activity levels, delayed age of child-bearing and reduced breast-feeding.

India also has a high mortality rate because a majority of the patients are still diagnosed in the late stages of the disease and a significant proportion of them are not able to get appropriate treatment. Another worrying trend is an increasing incidence of the disease in younger women. Shockingly, nearly half of the patients in urban India are less than 50 years of age. Poor awareness about symptoms, lack of a universal and comprehensive screening programme, social taboos and embarrassment to discuss the issue are the main reasons behind delayed diagnosis as well as the resultant high mortality. Unfortunately, the prevailing situation due to a worldwide pandemic has impeded diagnosis and treatment of a number of non-Coronavirus diseases, including all types of cancers. Already a neglected subject, women's health has further been relegated to the back-burner as families delay medical consultation and avoid visiting healthcare facilities or undergoing regular disease screening.

Pandemic or not, do not put health issues on the back-burner: The Coronavirus is a long-term problem, which is likely to stay with us in the near future. While containing the pandemic and ensuring treatment of all infected people must be a high

“INDIA ALSO HAS A HIGH MORTALITY RATE BECAUSE A MAJORITY OF THE PATIENTS ARE STILL DIAGNOSED IN THE LATE STAGES OF THE DISEASE AND A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF THEM ARE NOT ABLE TO GET APPROPRIATE TREATMENT. ANOTHER WORRYING TREND IS AN INCREASING INCIDENCE OF THE DISEASE IN YOUNGER WOMEN. SHOCKINGLY, NEARLY HALF OF THE PATIENTS IN URBAN INDIA ARE LESS THAN 50 YEARS OF AGE. POOR AWARENESS ABOUT SYMPTOMS, LACK OF A UNIVERSAL AND COMPREHENSIVE SCREENING PROGRAMME, SOCIAL TABOOS AND EMBARRASSMENT TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE ARE THE MAIN REASONS BEHIND DELAYED DIAGNOSIS”



priority, adequate policy measures need to be taken to ensure that other serious diseases are not neglected in the process. Governments as well as healthcare providers, both have a role to play in achieving this. It is important to educate people about the importance of not neglecting their health conditions and prevent interruptions in treatment modalities, too. It is equally important to ensure continuation of unimpeded non-Coronavirus services in hospitals while also instilling confidence among people about the safety of hospitals and clinics, especially outpatient departments (OPDs).

However, the silver lining in the dark cloud is that thanks to advanced diagnostic and treatment modalities, survival rates of breast cancer patients have increased significantly globally. While survival depends on a number of factors such as the type of cancer, stage at the time of diagnosis, the quality of treatment, in the US it is estimated that up to 90 per cent of women survive five years after diagnosis and 84 per cent manage to survive 10 years.

However, in India, the survival rates remain abysmally low for reasons mentioned above. Increased awareness and health literacy, regular screening after 40 years of age, adoption of a healthy and active lifestyle sans smoking or excessive drinking, timely and appropriate treatment can help improve survival rates in India too.

New-age technologies can help navigate the Coronavirus pandemic: The adoption of new-age technologically-advanced methods further helps improve the quality of life of patients. Now, surgical treatment does not mean removal of the whole breast in all patients. It is possible to offer a breast conservation surgery

in nearly 60-70 per cent of the patients either upfront or after chemotherapy.

Similarly, complete removal of armpit nodes, a procedure done routinely in all patients until a couple of decades ago, has given way to sentinel lymph node biopsy in which only a few nodes need to be tested for the presence of the tumour.

If these sentinel nodes are not involved in the disease, one does not need to remove the remaining nodes, thus bringing down the rate of shoulder dysfunction as well as lymphedema (swelling of the arm) significantly. Similar to surgery, personalised systemic therapy (chemo, hormone, immune and targeted therapy) has enabled us to avoid more toxic treatment in patients with a good biology tumour. Two patients with the same size of tumour can have very different outcomes. New-age prognostic tests help predict the risk of cancer relapse in the early stage of breast cancer with a high degree of accuracy, stratifying patients into low and high-risk categories, based on their tumour biology. Those patients who fall in the low-risk category have very limited risk of relapse and may be able to avoid chemotherapy.

Cancer patients face a higher risk of catching the Coronavirus infection as well as suffering from its complications because of their immuno-suppressive state as a result of the disease itself and due to chemotherapy. These prognostic tests that can help them avoid chemotherapy, if used judiciously, can kill two birds with one stone — patients can avoid chemotherapy, which is immunosuppressive, and avoid visits to the hospital to undergo chemotherapy.

Radiation therapy has also undergone a complete metamorphosis over the decades and modern machines enable us

to deliver more precise radiation (thus sparing adjacent organs like the lungs and the heart from a high dose of radiation) and in a shorter interval of time (as less as two weeks as compared to the usual five weeks in a select group of patients).

In more good news, researchers in Canada have developed a new, inexpensive technology that could save lives and money by routinely screening women for breast cancer without exposure to radiation. The system, developed by researchers at the University of Waterloo, uses harmless microwaves and Artificial Intelligence software to detect even small, early-stage tumours within minutes.

By comparing the tissue composition of one breast with the other, the system is sensitive enough to detect anomalies less than one centimetre in diameter. A negative result could quickly rule out cancer, while a positive result would trigger referral for more expensive tests using mammography or magnetic resonance imaging. In addition to reducing patient wait times and enabling earlier diagnosis, the device would eliminate radiation exposure, improve patient comfort and work on particularly dense breasts, a problem with mammograms. However, this technology will take a while to come to India as it is still at the nascent stage.

In the end, people have to realise that while the Coronavirus is a serious pandemic, they must not neglect their overall health, compromise on regular check-ups and doctor consultations or delay cancer treatment. However, all hospital visits must be undertaken with complete precautionary measures that are the new normal now.

(The writer is head, Department of Surgical Oncology, Manipal Hospitals, Dwarka)

Closure of budget private schools looms large

With apathy, low Government allocation and high-handedness, school education is becoming nobody's baby



SHIVAJI SARKAR

India's unaided private school education is collapsing as thousands of institutions have closed down and many others are struggling to survive. This may cost the nation over ₹1.75 lakh crore a year, as the Coronavirus-induced lockdown has harmed the education sector immensely. Though the mention of private education conjures up images of swanky private schools with world-class facilities and sky-high fee structure, these are also in crisis today.

However, it is the online, low-budget schools that have been the worst-hit by the pandemic. These schools penetrate rural areas, small towns or low-income localities of metros, according to the State of the Sector Report on Private Schools by the Central Square Foundation (CSF). As

per the recently released Household Social Consumption on Education in India Report, the aggregate household expenditure on private schools is approximately ₹1.75 lakh crore, almost equal to the e-commerce sector. Also, about 50 per cent of the total school enrolments are in private schools.

Though almost all schools, Government or private, are under stress due to the lockdown, the worst sufferers are the virtual informal schools. With or without Government recognition, they serve the hinterland of the country. They have improved school enrolment, especially in rural areas, where the number of students attending private schools has increased from four per cent in 1993 to 26.6 per cent in 2017-18.

The CSF says that the struggle for the survival of private education in the country is intense. Even under normal circumstances, it is not easy for private schools to attract students and during the Coronavirus era, the situation has worsened further as parents refuse to pay fees. Plus, the digital footprint has made online education unaffordable.

So most such schools have either closed down or are facing closure as they are neither able to pay their teachers nor can they afford infrastructure costs. Some had planned expansion in early March and taken loans. Many have gone into severe debt and even after closure, are in distress. Most of these are entrepreneurial ventures by innovative individuals. In Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh, a shopkeeper's son started a school that followed the concept of "pay ₹1 a day." However, since the students are not coming to school, entrepreneurs like him have little option but to close down operations.

The impact on society is severe as these virtual schools employ mostly jobless youth at low salaries. The payment is on a daily or hourly basis. But each school sustains at least 100 people on an average. The youth prefer to opt for such jobs for sustenance as well as for the prestige they enjoy in their neighbourhood due to it. In villages or semi-urban areas, such schools have become the first choice for parents, as they are perceived to be better than Government schools due to the overall care that a child is



given as the teachers (trained or not) are from the neighbourhood. This is making education more mass-based as the official system has many limitations and despite some recent efforts, suffers from delivery problems. Recruitment of teachers itself is flawed as the disclosures from VYA-PAM in Madhya Pradesh and by the UP Government have shown. The Yogi Adityanath Government also found that the district officials interfered in "Basic Shiksha" schools and issued orders for severing these from the district administration. Plus, online education has largely come a

cropper in all such institutions.

The pandemic gave rise to the need for having a digital infrastructure and due to their low budgets, the unaided private schools claim that they are neither able to match up with elite schools nor with the State-run schools, for which the content is aired through television and radio channels and other Government-run platforms. To make matters worse, parents do not consider online teaching to be proper education. They do not pay the schools because their wards are not going there. Apart from that, they find online teaching expensive due to the high internet costs. Another problem they face is that each child needs a smart phone or computer, which they cannot afford.

Apart from this, many children do not find online teaching interesting as there are many glitches and teachers, too, find themselves struggling due to the lack of eye contact. Plus, students mostly switch off the video mode because of the poor network across the country and to reduce unaffordable data use.

The students and their parents find brick and mortar schools more

affordable and fruitful because apart from learning from books and the teachers, the children learn language skills, etiquette, discipline, interaction with peer groups, use of a library and social behaviour. So parents, despite their low incomes, do not mind paying for education at brick and mortar schools.

As per a Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation report, Indians pay 12 times the money for pre-primary education at a private school. The number decreases to about three times at the higher secondary level. A majority, 70.8 per cent students, pay less than ₹1,000 monthly fee, while 45.5 per cent pay less than ₹500. The monthly median fee in an elementary unaided school is ₹958 in urban areas and ₹500 in rural India. Schools complain that at least one-third of the parents default in paying this minimal amount also. The closure of budget private schools can adversely impact "education for all" and multiply unemployment. With apathy, low Government allocation and high-handedness, school education is becoming nobody's baby.

(The writer is a senior journalist)



FOREIGN EYE



CONCERNS OVER AN AGEING WORLD

Globally, the life of the elderly has changed from a simple, mainly localised concern to a systemic, comprehensive and long-term factor related to the sustainable development of the economy and society. With a rapidly ageing society, the challenges that need to be overcome range from the rising shortage of labour to increasingly unsustainable pension funds and inadequate medical and nursing resources. (China Daily editorial)

GST COMPENSATION

Centre borrows, transfers ₹6K cr to 16 States

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Government on Friday said that it borrowed and transferred ₹6,000 crore as first tranche to 16 states on account of GST compensation under the special borrowing window. The Centre has evolved a special borrowing window to address the shortfall in the GST collection during the year 2020-2021. In all, 21 states and 2 Union Territories have opted for this special window involving back-to-back borrowing coordinated by the Ministry of Finance. Out of these, five states did not have any shortfall on account of GST compensation. The Rs 6,000 crore has been transferred to Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha,

Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and the Union Territories of Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir. The borrowing is at an interest rate of 5.19 percent. Tenor of borrowing is expected to be broadly in the range of 3 to 5 years. The Centre plans to make weekly releases of Rs 6,000 crore to the states. As part of GST compensation settlement formula evolved by the Centre, it is to borrow close to Rs 1,10,000 crore this year for back to back transfers to states towards meeting their GST compensation. The borrowing and its interest is to be settled from realisations on account of GST compensation cess. The GST Council has allowed levy of cess beyond the five year transition period ending June 2022 to clear all unmet compensation dues of states.

Markets back to winning ways

AUTO, POWER STOCKS RALLY

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic equity markets on Friday resumed their northward journey after a day's hiatus, with gains mainly in auto, power and consumer durable shares offsetting losses in IT and realty stocks. The BSE benchmark Sensex settled 127.01 points or 0.31 per cent higher at 40,685.50; and the broader NSE Nifty rose 33.90 points or 0.28 per cent to end 11,930.35. On a weekly basis, the Sensex rallied 702.52 points or 1.75 per cent, while the Nifty advanced 167.90 points or 1.42 per cent.

On the Sensex chart on Friday, Maruti Suzuki was the top gainer, rallying around 4 per cent, followed by M&M, Tata Steel, PowerGrid, Bajaj Auto and NTPC. On the other hand, UltraTech Cement, HCL Tech, HUL and Bajaj Finserv were among the laggards. On the sectoral front, BSE auto, consumer durables, power, utilities, industrials and capital goods indices rose up to 2.76 per cent; while realty, basic materials, IT, healthcare, teck and bankex ended in the red. Broader midcap and smallcap indices rose up to 0.71 per cent. "Markets consolidated further for yet another day and ended marginally higher. A mixed trend was witnessed on the sectoral front wherein noticeable buying was observed in auto, consumer

durables and capital goods space, while realty, IT and healthcare traded subdued," said Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd. All eyes are on US markets for updates on the stimulus package and upcoming presidential elections, he said adding that the news on COVID-19 cases in Europe will also remain on the participants' radar. Bourses in Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul closed up to 0.54 per cent higher, while Shanghai finished in the red. Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading in the green in early deals. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.38 per cent higher at USD 42.62 per barrel. In the forex market, the rupee depreciated 7 paise to close at 73.61 against the US dollar.

Gold falls ₹75, silver rises by ₹121

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices declined by ₹75 to ₹51,069 per 10 gram in the national capital on Friday, according to HDFC Securities. The precious metal had closed at ₹51,144 per 10 gram in the previous trade. Silver prices, however, rose by ₹121 to ₹62,933 per kilogram from ₹62,812 per kilogram in the previous trade. In the international market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,908 per pounce, while silver was quoting flat at USD 24.72 per pounce.

GST officials bust racket for availing ₹50 cr illegal ITC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Busting an illegal input tax credit (ITC) racket, GST officials have arrested a wannabe chartered accountant for alleged involvement in passing on ITC of about ₹50 crore through a web of 115 fake companies, a source said on Friday. Prince Manish Kumar Khatri, a third-year student and a partner of a CA firm in Ahmedabad, allegedly registered fake firms that were used to avoid paying Goods and Services Tax (GST) by showing bills generated by them as ITC. In all, ITC of ₹50.24 crore was wrongfully passed on.

Rate cut will depend upon moderation in inflation: RBI

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Reserve Bank Governor Raghuram G. G. G. Das has said that there is room for rate cut but monetary policy action would depend upon the evolving situation on the inflation front which is currently above the tolerance level of the central bank. "I recognise that there exists space for future rate cuts if the inflation evolves in line with our expectations. This

pace needs to be used judiciously to support recovery in growth," opined the governor as per the minutes of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The reconstituted MPC, which met from October 7 to 9, had decided to keep the benchmark lending rates unchanged in view of the hardening of retail inflation. Das said after the sharpest contraction in economic activ-

ity in the first quarter of 2020-21, a number of high frequency indicators of economic activity for the second quarter suggest a sequential improvement. "There are, however, downside uncertainties that could put sand in the wheels of this nascent recovery. Primary among them is the risk of a second wave of COVID-19. Private investment activity is likely to be subdued, even as domestic financial conditions

have eased significantly," he said. External demand is also expected to remain anaemic with sharp contraction in global economic activity and trade. As per RBI, the full year gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to contract by 9.5 per cent with a strong rebound next year. "On the outlook for inflation, food inflation should moderate going forward on a combination of good kharif harvest and a favourable rabi

season," the Governor said. As per the RBI's assessment, headline inflation would moderate in H2 of the current year and further in Q1 of next fiscal year. Inflation remained above the upper tolerance threshold of 6 per cent since June, with signs of aggravation of price pressures. The government has asked RBI to keep inflation at 4 per cent (+, - 2 per cent). Deputy Governor and MPC member Michael

Debabrata Patra noted that India has entered a technical recession in the first half of the year for the first time in its history. "GDP is an aggregative indicator of economic activity and hides the extent of human misery and the loss of social and human capital caused by the health crisis. "Nonetheless, if the projections hold, the level of GDP would have fallen approximately 6 per cent

below its pre-COVID level by the end of 2020-21 and it may take years to regain this lost output," he said. While voting for keeping the interest rate unchanged, RBI Executive Director Mr. K. S. Sagar expressed concern that if current real negative interest rates fall further, it may generate significant distortions that could adversely affect aggregate savings, current account and medium-term growth in the economy.

₹ drops by 7 paise on \$ buying by banks

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated by 7 paise to close at 73.61 against the US dollar on Friday due to dollar buying by banks possibly on the behalf of the Reserve Bank. At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened weak at 73.62 against the US dollar and remained under pressure for the most part of the session. It moved in a range of 73.46 to 73.67.

NIFTY 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY 50	11957.90	11974.55	11908.75	11930.35	33.90	
MARUTI	6858.00	7124.70	6832.00	7102.00	290.45	
M&M	609.75	628.00	605.35	624.30	19.95	
TATASTEEL	413.00	426.00	412.20	423.05	13.40	
POWERGRID	165.10	171.40	164.70	169.90	4.80	
BAJAJ-AUTO	3030.00	3095.50	2997.15	3090.00	83.80	
TATAMOTORS	134.90	138.90	134.10	136.65	3.15	
NTPC	86.00	86.60	84.50	86.15	1.50	
COALINDIA	116.80	118.20	116.20	117.70	1.90	
ITC	168.95	171.00	167.75	170.85	2.30	
ADANI PORTS	360.00	369.00	357.65	360.35	4.70	
EICHERMOT	2162.00	2198.50	2160.00	2184.95	25.50	
TECHM	840.00	857.45	833.55	847.00	9.55	
TITAN	1235.00	1247.80	1231.20	1243.00	13.55	
HDFC	2056.00	2067.90	2046.00	2062.75	20.20	
HEROMOTOCO	3100.00	3152.95	3089.90	3109.00	27.50	
ICICIBANK	417.00	420.50	411.75	416.35	3.45	
ASIANPAINT	2113.50	2129.40	2096.00	2116.40	16.50	
BHARTIARTL	434.90	437.60	427.30	434.00	3.35	
IOC	77.20	79.25	77.70	78.20	0.50	
TCS	2687.80	2702.00	2670.10	2687.00	15.85	
LT	940.00	948.50	928.00	941.50	5.20	
INFY	1133.00	1135.00	1112.10	1122.40	5.35	
BPCL	349.90	355.35	349.50	350.95	1.60	
BRITANNIA	3480.00	3532.90	3442.05	3470.00	11.65	
HDFCLIFE	563.00	580.65	553.65	562.75	1.65	
HDFCBANK	1243.50	1248.45	1231.20	1236.55	3.25	
RELIANCE	2106.00	2135.00	2096.40	2112.00	5.05	
ONGC	69.20	69.60	68.60	69.09	0.15	
CIPLA	76.125	77.465	75.500	75.875	0.35	
BAJFINANCE	3331.40	3356.80	3303.00	3314.00	-0.45	
DRREDDY	5051.00	5091.00	4996.00	5008.00	-14.00	
NESTLEIND	15930.00	16066.00	15807.25	15860.00	-49.45	
SUNPHARMA	4840.00	4945.00	4820.00	4840.00	-1.55	
INDUSINDBNK	617.00	617.70	604.35	606.40	-2.35	
SBIN	204.00	205.60	201.55	202.45	-0.85	
SHREECEM	21165.00	21272.30	20257.05	20900.00	-91.70	
KOTAKBANK	1400.00	1407.70	1378.25	1385.65	-7.40	
WIPRO	346.90	347.10	341.30	342.45	-2.00	
AXISBANK	513.90	515.50	504.50	515.05	-3.15	
BAJAJFINSV	9934.85	9962.00	9823.85	9830.00	-40.40	
UPL	458.50	458.90	453.00	458.00	-3.70	
GRASIM	791.00	804.00	782.10	784.90	-6.75	
DIVISLAB	3094.00	3144.00	3062.65	3067.00	-26.50	
JSWSTEEL	326.00	327.30	319.00	321.85	-3.65	
SHLIFE	738.15	789.75	767.00	779.00	-10.00	
HINDALCO	185.60	186.60	181.65	182.05	-2.40	
GAIL	89.35	89.35	87.00	87.45	-1.20	
HINDUNILVR	2188.90	2188.90	2140.00	2145.40	-33.95	
HCTECH	871.00	875.45	850.60	852.50	-13.75	
ULTRACEMCO	4620.00	4642.00	4488.40	4502.00	-112.55	

NIFTY NEXT 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY NEXT 50	27416.65	27499.60	27349.80	27432.55	81.25	
NAUKRI	3414.00	3674.70	3401.35	3655.00	257.05	
MOTHERSUMI	107.00	111.10	106.55	110.55	4.55	
BOSCHLTD	11900.00	12264.75	11802.00	12190.00	378.30	
MCOWELL-N	518.00	529.85	517.80	527.65	12.45	
DABUR	512.00	520.90	509.80	518.90	11.75	
COLPAL	1430.00	1468.15	1425.50	1463.60	31.60	
PIDILITIND	1483.00	1505.00	1478.15	1501.00	25.55	
GODREJCP	671.00	682.45	668.40	681.90	9.75	
TATACONSUM	469.95	474.00	466.20	472.80	6.60	
HINDPETRO	179.80	184.00	179.00	181.90	2.55	
INDIGO	1365.90	1391.25	1359.45	1374.10	17.85	
MARICO	358.50	360.50	356.00	360.45	3.75	
PNB	27.40	27.50	27.20	27.40	0.20	
HINDZINC	242.00	243.00	238.25	240.00	1.40	
GICRE	121.10	123.90	121.10	121.80	0.70	
TORNTHARMA	2728.80	2814.50	2716.00	2730.00	14.85	
BANKBARODA	42.90	43.65	42.80	43.05	0.20	
SIEMENS	1274.00	1290.90	1270.00	1280.00	5.85	
LTI	3078.90	3105.75	3041.10	3060.00	8.00	
UBL	964.05	970.30	953.60	959.05	2.50	
IGL	392.80	394.80	388.70	391.50	0.70	
ICICIGI	1262.15	1265.00	1241.50	1258.00	2.05	
HAYAVLS	725.00	731.75	720.75	724.95	1.10	
DMART	2106.95	2133.85	2081.00	2103.00	2.70	
PEL	1327.00	1338.00	1315.35	1322.00	1.30	
PGHH	1030.00	1032.50	1019.05	1026.95	0.65	
BERGEPAINT	609.10	614.40	603.45	609.00	-0.05	
AUROPHARMA	780.00	788.80	773.00	781.20	-1.00	
LUPIN	994.00	1010.00	986.40	989.80	-3.55	
PEC	90.15	90.90	89.60	89.60	-0.35	
ADANITRANS	294.05	295.90	286.65	292.05	-1.50	
CADILAH	428.00	434.65	423.05	423.40	-2.25	
ALKE	2629.00	2641.45	2591.00	2598.80	-19.75	
DLF	1733.50	1740.00	1760.00	171.00	-1.50	
MUTHOOTFIN	1188.50	1220.00	1170.05	1181.65	-11.20	
BANDHANBNK	313.00	315.00	306.00	307.20	-3.10	
ADANIGREEN	734.80	734.80	712.20	718.00	-8.95	
ABBOTINDIA	15790.00	15961.05	15588.05	15600.00	-199.35	
ICICIPRULI	416.05	416.90	407.40	408.80	-5.20	
PETRONET	235.55	236.00	231.00	232.35	-3.25	
INFRA	200.00	205.75	189.55	193.00	-2.90	
OFSS	3399.00	3400.00	3295.00	3315.00	-52.70	
ACC	1635.00	1635.30	1599.00	1602.00	-27.00	
BAJAHALING	2303.05	2332.00	2248.00	2262.00	-39.80	
HDFCFC	2325.00	2356.50	2296.05	2312.00	-45.10	
NMDC	87.20	87.20	84.40	84.75	-1.85	
AMBUJACEM	255.50	256.00	245.00	247.40	-6.20	
CONCOR	395.05	396.50	383.70	385.70	-10.25	
BIOCON	420.05	430.50	415.70	417.95	-11.70	
SBICARD	790.00	827.85	766.10	805.00	-46.90	

BSE 500

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP					
Security Name	Open	High	Low	LTP					
HDFCLIFE	565.00	580.60	560.00	564.05	INDFCFSTRTB	31.40	31.90	31.30	31.40
RELIANCE	2109.00	2134.80	2095.65	2112.55	ACC	1636.00	1636.00	1595.50	1604.22
SBICARD	797.00	827.70	762.70	807.05	CHENNPETRO	83.45	84.75	76.30	76.77
MARUTI	6825.00	7129.50	6825.00	7108.45	BLISSGS	172.75	172.75	170.15	171.91
IDEA	9.03	9.25	8.89	9.07	INDIAMART	4810.00	5050.00	4810.00	4995.97
TATASTEEL	412.00	425.90	412.00	423.35	ADANIENT	314.95	322.10	314.15	315.55
INDUSINDBK	615.00	617.60	604.50	607.45	CHOLAFIN	245.00	252.20	243.20	251.81
TATAMOTORS	134.85	138.90	134.15	137.00	GROJECJP	672.00	682.65	668.00	681.31
IPCALAB	2174.00	2196.00	2142.00	2173.00	COINPHARM	370.80	376.40	358.30	362.55
ASHOKLEY	79.40	83.50	78.55	81.85	TORTNSTP	2745.00	2813.45	2722.00	2734.33
BHARTIARTL	433.00	437.30	427.30	434.05	IGL	393.60	394.70	388.50	392.11
ABFRL	153.50	178.80	150.00	165.35	BHEL	28.85	29.40	28.85	29.12
INFY	1134.45	1134.45	1120.00	1122.00	MPHASIS	1390.00	1412.00	1374.15	1381.71
ICICIBANK	416.20	420.55	411.60	416.85	LALPATHLAB	2210.00	2313.00	2200.05	2300.44
BAJFINANCE	3328.35	3355.50	3304.00	3317.35	CEATLTD	1083.00	1136.00	1035.00	1126.98
JINDALSTEL	209.00	214.00	202.05	206.60	AFELLO	2755.00	2862.75	2755.00	2796.98
IBULHSGFIN	150.00	155.00	149.50	150.40	HIMATSEIDE	136.00	147.50	134.10	147.14
VEDL	105.60	107.00	104.15	104.00	AMBER	2327.85	2363.50	2282.00	2343.19
DRREDDY	5045.00	5090.60	5000.00	5015.90	DGL	175.00	175.00	170.70	171.12
SBIN	203.80	205.65	201.55	202.75	MLF	834.95	835.80	819.00	821.11
ITC	168.95	170.95	167.75	170.70	NCC	33.25	36.70	33.25	35.66
POWERGRID	164.90	171.00	164.00	170.15	HINDALCO	185.00	186.50	181.65	182.22
AXISBANK	514.80	515.50	504.55	507.15	JUBLFOOD	2200.00	2235.95	2189.50	2221.66
HCLTECH	873.00	875.00	850.60	852.25	IDBI	39.35	40.80	38.80	39.7
M&M	609.75	627.00	605.10	625.05	APLITD	1032.15	1032.15	966.45	973.77
TCS	2684.00	2706.05	2670.55	2686.45	TVMOTOR	447.00	450.00	441.15	447.37
TECHM	839.00	857.00	833.40	848.10	ABCAPITAL	67.70	70.55	65.35	68.88
SRTRANSFIN	702.00	717.80	699.50	708.90	MCX	1817.95	1837.00	1790.70	1799.88
ITI	3097.00	3100.00	3046.00	3065.20	TATAPOWER	55.75	55.75	54.70	55.2
NAUKRI	3402.00	3570.00	3399.10	3647.65	GLENNMARK	488.70	495.80	483.35	485.05
ZEE	185.00	187.60	183.55	185.80	DIXON	9508.00	9949.40	9410.20	9804.77
SPIECJET	48.10	53.75	48.05	52.15	ADANIGREEN	75.95	76.675	71.200	718.9
ASIANPAINT	2115.00	2126.95	2096.85	2119.40	BEL	94.20	94.25	92.15	92.95
MOTHERSUMI	106.90	111.00	106.55	110.45	SONATSOFTW	365.00	378.30	363.00	369.44
KEC	340.50	345.00	332.85	338.25	HAVELS	723.05	731.60	720.35	725.77
TATAELXSI	1617.00	1709.90	1608.40	1651.65	CONSUMER	7.70	7.93	7.64	7.9
FEDERALBNK	57.00	57.15	55.90	56.00	TATACONSUM	470.95	473.70	466.30	472.55
HDFCBANK	1240.00	1248.00	1231.45	1235.70	TATAMTRDVR	57.00	58.10	56.60	57.55
BLEUDAAT	311.45	3262.30	311.45	326.30	PCIEWELLER	17.58	18.52	16.62	17.2
CIPLA	767.40	774.40	755.10	757.85	MUTHOOTFIN	1196.90	1196.90	1170.45	1184.22
JUSTDIAL	560.00	595.65	553.20	583.90	GRANULES	389.10	392.80	381.10	386.1
ULTRACEMCO	4644.00	4644.00	4487.95	4503.55	ATUL	6178.00	6249.00	6074.00	6117.77
INFRATEL	198.70	205.65	189.40	192.20	APOLLOHOSP	2079.00	2099.95	2053.15	2075.1
LT	940.00	948.80	927.65	941.70	PHILPCARB	151.75	153.35	147.95	149.00
BALRANJIA	3740.00	3800.00	3441.75	3469.70	POLYCOR	889.00	887.75	837.00	883.4
IOC	78.00	79.25	77.75	78.25	PETRONET	235.90	235.20	231.00	233.00
ELCHERMOT	2160.00	2198.40	2157.50	2184.05	UPL	456.35	457.25	450.00	456.3
KITH	65.00	66.80	64.40	64.95	JUBLANT	747.90	747.90	743.40	740.68
SUNPHARMA	489.60	494.40	482.40	484.35	DELTAACORP	111.40	114.70	110.35	112.00
MRF	6256.00	6396.10	62294.35	63601.70	PFIZER	5130.00	5182.85	5074.60	5112.88
HDFC	2030.00	2067.00	2046.30	2061.10	KEI	324.00	337.75	324.00	335.77
AUROPHARMA	782.45	788.05	773.20	783.05	SIEMENS	1273.90	1290.35	1271.05	1278.2
M&MFIN	133.00	137.00	133.00	134.70	CGCL	245.00	245.00	236.60	239.1
ALOKTEXT	22.85	23.20	22.15	23.20	CYIENT	429.40	442.80	421.15	429.4
SBILIFE	781.00	789.00	766.75	770.30					
NTPC	85.00	86.55	84.50	86.25					
COALINDIA	116.10	118.15	116.10	117.75					
AMBUJACEM	256.90	256.90	245.80	247.50					
BANKBARODA	43.00	43.65	42.80	43.20					
BAJAJ-AUTO	3012.10	3094.40	2997.55	3083.15					
VMART	1924.80	1959.00	1877.85	1946.10					
BAJAJFINSV	5948.80	5964.30	5824.00	5830.15					
KOTAKBANK	1392.05	1407.95	1378.75	1383.05					
WIPRO	346.10	347.75	341.30	342.40					
HINDUNILVR	2180.00	2181.00	2140.00	2144.05					
RBLBANK	181.00	182.20	176.55	177.55					
SANOFI	8550.00	8550.00	8404.00	8430.45					
BPCIL	352.00	355.20	350.00	351.10					
DMART	2110.00	2130.00	2083.00	2112.40					
PPC	90.05	90.90	89.50	89.85					
GAIL	88.85	89.50	87.00	87.85					
JSWSTEEL	326.00	327.15	319.75	321.05					
JKTYRE	67.35	76.60	65.20	72.85	BALKRISIND	1364.00	1394.05	1330.00	1388.88
DIVISLAB	3107.00	3145.00	3063.05	3067.25	NBCC	22.90	23.90	22.40	23.6
APOLLOTYRE	141.00	150.70	141.00	149.80	WOCKPHARMA	294.50	299.00	293.45	294.99
HEROMOTOCO	1100.00	1151.60	3091.00	1109.15	SHREEAM	71.90	80.00	78.05	784.9
ESCORTS	3193.00	3122.30	1181.95	1187.40	GRASIM	2129.35	2129.35	2073.75	2057.77
SAIL	36.40	36.95	35.55	36.95	PVR	1177.45	1189.00	1163.00	1180.1
HINDPETRO	178.00	183.90	178.00	182.15	STRECH	160.00	161.00	154.15	156.1
CROMPTON	304.00	328.45	299.20	303.70	EXIDEIND	165.00	163.35	159.25	162.11
FRETAIL	77.00	78.85	75.30	77.80	SCAP	581.95	591.95	579.90	589.9
INDIGO	1466.00	1389.95	1361.80	1371.15	TRIDENT	7.83	8.10	7.83	7.9
COLPAL	1347.00	1472.20	1426.40	1466.00	T11BRDRCST	29.65	30.65	29.30	30.00
CADILAC	429.00	443.45	423.00	423.85	IRCTC	132.70	1334.90	1327.00	1327.88
AMARAJATB	756.00	763.00	744.35	751.20	RAIN	102.50	105.00	101.80	103.77
BATAINDIA	1365.00	1380.85	1346.35	1349.30	MFSL	576.15	593.25	574.50	590.4
MINDTREE	1365.00	1408.75	1382.30	1393.90	SUNDSCHEM	481.00	496.95	485.85	487.99
ADANIEXPORTS	367.70	369.00	358.00	364.05	PNB	27.20	27.50	27.20	27.4
GMM	3294.00	3848.00	3700.10	3746.10	COMORANDEL	730.00	742.00	718.80	739.66
HDFCAML	2328.35	2354.00	2296.45	2309.70	ADVENZYMES	33.20	33.50	31.75	31.90
BIOCON	426.00	430.25	416.00	417.20	SYNGENE	53.05	540.70	526.90	533.9
LAURUSLABS	339.40	341.00	334.15	335.50	UJIVAN	21.00	21.00	20.85	21.05
BHARATFORG	468.90	498.55	462.20	495.25	RELAXED	101.95	101.95	99.50	100.25
DABUR	509.90	520.00	509.90	518.95	SUNTV	434.00	434.70	425.00	428.85
TITAN	1241.80	1247.15	1234.25	1241.90	PERSISTENT	120.00	1224.00	1151.25	1171.0
HINDZINC	242.10	243.00	238.60	239.55	CONCOR	395.65	396.55	383.55	385.4
ONGC	69.25	69.55	68.60	69.00	ADANIGAS	195.00	198.20	193.00	196.2
LUPIN	92.55	101.00	98.70	99.75	NOCEL	159.00	170.55	156.00	167.77
GODRE/PROP	1033.00	1057.60	1033.00	1047.40	DACIL	142.00	146.40	141.30	145.45
PIDILITIND	1480.00	1506.95	1479.00	1502.45	PEL	1330.00	1337.85	1315.95	1327.4
DEEPAKNI	73.20	74.90	71.65	72.00	INDIACEM	122.50	125.00	121.20	121.9
NMDC	85.15	87.10	84.50	84.85	HAWKINCOOK	5078.95	5225.00	5050.00	5148.1
NESTLEIND	15912.00	16066.15	15815.35	15863.00	JRKTINDIA	75.35	79.60	75.35	78.0
BOSCHLTD	11896.00	12290.00	11820.00	12211.65	ULB	962.10	970.50	954.00	959.88
LICHSGFIN	306.50	325.00	303.60	305.55	RADICO	455.50	457.00	438.00	447.77
COFORGE	2510.00	2530.30	2340.10	2381.25	MALAPPURAM	166.10	166.70	163.70	165.20
VOLTAS	710.60	721.00	703.20	705.35	HEIDELBERG	199.00	200.00	188.35	190.00

US PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

Mute button brings civility as Trump, Biden show restraint

Washington: The mute button, or at least the threat of it, worked well this time as US President Donald Trump and his Democratic rival Joe Biden showed restraint and civility during the last presidential debate, unlike their first encounter when they frequently spoke over each other, creating chaos at times.

Far from their raucous first meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, that led organisers to introduce the

mute button, the second and final 90-minute debate between Trump and Biden at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee on Thursday night was less fury and more urgency.

In the first presidential debate last month, Trump, 74, and Biden, 77, fiercely clashed over a number of issues, including the COVID-19 pandemic, racism, economy and climate, marked by angry interruptions

and bitter accusations.

A media report termed the mute button a godsend, saying it also amplified the candidates' differences.

On Monday, the non-partisan Commission on Presidential Debates announced new rules under which it will mute microphones for two minutes of the rival speakers so as to give them uninterrupted opening remarks during the final debate. **PTI**

Trump, Biden spar over Covid-19, race, climate

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump and his challenger Joe Biden clashed over Covid-19, immigration, race relations and climate change during their final debate, just ahead of the November 3 presidential election, presenting Americans with sharply divergent views of where they would lead them over the next four years.

The two leaders traded barbs during the debate that lasted just over 90 minutes, attacking each other's positions on controlling the raging coronavirus pandemic and curbing the country's world-leading death toll of over 223,000.

The prime-time debate in Nashville, Tennessee, was a less acrimonious and more substantive affair than their previous showdown on September 29, which devolved into insults and name-calling. This prompted the debate organisers to put in place muted microphones during the candidates' opening statements on each topic to minimise disruption.

The debate, moderated by NBC's Kristen Welker, saw plenty of personal attacks between 74-year-old Trump, a Republican, and his 77-year-old Democratic rival, Biden, whose mutual dislike was quite evident.

Trump accuses Biden of corruption

Washington: US President Donald Trump and his Democratic rival Joe Biden accused each other of serious corruption charges that too from overseas as they took part in the final presidential debate and defended their track record on strongly handling foreign adversaries.

Trump and Biden shared the stage for the second and final presidential debate that was moderated by NBC's Kristen Welker on Thursday night in Nashville, Tennessee.

Trump, a Republican, attacked Biden, saying, "I don't make money from China. You do. I don't make money from Ukraine. You do. I don't make money from Russia. You made USD 3.5 million".

"And your son gave you - they even have a statement that we have to give 10 per cent to the big man. You're the big

man, I think. I don't know. Maybe or not, but you are the big man, I think. You, since then, we have to give 10 per cent to the big man. Joe, what's that all about? It's terrible," Trump said, in a reference to claims by Tony Bobulinski, an ex-business partner of Hunter Biden, son of the former US vice president.

In a statement to press in Nashville, Bobulinski said the Democratic presidential candidate was to get 10 per cent in the Chinese business deal.

"I've heard Joe Biden say he never discussed business with Hunter. That is false. Tomorrow I will be meeting with the Senate committee members concerning this matter. And I will be providing the FBI the devices which contain the evidence corroborating what I have said, so I will not be taking any questions at this time," he said. **PTI**

Biden warns any country that interferes in US elections 'will pay a price' if he is elected

Washington: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has warned that any country that interferes in American elections "will pay a price" if he is elected in the November 3 polls, specifically referring to alleged interference by China, Russia and Iran.

Biden made the remarks while responding to a question on how he would deter foreign interference in

American elections during the final presidential debate with President Donald Trump at Belmont University in Nashville on Thursday night.

"They will pay a price if I'm elected," Biden said.

"They're interfering with American sovereignty. That's what's going on," he said when asked about US intelligence reports that Russia and

Iran are trying to significantly interfere with the election.

Trump said he was informed of the recent election interference efforts. "I knew all about that," he said.

Top US intelligence officials this week claimed that both Iran and Russia have obtained US voter registration information in an effort to interfere in the election. **PTI**

Covid-19 vaccine coming in weeks: Trump

Washington: A Covid-19 vaccine is "ready" and coming "within weeks" and would be distributed by the military, US President Donald Trump said on Thursday while his Democratic challenger Joe Biden alleged that America is about to enter into a "dark winter" as they clashed over their policies on the pandemic during the final presidential debate.

The 90-minute debate, just less

than two weeks ahead of the crucial presidential election on November 3, started in Nashville, Tennessee, with opening remarks by both the candidates, when the mike of the other was muted to avoid interruptions. The coronavirus dominated the opening minutes of the Trump-Biden face-off with President Trump terming the contagion a "worldwide problem".

"We have a vaccine that's

coming. It's ready, it's going to be announced within weeks and it's going to be delivered," Trump, 74, said adding that companies like Johnson & Johnson, Moderna and Pfizer are doing very well on that front. "We also have others that we're working on very closely with other countries, in particular, Europe," he said.

Asserting that his timeline is going to be more accurate, Trump

said he has his generals lined up for the fast distribution of the vaccine, as he expects to have 100 million vials.

"As soon as we have the vaccine, he (general) is ready to go," said the president, who is seeking reelection. Former vice president Biden, 77, challenged Trump and alleged that his policies have resulted in a large number of deaths in the country. **PTI**

China warns UK not to offer citizenship to Hong Kong residents

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Friday threatened to stop recognising the UK-issued passports for Hong Kong residents after the country reaffirmed its plan to offer a route to its citizenship to thousands of people living in the former British colony.

The British government announced in July that it will open a new special pathway to obtaining British citizenship for eligible Hong Kongers from January 2021 after China imposed a new, sweeping national security law on Hong Kong.

The British offer is not for all residents of Hong Kong, but only those holding a British National Overseas (BNO) passport.

China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing here that the Chinese government has repeatedly made clear its "strong stance on this issue, but the British side has insisted on interfering with Hong Kong affairs and China's domestic issues."

"As the British side broke its own promises, the Chinese government will consider not recognising the BNO passport as a valid travel document, and reserve the right to impose further measures," he said.

The new "Hong Kong BN(O) Visa" will allow the holder to enter and remain in Britain for an initial period of 30 months, extendable by a further 30 months, or a single period of five years, according to information on the British government's website.

"You'll be able to work and study, but you won't be able to access public funds such as social welfare benefits," Hong Kong-based South China Morning quoted the statement as saying. Holders can apply to settle in Britain once they have lived there for five years.

"After 12 months with this status, you can apply for British citizenship," the statement said.

US Embassy in Turkey issues alert on potential attacks

Istanbul: The US Embassy in Turkey issued a security alert Friday, saying it received reports of a possible attack on Americans and other foreigners, and temporarily suspended consular services.

"The US Mission in Turkey has received credible reports of potential terrorist attacks and kidnappings against US citizens and foreign nationals in Istanbul, including against the US Consulate General, as well as potentially other locations in Turkey," the embassy said in a statement.

The embassy in Ankara, Turkey's capital, urged American citizens to exercise caution, including while at large office buildings, shopping malls and other locations where foreigners gather. It said citizen and visa services would be temporarily suspended at all US consulates in Turkey.

The Islamic State group and an outlawed Kurdish militant group conducted deadly attacks on Turkish soil between 2015 and 2017. A far-left group has also previously targeted the US Embassy in Ankara.

A US Embassy spokesperson said: "The US mission to Turkey issued this notice as a result of our ongoing assessment of security conditions. The statement speaks for itself. We are grateful for the support of the Turkish government in ensuring the safety of Americans living in Turkey as well as Turkish citizens who visit our Embassy and Consulates." **AP**

Israel strikes Gaza after Palestinian militants fire rockets

AP ■ JERUSALEM

The Israeli military said on Friday it launched overnight airstrikes in the Gaza Strip after Palestinian militants fired two rockets, with no reports of casualties or major damage on either side.

The military said fighter jets and other aircraft struck a weapons manufacturing site and "underground infrastructure" belonging to the Islamic militant group Hamas, which rules Gaza.

Late Thursday, Palestinian militants fired two rockets into Israel. One was intercepted by Israeli missile defenses while the other fell in an open area.

Israel and Hamas have fought three wars and several skirmishes since the militant group seized power from rival Palestinian forces in 2007. Israel holds Hamas responsible for all attacks emanating from Gaza, including those claimed by other militant groups.

Israel and Egypt have maintained a crippling blockade on the coastal territory, which is home to 2 million Palestinians, since Hamas seized power.

Earlier this week, Israel announced the discovery of an unfinished tunnel dug by militants that had crossed into Israel before it was detected by underground sensors. It said the tunnel ran dozens of meters (yards) underground and was intended to facilitate attacks.

Israel has uncovered around 20 such tunnels since the last war with Hamas, in 2014.

Pak's anti-corruption body slaps fresh graft case on Nawaz Sharif

Islamabad: Pakistan's anti-corruption body has slapped a fresh corruption case on deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif, compounding the legal woes of the embattled Opposition leader who has frequently attacked the powerful military as well as the Government.

Sharif, the 70-year-old supremo of the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) who was ousted from power in 2017 by the Supreme Court on corruption charges, is currently in London for medical treatment.

The National Accountability Bureau also approved cases against Sharif's ex-personal secretary Fawad Hasan Fawad, former federal minister Ahsan Iqbal, former foreign secretary Aizaz Chaudhry and former Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief Aftab Sultan, Dawn newspaper reported. On Thursday, a total of 11 cases were approved at NAB's Executive Board Meeting (EBM) presided over by its chairman, retired Justice Javed Iqbal.

According to the NAB, a fresh case was approved against Sharif along with Chaudhry, Sultan and Fawad for "illegally" purchasing 73 high-security vehicles for the security of foreign dignitaries. They are accused of favouritism and illegal use of vehicles, causing a loss of over Rs 1,952 million to the national exchequer.

The EBM also approved a case against Ahsan Iqbal and Mohammad Ahmed, contractor/owner of private firm Ahmed and Sons, for increasing the scope of the Sports City project in Narowal from Rs 30 million to Rs 3 billion by "abusing the authority". **PTI**

R&AW chief's meeting with Nepal PM sparks criticism

Kathmandu: Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli has come under fire, including from the ruling Communist Party leaders, for breaching diplomatic norms over his meeting with Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) chief Samant Kumar Goel.

Goel called on Prime Minister Oli at his official residence at Baluwater on Wednesday evening.

However, the Indian intelligence chief's visit did not go down well with some political leaders of the country, including members of the ruling party Nepal Communist Party (NCP).

The meeting that took place between RAW chief Goel and Prime Minister Oli was against diplomatic norms and it doesn't serve Nepal's national interest, said senior ruling party leader Bhim Rawal.

"As the meeting took place in a non-transparent manner without consulting with the concerned section of the Foreign Ministry, this may also contribute to weakening our state mechanism," he pointed out.

Bishnu Rijal, deputy chief of the foreign affairs department of the NCP, said politicians should not overstep in matters related to diplomacy.

"Diplomacy should be handled by diplomats—not politicians," he said.

"The present confusion over the visit of the R&AW chief is the result of the handling of diplomacy by politicians," he said.

Nepali Congress central leader Gagan Thapa in a tweet said the meeting posed a threat to national security. "The meeting was not only the breach of our diplomatic norms but it also poses threat to our national security, which needs to be investigated into," Thapa tweeted. **PTI**

NO MORE LANTERN IN PROGRESSIVE BIHAR: PM

He paid his respect to late Ram Vilas Paswan but remained silent on his LJP, now being led by his son Chirag, who has gone alone in the polls refusing to accept Nitish as the NDA's Chief Ministerial candidate and has been hitting out at the JD (U) leader.

Bringing the focus back on the abrogation of Article 370, Modi said, "The NDA Government abrogated Article 370. These people (Opposition) say they will bring it back if they come to power. After saying this they dare to ask for votes from Bihar. Is this not an insult of Bihar," he said.

The Prime Minister referred to the clash of Indian and Chinese soldiers in Ladakh on the Line of Actual Control saying, "The sons of Bihar lost their lives in Galwan Valley for the tricolour and ensured Bharat Mata's head is held high. Jawans of Bihar were also martyred in Pulwama attack. I bow my head at their feet and pay respects."

Modi took the Opposition, particularly the RJD (with which Kumar formed the Government in the State prior to 2017 before he joined hands with the BJP), to task saying it did not allow the Chief Minister to work in the State and impeded its development.

"When I as Gujarat Chief Minister and Nitish attended UPA's central meetings, Nitish always told them - don't stall Bihar's development. But for 10 years, those who were defeated in Bihar were angry, they influenced the Centre and ensured Nitish cannot work. They wasted Bihar's 10 years," said the Prime Minister.

Modi is the main face of the NDA's campaign factoring Kumar's successive run as the Chief Minister inviting anti-incumbency against the NDA.

"The people who once ruled Bihar are again looking at the developing state with their greedy eyes. But, Bihar must not forget who pushed them backward, that was the time when there was worsening law and order situation and corruption in the state," Modi said attacking RJD-rule in Bihar.

Modi credited Kumar for ending 'jungle Raj' under the RJD governance and ending "lawlessness in Bihar".

Modi said people of Bihar know that it is important to make Kumar the Chief

Minister again for faster development of the State. The parties who are today standing against NDA are against the growth of the country, he said

Modi also paid respect to RJD's Raghuvansh Prasad who passed away recently.

"Bihar lost its two sons recently. I pay my respects to Ram Vilas Paswan, who was with me till his last breath and gave his entire life for the welfare of the poor and Dalits. Similarly, Babu Raghuvansh Prasad Singh also worked for poor. I pay respects to him," he said.

Modi said people of Bihar know that it is important to make Kumar the CM again for faster development of the State. The parties who are today standing against NDA are against the growth of the country, he said

"Bihar deserves quality education. Can it be ensured by those who don't even know the value of education or by those who are working 24/7 to bring IITs and AIIMS to Bihar? asked Modi at his Bhagalpur rally.

"Each and every citizen of Bihar must cast his or her vote in the upcoming Bihar elections, following all the guidelines and social distancing norms related to coronavirus. Also, I will like to appeal to all to 'Go Local' while you shop for the festivals this year, promote local artisans," he said.

Modi said without prompt action, "many, many more" would have died of Covid-19 and there would have been "unimaginable mayhem".

RAHUL RAPS MODI ON MIGRANT CRISIS, CHINESE AGGRESSION

Addressing another election rally at Bhagalpur, Rahul alleged that Modi and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar broke the backbone of the farmers, and medium and small businesses in the State.

He said Modi calls himself a nationalist but weakened the country over the last six years. "Economy is suppressed and farmers oppressed," Rahul added.

The Congress leader also hit out at the Centre over the recent farm laws, saying these have been brought to attack the farmers. "They had ended the mandi system and the MSP regime in Bihar already and now, they are doing that across the coun-

try," he said.

HOUSE PANEL WARNS PENALTY IF AMAZON DISOBEYS SUMMONS

According to sources, the MPs asked many questions and clarifications about how the foreign company can ensure data protection and privacy and their responsibility to Indian agencies. The joint committee has 20 members from the Lok Sabha and 10 from the Rajya Sabha.

Recently, the Congress had accused Facebook of favouring the ruling BJP by ignoring the hate speeches of its leaders. It had written to Facebook Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg to investigate allegations that the social media company's India team ignored hate speech policy to avoid ruining its relationship with the BJP. It had based its allegations on a report of the Wall Street Journal. The social networking major had refuted the allegations.

Incidentally, the BJP also accused Facebook of bias. Union IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad wrote to Zuckerberg saying in the run up to 2019 General Elections in India, there was a concerted effort by Facebook India management to not just delete pages or substantially reduce their reach but also offer no recourse or right of appeal to affected people who are supportive of the right-of-centre ideology. "I am also aware that dozens of emails written to Facebook management received no response. The above documented cases of bias and inaction are seemingly a direct outcome of the dominant political beliefs of individuals in your Facebook India team," he alleged.

GOVT SETS STOCK LIMIT FOR ONION TRADERS TO CHECK ITS PRICES

Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Haryana, Telangana and Tamil Nadu have shown interest and taking a total of 8,000 tonnes of onion from the buffer she said, adding that the

Ministry is awaiting response from other States.

According to Sudhanshu Pandey, Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution, there has been an increase in the price of onion due to rainfall in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka.

"The All India average retail price variation of onions as on October 21, when compared to last year is 22.12 % (from Rs 45.33 to Rs 55.60 per/Kg) and when compared to last 5 years average is 114.96 % (from Rs 25.87 to 55.60 per/ Kg). Therefore, the prices have increased by more than 100% when compared with average of last 5 years," he said.

According to the data of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, the maximum price of onion is at Rs 100 per kg while the minimum rate is quoted at Rs 25 per kg and the model price is estimated at Rs 70 per kg. The Ministry has asked States and Union Territories to take onion from its buffer stock for retail intervention.

The centre is offering onion from the buffer stock stored at Nashik, Maharashtra, at the procured rate of Rs 26-28 per kg to States who wish to lift the stock on their own.

For others who want it to be delivered, the offered price would be Rs 30 per kg. Besides this, cooperative Nafed, which is procuring and maintaining the onion buffer stock on behalf of the Government, is offloading the stock in wholesale mandis across the country.

The wholesale and retail prices have increased in markets across the country. Nashik cultivates 60 per cent of Maharashtra's onions and the Lasalgaon agriculture produce market committee (APMC) is the largest wholesale onion market in India. Heavy rainfall damaged the new kharif onions to a large extent and the new kharif crop is expected to arrive by mid-November. Heavy rainfall has affected onion supply which has resulted in price hike.

People in the business have said that onion prices may go up as high as Rs 120 per kg as its production has been affected in most of the key States. This is likely to continue till February net year till the new crop season arrives.

The prices of seasonal fruits such as apple, grapes, gooseberry, guava and orange (imported) are below Rs 100 per

kg across India. A good quality apple, guava is available at Rs 50-60 a kg while grapes, gooseberry and orange (imported) are selling at Rs 70-80 per kg. Besides, prices of potato and tomato also spiked in the past few days. The retail price of potato is at Rs 50 per kg while tomato is at Rs 70-80 per kg due to short supply.

PAK REMAINS IN TERROR WATCHDOG'S GREY LIST

FATF has reiterated that Pakistan needs to continue working on the implementation of its action plan and address its strategic deficiencies, which include:

* Demonstrating that law enforcement agencies (LEAs) are identifying and investigating the widest range of terrorist financing (TF) activity and that TF investigations and prosecutions target designated persons and entities, and those acting on behalf or at the direction of the designated persons and entities.

* Demonstrating that TF prosecutions result in effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions.

* Demonstrating effective implementation of targeted financial sanctions against all 1267 and 1373 designated terrorists and those acting for or on their behalf, preventing the raising and moving of funds including in relation to non-profit organizations (NPOs), identifying and freezing assets (movable or immovable), and prohibiting access to funds and financial services. * Demonstrating enforcement against TFS violations, including in relation to NPOs, of administrative and criminal penalties and provincial and federal authorities cooperating on enforcement cases.

While the decision by the FATF has clarified that Pakistan's only way out of the grey list is by complying with the 27-point action plan, Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said that it was India's desire to see Pakistan slipping into the black list, adding that New Delhi's plans have failed.

KAPIL DEV SUFFERS HEART ATTACK

Angioplasty is a procedure to open blocked arteries and restore normal blood

flow to the heart. Later in the day, a short statement on his instagram account expressed gratitude for the concern and support extended to his family. "Thank you everyone for all the love and concern. I am overwhelmed with the good wishes and well on the road to recovery," the statement read. The 1983 World Cup-winning legendary all-rounder was wished a speedy recovery by many on social media, including India's current captain Virat Kohli and Sachin Tendulkar among others.

COVID TAKES SHINE OFF DELHI'S RAMLEELA

In East Delhi, the Dussehra festival held at CBD ground near Karkardooma attracts thousands, but this year the size of the crowd cannot be more than 200 as per the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) directions, organisers of the Shri Balaji Ramlika Committee said.

"We are prepared with small-sized effigies to be burnt on Dussehra. Arrangements have also been made to maintain social distancing. However, police permission is awaited after which the size of the gathering will be fixed," Satish Agarwal, patron of the Committee, said.

The DDMA had on October 11 issued guidelines for holding gatherings ahead of the festival, limiting the number to a maximum of 200 people and restrictions on setting up food stalls, swings, squatting among others at the venues.

In view of the threat of COVID-19 infection, difficulties in keeping the crowd size under 200 and enforcing social distancing, many Dussehra festival organisers here will also resort to using footage of previous years as well as audio-visual and light effects to recreate effigy burning and stream it online.

"We will use previous footage with light and sound effects this year as it will be very difficult to control the crowd and ensure social distancing in view of COVID-19," Ashok Goel of Sri Keshav Ramleela Committee in Model Town said. Anil Sharma, president of RK Puram Ramleela Dharmik Samiti, said a short version of four-day-long Ramleela will be followed by a symbolic Ravana Dahan with use of sound and light effects.



SUSHMITA SEN

Fashion has a special place in my heart. Over the years, I have learnt that fashion is like a book. It shouldn't be judged by its cover. However, the reason we put a lot of thought into how we present ourselves in the fashion industry is because it is the way we connect and inspire with people around the world.



VIJAY VARMA

Gully Boy became a splendid success and also became a part of pop culture, and it spoke to the audience very loud. So, I think that was the turning point in my life. Basically I was part of projects that didn't meet the thunderous success of *Gully Boy*, so that was the only difference.



ANURAG BASU

Ludo is unlike any film I've made before. It was fantastic working with such a talented ensemble, where each actor brought a unique vision and craft. (Composer) Pritam, one of my closest collaborators who I have worked with on so many projects, worked closely with me to bring this film to life. I am so grateful to him.



MIRA NAIR

Monsoon Wedding is a wonderful musical with music from Vishal Bhardwaj, 21 new songs. It is very close to the film in spirit, but it's a stage musical. And that's something that I have been working on very painstakingly for 10-11 years. So now we are ready. We're looking for COVID to leave us so that we can open on the big stages.

PULKIT SAMRAT

I loved *Taish's* script. The opportunity to play a character I've never tried was very exciting. I thought it would lead to an enriching experience. Bejoy (Nambiar, director) had a vision and when I came on board, we brought my character to life together. We discussed his back story, and his life journey.



SHORT CIRCUITS

NEW NORMAL 60 MINUTES

WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS

Filmmaker IDA ALI is irrefutable in her approach. Stories and people inspire her. Perhaps, it's also why she chose her house help to be the protagonist and leading actor for her debut short film, *Bechari Chidiya*, shot and directed during the lockdown. She tells Chahak Mittal how a story can be expressed through a film with very limited resources

Why are the best examples sought out from our everyday lives? Perhaps, because they are very much in front of us; only we know what it's like to be in that situation; and they are our very realities.

For filmmaker Ida Ali, her debut directorial *Bechari Chidiya*, also turned out to be an example taken from her most immediate surroundings. Rather, her home. When her house help, whom she refers to as 'didi', could not go back to her home in Odisha during the lockdown, it occurred to Ida to make a film about how even though, unlike thousands, "she was in a house, she was not in her home." The film revolves around how

during the nationwide lockdown, a domestic-worker is stuck at her employer's house. Alone and unable to return to her village, she finds an unlikely companion.

The film, which is a part of the *Life: Summer of 2020* series of short films, shot in lockdown, by Lockdown Shorts Studio, is now set to release on Disney Hotstar. Excerpts:

How did you conceptualise the film? How long did it take for you to complete it given the lockdown?



When I heard about Lockdown Shorts and was asked to think of a story, I instinctively looked to my surroundings. Who were the people in my vicinity? How were they affected by the lockdown?

My house help, whom I call "didi," is one of the most important people in my life. She is someone whom I have lived with for years. And yet, my home was not her home because she had her own family

in her village in Odisha. The lockdown kept her from taking that one-time-a-year holiday to go to her home and meet her kids and grandkids. So my idea was based on not only her but on every worker from villages who had come to the city to find work and got stuck in the lockdown, unable to go back home.

Luckily, my didi turned out to be a fantastic actor. I cast her as the only character

in my film. I shot the film on my iPhone and the production stage of the film went by very fast. The post-production was a little more tricky because films have so many collaborators and I got in touch with some really talented people for the post. Communication, sending footage and coordinating was a challenge, but we made it work.

What were the on-ground challenges while directing your debut film during the lockdown?

Obviously, I had never directed a film, especially not during a lockdown. I ended up doing all the production work, including sound, camera, costumes, set and direction. But as much as it was challenging to single-handedly handle everything, it actually empowered me. It showed me what adaptive filmmaking means. It can be created anywhere and anyhow.

Why the title, *Bechari Chidiya*? Does it aim to metaphorically reflect the trapped reality that Summer of 2020 became for those who are always wandering?

Living on the 34th floor, I saw an immediate increase in the bird population in Mumbai after the lockdown. They took over the city, flocked the then empty streets and even enjoyed the sunrise on my balcony. In my fascination with them, I thought about how a bird could be someone's only companion if one was spending the lockdown alone. The idea was that how a bird and a woman become reflections of each other in that time. It is not a trap but simply an acceptance of nature.

During the migrant crisis in lockdown, while house helps and daily wage labourers were losing their jobs, to the contrary, in your film, the maid is instead stuck at home. It's a completely new angle to how crises in lockdown have been portrayed and looked at so far...

The migrant crisis really opened eyes and conversations about the sad reality of the workers in India — in a way it was needed. However, my perspective came from what I knew and what I saw firsthand. It is shocking to see that such few films have covered the lives of domestic helpers. It is almost like they have been overlooked. Well, I did not want my didi to be overlooked. I wanted to play with identity crisis even when one may be in a secure place — she was in a house but not in her home.

How do you think lockdown gave birth to new ventures for many?

I think the lockdown, for aspiring filmmakers like me, promoted the idea of making films when one is not comfortable — ith a smaller crew, over the internet, planning way in advance. This was when people really pushed to find new and alternative methods to work. I think when someone steps out of their comfort zone is when they are truly free to be as creative and unique as they want to be. I think it was that for me.

Do you think post-COVID, the Indian cinema will have a changed face as it will need to showcase more realistic angles to how life has seen a drastic change?

Post-COVID, the entire world will be drastically changed. Well, it is already so different. Masks and distancing will not disappear overnight. People have learnt to segregate what is important for them from what is not, be it friendships, jobs or even leisurely activities and I think that will stay on. As cinema is a reflection or at most a satire on the real world, it is bound to change.

After the WWI, the German Cinema took off showcasing the surrealist style that resonated with many who had been through the war. After the WWII, the French cinema took off. The tough times always, always, contribute to art for the better and hopefully, so will 2020.

What does an Ida Ali character look like? What is your strategy to write and create a character?

I take great interest in people and they could be anyone, be they my mother, my friend's grandfather, or even some passerby on the street. I want to know more about them, always.

It's a process. First, I would, inevitably, start building a backstory for a person. Then, a future. Then, I'd think about or try to explore what they are thinking of. The characters I create are probably, mostly holistic. Other than that, I do not want them to be the same type. I want to explore all kinds of people.

Sir Imtiaz Ali (Ida's father) has been a cherished filmmaker in the Indian cinema. And being the daughter of a famous director, has it ever felt burdened to match up to his level?

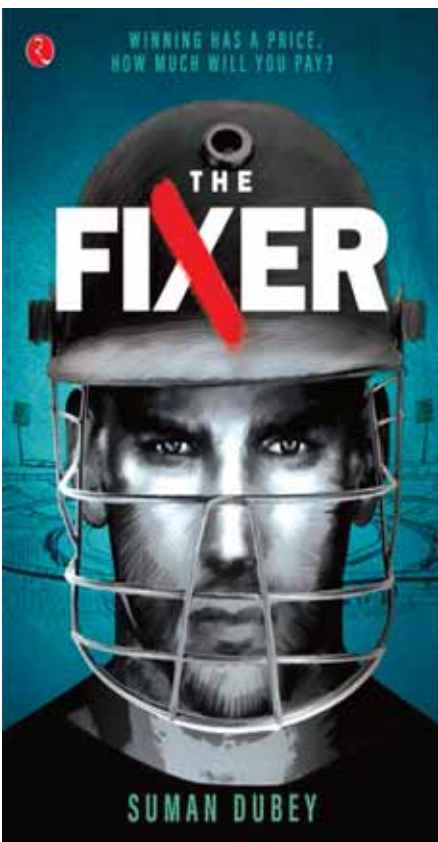
Well, I am asked this question a lot and very honestly, this is when I feel 'burdened' the most. Other than that, my aim in life is to create and present stories. I am already doing that, and some people seem to appreciate it. Currently, I chose to let go of that burden and be happy on even one smile that my film brings to a person's face.

What made you to pursue a career as a filmmaker? Was it because of your parents? How have your growing up years shaped you as a filmmaker?

My parents have been making films ever since I can remember. I would be naive to think that it did not influence me to become a filmmaker. However, what I really credit for my interest in making films is stories. I find them intriguing. I've listened to them for hours and not let my eyes shut even when I was being put to bed because I wanted to listen to more.

Now, I have started to tell my own stories, create them and bring them alive through films, presenting them in the exact way I imagined in my mind. I wanted to be a filmmaker just to be able to do this.

STUDIO CHAT 30 MINUTES



Cricketer Neil Upadhyay could never imagine getting involved in match-fixing. Not after a 20-year career in Indian Cricket, sacrificing everything for it — his stake in a large family business, his loved ones, marriage and personal life. He had fought tooth and nail to coach his family's cricket team in the glitzy new Indian Club Cricket League (ICCL). After winning the 'ICC Emerging Cricketer' award at 19, Neil was expected to become the next Kapil Dev. But due to a major setback in his family business, his ambitions are blown, which leads him to make some unthinkable compromises, taking his dream team stand on the brink. Will he be able to salvage his reputation and attain victory?

Author Suman Dubey's forthcoming debut novel, *The Fixer: Winning Has A Price. How Much Will You Pay?* narrates the tale of a cricketer-turned-fixer who finds himself up against the wall when his family business takes an unfortunate turn.

On the book's trailer

A shot at stake

Author SUMAN DUBEY's debut novel, *The Fixer*, revolves around crime and power in the world of Indian cricket



launch, director Sujoy Ghosh and cricketer-turned-commentator Aakash Chopra shared their thoughts on the book. During the chat, *UnFixed Conversation*, with RJ Rishi Kapoor, Sujoy, Aakash and Suman spoke about the plot of the book, the trailer and all things films and cricket.

Sujoy said, "After seeing the trailer, my first thought was, this is a screenplay for a thriller film and not a book! I observed that

the book is more about the person and not the sport. Stories and films are based on emotional journeys, and this book is about the journey of redemption. This trailer gives the impression of *Rocky* (Hollywood film) on the cricket field. The plot of this book has great emotional value and has potential for a film or a web series."

Talking about match-fixing, he added, "There's something dark about any and every industry, including cricket. These things are part and parcel of life. We see it in the film industry as well. Both cricket and the film industry are very alike. I am as good or bad as the last film I made, just like how a cricketer is as good or bad as his last performance on the pitch."

Aakash said, "Match-fixing is about honesty and ethics, and not about the money. I have seen so many players from humble backgrounds reporting being approached for match-fixing. While I may not be able to suggest the actors who can play the leading man, I would love to play a pivotal role, maybe as a commentator, if a film is ever made on *The Fixer*."

Suman said, "I look at my book as a source of entertainment for my readers. I wanted to provide them with a sneak-peek of the story with a trailer. The most exciting thing about writing this book was that at one point, it felt like the main character took off on his own journey beyond my control. This journey of writing a fiction-thriller novel has been the most exciting experience for me as it combined my passion for observing human nature with my zest for storytelling."

(Published by Rupa Publications, the book is available for pre-order in paperback and ebook. It will also be available online and in other book stores from October 26.)

Heartbreaking to see loss of jobs: Arjun

Actor Arjun Kapoor had recently invested in an emerging food delivery start-up, FoodCloud, with the aim to improve gender parity. He seems to have pivoted towards empowering as many people as possible to be self-reliant during the Coronavirus pandemic with his business platform.

Arjun says, "The Coronavirus pandemic has thrown extraordinary challenges at people. It is heartbreaking to see the loss of lives and employment. I have tried to empower as many people as possible through our venture."

The actor reveals that his platform has made around 1,000 home chefs turn into entrepreneurs during the lockdown. "We have managed to create about 1,000 new food

entrepreneurs from across the country on our fast-growing platform and that's a big achievement for us because these people have become self-reliant in this stifling lockdown situation. We have always wanted people to realise their dreams through self-reliance, and been a vocal for local company," he says.

Arjun is happy to contribute towards providing business opportunities to people during the pandemic. He adds, "These home chefs have found economic stability by turning entrepreneurs and it gives us great joy to see them happy. They have come on board our platform and found a new way to feed their families and take care of their needs. We are proud that they have chosen us to be their vehicle of dreams."



CAUSE 60 MINUTES

Carving faith

With the cheer of festive season, millennials are embracing religious and spiritual tattoos like that of MAA DURGA and LORD RAM

During these challenging and unprecedented times, we have seen a lot many drastic changes and have tried to adapt to a new normal. However, thankfully some things never change like the festive cheer. The raging COVID-19 pandemic has not deterred the tattoo enthusiasts from keeping up their excitement, especially during the festive season as it brings positivity and spirituality. Getting inked is truly a form of self-expression and tattoos during Indian festivities are gaining increased popularity these days. Men and women are keen on getting the ones that signify the importance of their tradition with a combination of ideas that are an extension of their personality. Believe it or not but religions and tattoos have a long history together. The carvings on prehistoric rocks were copied by tribal communities on their bodies. The process is known as *gudna* (burying the needle in Hindi). They flaunted the markings as jewellery — the kind which no one could take away from them

even if they lose everything. Some people choose religious tattoos to represent their own beliefs and others choose symbols they like without paying attention to their meanings. This year, despite the pandemic, millennials are showing their love for artwork to display their idea of power and spreading the message of good over evil by getting religious tattoos. The trend of people wearing art on their skin to reflect their faith or religion is growing and has more like a style statement. With Navratri and other festivals around the corner, there has been an increase in the number of spiritual or religious tattoos. Youngsters would come up with their tattoo designs in the form of images, symbols, sacred words etc. to dedicate love for Goddess Durga. Veteran tattoo artist, Lokesh Verma, Founder of Devilz Tattooz says, "Despite the pandemic the loyal art lovers are coming to get inked this Navratri. There is always a rise among women to get inked during Navratri as a form of flaunt-



ing the body art & spreading the message of equality & women empowerment to the society by getting tattoos of Goddess Kali & Durga which represent power, harmony & strength. Religious Tattoos are a symbol of faith & good luck for many to stay positive & believing the god & goddess is near protecting them from the evil. Celebrity tattoo artist, Vikas Malani, Founder of BodyCanvas Tattoos says, "While the women have been getting tattoos that are inspired by or directly related to the Mother Goddess Durga, or traditional tribal tattoos like rabari, decorative henna-like tattoos; the men either get bigger tattoos done that depict the story of the Ramayana or the victory of good over evil. The most relatable tattoos are those of Goddess Durga, Ravana, the symbolic representation of the trident or Trishul, the lotus flower that signifies purity and harmony, and the tiger/lion tattoos that signify power and strength." International artist, Micky Malani, Co-owner of BodyCanvas Tattoos says, "A lot of women come to us during Navratri for tattoos that give out a very strong social message. While some get color/black and grey tattoos done of the beautifully fierce eyes of Maa Durga, some women also like to get ornamental tattoos done like that of an



anklet/bracelet that compliments the overall get up of their Navratri outfit. A few couples also come together to get tattoos done that represent the bond they share along with some cultural/traditional touch." Some women also like to

get ornamental tattoos done like that of an anklet/bracelet that compliments the overall get up of their Navratri outfit. A few couples also come together to get tattoos done that represent the bond they share along with some cultural/traditional touch."

VOGUE 30 MINUTES

A twist to traditional styles

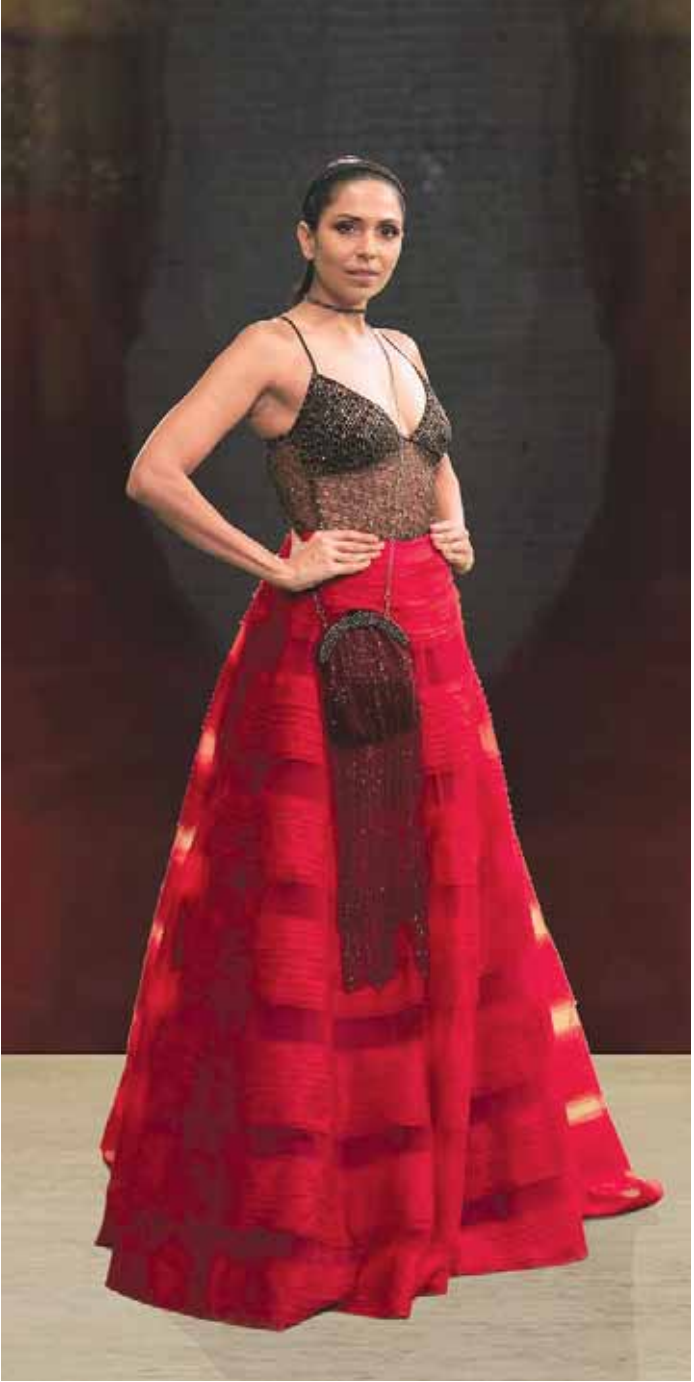


skirts, antique silver thread-work jackets, and elegant blouses that gave a twist to the traditional splendour with a global perspective. Each ensemble was further underscored using masterfully crafted accessories like silver bibs, Ek Taar belts, embellished mules, and cross-body sling bags. Completing the dazzling JADE ensembles was the new hair and make-up collection by Lakmé Salon. The collection plays up the beauty of the eyes with glitter and colour - in combination with baroque hairstyles featuring textured braids and twisted buns, fixing the spotlight firmly on the bride. The models sported a contemporary, subtle belle look with a focus on the eyes - enhanced

Lakmé Salon and designer duo Monica & Karishma of JADE came together to launch a collection titled *The New School of Brides*, a showcase of distinctive hair and make-up looks and designs at Lakmé Fashion Week 2020 Digital First Season Fluid Edition. The two brands presented a collection that is set to become a guidebook for the brides of 2020 — from opulent makeup and hair created to the intricately handcrafted couture collection the designers. The show was a presentation of oomph, style, craftsmanship and skill, but above all, an ode to the many moods and emotions of the bride. Designers Monica and Karishma from JADE showed that they deeply understand the dreams and hopes of brides on their wedding day and immortalized these feelings through couture. The designers drew inspiration from their own experiences - as brides full of hope and dreams - combined with their love for fabricating designs that encapsulated the excitement and thrill of the new beginnings. The collection is a subtle invitation to look beyond the grey clouds and revel in the silver linings, just like the bride does. And, for the same reason, the colours used in this range are lush and enchanting - berries, reds, pinks - vibrant tones that symbolize joy, excitement, and hopefulness. They used Kasab and lace to curate intricately handcrafted designs for Ek Taar lehengas (where each piece is intricately handcrafted with just one thread), textured

using glitter with splashes of colour, colour on the waterline, bewitching eyelashes, and fluffy feathered eyebrows, offset by glowing glass skin and nude lips. Shades of mahogany and brown were extensively used with bronze glitter to add depth and dimension to the eyes. The hair exhibited a playful rendition of structure through texture and layering - from Dual Textured Braids for instant glam and extra oomph to Entwined Twin Dutch Braids that give the ensemble a royal look, flirtatious braided ponytails for playful moments to a French Twist for a modern rendition of the classic chic style and the timeless Top Knot that flatters all face shapes. Pooja Singh, National Creative Director - Hair, Lakmé Salon adds, "Hairstyles for the New School of Brides twist the boundaries of traditional styles for contemporary looks - there are rich combinations with breath-taking Dual Textured Braids, enchanting Entwined Twin Dutch Braids, a royal French twist and a Ponytail with braids. We have replaced the plain traditional bun with a French twist and fun top knot to craft a fresh look. Each style in this new collection plays with structure through texturing and layered braiding." Anupma Katyal, National Creative Director - Skin, Lakmé Salon adds, "A contemporary take on tradition, the make-up looks are specially created for the new age bride and her tribe. Replacing the OTT bridal makeup, we have kept a minimal base with nude, dewy

Designer duo Monica & KARISHMA of JADE and LAKMÉ SALON came together to launch a collection — The New School of Brides — an ode to the many moods and emotions of the newly-weds



fresh and glass glow skin - accentuated with a colour splash, glitter & shimmering eyes in hues of mahogany, browns and bronze. These timeless colours will suit every outfit and occasion in the bridal journey." Monica Shah of JADE by Monica & Karishma said, "We, at

JADE, have always stood for Indian craft and techniques, and given it a modern flair. Today as we showcased with Lakmé Salon and brought the New stood for Indian craft and techniques, and given it a modern flair. Today as we showcased with Lakmé Salon and brought the New.

Dev on top has been incredible. He has got a similar imposing way of batting as Hayden...The way he conducts himself, you can say 'he is the future of Indian cricket'

We just slipped in the last minutes. A win like this will give confidence to each and every member of the team. We can win the remaining games and keep ourselves alive

The challenge is pretty clear win three in a row and see where we are in the run rate. We have no option. It's about continue to prepare and believe that we are good enough

I am the one who's lucky to get the wickets, but everyone has been contributing to the side. All the bowlers, batsmen and even fielders have contributed in our good performances

KKR aim to stay in hunt

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Table-toppers Delhi Capitals would expect more from their batsmen after an underwhelming performance in the loss to Kings XI Punjab when they take on a low-on-confidence Kolkata Knight Riders here on Saturday.

For Delhi, opener Shikhar Dhawan has been in brilliant form but even his record-setting hundred was not enough to save the side from a defeat against Kings XI Punjab for lack of contribution from other batters.

Young Prithvi Shaw needs to bat with more responsibility at the top since Dhawan may not be able to rescue the side all the time. Shaw's last four innings have included two ducks.

Skipper Shreyas Iyer too has not been hitting the ball as fluently as he was before suffering a side strain. Rishabh Pant, who made a comeback from injury against Punjab, too has not yet set the stage on fire.

Iyer and Pant, along with Marcus Stoinis, form the backbone of Capitals' middle order. They are vital cogs in DC's wheels and need to do more than just making good starts.

Pacer Anrich Nortje, who has been instrumental in Capitals' superb run thus far along with his South African compatriot

Kagiso Rabada, had a niggle and missed the last match against Punjab.

If he comes back, it will add sting to DC's attack and in that case Australian pacer Daniel Sams will have to make way for him.

KKR are heading into the contest after an embarrassing batting performance against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Blown away by Mohammed Siraj's furious spell, KKR managed just 84 runs on the board.

It certainly was a confidence-crushing defeat and KKR need to regroup quickly. Sitting at fourth place in the table with 10 points, they would be desperate to increase their tally to stay alive in the play-offs race.

Even the change in captaincy has not instilled much confidence in the side.

The performance of pacer Lockie Ferguson has been the only bright spot for them amid the disappointment of Andre Russell's poor run.

Russell missed out on the last match due to an injury and it will be interesting to see if the team management reposes faith in him, if he is fit. KKR needs a collective effort from now on with skipper Morgan, Dinesh Karthik, Shubman Gill, Nitish Rana all required to contribute.

KKR needs a collective effort from now on with skipper Morgan, Dinesh Karthik, Shubman Gill, Nitish Rana all required to contribute.

DOMINATION

Mumbai hunt Super Kings by 10 wickets to reach on top



Mumbai Indians pacer Trent Boult celebrates with teammates after taking wicket of CSK batsman

IPLT20.com

PTI ■ SHARJAH

Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah's devastating pace-bowling spell in tandem before Ishan Kishan's batting heroics helped Mumbai Indians post a comprehensive 10-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings in a completely lop-sided IPL match here on Friday.

With the embarrassing loss, CSK are all but out of reckoning for the play-offs with just six points from 11 games, while MI jumped to the top spot with 14 points from 10 matches.

Bowling in tandem, Boult

(4/18) and Bumrah (2/25) reduced CSK to 21 for 5 inside powerplay with three and two wickets respectively and CSK never recovered from there, limping to 114 for 9, largely thanks to Sam Curran's 52.

Chasing 115 for a win, Kishan (68 not out), opening in place of regular skipper Rohit Sharma who missed out due to a hamstring injury, and Quinton de Kock (46 not out) knocked off the required runs in just 12.2 overs.

The duo toyed with the CSK bowling attack on a dreadful day for the MS Dhoni-led side to carry their bats through the

innings.

The left-handed Kishan, who has not had a substantial score after his knock of 99 against Royal Challengers Bangalore, was at his attacking best as he smashed six fours and five sixes during his 37-ball innings.

The South African de Kock played second fiddle during his 37-ball innings which had five fours and two sixes.

Earlier, Boult and Burmah produced a devastating pace-bowling spell in tandem to restrict CSK to 114 for 9.

Put in to bat, CSK were five wickets down inside powerplay

overs with Boult and Bumrah taking three and two wickets respectively.

CSK could reach to 114 for 9 thanks largely to Sam Curran's enterprising half-century. The young Englishman mixed caution with aggression to top-score with 52 (47 balls, 4 fours, 2 sixes) in an otherwise pathetic display by CSK batsmen.

Boult eventually picked up four wickets for 18 runs, 13 of those coming in the final over. Bumrah (2/25) and leg-spinner Rahul Chahar (2/22) picked up two wickets each while Nathan Coulter-Nile ended with 1 for 25.

Incidentally, Curran's 43-run partnership for the ninth wicket with Imran Tahir (13 not out) was the highest partnership of the CSK innings which showed the rest of the batsmen in poor light.

CSK had a horror start and slipped to 3 for 3 after two overs and lost two more wickets before the powerplay ended.

It all started with Ruturaj Gaikwad, back into the side, being trapped LBW in the opening over bowled by Boult for a duck.

Ambati Rayudu fell to a short ball from Bumrah, gloving an easy catch to de Kock. N Jagadeesan followed him to the pavilion off the next ball, poking at one to be caught by Suryakumar Yadav.

Faf du Plessis, the only CSK to batsman to shine this season so far, edged one to give de Kock his second catch of the night.

Skipper Dhoni's (16) poor run continued as he fell to leggie Rahul Chahar while going for a big one off a tossed-up delivery after having smacked a six of the previous ball.

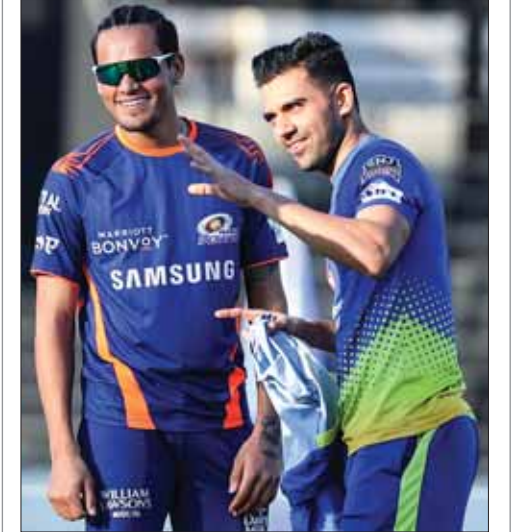
Ravindra Jadeja (7) hit a boundary before pulling one straight to Krunal Pandya at mid-wicket to give Boult his third wicket and leave CSK in tatters at 21 for 5.

DUGOUT



Chennai Super Kings skipper MS Dhoni chats with Mumbai Indian's all-rounder Hardik Pandya during team's warm-up session ahead of the start of IPL game

@ChennaiIPL



MI's Rahul Chahar chats with his cousin and CSK pacer Deepak Chahar before the start of IPL game

@mipaltan



Mumbai Indian's Director of Cricket Operations Zaheer Khan poses for photo

@mipaltan



POINTS TABLE						
		P	W	L	NRR	PTS
1	MI	10	7	3	+1.448	14
2	DC	10	7	3	+0.774	14
3	RCB	10	7	3	+0.182	14
4	KKR	10	5	5	-0.828	10
5	SRH	10	4	6	+0.092	8
6	KXIP	10	4	6	-0.177	8
7	RR	11	4	7	-0.620	8
8	CSK	11	3	8	-0.733	6

PTI ■ DUBAI

Their campaign back on track with a hat-trick of wins, Kings XI Punjab will take on another resurgent team — Sunrisers Hyderabad — here on Saturday in a must-win IPL game for the two well-matched sides.

Both KXIP and SRH are on the same pedestal, having garnered eight points apiece after 10 games, but the Hyderabad outfit is a rung ahead in the eight-team standings, on the fifth spot by virtue of a better net run rate.

And both the teams need to win their remaining four games to guarantee their place in the play-offs

It has been a terrific turnaround especially for KXIP after a slow start to the tournament.

After the initial hic-

Survival of the fittest

KXIP, Sunrisers meet in must win game to keep play-offs hopes alive

cups, KXIP got its campaign back on track with three consecutive wins — over mighty Delhi Capitals, Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bangalore and the KL Rahul-led side would be hoping to carry the winning momentum forward to break into top four.

While KXIP's batting is in the safe hands of skipper Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Chris Gayle and Nicholas Pooran, the shaky form of Glenn Maxwell remains a concern.

It has been an erratic season for KXIP so far despite having the

tournament's top two run-getters in openers Rahul (540) and Mayank Agarwal (398) in its ranks.

But the successful return of Gayle has been a welcome relief for KXIP as it reduced the burden on the shoulders of its star openers, especially allowing Rahul to play more freely.

Jimmy Neesham's inclusion has given some depth to KXIP's batting as well bowling unit led by the experienced Mohammed Shami.

SRH too find itself in similar position and needs to win its remaining four matches to seal a play-off berth.

The side managed to keep itself in the play-off hunt with a confidence-boosting eight-wicket win over Rajasthan Royals on

Thursday after three consecutive defeats.

And the David Warner-led side can't slip a bit from hereon if it wishes to stay alive in the tournament.

The positive for SRH is that despite Warner and Jonny Bairstow departing early in the 155-run chase against RR in their last match, young Manish Pandey (83) and Vijay Shankar (52) rose to the occasion and shared an unbeaten 140-run partnership to secure a comfortable win.

Jason Holder's inclusion has added firepower to SRH's bowling attack as the West Indian picked up three wickets for 33 runs against RR.

But it's high time that SRH's young guns — Priyam Garg, Abdul Samad and T Natarajan — own up some responsibility.

Azhar Ali may lose Pak Test captaincy

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan Test captain Azhar Ali may lose his job as leader of the side when the team tours New Zealand amidst speculations that either white-ball skipper Babar Azam or Mohammad Rizwan could replace him.

Azhar, who is the most capped player now in the national team with 81 appearances, is said to have lost favour with an influential member of the cricket committee while the PCB Chairman and CEO are also said to be having second thoughts about retaining him as captain.

He was named Test captain last year in October after sacking of Sarfaraz Ahmed as captain and player from all three formats.

With just 12 months in the job, Azhar saw the Pakistan team lose two-til in Australia before securing home Test wins over Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Then they travelled to England where the team lost the three-match Test series 0-1.

WTC should be extended: Misbah

Karachi: Pakistan's head coach Misbah-ul-Haq wants the ICC to conduct the World Test Championship exactly the way it has been planned even if it means extending the duration of the event due to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Misbah's statement came amid reports that the ICC is considering splitting points for unplayed games in the championship cycle which was originally scheduled to end in June-July 2021 with the final in England.

"The Covid-19 situation has hit the World Test Championship series but I would still prefer to see the ICC complete the championship

Lanka and Bangladesh. Then they travelled to England where the team lost the three-match Test series 0-1.

Wicketkeeper-batsman, Mohammad Rizwan who is right now riding on a wave of popularity and

with all teams completing their scheduled matches," Misbah said in an interview on the Cricket Baaz channel on YouTube.

"I think the matches can be rescheduled because every team should get a fair chance to take a shot at qualifying for the final," Misbah said.

The former Pakistan captain felt that the league can be extended to accommodate matches hit by the pandemic.

Pakistan's one Test against Bangladesh in April has not been played due to the pandemic. Other countries have also had several of their scheduled series disrupted due to the pandemic.

recently led the KPK team to the National T20 Championship title is said to be favourite to replace Azhar.

PCB CEO Wasim Khan told a television channel that a meeting could be held on November 11 to decide on Azhar's future and find a new chief selector as head coach, Misbah ul Haq has relinquished the post.

English cricketers take 15% pay cut

AFF ■ LONDON

England's centrally contracted men's cricketers have agreed to take a 15 percent pay cut as part of cost-cutting measures due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The England and Wales Cricket Board says the English game has already lost more than £100 million (£130 million) — a figure that could rise to £200 million next year.

Bowlers Stuart Broad and Chris Woakes have said recently that players are willing to take a pay cut, which the ECB revealed on Friday would come from retainers, match fees and win bonuses.

The annual contracts, which started on October 1, were understood to have been worth £650,000 for Test stars and £275,000 for white-ball performers in 2019/20.

"We need to recognize that our players, led by captains Joe Root and Eoin Morgan, have conducted themselves with great maturity and responsibility throughout this challenging time," team director Ashley Giles said.

Europa biggies start with win

AFF ■ LONDON

Gareth Bale said it felt good to be "loved and appreciated" after helping Tottenham to a 3-0 win over Austrian club LASK in the Europa League on Thursday.

The Welsh international started his first match since his return from Real Madrid and played for an hour before Jose Mourinho gave him a break.

"It is amazing to be back," Bale told *BT Sport* on Thursday.

"It is a big reason why I play well and why I came back. You want to be loved and appreciated. I will give everything for this shirt."

However, he admitted it will take time to find his feet. "I am a bit stiff. It is like a mini pre-season for me and I am trying to get minutes

into the legs," he said.

Despite Bale starting, it was on-loan Carlos Vinicius who made an impressive debut in the Group J opener.

Vinicius started in place of the resting Harry Kane and he made goals in either half for Lucas Moura and Son Heung-min, while he would have also netted himself had Andres Andrade not scored an own goal.

Bale made that goal where Andrade put through his own net.

Leicester made the perfect start in Group G

with a comfortable 3-0 win over Zorya Luhansk of Ukraine.

James Maddison, Harvey Barnes and Kelechi Iheanacho were on the score-

sheet.

In Glasgow, Celtic struggled against Serie A leaders AC Milan who were 2-0 up at half-time thanks to goals from Rade Krunic and Ibrahim Diaz.

Mohamed Elyounoussi reduced the arrears after the break, but Jens Petter Hauge broke clear to secure Milan's Group H 3-1 win in stoppage time. Milan were so comfortable that they could afford to take off Zlatan Ibrahimovic just after the hour.

GUNNERS COMEBACK

Earlier, Arsenal came from behind to down Rapid Vienna 2-1 and Rangers beat Standard Liege 2-0.

After a goalless first half Arsenal went behind when keeper Bernd Leno fluffed a clearance on a night he will want to forget but the Gunners then turned the game around in four second half minutes.

David Luiz put them level with a deft glancing header off Nicolas Pepe's free-kick, with Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang then tapping home to bag the

three Group B points.

The other Group B game was being played out in Dublin where Dundalk, only Ireland's third ever representative in the group stage, were beaten 2-1 by Norwegians Molde.

In Belgium, Steven Gerrard's Rangers took on Standard Liege fresh from their Old Firm derby win over Celtic. James Tavernier scored from the spot after Noe Dussenne handled in the area to put them into a 19th minute lead.

Then three minutes into stoppage time Kemar Roofe produced a wonder goal from the halfway line, the ball flying over the head of bewildered keeper Arnaud Bodart.

Benfica had claimed the first goal of the night and they went on to beat Lech Poznan in Poland 4-2 in the other Group D game.

Elsewhere, Bayer Leverkusen ran riot 6-2 against French side Nice and Spanish side Granada, in their first ever European campaign, beat PSV Eindhoven 2-1.