

LANDMARK 7
CHINA'S AGGRESSION TO
FIGURE IN 2+2 TALKS**WORLD 9**
I VOTED FOR A GUY NAMED
TRUMP, SAYS PRESIDENT**SPORT 12**
KKR BEAT DELHI
BY 59 RUNSPublished From
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**USUAL SUSPECTS**
SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Can Modi's appeal do wonders for Nitish?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

KITCHEN BUDGET GOES FOR A TOSS

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

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

across India.

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

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

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

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

*PRICES AS PER MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS FOR OCT 24

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

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

of summer," he added.

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

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

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

Given the steep hike in the onion price, the Telangana Government on Saturday decided to sell the edible bulb at ₹35 per kilo at the Government-run "Rythu Bazaars". Two kilos of onions would be sold per person and the consumers have to show any identity card.

According to Suresh Agarwal, All India Dal Miller Association, there is a shortage of pulses in the country as farmers have switched over from pulses to wheat and soyabean since 2018. Besides, the Government policies also led to this situation.

Most pulses come to India from South African countries, Canada and Myanmar. India had imported 3.17 MT of pulses in 2014. This rose to 5.8 MT in 2016. It further rose to 6.6 MT in 2017, followed by 5.6 MT in 2018. In 2018-19 though, the imports reduced to 2.52 MT.

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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I-T returns filing deadline extended till December 31

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

The due date for furnishing

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

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

Breather for choking Delhi likely tomorrow

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality remained in the 'very poor' category on Saturday with the Air Quality Index recorded at 347.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor, System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR), said that some locations entered 'severe' zone but that will be short lived as winds are expected to increase slightly.

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

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

Corona attack on BJP Bihar election drive

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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


Now campaign incharge Fadnavis tests +ve

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

Before Fadnavis, Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister Sushil

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

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

Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL	
CASES: 78,63,139	
DEATHS: 1,18,552	
RECOVERED: 70,74,807	
ACTIVE: 6,68,470	



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

India vows to save Himalayan abode of snow leopards

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

"The Government is committed to landscape restoration

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

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

According to an estimate,

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

Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In India, the geographical



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

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

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

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CAPSULE

FAROOQ TO LEAD GUPKAR ALLIANCE

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

RISHI SUNAK 'BARRED FOR LIFE' FROM UK PUB

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



HOLIDAY NOTICE

The Press and offices of The Pioneer will remain closed on Sunday, October 25, 2020 on account of Dussehra. The next issue of the newspaper will appear on Tuesday, October 27, 2020.

CM Yogi adds yet another milestone in UP’s dev

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In yet another milestone in Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath’s plan for state’s development, he approved a high-profile Data Centre, with an investment of more than ₹ 600 crore.

Hiranandani Group of Mumbai will build this data center spread over 20 acres in Greater Noida.



NOTICE

I, Army No. 4191372K Nav. Mir Insan Ali S/o Mir Faijuddin, Unit 15, Kumaon C/o 56, APO, hereby declared that in my service records inadvertently the name of my wife’s Manora Khatun, while her correct name Manora Bibi may be recorded in my service records.

NOTICE

I, Army No. 4191657W Hav. Shiv Charan Singh S/o Shree Girdhar Singh, Unit 15, Kumaon C/o 56, APO, hereby declared that in my service records inadvertently the name of my wife’s Reetu Devi, while her correct name Ritu Rawat may be recorded in my service records.

NOTICE

I, Army No. 4201359W L/Nk Hanuman Singh Chouhan S/o Sri Manohar Singh, Unit 15, Kumaon C/o 56, APO, hereby declared that in my service records inadvertently the name of my wife’s name Dimple Chouhan and D.O.B. 01.04.1988, while her correct name Dimple Kanwar and D.O.B. 01.01.1990 may be recorded in my service records.

NOTICE

I Army No-15417666 P Rank-NK Bhoj somnath Anant s/o Bhoj Anant Unit AMC Record pin-900450 c/o 56 APO, in my Army records my mother’s name changed from Bhoj Mahadevi Anant to mahananda Anant Bhoj while bhoj mahadevi anant and mahananda anant Bhoj one and the same person.

NOTICE

I Army No-15417666 P Rank-NK Bhoj somnath Anant s/o Bhoj Anant Unit AMC Record pin-900450 c/o 56 APO, in my Army records my Daughter’s name changed from Bhoj Sanvi somnath to sanvi , while bhoj sanvi somnath and sanvi one and the same person.

NOTICE

I Army No-15417666 P Rank-NK Bhoj somnath Anant s/o Bhoj Anant Unit AMC Record pin-900450 c/o 56 APO, in my Army records my father’s name changed from Bhoj Anant to Anantrao shankarrao bhoj while bhoj anant and Anantrao shankarrao Bhoj one and the same person.

NOTICE

I Army No-15418196 F Rank-NK Salunke Amol Sopan s/o Sopan Unit AMC Record pin-900450 C/O. 56 APO, in my Army records my Mother’s name changed from Janabae S S to Janabai Sopan Salunke, while Janabae S S and Janabai Sopan Salunke one and the same person.

NOTICE

I Army No-15418196 F Rank-NK Salunke Amol Sopan s/o Sopan Unit AMC Record pin-900450 C/O. 56 APO, in my Army records my Father’s name changed from Sopan to Sopan Ramchandra Salunke, while Sopan and Sopan Ramchandra Salunke one and the same person.

NOTICE

I JC 451522 M Subedar Shiv Kesh Singh 89-U.P. Battalion N.C.C. BHU Varanasi hereby declared that in my service record my son (Prince Singh Bhadoria) & date of beath, in advertently 20.12.2001 while the correct name Prince Singh Bhadouriya & date of beath is 20.12.2002 and same has been incorporated in my service record.

A government spokesman said here on Saturday that the project will generate employment opportunities for youth in the state.

It will be the first of its kind data center park equipped with state-of-the-art technology and facilities.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has also made arrangements for the land by giving instructions to officials. The Hiranandani Group, Mumbai’s real estate developer, has now moved to UP after building such data centers in Mumbai, Chennai and Hyderabad. Many other companies have also shown interest in the data center. After the creation of the data center, companies operating in other states will also be connected to UP.

Rack Bank, Adani Group and other companies have proposed an investment of ₹ 10,000 crore to the UP government.

Since, power consumption for the data centers is high, the Yogi government has prepared a plan for this too. As per the secured plan, open access will provide power to the data center park.

“After creation of a data center park, we will be able to keep our data safe in our country,” the spokesman claimed. On the initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, work has been done on the plan to build such data centers across the country for some time.

Seeing the vast potential in the data center sector, the Yogi government is also formulating a separate policy for this. The proposal of companies showing interest in large investment in the data center sector are considered as a big industrial success of the Yogi Adityanath Government.

Crackdown on mafia augurs well for tranquility of UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

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

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

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

Atiq Ahmad, presently lodged in Sabarmati jail at Ahmedabad, has cited various ailments, including kidney complications, high blood pressure and diabetes, to get exemption from personal appearance in court instead of asking for court attendance in Prayagraj through video conferencing.

Clearly, it indicates his fear psychosis in the wake of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath’s police action. Atiq Ahmed has also referred to the distance between Ahmedabad and Prayagraj (1,450 kms) in his request for video conferencing through his lawyer.

It may be mentioned here that last month, the district administration of Prayagraj had razed the illegal properties of Atiq Ahmed’s associates. The exercise included demolishing of a two – storey lodge of one Bhutto and the houses of Arshad and Kammu, all of which were illegally constructed on state land.

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

Besides Atiq Ahmed, the state government is also busy cracking the whip on mafia Mukhtar Ansari and his associates. In August last, Rakesh Pandey, one of his associates and a co-accused in the 2005 murder of Bharatiya

Janata Party MLA Krishnanand Rai, was killed in a cross-firing with the police in Lucknow.

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

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

Besides the ongoing crackdown on these mafia and their associates, as many as 17 mafiosi have been identified and marked by the authorities for further action. They include three liquor mafia, three cattle mafia and other mafiosi, the release added.

Mission Shakti completes its first phase

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

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

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

At the outset, Yogi had directed to identify 100

role models among women and girls in every district aiming to showcase their achievements and contributions which could be inspirational for others to emulate.

The communiqué said that a series of decisions were also taken to further the cause of Mission Shakti like - Women Help Desk at all 1535 police stations of the state, dedicated Women’s Help desk at all 350 Tehsils to resolve revenue-related complaints of women and deployment of women personnel at these help desks.

Besides it was also decided to have 20 percent of women compulsorily in UP Police force for reaching out to women victims.

The government also decided to add regional languages in the 112 emergency help line so that people from different regions and dialects could easily convey their problems.

Politics of caste, religion spoiling atmosphere of UP: Swatantra

Lucknow (PTI): Uttar Pradesh BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh on Saturday said that parties indulging in politics of caste and religion are trying to spoil the atmosphere of the state.

He claimed that political parties like the Congress, Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party never cared about the interest of farmers.

Singh made the remarks at a chaupal in Jaunpur’s Malhani constituency, where bypoll will be held on November 3.

“Political parties which have been indulging in politics of caste and religion to serve their motives are not liking the good governance of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and are therefore encouraging violence and anarchy to damage the atmosphere of the state,” the state BJP chief said.

Talking about an alliance formed in Jammu and Kashmir for restoration of the special status of the erstwhile state, he said, “Some parties are saying that they will restore Article 370 and 35A in J-K on coming to power but people of the UT will never allow this.”

Even while appointment letters were given to 31,277 Basic Education teachers and 3,317 Secondary Education teachers, women in both categories outnumbered men.

Besides, the state government inaugurated ‘Pink Patrol’ in which 100 scooters and 10 SUVs were flagged off in Lucknow with 250 women cops to guard major public places of the city. The Pink Patrol will be extended to other cities of the state in the second phase.

Also Pink Booths were to be set up at sensitive and vantage locations to facilitate women in every distress or emergency. Pink booths were earlier at major crossings of Lucknow on October 17. Apart from this, Transparent Secret Rooms are to be set up across all police stations and women cops would be deployed to ensure that women victims could share problems with ease and comfort.

Fielding of candidate by BSP could force RS election

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Despite lacking the numbers, Bahujan Samaj Party’s move to field candidate for the biennial Rajya Sabha poll is likely to force election for the 10 seats.

Based on its strength in the UP Assembly, the ruling BJP could easily win 8 seats, while Samajwadi Party could bag one. The BJP is eying the tenth seat on the basis of its surplus votes, rebels from Congress, BSP and allies. To get elected, a candidate would need at least 36 first preference votes.

The BSP, with only 18 MLAs, is banking on the support of surplus votes of the SP, Congress and Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (a former ally of the BJP). The BSP also expected to get support from the most unexpected quarter - rebel MLAs from the BJP.

The RS elections are scheduled on November 9 and the set is now stage for an interesting contest. It’s likely to be to a contest between the BSP, keen on avenging the defeat of its candidate in RS election held in March, 2018, and the BJP which will leave no stone unturned to break into opposition’s ranks and grab the ninth seat for the Upper House.

BSP leader in UP Assembly,

The BSP, with only 18 MLAs, is banking on the support of surplus votes of the SP, Congress and Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (a former ally of the BJP). The BSP also expected to get support from the most unexpected quarter - rebel MLAs from the BJP

Lalji Verma said that its candidate Ramji Gautam would file his papers for the upcoming RS polls on Monday October 26. “The BSP would send Gautam to the Upper House on the basis of support from other opposition parties,” he claimed.

In the 2018 RS election, BSP candidate Bhimrao Ambedkar had lost, despite the combined support of both Samajwadi Party (SP) and Congress. Ambedkar lost due to cross-voting by BSP MLAs and BJP’s successful bid to win the support of Independent legislators.

Mr Brown launches ‘Danbro’, goes organic

Lucknow (PNS): Prominent bakery Mr Brown has launched the ‘Danbro’ brand which would be another bakery serving healthy, organic and international bakery products under one roof, in technical association with Danbro, Italy.

The company has been working on a mega expansion plan to invest ₹ 200 crores in the next three years by opening 50 outlets. The expansion would also comprise bringing in direct organic produce from farmers with buy back guarantee.

“We had signed an MOU worth ₹ 500 crores with the state government during the Investors’ Summit held in Lucknow and since then we have been investing and working to fulfill our commitment,” said Tanushree Gupta, the company’s founder.

“After launching our first outlet in Delhi, we are launching three new outlets of our new brand ‘Danbro’ in Lucknow, one in Chandigarh and five in Delhi/NCR by March 31, 2021,” she said.

Adding to her statement, Gupta said, “By doing so, we shall create 4,000 direct and 3,500 indirect jobs where we would be promoting two main things: empowerment of women in our organization and bringing organic, healthy, nutritious and live bakery products to our store.”

“Mr Brown is already one of the prominent and most organised bakery chains of north India and Danbro, our new retail bakery brand will bring in more delightful and delectable bakery products for the first time in India. Since the inception of Mr. Brown, we have been committed towards quality, innovation and improving on our overall services,” she said.



शिक्षा व्यवस्था में बढ़ते कदम

वर्चुअल स्कूल

कक्षा-10 एवं 12 के विद्यार्थियों के लिए दूरदर्शन. उत्तर प्रदेश (DD UP) चैनल और कक्षा-9 एवं 11 के विद्यार्थियों के लिए चैनल e vidya-9 एवं e vidya-11 पर शैक्षणिक वीडियो के माध्यम से

26.10.2020 से 29.10.2020 तक ई-लर्निंग प्रसारण का दसां चरण

दूरदर्शन, उत्तर प्रदेश (DD UP) चैनल पर यू.पी. बोर्ड की कक्षा-10 एवं 12 हेतु शैक्षणिक प्रसारण की समय-सारिणी								
	कक्षा-10				कक्षा-12			
दिनांक तथा समय	अपराह्न 1:00 से अपराह्न 2:00 बजे तक	अपराह्न 3:30 से अपराह्न 4:00 बजे तक	अपराह्न 4:30 से सायं 5:00 बजे तक	सायं 6:00 से सायं 6:30 बजे तक	अपराह्न 1:00 से अपराह्न 1:30 बजे तक	अपराह्न 2:30 से अपराह्न 3:00 बजे तक	अपराह्न 4:00 से अपराह्न 4:30 बजे तक	सायं 5:30 से सायं 6:00 बजे तक
26-10-2020 सोमवार	गृह विज्ञान अध्याय-5 गृह विज्ञान भाग-1	अंग्रेजी (English Grammar) (Helping Verbs or Auxiliary Verbs) Part-2	अंग्रेजी (English Grammar) (Reported Speech) Part-1	संस्कृत अध्याय-8 लक्ष्य वेध परीक्षा भाग-4	अर्थशास्त्र अध्याय-2 उपभोक्ता के व्यवहार का सिद्धांत, भाग-4	गणित अध्याय-9 अवकल समीकरण भाग-6	गणित अध्याय-11 सदिश तथा त्रिविमीय ज्यामिति भाग-1	गणित अध्याय-11 सदिश तथा त्रिविमीय ज्यामिति भाग-2
27-10-2020 मंगलवार	संस्कृत अध्याय-व्याकरण विसर्ग संधि भाग-1	संस्कृत अध्याय- व्याकरण शब्द रचना के तत्व भाग-1	गृह विज्ञान अध्याय-1 रोगी का स्वयं करना भाग-1	गृह विज्ञान अध्याय-1 घातल का स्थानान्तरण भाग-1	भौतिक विज्ञान अध्याय-8 विद्युत चुम्बकीय तरंगे भाग-1	भौतिक विज्ञान अध्याय-8 विद्युत चुम्बकीय तरंगे भाग-2	भौतिक विज्ञान अध्याय-8 विद्युत चुम्बकीय तरंगे भाग-3	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-7 पी ब्लॉक के तत्व भाग-1
28-10-2020 बुधवार	वाणिज्य अध्याय-6 नस्तीकरण भाग-1	अंग्रेजी (English Reader) The Judgement Seat of Vikramaditya Part-1	अंग्रेजी (English Reader) The Judgement Seat of Vikramaditya Part-2	संस्कृत अध्याय-पद्य-पयूषम् महात्मनः संस्मरणानि भाग-2	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-7 पी ब्लॉक के तत्व भाग-2	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-7 पी ब्लॉक के तत्व भाग-3	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-7 पी ब्लॉक के तत्व भाग-4	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-7 पी ब्लॉक के तत्व भाग-5
29-10-2020 गुरुवार	संस्कृत अध्याय- पद्य-पयूषम् महात्मनः संस्मरणानि भाग-3	गृह विज्ञान अध्याय-5 गृह गणित भाग-2	गृह विज्ञान अध्याय-2 आय, व्यय और बचत भाग-2	अंग्रेजी (English Grammar) (Parts of the Sentence) Part-1	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-12 एलिहाइड कीटोन एवं कार्बोक्सिलिक अम्ल, भाग-1	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-12 एलिहाइड कीटोन एवं कार्बोक्सिलिक अम्ल, भाग-2	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-12 एलिहाइड कीटोन एवं कार्बोक्सिलिक अम्ल, भाग-3	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-12 एलिहाइड कीटोन एवं कार्बोक्सिलिक अम्ल, भाग-4

नोट : DD-UP, अब आप इन चैनलों पर भी देख सकते हैं, डी डी फ्री डिश-45, डेन-137, नेटविजन-138, डिश टीवी-229, लखनऊ 9-237, बिग टीवी-250, एयरटेल-400, हायवे-400, सिटी केबल-671, वीडियोकॉन डी 2 एच-889, टाटा स्काई-1195

चैनल e vidya-9 पर कक्षा-9 एवं चैनल e vidya-11 पर कक्षा-11 यू.पी. बोर्ड हेतु शैक्षणिक प्रसारण की समय-सारिणी				
	कक्षा-9		कक्षा-11	
दिनांक तथा समय	प्रातः 8:30 से प्रातः 9:00 बजे तक	प्रातः 9:00 से प्रातः 9:30 बजे तक	सायं 6:30 से सायं 7:00 बजे तक	सायं 7:00 से सायं 7:30 बजे तक
26-10-2020 सोमवार	गृह विज्ञान अध्याय-6 (स्वास्थ्य रक्षा) स्थानीय स्वास्थ्य संस्थाएं, प्रशासन एवं सेवाएं इकाई-2, भाग-1/3	विज्ञान अध्याय-8 (विज्ञान) गति भाग-1/3	हिन्दी अध्याय-4 खण्ड-क सूरदास-विनय, वात्सल्य, भमरगीत (गद्य कथा साहित्य, काव्य संस्कृत दिग्दर्शिका), भाग-1/3	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-3, तत्वों का वर्गीकरण एवं गुणधर्मों में आवर्तिता भाग-1/7
27-10-2020 मंगलवार	सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-1 लोकतन्त्र क्या-लोकतन्त्र क्यों (नागरिक शास्त्र-लोकतांत्रिक राजनीति-1), भाग-1/1	संस्कृत अध्याय-2-खण्ड-क संस्कृत गद्य भारती (गद्य-पद्य तथा आशुपाद) आदिकवि: वाल्मीकि: भाग-1/2	इतिहास अध्याय-3 अनुभाग दो-सासाज्य कालक्रम दो (लगभग 100ई000 से 1300ई000) तीन महाद्वीपों में फैला हुआ सासाज्य (विश्व इतिहास के कुछ विषय), भाग-1/1	संस्कृत अध्याय-खण्ड-क (पद्य) रघुवंशमहाकाव्यम् (द्वितीय सर्ग) भाग-1/2
28-10-2020 बुधवार	गृह विज्ञान अध्याय-6 (स्वास्थ्य रक्षा) स्थानीय स्वास्थ्य संस्थाएं, प्रशासन एवं सेवाएं इकाई-2, भाग-2/3	विज्ञान अध्याय-8 (विज्ञान) गति भाग-2/3	हिन्दी अध्याय-4 खण्ड-क सूरदास-विनय, वात्सल्य, भमरगीत (गद्य कथा साहित्य, काव्य संस्कृत दिग्दर्शिका), भाग-2/3	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-3, तत्वों का वर्गीकरण एवं गुणधर्मों में आवर्तिता भाग-2/7
29-10-2020 गुरुवार	वाणिज्य अध्याय-6 प्रारम्भिक लेख की पुस्तकें खतौनी तथा तलपट, भाग-1/2	संस्कृत अध्याय-2-खण्ड-क संस्कृत गद्य भारती (गद्य-पद्य तथा आशुपाद) आदिकवि: वाल्मीकि: भाग-2/2	वाणिज्य अध्याय-इकाई-2 लेखांकन के सैद्धान्तिक आधार (भाग-1 वित्तीय लेखांकन), भाग-1/2	संस्कृत अध्याय-खण्ड-क (पद्य) रघुवंशमहाकाव्यम् (द्वितीय सर्ग) भाग-2/2

नोट: e vidya-9, जियो टीवी एप, डिश टीवी चैनल-950, वीडियोकॉन चैनल-447, एयरटेल चैनल-440, फ्री डिश-128 तथा टाटा स्काई चैनल-756 पर उपलब्ध है। e vidya-11, जियो टीवी एप, डिश टीवी-952 तथा NCERT OFFICIAL YouTube पर उपलब्ध है।

माध्यमिक शिक्षा विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश की एक पहल

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Covid recovery improving; Yogi advises caution

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

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

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

Yogi also told officials to ensure that no programmes were held in containment zones and that the number of visitors to any venue was restricted for ensuring social distancing norms.

The chief minister appealed to the people that due

to the spread of COVID-19 and dengue, they should keep their localities clean to prevent any kind of pandemic.

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

Prasad said that 2,277 new cases were reported in the last 24 hours, taking the number of active cases to 27,681 in the state. He said that the active case percentage had also dipped to 59.43.

The senior official revealed that in the last 24 hours, 2,852 patients were discharged and so far, 4.33 lakh patients were successfully treated.

He said that till now, 2.63



lakh patients got treatment in home isolation and 2.50 lakh recovered fully.

Prasad further said that

1.46 lakh surveillance teams covered 4.32 lakh areas across the state, visiting 2.77 crore homes, and checked the health of 13.63 crore people of the state.

Besides, 1.60 lakh were provided medical consultation through s-Sanjeevani portal.

The official said that the government would run a special drive in November to vaccinate four lakh children, who missed out vaccination in the last phases.

Between November 2 and 11, a campaign against TB will also be run in 31 districts of the state.

Earlier, 41 districts were covered under similar campaigns. Those villages left to be included under Ayushman Scheme will now be covered through the special drive. Besides, residents of 7,000

more villages will be provided Golden Cards in the next month,” informed Prasad.

292 TEST +VE, 284 RECOVER IN LKO

Meanwhile, 292 more people tested positive for coronavirus infection in Lucknow, taking the tally of confirmed cases to 61,4712 on Saturday evening.

The state capital also reported 10 COVID-19 deaths taking the toll to 849. While seven of the patients were from Lucknow the other three were from Bahraich, Rae Bareilly and Sultanpur districts.

With 284 more COVID-19 patients recovering in the last 24 hours, 57,228 persons with coronavirus infection have been cured in the city which now has 3,395 active cases.

AKTU to carry out need-based analysis for rural tech dev

Lucknow (PNS): A review meeting of the village adoption scheme was held under the chairmanship of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Technical University (AKTU) Vice Chancellor Prof Vinay Kumar Pathak. Representatives of 22 institutions affiliated to the AKTU participated in the meeting through online platform. Prof Pathak said that need based analysis would be done for technical development in rural areas. In this analysis, technical support will be provided to the people of villages after knowing their needs. He said that the AKTU service scheme would be started like the National Service Scheme.

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आवश्यकता है

प्राचार्य एवं बी.एड., बी.पी.एड., डी.एल.एड. (बी.टी.सी.) बी.बी.ए., बी.सी.ए. पाठ्यक्रम में Asst.prof., lecturer पद हेतु। योग्यता एवं वेतनमान यू.जी.सी./एन.सी.टी.ई./उ.प्र. शासन/वि. वि. के मानकानुसार। अर्ह अभ्यर्थी समस्त शैक्षणिक एवं अनुभव प्रमाण पत्रों की छायाप्रति, दो रंगीन फोटो के साथ, आवेदन पत्र 15 दिनों के अन्दर Email: banshicollege@rediffmail.com पर या महाविद्यालय के पते पर पंजीकृत डाक से भेजें। (सचिव/प्रबन्धक)

Wife of senior IPS officer was found hanging in house

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The wife of a senior IPS officer of Uttar Pradesh who was part of the SIT set up by the state government to probe the Hathras rape and death case allegedly committed suicide at their home here on Saturday, police said.

Pushpa Devi (36) was found hanging from a ceiling fan at her home. She is the wife of Chandra Prakash, DIG of Police Training Centre, Unnao, they said.

Prakash was part of the three-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up to probe the murder and alleged gang-rape of a 19-year-old woman in Hathras last month.

Pushpa Devi, wife of DIG Chandra Prakash, committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling fan at their residence in Sushant Golf City in Lucknow, Joint Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Naveen Arora said.

No suicide note has been found and an investigation is underway, he said.

Goddess Durga visarjan today

Lucknow (PNS): The city is all set for the immersion of Goddess Durga idols in pandemic times, the arrangements for which were made by Lucknow Nagar Nigam on Saturday.

Municipal Commissioner Ajay Kumar Dwivedi carried out an inspection of the preparations at the Laxman Mela grounds and the Jhule Lal Park. He said that barricading had been done and arrangements made for keeping the area clean. “The idols will be immersed in the water in the pits so that the river is not polluted,” he said.

Lucknow Durga Puja Samiti president Rupesh Mandal said that the idol immersion would take place at three points with four pits made at Jhule Lal Park, two at the Laxman Mela grounds and one at the Kudia Ghat. He said that in the four pits at the Jhule Lal Park, one pit was for visarjan of the puja samigri, one pit for bigger idols and one for smaller idols.

“There are 57 Durga Pujas samitis in Lucknow and they would immerse the idols from 10

Ravan Dahan based on Covid theme

Lucknow (PNS): The Ravan Dahan of the Aishbagh Ramlila Samiti is based on the COVID-19 theme this year. Aditya Dwivedi from the samiti said that the basic message was that Lord Ram helps us get rid of the virus.

The Ravan Dahan of Aishbagh has always been based on a social evil theme. Dwivedi said that their Ravan was 71-foot tall and would be burnt sans any crowd on Sunday.

He said that Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma would be the chief guest at the Ravan Dahan.

“The theme of coronavirus has been chosen so that the health is restored again to the society and we get rid of the disease,” he added. He said that they would be having a grand fireworks display after the Ravana Dahan and everything would be relayed online. He said that the fight sequences would not be the way they were portrayed last year because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Dwivedi said that the Aishbagh Ramlila had been able to get a lot of audience online and a number of subscribers also.

am on Sunday. Since there is a ban on procession, most of the idols will be brought by five persons of the samitis on four-wheelers. We will ensure that they all wear gloves as they hold the idol for immersion and also wear a mask,” he said. Mandal said that Ramakrishna Durga Puja samiti would be carrying out ‘bhu visarjan’ while a few others had made their ponds. “The

visarjan is expected to go smoothly because there will be no procession. We will not allow spectators and there will be no vendors at the idol immersion point so that people are not encouraged to buy food and get a chance to stand over there,” he said. He said that if the samitis were not guided properly, then most of them would come towards the Jhule Lal Park.

Several injured in road mishap

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The driver of a car attached to a government department ran over some people standing outside a fair price shop near Yojna Bhawan in Hussainganj police station area on Saturday morning, injuring several of them. The driver was said to be in a drunken state at the time of the accident.

The mob went berserk and started pelting the car with stones and also the cops who reached the scene.

Sachin, his sister-in-law, Mala Sonkar, Zahrunnisha and several others, all of Hussainganj, were injured in the incident.

DOWRY DEATH

A woman sustained injuries in mysterious circumstances at her house in Triveni Nagar under Aliganj police station and died later. Police registered a case of dowry death and arrested the husband of the deceased.

Deceased’s father Raj Kumar Tiwari, said his daughter was married to Manish Dixit of Triveni Nagar in 2015 and Manish was pressing her for a plot as a dowry gift.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Safety

of Passengers is our Priority

In order to clear the extra rush of passengers during current festival season, Railway has introduced **'Festival Special'** trains w.e.f. 20.10.2020. These trains are fully reserved and no passengers can travel without confirmed ticket in these trains.

Passengers are advised not to enter the station premises without proper reserved ticket.

North Central Railway

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Forest official, staff thrash scribes

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A forest official and his staff were accused of thrashing and holding hostage journalists who had gone to cover an incident in which a 60-year-old man was found hanging from a tree in a forest in Kakori police station area on Saturday evening.

As the incident generated a controversy, senior officials intervened to control the situation. Later, a case was registered against the forest officer and his staff.

As per reports, Rajesh of Chandioya village, who was going to the forest area to attend to the call of nature, spotted a body hanging from a tree. He ran away from the scene and called the police.

The body was later identified to be of Sukhdev Sahu of Hayat Nagar in Thakurganj. He was identified by his nephew, Kuldeep Sahu, who said his uncle was missing for the last one day. Police said Sukhdev was suffering from depression and was under treatment at Laxmi Hospital in Balaganj.

Police said Sukhdev was

AS THE NEWS SPREAD, SOME JOURNALISTS, IDENTIFIED AS MANOJ SHARMA, RAJAN SINGH, PUSHPENDRA SINGH, MANOJ KUMAR AND SATYA SINGH, REACHED THE SPOT TO COVER THE INCIDENT BUT WERE STOPPED BY FOREST STAFF AROUND 6 PM ON SATURDAY

sent to jail for purchasing ganja in February 2020. His one hand was fractured and was bandaged.

Police said the man was found hanging from a tree.

As the news spread, some journalists, identified as Manoj Sharma, Rajan Singh, Pushpendra Singh, Manoj Kumar and Satya Singh, reached the spot to cover the incident but were stopped by forest staff around 6 pm on Saturday. Manoj said he and his colleagues were asked to meet Forest Officer Amit Kumar Singh and so they went to meet him.

“Amit lost his cool soon after he saw us and called his staff, all of whom were holding

sticks in their hand. Amit and his men caught me by my throat and pressed it with an intention to kill me. We all were held inside the office and the staff put a lock on the door. They snatched our mobile phones and started beating us. One of our colleagues, who got the news from some forest staff, called the police and the cops reached the spot. The forest officer and his staff thrashed us even in the presence of police and later we were rescued,” he said.

The police spokesman said a case was registered against Forest Officer Amit and his staff for manhandling journalists and holding them hostage.

Girl students get a feel of Mahila Shakti Mission

Lucknow (PNS): Under Mahila Shakti Mission, a class 10 topper girl student, Sambhvi Singh, was given the charge of Nigoha police station incharge for a day on Saturday.

Sambhvi handled three cases, solving one instantly while suggesting investigation in the two other cases.

Expressing her happiness, she said the police should find an amicable solution if there was an issue between two persons before initiating legal action. At Maal police station, a class 10 girl student, Anushka Gautam, also took the charge of a police station incharge on Saturday. She heard the complaints of people who had the police station to seek police help.

At Bakshi Ka Talab police station, a class 12 student, Sarika Verma, was given the charge of SHO. She attended to several complaints and suggested speedy action against the criminals involved in crime against women.

इंडियन बैंक
(भारत सरकार का उपक्रम)

Indian Bank
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

ALLAHABAD

Mahoba Branch: Near Roadways Bus Stand, Gandhi Nagar, Mahoba U.P. - 210427

ALLAHABAD

Safe notice for sale of immovable properties [See proviso Rule 8 (6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Indian Bank (e-Allahabad Bank)**, **Mahoba Branch: Near Roadways Bus Stand, Gandhi Nagar, Mahoba U.P. - 210427** as Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on **25.11.2020**. for recovery of Bank's dues from Borrowers and Guarantors to the Secured Creditor. The details are described as below:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower	Name of Guarantors	Name of Property owner/Mortgagor	Bank's Dues	Details of Property	Reserve Price	Earnest Money	Details of the encumbrance known to the Bank
1.	M/s Mahashakti Transformers Prop: Mrs. Sona Devi	1. Mr. Arvind Kumar Shukla S/o Shiv Mangal Prasad Shukla 2. Mr. Shushil Kumar Shukla S/o Shiv Mangal Prasad Shukla	Mrs. Sona Devi W/o Mr. Shushil Kumar Shukla	52,08,917.00 + interest till the date of realization and costs, charges and expenses	Gata No. 861/1, Charkhari Road Mauza Nathupura Mahoba, Distt. Mahoba Area: 1657 Sq. Mtr. Boundary: East: Khet of Seller West: Khet of Seller North: Mahoba / Charkhari Road South: Khet of Seller	Rs. 41.20 Lacs	Rs. 4.12 Lacs	—

Date & Time of submission of process Compliance form & EMD - 23.11.2020 upto 4 P.M. at and Date & Time of e-auction 25.11.2020 from 10.00 AM - 4.00 P.M. with unlimited extension, with Bid incremental Amount. Rs. 10000/-

For further details and Terms & Conditions
Contact: Himanshu Gupta (Auth. Officer)
Mo. No. 09120640062
e-mail:- br hamir_mahoba@allahabadbank.in

For downloading further details and Terms & Conditions, Please Visit:
1. www.indianbank.co.in
2. <https://www.ibapi.in>
3. <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi>

Bidders are advised to visit the website (www.mstcecommerce.com) of our e-auction service provider MSTC Ltd. to participate in online bid. For Technical Assistance Please call MSTC HELPDISK No. 033-22901004 and other help line numbers available in service providers help desk. For Registration status with MSTC Ltd. please contact ibapiop@mstcecommerce.com and for EMD status please contact ibapifin@mstcecommerce.com. For property details and photograph of the property and auction terms and condition please visit: <https://ibapi.in> and for clarification related to this portal, please contact help line number '18001025026' and '011-41106131

Corporate Office: Avvai Shanmugam Salai Royalpettah, Chennai-600014

Date: 24.10.2020 Place: Mahoba (UP) **Authorized Officer, Indian Bank**

चौ० चरण सिंह विश्वविद्यालय, मेरठ

कोरोना हारेगा देश जीतेगा

असत्य पर सत्य की विजय के प्रतीक विजयदशमी पर्व पर हार्दिक शुभकामनायें

कुलाधिपति अमली बेन चरण

कुलपति प्रो. एच. के. तपका

चौधरी चरण सिंह विश्वविद्यालय, राष्ट्रीय राजधानी क्षेत्र का एक महत्वपूर्ण विश्वविद्यालय है। पिछले 50 वर्षों में विश्वविद्यालय परिवार के समस्त सदस्यों ने अपनी गहन निष्ठा, मेहनत और भविष्य दृष्टि संवारने का अथक प्रयास किया है। पौराणिक काल से ही महत्वपूर्ण यह क्षेत्र देश की आजादी के आंदोलन में भी अपनी महती भूमिका के कारण विख्यात रहा है। विश्वविद्यालय आचारानूत सुविधाओं की दृष्टि से प्रदेश और देश में अपना विशिष्ट स्थान रखता है। विद्यार्थियों को वर्तमान वैश्विक युग की आवश्यकताओं के अनुसार गुणवत्ता युक्त उच्च शिक्षा देने में प्रयत्नशील है। उच्च शिक्षा का जन-जन तक पहुंचाने के दायित्व का निर्वहन विश्वविद्यालय अपने सोमित संसाधनों में पूरी ईमानदारी व लगन से कर रहा है। यह विश्वविद्यालय लगभग 222 एकड़ भू-क्षेत्र में विकसित है, जिसमें पृथक-पृथक विभागीय शैक्षणिक भवन, नवीनतम उत्कृष्ट उपकरणों से समृद्ध प्रयोगशालाएं, आधुनिक सुविधाओं से युक्त पुस्तकालय, मध्य प्रेक्षागृह, विशाल प्रशासनिक भवन, सामुदायिक केन्द्र, चिकित्सालय, कम्प्यूटर केन्द्र, वातानुकूलित बृहत्तरि सभागार, मूल्यांकन केन्द्र, आठ छात्रावास, अभियांत्रिकी व विद्युत विभाग के पृथक-पृथक भवन, डाकखाना, बैंक, रेलवे आरक्षण केन्द्र, क्रीडा भवन, कुश्ती स्टेडियम, विशेष रूप से विकसित किये गये विविध खेल मैदान तथा कोर्ट, तपोवन एवं साहित्य कुटीर आदि वांछागत सुविधाएँ हैं।

उपलब्धियाँ

1. अनेक वर्षों से लम्बित नैक मूल्यांकन सम्पन्न एवं सम्मानजनक ग्रेड।
2. विश्वविद्यालय के समस्त प्रवेश ऑनलाइन सुनिश्चित एवं प्रक्रियाओं का सरलीकरण।
3. परीक्षाओं का समयबद्ध संचालन एवं शुचितापूर्वक संचरण, एवं सुव्यवस्थित तथा सुगठित शैली से दीक्षांत समारोह का आयोजन।
4. शैक्षणिक विभागों में रिजेंट आचार्य एवं सहायक आचार्य के पदों पर नियुक्त की प्रक्रिया पूर्ण हो चुकी है।
5. परिसर को रेंजिंग-मुक्त प्रदर्शन-मुक्त तथा धूम्रपान-मुक्त बनाना, जैदिक खाद निर्माण द्वारा कृषि निस्तारण योजना का क्रियान्वयन।
6. विश्वविद्यालय परिसर में सी.बी.सी.एस. के माध्यम से शिक्षण प्रारम्भ एवं शैक्षणिक विभागों के शोध व अध्ययन हेतु कतिपय विदेशी संस्थानों तथा मारस के अन्य अनुसंधान केन्द्रों के साथ अनुबन्ध।
7. प्रशासनिक, अकादमिक, वित्तीय तथा विधायी प्रक्रियाओं का क्रमबद्ध सरलीकरण।
8. शैक्षणिक विभागों में अध्ययन, अध्यापन एवं अनुसंधान पर विशेष ध्यान।
9. अकादमिक गुणवत्ता सुनिश्चयन हेतु प्रकोष्ठ का पुनर्गठन एवं नियमित क्रियाशीलता को प्रोत्साहन।
10. विश्वविद्यालय परिसर में छात्र/छात्राओं के सर्वांगीण विकास हेतु स्विक्मैके संस्था के संयुक्त तत्वाधान में शास्त्रीय/लोकसंगीत के आयोजन तथा साहित्यिक सांस्कृतिक परिषद् की पहल पर महापुरुषों की जयन्ती के अकादमिक एवं सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम।
11. पीएच.डी प्रवेश परीक्षा उत्तीर्ण छात्रों का प्री-पीएच.डी कोर्सवर्क में प्रवेश तथा अर्ह छात्रों का शोध पंजीकरण।
12. विभिन्न प्रशासनिक तथा अकादमिक समितियों का पारदर्शी पुनर्गठन।
13. सम्बद्धता के सभी लम्बित प्रकरणों पर त्वरित निर्णय।
14. विश्वविद्यालय परिसर में चालीस वर्षों जल संग्रहण संयंत्र स्थापित किये गये एवं अनुसंधान के क्षेत्र में पं० दीनदयाल उपाध्याय शोधपीठ।
15. शैक्षणिक विभागों में पाठ्य समिति तथा शोध उपाधि समिति की बैठक का आयोजन।
16. विश्वविद्यालय परिसर में सौर ऊर्जा सन्त्यन्त्रण द्वारा 1260 किलोवाट विद्युत का उत्पादन।
17. स्वामी विवेकानन्द की 12 फीट की धातु की मूर्ति का लोकार्पण।
18. विश्वविद्यालय में छात्रों की समस्याओं के निस्तारण हेतु Online Grievance Redressal System की शुरुआत।
19. सहारनपुर राज्य विश्वविद्यालय की स्थापना के लिए 100 करोड़ रुपये जारी किये।

Study Programmes on the Campus

State Funded Courses :- Genetics & Plant Breeding (Ag. Batary) Botany, Chemistry, Economics-(MA, M.phil & Ph.D.), Education (M.Ed., M.Phil, Ph.D.), English (MA, M.Phil, Ph.D.), Hindi, History, Horticulture, Mathematics, Microbiology, B.Sc. Food Microbiology, Safety & Quality Control, Psychology, Sanskrit, Statistics, Urdu, Zoology (Toxicology), Foreign Languages (Russian, German, French), B.Tech, Geography (PG), Physical Education (BP.Ed, MP.Ed, Yoga), Political Science

Self Finance Courses :- Institute of Business Studies (MBA, BBA, BBA (HA), B.Com, (Hon's), M.Com, MBA (Hospital Administration), MCA, Biotechnology, Home Science (Human Development Food Nutrition), Food Science & Technology (Plant Protection, Entomology, & Plant Pathology), Seed Science & Technology, BJMC, MJMC, M.Phil (MJMC), Fine Art, Law (BA-LLB, LL.M), Environmental Science, Geography (PG Diploma in GIS), Library Science (B.Lib, M.Lib), Sociology (MSW), Master of Public Administration (MPA), Diploma in Psychological Counselling, Vedic Math, Applied Microbiology, Medical Microbiology, Bioinformatics, Polymer Science, & Chemical Technology, M.Sc (Bio-Chemistry), B.Sc. Chemistry (Hon's).

धीरेन्द्र कुमार
कुलसचिव

सुशील कुमार गुप्ता
वित्त अधिकारी

प्रो. वाई. विमला
प्रतिकुलपति

प्रो० एन. के. तनेजा
कुलपति

Gangsters Act invoked against 30 aides of Vikas Dubey

Kanpur (PTI): More than three months since the Bikru village ambush, in which eight police-men including a deputy SP were killed, the Kanpur police has invoked the Gangsters Act against 30 of slain gangster Vikas Dubey's aides arrested in connection with the case. Kanpur's Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Preetinder Singh said on Saturday that the Gangsters Act has been slapped against the 30 accused.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

Tender Notice No. 4120202021

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Dated: 20.10.2020

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders on prescribed form for the following work upto 13:30 hrs on 18.11.2020. The details of the tender are as under:-

SN	Tender No.	Name of Work	Approx Cost ₹	Earnest Money ₹
1	129	Lifting of track by Track Machine to increase cushion to 350mm between Aligarh Jn. to Ghaziabad in Section of ADEN/Aligarh.	38986492/-	344900/-
2	130	Lifting of track by Track Machine to increase cushion to 350mm between Tundla to Aligarh Jn. in Section of ADEN/T/Tundla.	32139651/-	310700/-
3	131	Replacement of Steel Channel Sleepers with H. Beam Sleepers on Girder Bridges along with lifting between Tundla-Ghaziabad Section under Sr. DEN/V/Prayagraj	16743504/-	233700/-
4	132	Replacement of existing CMS crossing with WCMS and replacement of Curved switches with TWS on Main Line in the section of sr. DEN/V/Prayagraj.	19915339/-	249600/-

SN: 1,2 & 4 Eligibility Criteria for similar work: P:Way work, & SN: 3 Fabrication and laying of channel sleeper in running track on bridges or Fabrication and laying of channel sleeper with H Beam in running track on bridges. **Completion Period:** 18 months **Date of Opening of tender:** 18.11.2020 **Note:** 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders is available on Website www.irops.gov.in upto 13:30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 18.11.2020 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. The tenderers shall submit a copy of certificate as given in tender document in standard format, without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected. **4. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the IREPS website may be approached.** 1116/20(D)

f North central railways

www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

@CPRONCR

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ				
Date: 21.10.2020		<u>E-Tendering Tender Notice</u>		
For and on behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W), Prayagraj, North Central Railway, Prayagraj invites E-Tenders in prescribed forms, from reputed contractors with adequate experience and financial capability for the under mentioned work up to 15:00 Hrs of Date of opening of tender:-				
E-Tender Notice No.	Name of work	Tender System	Tender Value	E.M.D.
NCR-M-PRY-J- BLC-18-20	Conversion of 15 no. BLC rakes (675 wagons) to 22 T axle load-BLCAM/BLCBM wagons of M/s Container Corporation India Ltd. at GMC	Single packet system	₹ 12390914.25	₹ 212000.00
Cost of E-Tender Form: Free. Period of work: 24 months Date of publishing on IREPS website: 29.10.2020 Date of opening of tender: 20.11.2020. Similar work definition for minimum Eligibility Criteria: Conversion/Retro-fitting of Container wagon (BLC/BLL) to 22T axle load OR Manufacturing/Rehabilitation/Modification of Railway wagons. For Indian Railways or Central Government of State Government or PSU/Corporation of Central Government or State Government work may have been done through a works contract or store contracts. Note: 1. The complete information along with tender booklet of above E-Tenders will be available/uploaded since Date of publishing on IREPS website and shall be remained on Website www.irops.gov.in up to 15:00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendors shall be straight way ignored and shall not be considered. 4. Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 5. This tender notice have also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in 6. E-Tender Forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. 7. Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. 8. Any firm recognized by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) as 'Startups' shall be exempted from payment of earnest money deposit detailed above. 100% Govt. owned PSUs shall be exempt from payment of earnest money deposit detailed above. Labour Cooperative Societies shall deposit only 50% of above earnest money deposit detailed above. 9. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 10. Online E-Tender can be submitted up to 15:00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. 1124/20(D)				
North central railways		www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in		@CPRONCR

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

Tender Notice No. 4020202021
Date : 20.10.2020

E-TENDERING TENDER NOTICE

**Office of Divisional Railways Manager
North Central Railways, Prayagraj**

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/ North Central Railway Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-TENDERS on prescribed form for the following work up to 13.30 hrs. On 18.11.2020. The details of the Tender are as under:-

Tender No.	Name of Work	Approx Cost (in ₹ Lacks)	Earnest Money (₹)
123	Raising & Improvement of Goods Shed surface with drainage b/w line no. 10 & 11 at Prayagraj Chheeki (PCOI): Phase-I.	2,24,54,503.46	2,62,300.00
124	Improvement of approach roads of PCOI goods sheds.	1,72,58,752.54	2,36,300.00
125	Combined tender for repairs of road colony No. 1,2,3 Zero colony and chaufatka colony & repairing of road in Railgaon colony along with the Type-I to Type-V Quarters under ADEN/HQ-II/PRYJ.	1,36,79,120.06	2,18,400.00
126	Replacement of Broken AC Sheet Roof of Production Unit by Galvanized sheet and Repair work of production shed & Administrative building of CSP Subedarganj.	54,56,698.56	1,09,100.00
127	Construction of Storm water management system by crosswawe Technology at Railgaon Colony & NCR (HQ) Prayagraj.	1,81,78,417.30	2,40,900.00
128	Modification of central office of NCRES at 464-B Nawab Yusuf road Prayagraj.	7,86,507.73	15,700.00

Completion Period : Tender No. 123 To 127 - 06 Month & Tender No. 128 - 03 Month, **Date of Opening of tender :** 18.11.2020
Eligibility Criteria for similar work : Tender No. 123 To 127 - Any Civil Engineering Work & Tender No. 128 : Not applicable

Note : (1) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website www.irops.gov.in up to 13:30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 18.11.2020. (2) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form / letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightaway ignored and shall not be considered. (4) The tenderers shall submit a copy of certificate as given in tender document, in standard format, without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected. (5) The supplier / contractor of goods and / or services would be subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. (6) Credentials in the name of firm applying for the work will only be considered. (7) Though no minimum eligibility criteria is specified for the works at SN. 6. (Tender value being less than Rs. 50.00 Lakhs) bidders are advised to upload documents so that their financial capacity, capability & past performance to undertake the tendered work can be adjudged during evaluation of their offer. (8) Documents being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (9) This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. (10) Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. (11) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (12) Tender on line can be submitted up to 13.30 hrs. on 18.11.2020

f North central railways

www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

1115/20 (SP)

@CPRONCR

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Prayagraj Division

Dated: 19.10.2020

Tender Notice No.: 3920202021

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/ North Central Railway/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites the following E-tendering process for the following works up to 13.30 hrs. on 18.11.2020. The details of the tender is as under :-

S N	Tender No.	Name of Work	Approx Cost of work (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)	Completion period	Eligibility Criteria for similar work
1	119	Supply and Stacking of Welding Portion (SKV) of auto thimble technology with prefabricated moulds including all consumables etc. in the section of Sr. Divisional Engineer/ II/North Central Railway/ Prayagraj.	1,83,43,208/-	2,41,700/-	12 (Twelve) Months	Thermit Welding Work.
2	120	Replacement of existing CMS crossing with WCMS and replacement of curved switch with TWS on mainline in the jurisdiction of Sr. Divisional Engineer /II/ North Central Railway/Prayagraj.	2,46,32,212/-	2,73,200/-	12 (Twelve) Months	P. Way Work
3	121	Replacement of Steel Channel Sleepers with H.Beam Sleepers on Girder Bridge No. 30 (Yamuna Bridge) between Naini-Prayagraj Section in the jurisdiction of Sr. Divisional Engineer/II/North Central Railway/Prayagraj.	9,78,08,401/-	6,39,100/-	09 (Nine) Months	Fabrication and laying of channel sleeper in running track on bridges, OR Fabrication and laying of channel sleeper with 'H' beam in running track on bridges.
4	122	Replacement of Steel Channel Sleepers with H.Beam Sleepers on Girder Bridges between Naini-Kanpur Section in the jurisdiction of Sr. Divisional Engineer/II/North Central Railway/Prayagraj.	2,21,75,547/-	2,60,900/-	09 (Nine) Months	Fabrication and laying of channel sleeper in running track on bridges, OR Fabrication and laying of channel sleeper with 'H' beam in running track on bridges.

Date of opening for all the tenders is: 18.11.2020. **Note :** 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website www.irops.gov.in up to 13:30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 18.11.2020. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form / letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. 4. The tenderers shall submit a copy of certificate as given in tender document in standard format for all items without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected. 5. The supplier/contractor of goods and/or services would be subject to GST Act, and Rules as applicable from time to time. 6. Credentials in the name of firm applying for the work will only be considered. 7. Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 8. This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. 9. Payment of Earnest Money deposit (EMD) in respect of E-Tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. The tenderer(s) should note that, Tenders without Earnest money shall be summarily rejected. 10. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 12. Tender online can be submitted up to 13:30 hrs. on 18.11.2020. 12. The calculation of Earnest Money is as per irops.gov.in web site. 13. E-Tender Form will be issued FREE of COST to all tenderers.

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Covid surveillance teams to look into containment of dengue also

PNs ■ LUCKNOW

The Covid surveillance teams will also work to contain the spread of dengue in the Lucknow district by looking for stagnant waters and fever cases.

Giving this information, a senior official at the CMO office said that this was necessary because with some areas still in the grip of novel coronavirus infection, any super-added infection along with COVID-19 could lead to more complications and mortality and to prevent this risk they had to be doubly cautious.

The official said that there were two rapid response teams (RRTs), one for COVID-19 and the other for malaria

He admitted that with the COVID-19 graph plateauing with 300 cases per day, both the diseases could be effectively taken up by the teams.

The official said that there were 270 dengue cases in Lucknow district, primarily in the urban areas, mainly in Faizullaganj, Gontinagar and Aliganj.

He said looking at the figures of the previous year's dengue cases, the situation was not alarming as of now.

“The number of dengue cases are one-fourth to one-fifth less this year compared to

the previous years in the same period,” he added.

The official admitted that they had come across dengue infection in a coronavirus positive person.

He said a review meeting was held with DG Health in which the issue of controlling dengue in Lucknow district was discussed.

The official said the surveillance teams were testing 12 contact of the person testing positive for coronavirus infection and had distributed 35 lakh ivermectin tablets in all hot spot areas to the contacts of positive cases.

“These tablets are of 6 mg and are given as per the weight of the individual. For a person who has tested positive, the tablet is taken for three days and by the contacts, on the first, seventh and 13th day,” he said.

When asked about the death audits of COVID-19 patients, he said it had come to light that most of these deaths were after a certain interval of the person being admitted to a particular hospital.

“The reason for these deaths was not that the patient could not be admitted on time. In most cases, the patient was admitted and got full treatment and the death occurred because of complications. The findings of the audit have revealed

that most of the deaths were of elderly patients,” he added.

The official said that in the death audit, they primarily looked into how much time it took for the patient to reach the hospital, what were the complications when the patients reached the hospital and what were the issues which were not taken care of.

He said that they were extensively monitoring the time taken for the Covid samples to reach the labs and the time spent on testing after the sample reached the lab.

He said the time taken for collection of a sample and its transportation to the lab was one day and the report was available the next day.

Meanwhile, People's Health Organisation secretary Dr Ishwar Gilada said that the evidence over utility of masks in COVID-19 pandemic had evolved and several facts had emerged and many myths had been clarified.

“Handkerchiefs, dupattas and gamchhas, while better than no mask, do not offer as much protection from coronavirus as a cloth mask. Just like a mask would not be as good as a handkerchief to wipe ones hands dry, similarly the handkerchief will not protect one from coronavirus as effectively as a mask,” he said.

LU gets its own organic farm

PNs ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow University now has its own organic farm, which was inaugurated on Saturday by Vice Chancellor Prof Alok Kumar Rai.

LU spokesperson Durgesh Srivastava said that this farm would produce fresh, green and organic vegetables which would be used by the university. “The produce generated from the farm can be conveniently used at places like our guest house, transit hostels etc. located in the university. This farm is also one of the many innovative steps taken by LU Vice Chancellor Prof Alok Kumar Rai to increase the green quotient of the university,” he said.

On every important occasion celebrated in the university this year, be it Republic Day or Independence Day or even the birth anniversary of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Prof Rai has encouraged the university to celebrate the occasions with a tree plantation drive.

BOOK RELEASE

Meanwhile, The vice chancellor on Saturday participated in a book release function attended by some of the biggest names in the country. The book, Future Shock, authored by Dr Sandeep Goyal, was

hailed by critics and readers present at the event as a “sneak peak of what is coming in our future”.

Speaking on the occasion, Sanjay Gupta, country head of an online site, talked about how the human society was curious by nature and how latest technology supported by organisations was satisfying that curiosity. He also talked about enabling people to “look into tomorrow by looking a little at today and a lot into yesterday”.

Padma Shri chef Sanjeev Kapoor, who was also present at the meeting, spoke on the future of food and how with artificial intelligence and virtual reality, the experience of food consumption would take more meaning and texture.

Kapoor was followed by D. Shitij Kapoor, a world renowned psychiatrist, who spoke about the transformation of societies across the world into cognitive societies instead of mechanical ones, and also stressed the importance of balance between traditional forms of medicine as well as modern ones for holistic health and living.

The event was also attended by Dr Praveer Sinha, visiting faculty at MIT and Tata Power Group Head, who spoke about green energy.

Girl killed in Firozabad for resisting sexual harassment

PNs ■ LUCKNOW

A minor girl studying in class 11 was shot dead in her home in Firozabad district on Friday evening, allegedly by three men for fighting back against sexual harassment.

According to reports, the police launched a search to nab the three accused named by the victim's father and the cops said they would be arrested soon.

The girl's body was sent for post-mortem. The victim's father said that the men barged into his Prem Nagar house and shot his 16-year-old daughter in the head.

“Some people came to my house on Friday night and started fighting. They shot my daughter in the head. Manish Yadav, Shiwali Yadav and Gaurav Chak killed my daughter. My daughter was a Class 11 student. These people used abusive words for her when she was coming home from school. My daughter responded and opposed the harassment,” he said.

He added that his daughter was killed for resisting a sexual harassment.

Speaking to the media persons, SSP Sachind Kumar Patel said three teams had been formed to arrest the accused.

“We reached the spot after receiving information of the murder. The father of the deceased has given us the names of three people, accusing them of entering the house and killing the girl. A case has been registered and three teams have been formed to arrest the accused,” he said.

This murder marks yet another incident of rising crime against women in Uttar Pradesh when the country has not even recovered from the shock of the brutal rape and death of a girl in Hathras.

In Jalaun, a 13-year-old girl was allegedly raped by two youth in a village under the Kuthaund police station, police said on Saturday.

The girl, a student of Class 9, was alone at home on Thursday night when the

accused allegedly barged in and raped her, the police said.

As the girl raised an alarm, the neighbours rushed to the house and caught hold of one of the accused and handed him over to the police while the other accused was nabbed on Friday, the police said. On the basis of a complaint from the girl's father, an FIR was registered, Kuthaund Station House Officer Arun Tiwari said.

The victim was sent for medical examination on Friday, he said, adding that the accused had claimed that they were around 16 to 17 years of age, but it was yet to be ascertained.

If found minor, they would be sent to a juvenile home, the SHO said. In Hathras, a 4-year-old girl was raped by two juveniles. One of the accused is 9-year-old and the other 12-year-old. The officials of the Hathras Junction police station who registered a case in this regard on Friday claimed that they sent the victim for medical treatment while both the accused were detained.

IISR releases new sugarcane variety for cultivation in UP

PNs ■ LUCKNOW

During the festive season, the Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research at Lucknow gave sweet treats to about 30 lakh sugarcane farmers of the state in the form of a new cane variety CoLk 14201.

The new variety developed by the IISR was released for cultivation in P in a meeting of the Seed Sugarcane and Sugarcane Variety Approval Sub-committee, held under the chairmanship of additional chief secretary (sugarcane and sugar industry). Giving information on the new sugarcane variety, IISR Director Dr Ashwini Dutt Pathak said that in the last few years, widespread outbreak of several pests with red rot disease was observed in the most prevalent variety Co0238 in the state.

“The farmers were very upset and were hoping for some kind of cane variety which would be better in yield than Co0238 and be free from diseases and pests. Realising these expectations, breeder scientists at the institute, Dr J Singh, Dr PK Singh, Dr Sanjeev Kumar and Dr DK Pandey, with collective efforts developed CoLk14201. Due to the relentless efforts of the scientists during the last 7-8 years, this sweet result was achieved,” he said.

The yield capacity of CoLk14201 is 90-100 tonne per hectare, whereas the average cane yield in the state is about 80 tonne per hectare at present.

While analysing the potential economic benefit of this new variety IISR principal scientist Dr AK Sah said that even if only 10 tonne per hectare more yield from cultivation of this variety was obtained, the farmers of the state would be able to earn an additional profit of Rs.32,500 per hectare.

“Considering the quality of this variety, it is estimated that if the availability of seeds remains proper, in the coming 2-3 years this variety will be covered in 30 percent sugarcane area of the state and farmers will get an addi-

tional profit of about Rs 2,145 crore. If this variety is covered in 40 percent sugarcane area and 50 percent area, then the additional profits of the farmers will be Rs 2,860 crore and Rs 3,575 crore annually, respectively,” he added.

According to the results obtained in the trials, commercial sugar production in variety CoLk14201 was 11.94 tonne per hectare, which was 10.99 tonne per hectare in Co0238, thus, from the CoLk14201 variety, the sugar mills could get 9.5 quintals of extra sugar per hectare of sugarcane, with the additional revenue being Rs.31,350 per hectare, he said.

In this way, the sugar industry of the state will be able to get additional revenue of Rs 2,069 crore, Rs 2,759 crore and Rs 3,448 crore, respectively, in the coming years when 30 percent, 40 percent and 50 percent sugarcane area is replaced by this variety, respectively. He said that about 80 percent of the sugarcane area in the state — 17.6 lakh hectares — was currently under the variety Co0238 in which farmers use pesticide twice due to widespread outbreak of insect-pests. On per hectare extra dose of Coragen, farmers have to spend about Rs.6,875.

“And this expenditure in the 17.6 lakh hectare area comes to Rs 1,210 crore annually, which is an additional burden on the farmers or their annual loss. In addition, soil and water are also contaminated by using chemicals in double quantity, He said.

The scientist said there would be no additional burden of Rs 1,210 crore on sugarcane farmers with the adoption of CoLk 14201 variety.

“The sugarcane of CoLk14201 variety stands upright and does not fall, so there will be no need to tie the crop and farmers will also save on the expenditure in cane tying. Jaggery made from this variety is also of golden colour and of high quality, hence this variety is also best for organic jaggery production,” he added.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CONSTRUCTION DIVISION No.1, P.W.D., LUCKNOW									
Letter No. 2602 / E-Tender / 20-21 SHORT TERM INVITING TENDER NOTICE						Date : 19.10.2020			
The Executive Engineer Construction Division-1, U.P.P.W.D. Lucknow on behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids online from the eligible and approved Contractors registered UP PWD for road Work class A, B, C & D. The Bidder may submit bids for any or all of the works. Bidders are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 4 of the Instructions to Bidders to qualify for the award of the contract.									
Sl. No.	Di-strict	Name of Work	Esti-mated Cost (Rs.in Lakhs)	Bid Security (Rs.in Lakhs)	Cost of Document (In Rs.)	Time of completion	Address of Executive Engineer of the Executing work	Address of Superintending Engineer	Address of Chief Engineer
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	LUCKNOW	Special Repair of remaining Portion of Chakra Barawara to Vignyanhand Link road	5.60	0.56	150.00+500.00+27.00 (Tender cost+Stationery Charges)+GST@18%=Rs. 667.00	2 Month	Construction Division-1 P.W.D. Lucknow.	LUCKNOW	Chief Engineer Central Zone P.W.D. Lucknow
2	LUCKNOW	Special Repair with CC Road in Radha/Vihar Sanjay Singh house to Shri S.K Singh House (in Gongoti Lane)	32.20	3.22	150.00+500.00+27.00 (Tender cost+Stationery Charges)+GST@18%=Rs. 667.00	2 Month	Construction Division-1 P.W.D. Lucknow.	LUCKNOW	Chief Engineer Central Zone P.W.D. Lucknow
➤ The Rate adopted in the BOD are excluding GST. Bids can be submitted online from date 25.10.2020 at 9:00 AM to 31.10.2020 at 12:00 Noon and bid can be submitted online on or before 31.10.2020 at 12:00 Noon. The technical bids will be opened online on date 04.11.2020 at 12:30 PM. According to the provisions of Government Order No. 1/2018/307078-2-2018/421177 (22) Date 03-01-2018 after opening of the technical and financial bids, the bidder has to submit original documents personally in department office. In the event of non submission of original documents by the bidder, the appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the provision of G.O. Technical specification matters to be done by Prahari Software, the details of which are available in NIT enclosed with Bid Document.									
								(A.K. Singh) Executive Engineer	
U.P.P. : 156240, Date : 22.10.2020, विधान सभावेबसाइट www.up.gov.in च पर अवकाश है।						Construction Division-1, P.W.D. Lucknow			

95 COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 95 new Covid-19 positive patients have been detected in the district on Saturday, increasing the total number of cases to 16,333. The day also saw two more deaths, increasing the toll to 261. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 172 patients. Out of them, 164 have been recovered from home isolation and six from the hospitals, increasing the number to 12,545 and 2,798 respec-

tively. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 15,343, leaving 729 active cases. The recovery rate has improved to 93.93 percent but mortality rate remained at 1.59 percent. Meanwhile, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. VB Singh has informed that in the first report of the day, 80 positive patients were found out of 3,034 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 3,01,806 and the results of 1,737 are awaited.

Out of them, 2,85,488 were negative while 16,318 positive. The total number of samples collected was 3,19,552. Earlier, a male aged 63 from Tulsi Vihar Colony succumbed to Covid-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital (SSH), Banaras Hindu University (BHU). With the addition of eight new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,269 including 244 red zones. Six green zones have been converted into red zones again.

There are 2,025 green zones with 19 new ones. Under ongoing mass/ group antigen tests, all 295 tests at Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura, 105 at adjacent Government Women's Hospital, 35 at CHC Shivpur and 46 at Swami Vivekanand Government Hospital, Bhelupur were found negative. However, five out of 110 at LBS Hospital, Ramnagar and two out of 112 at SSH BHU were detected positive.

Target to purchase 5 MT paddy :DC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Divisional Commissioner (DC) Deepak Agrawal has informed that the division has expected to produce 13 lakh metric tonnes (MT) of paddy this Kharif season and the target is to purchase 5 lakh MT of paddy which is 40 per cent of the total production. He was reviewing the progress of preparations for paddy procurement through video conferencing here on Friday. He has instructed the concerned officers to invite the paddy growers to purchasing centres so that they can get maximum benefits.

According to him, paddy harvesting is going on right now but the sales would pick up in the division next month and at present the market rates are low. He asked the officers to make all arrangements of money, bags, moisture measuring equipment, transport facilities etc at the centres and keep the goal of purchasing paddy more than the target. 'Till now 25,720 farmers have been registered,' he said, direct-



DC Deepak Agrawal reviewing preparations for paddy purchasing in Varanasi on Friday

dry it. 'The minimum support price (MSP) of paddy fixed by the government is very well so it would benefit the farmers a lot. In western UP, paddy has started being brought in large quantities to the purchasing centers, so arrangements should be made in advance here keeping in mind the possibilities of arrival of increased quantities of paddy this time,' he said.

Meanwhile, Agrawal also presided over a meeting of divisional Udyog Bandhu in which he has informed that the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (Facilitation of Establishment and Operating) Act 2020 has come into force under which all the license provisions will be made available to the entrepreneurs in 72 hours on setting up the MSME units. In the meeting the applications received from some units were approved in principle. The meeting was also attended by Joint Commissioner (Industries) Umesh Singh, senior officers of various departments and entrepreneurs.

ing the officers to call the farmers from the control room to get themselves registered and inform them about their nearby purchasing centres.

'The farmers should not be harassed at the purchasing centre and they should be given proper facilities and assistance at the centres apart from ensuring to give their pay-

ment within 72 hours as the government is committed to increase the income of farmers and to provide all possible help to them,' he said, instructing the officers to get feedback by associating lekhpalas, Kisan sahayaks to the purchasing centers. He also said that if any farmer brings paddy containing moisture, help them to

Sukanya Samridhi accounts opened

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In this parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Department of Posts has taken a new initiative during Navratri festival. Under the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' campaign launched by the PM, 'Sukanya Samridhi Yojana' has proved the significance of Navratri festival by opening the accounts of all the girl children and ensuring their future. On the initiative of Post Master General (PMG) of Varanasi Region Krishna Kumar Yadav, 188 villages of Varanasi Postal Region have been declared as 'Sampurna Sukanya Samridhi Gram' during the Navratri by opening Sukanya Samridhi accounts of all eligible girls of these villages.

At a function at Tapovan Branch PO here Yadav gifted passbooks to the girls. Senior Superintendent of Post offices Sumit Kumar Gaat, Superintendent of Post offices Ram Milan, Mahant Deen



PMG KK Yadav giving Sukanya Samridhi account to a girl during Navratri in Varanasi on Saturday

Bandhu Das Ji Maharaj, Ward Member Vandana Singh, Assistant Director Shambhu Rai also wished for the happy future of these girls.

In his address, Yadav said that women power is important in Indian culture. 'Sukanya Samridhi Yojana' is not only a medium of investment, but it is also linked with bright and prosperous future of the girls. 'More than 1.72 lakh Sukanya Samridhi accounts of eligible girls have been opened in

Varanasi Region," he informed, adding that financial as well as social concerns of this scheme are also important. The amount deposited in it will be solely for daughters, which will be useful in their education, career, and marriage. This scheme will also promote women empowerment in future by empowering girls.

Speaking on the occasion, Sumit Kumar Gatt said that Sukanya Samridhi Account of girls upto 10 years can be

opened in any post office with minimum ₹250. Minimum ₹ 1,000 and maximum ₹ 1,50,000 can be deposited in a financial year in this account. Ram Milan said that 50 per cent of the amount deposited on girl being 18 years and the entire amount can be withdrawn on completion of 21 years.

Shambhu Rai said that the interest rate in Sukanya Samridhi Yojana is 7.6 per cent and there is also a provision for income tax rebate on the deposits. Tapovan Ward member Vandana Singh said that during the Navratri festival this unique initiative of the Department of Posts in the interest of daughters is admirable.

This will make the future of girls bright and secure. Mahant of Tapovan Ashram Deen Bandhu Das Ji Maharaj said that there is a tradition of girl worship in Navratri and during this auspicious festival, the Department of Posts has made these Sukanyas more prosperous by opening their Accounts.

Traditional gaiety prevails in Durga Puja

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Despite all COVID-19 restrictions, traditional gaiety and religious fervour prevailed as a good number of people thronged different areas of the city to see the idols of Goddess Durga on the auspicious occasion of Ashtmi here on Saturday. Though no grandeur was made on the pandals this year, it did not discourage the enthusiasms of the people. However, the rush which generally reached a peak on this auspicious occasion was missed this year. In many areas, attractive lighting arrangements were made while at some pandals, digital shows were organised.

The rush was mainly seen in Lahurabir, Sagra, Luxa, Godowlia, Sonarpura-Bhelupur, Maidagin, and many areas in trans-Varuna area including Shivpur, Pandeypur, Orderly Bazar, Pahadihya and some others. As the city has been extended a lot in trans-Varuna, several pandals were set up at Shivpur Mini Stadium, Orderly Bazar and Pandeypur but they did not invest such huge amount on their pandals this time as they generally did in the previous years. In many pandals, though all the traditional rituals were performed by the puja samiti members, the visitors were only asked to



Puja being offered at Durga Puja pandal at Pandey Haveli on Ashtmi in Varanasi

offer prayer from outside the restricted puja areas. The Bangiya Samaj which general gives its major focus on its idols, performed all their rituals with traditional gaiety but they did not allow outsiders to reach near the idols.

Elaborate security arrangements were made and at many places the visitors were asked to maintain social distancing. 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 Sagra, Dashasamedh, Chowk, Chetganj, Luxa and some other areas while in rural areas at Rohania, Cholaapur and Choubeypur.

DEVOTEES THROG ANNAPURNA TEMPLE: Amidst tight security arrangements, hundreds of devotees

thronged Mahagauri (Annapurna Mandir) near Kashi Vishwanath temple on the auspicious occasion of Ashtmi during the ongoing Shardiya Navratri here on Saturday, maintaining COVID-19 guidelines. As the temple is located in super-sensitive Gyanvapi premises, every devotee entered the temple after thorough proper checking. It was the second continuous day when the temple of Goddess Durga is located in the sensitive areas. Though the rush was not as usual as it was generally seen on this auspicious occasion due to coronavirus pandemic, a good number of devotees reached there.

Besides, heavy rush was also seen throughout the day at Durga Mandir and all other temples of goddesses. Several people also preferred to go to old Durga Mandir in trans-

Ganga Ramnagar and Maa Sheetla Mata Mandir at Adalpur near Varanasi-Mirzapur border. Not only this, hundreds of people also went to Vindhychal in Mirzapur district, about 65 kms from here, to offer prayer at Maa Vindhyasini Devi. 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.

Besides, on the auspicious occasion, at several places the programmes of Kanya Puja was organised apart from several homes where Kalashs have been set up for Navratri Puja. Besides, Namami Ganga activists also observed Kanya Puja. After offering meals and Dakshina to the girls, they also appealed to them to use masks and sanitisers during coronavirus pandemic period. The girls were carrying placards 'jab taq dawai nahi, tab taq dilai nahi'.

Speaking on the occasion, convener Rajesh Shukla said that during the Navratri, Durga Puja also sends the message of cleanliness as before installing Kalash the people make their homes properly clean and appealed to all not to use single use plastic items apart from praying to make the country Atmanirbhar (self-reliant).



Devotees take holy dip in the Ganga river on the occasion of Ashtmi during Navratri in Prayagraj on Saturday

Pioneer

172 more test positive in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The number of new patients with corona infection remains fluctuating. The figure of 172 new positive patients crossed the 23,000 mark in the district within the last 24 hours. During the treatment, 309 corona-infected people have died with the death of three people late on Friday night. However, the increase in the number of people who beat corona is going to be a relief. About 167 people beat Corona in 24 hours.

According to CMO Dr GS Bajpai, the scope of Covid test-

ing and contract tracing has reduced the spread of rapid infection. Health officials are advising people to avoid corona. On Friday, 32 people from various Covid hospitals were discharged after becoming infection free. 135 patients completed home isolation. So far, 23,088 people have been infected in the district, while 5,432 people have been admitted to hospitals and have become infection free. Also, 15,887 people have beaten the corona in home isolation. He said that 1,460 Covid cases remained active in the district on Friday.

Nodal Officer for Corona

Dr Rishi Sahai said that on Friday, the new corona-infected included three lawyers, along with two bank managers and an excise inspector. He said that the CRO of the High Court, the manager of NTPC, the clerk posted in the CMO office, the secretary of the judicial officer have also been positive. A degree college teacher, librarian, branch manager of SBI, chief manager of PNB, assistant manager of Canara Bank has suffered from corona infection.

New OT commissioned at Covid Hospital in Super Specialty Block located at SRN Hospital Campus has been

made functional. Corona infected women will now be delivered in the new OT of this new Covid block. According to Dr SP Singh, Principal of MLN Medical College, modern OT is equipped with modern resources.

Dr Amrita Chaurasia, Head of the Department of gynecologist, said that on Saturday, OT was inaugurated with worship prayers. Till now the delivery of corona infected women was done in the OT in the old building of the hospital. Now normal and cesarean deliveries will be done in the new modular OT, added Dr Chaurasia.

Women's help desk service started

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Women's help desk service started in all 39 police stations of the district. The main event was held at the Colonelganj police station where the newly constructed women's help desk was inaugurated jointly by Phulpur MP, Mayor and District Panchayat president. Earlier, the Chief Minister addressed the officers and policemen through video conferencing and congratulated them for this effort.

Simultaneous service began on Friday across the state, including Prayagraj. On this occasion, 20 police stations of the state were directly linked to the Chief Minister's office through video conferencing,

including the Colonelganj police station of the city. Around 10 am, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath started addressing police and administrative officers and employees present in all the 20 police stations through video conferencing. After the end of the address, Phulpur MP Keshari Devi Patel, Mayor Abhilasha Gupta and District Panchayat president Rekha Singh, who were present in the programme, inaugurated the women's help desk at the police station by cutting the ribbon. ADG Zone Premprakash, IG Range KP Singh, DM Bhanuchand Goswami, DIG, SSP Sarvashresth Tripathi, SP City Dinesh Kumar Singh, Nodal Officer of Mission Shakti

Bairahna Amita Singh and other officers and employees were present on the occasion.

Earlier, the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's address was broadcast live on two screens installed in the police station premises. On this occasion, Colonelganj police station was decorated attractively. Apart from women organisations and social workers, other enlightened people were present here along with police and administrative officers.

ADG Zone Premprakash said that complaints will be lodged on the computer at the women's help desk set up inside the transparent cabin in the police station. Trained women police personnel will give acknowledgment to the victims

after registering their complaints, which will also include the investigating officer and their mobile number. He further said that the disposal of complaints on women's helpdesk will be reviewed regularly. In three shifts of eight-eight hours, two women policemen will be on duty at the helpdesk for 24 hours.

The intention of the government is that the victims can speak without any hesitation and fearlessness. Accordingly, this arrangement has been made. This service has been started in all the police stations located in the eight districts of the zone. Additional SP and CO level officers will supervise the work of the help desk, said ADG Zone Premprakash.

Devotees visit Maa Durga temple

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

In Shardiya Navratri, devotees thronged the Devi temples on Saturday since morning to worship Maha Gauri, the eighth carnation of the goddess Durga. Every devotee who came to the temple was eager to get a glimpse of the Maa Durga.

The devotees made a beeline for hours and then reached the abode of the goddess and bowed at her feet. The crowd in the temples became so much that even physical distance could not be followed, the police also struggled to follow it.

From 4 o'clock in the morning, the order of devotees who came to visit the Devi temples continued. Goddess Alopshankari in Alopibagh,

Ma Lalita Devi in Meerapur, Ma Kalyani in Kalyani Devi, Khema Mai in Chowk, Kali Bari temple in Mutathiganj echoed with the shout of goddess Kali. Similarly, in other temples, people continued to distribute prasad with offering prayers.

At some points in the temple the devotees were witnessed having darshan with two and a half yards away. The city's Alopi Devi Temple, Kalyani Devi Temple, Lalita Devi Temple were the most crowded. All the devotees who were going to the temple for darshan were motivated by policemen to put on masks. The same situation existed in the Devi temples of the rural area. Similarly, people worshipped the mother goddess in homes and made nine girls eat food. Similarly, the people of

the city are also preparing for Dussehra.

Similarly, in Kaushambi district, worship was held in the Devi temples on Mahashtami. The festival of worship of Shakti in Sanatan Dharma has been a tradition of worshipping among havan and Kanyabhoj for centuries in Navratri. Even in puranas, havan puja and Kanyabhoj have been described as very important. Devotees also worship girls by considering them as the form of Mother Durga.

Since Saturday morning, devotees offered prayers to Maa Bhagwati amid chanting of mantras with havan.

Havan-pujan has been going on since morning in Devi temples including Durga Mandir Temple at Sarai Akil, Masuria Mata Temple at Kishunpur Ambari. In the

Mahila Gram Sabha, devotees who are fasting in Navratri performed the havan and purnahuti of Goddess Bhagwati. During this, the devotee ended their fast with 51 Kanyabhoj.

Bhandara was also organised at many places. A grand Maha Aarti was held in Durga Puja pandals at night.

The picturesque tableaux of Jagat Janani Maa Adi Shakti were the centre of attraction in Durga Puja pandals on the auspicious occasion of Navratri in various villages including Manauri, Charava, Tilhapurmod, Nevada, Tilhapur in Chail tehsil. Devotees joined the aarti with reverence. Mahaarti was organised in Durga Temple Sarai Akil, Masuria Mata Temple Kishunpur Ambari, Devi Temple Mahila village.

Kalyan Ghosh passes away

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Multidimensional personality and owner and managing director of the historic Indian Press octogenarian Kalyan Ghosh breathed his last on Saturday morning at Apollo Hospital Lucknow. He was 82.

The news of the demise of Kalyan Ghosh, popularly known as Kollan Da, spread a pall of gloom over the Sangam City because this person of multiple specialities was associated with a good number of social, cultural, educational and voluntary organisations.

His mortal remains arrived at Ghosh Villa, Georgetown in the afternoon hours from Lucknow, and after some time was taken to Jagat Taran Girls Inter College, and to Golden



Kalyan Ghosh

Jubilee School in JT Girls Degree College for Antim Darshan in a flower bedecked van. He was consigned to flames at Rasoolabad Ghat by

his son Arindam Ghosh.

Kollan Da was from the elite Ghosh family of Allahabad, the owners of the famous Indian Press. After his education in the UK Kalyan Ghosh returned to Allahabad and besides looking after his family business, he showed keen interest in theatre and music. He was a master guitar player and a noted theatre actor and director. Even at the age of 80 he performed on the stage a couple of years ago, and became the centre of attraction.

He was very actively associated with Rotary, Bengali social and cultural organisation, Roopkatha Theatre group, Jagat Taran Educational Society and many other associations.

A very soft spoken and filled with Bengali traditions, Kollan Da used to organise

Durga Puja every year at JT Girls Degree College premises, but owing to Covid restrictions, it could not be held this year.

Kollan Da had developed a malignant lump near prostate gland, and he could not survive the chemotherapy. His end came owing to multi organ failure.

NEW OFFICE INAUGURATED: Partner of Singh and Dwivedi Company Anil Gupta Chartered Accountant opened his new office just by the side of *The Pioneer* in Civil Lines on Saturday, on the auspicious occasion of Maha Ashtmi. Shivram Gupta inaugurated this office in the presence of the elite of the city. People may find quick solutions of GST and other tax related problems, said Anil Gupta.

DC launches Kanpur Road Repair Helpline

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar launching a 'Kanpur Road Repair Helpline' said good and safe roads were the basic requirement of a citizen. He said it was in fact the fundamental right of every citizen. He directed that all the roads which were full of potholes and craters should be repaired within the next 15 days. He said the Helpline was especially meant for the Kanpurites who can register their complaints regarding bad roads and assured that the repair of the that particular road will certainly be carried

out. He appealed to the people to avail themselves of the facility extended to them. He said good pedestrian paths and roads were a fundamental right of every citizen under Article 21 of the Constitution, indicating that it was the statutory and constitutional duty of the Kanpur Nagar Nigam to maintain roads and footpaths. He directed the Kanpur Municipal Commissioner to ensure that the citizens were not deprived of their rights. He said a citizen can demand the enforcement of a fundamental right and can also seek compensation if the authorities failed in their legal

obligation. He said if a citizen suffered as a result of the failure of the state machinery to maintain roads, apart from liability under the regular law of torts, the person can take recourse to public law remedy. He said they can initiate action under public law to seek compensation from the authorities. He said it would not be any exaggeration that the roads in Kanpur were certainly in a mess and thus the local governance need to construct and repair. He said we all know that the UP government was making every effort to make Kanpur a smart city and thus

smart city has smart roads as well. The DC said widespread attention continued to be drawn to the ecological effects of roads, especially as the road system continued to expand. He said roads were created because of changing interactions between people and their environments and were also created to facilitate access to natural resources, to connect human communities, to move goods to markets, and to move people to work. He said whatever their purpose, roads, road establishment, road maintenance, and road travel had a broad variety of effects.

V-C presents roadmap to develop GU as world-class institute

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ GORAKHPUR

Vice-Chancellor of Deendayal Upadhyaya, Gorakhpur University, Prof Rajesh Singh, met the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at Gorakhnath Temple on Saturday and discussed many important issues including new courses to be started and opening of new institutes and centres in the university.

The Vice-Chancellor presented a roadmap to the Chief Minister to make Mahayogi Guru Gorakshanath Shodhpeeth a global (world class) institute. Prof Rajesh Singh apprised the Chief Minister that encyclopaedia on Nathpanth would be ready soon.

Prof Singh said that world-class education and facilities would be provided in the university through the proposed new centres and institutes under the National Education Policy. V-C also apprised Chief Minister that University has planned to start Institute of Multi-Disciplinary Sciences and has proposed eight centres including covering disciplines like Genetics, Bio-informatics, Aquaculture, Bio-Resources, Climate Change, Data Science, Information Security, Food Technology and Packaging and Instrumentation.

Prof Rajesh Singh informed the CM about the proposed new institutions and centres in the university.

Prof Singh told that besides the Institute of Physical Education and Sports Science, Institute of Hotel Management Catering and Tourism, Mahayogi Institute of Yoga Vedic Education and Research, Centre for Development Studies, Guru Gorakshanath Centre for Media and Communication, Centre for Entrepreneurship Development and Business Incubation and the Mahayogi Gorakshanath Global Institute for Cultural and Development Studies, the university has plans to run new centres and institutes with the help of the State Government or Central Government or under Public Private Partnership.

Chief Minister assured all possible help and support in the beginning of new courses, institutes and centres in the DDU Gorakhpur University.

Prof Singh said the entire effort is to attract students from other states and also from foreign countries which will help the DDU Gorakhpur University to perform better in NAAC accreditation and NIRF ranking.

Kidnapped boy recovered

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Due to alertness of a meter reader, a three years old boy was recovered from a kidnapper within two hours of the incident under the Kalyanpur police station on Friday night.

According to reports, the three years old son of Bakery owner Amit Shukla of Sheoli Road, Kalyanpur, suddenly went missing late on Friday evening.

After leaving a letter demanding ransom of ₹ 15 lakh, the kidnapper escaped with the boy.

Around 11 pm, the kidnapper, along with the boy, reached to his friend Aniket Soni's house in Mandhana (Bithoor) and asked him to leave them up to Mandhana crossing on his bike.

Meter Reader Aniket and his family members suspected some wrong who immediately asked about the child from his friend Shailendra, the kidnapper.

Shailendra said the boy to be his nephew (son of his sister) and suddenly went out of Aniket's house.

Aniket with the help of neighbours caught hold of Shailendra along with the boy near a Paper Factory. Aniket's brother Abhishek Soni informed the police when PRV 4111 reached the spot and quizzed Shailendra about the child.

On being grilled, Shailendra confessed about the kidnapping of boy. Cops immediately recovered the boy from his possession and took him to the police station for further action against him.

55-yr-old man's body found

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The recovery of the body of an 55-year-old man in the Gida area created a sensation there. On getting information the police rushed to the spot, took the body of the deceased into custody and sent it for the post-mortem examination. Reports said that on Friday some residents of Gahasad village had gone to graze their animals on the southern side of Gahasad railway bridge

towards Bhatwa. People raised suddenly an alarm when they spotted the body of a man lying there. He was later identified as Pramod Kumar Yadav, son of Chanda Prasad Yadav, a resident of Gahasad, a priest at a Shiv Temple. He was wearing a 'lungi' and a white kurt and an empty bottle, 'petha' and 'Ramdana' were found near his body. Gida SO Devendra Singh said that that body had of the deceased had been sent for the post mortem examination.

Meanwhile one person was killed when a bus carrying passengers collided with a truck parked on the four lane near the Jungle Chawri village under the Khorabar police station around 2 pm on Friday. As many as 11 passengers, including three women and seven children, were injured. On getting information the police rushed the injured to the local health centre from where they were referred to the district hospital after first aid.

Surat-Chhapra spl to be diverted

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration will divert 09065/09066 Surat-Chhapra-Surat superfast clone special train via Chhapra-Jaunpur-Varanasi-Prayagraj Chheoki, Senior Public Relations Officer CP Chauhan said. As a result the 09065 Surat-Chhapra superfast clone special train from November 2 will be diverted via Rohtak-Bhiwani-Hisar-Shadulpur-Hanumangarh. The 05910 Lalgarh-Dibrugarh special train running from Lalgarh from October 22 to November 4 will be diverted via Hanumangarh-Shadulpur-Hisar-Bhiwani-Rohtak.

PARCEL SPECIAL: For the convenience of business establishments, industries, traders and general public on the occasion of forthcoming Chhath and other festivals the railway administration for ensuring the availability of necessary goods at various places between Kolkata and Gorakhpur and Gorakhpur and Kolkata since September 7 this year till Chhath Puja is running the 00325/00326 Kolkata-Gorakhpur-Kolkata parcel weekly express special train. As many as 12 parcel coaches are being attached in this train, CPRO PK Singh said. The 00325 Kolkata-Gorakhpur

a result this train will leave Satna at 21.25 hrs, Katni at 23.00 hrs, the second day Itarsi at 04.15 hrs and Khandwa at 06.25 hrs. On the other hand, due to the ongoing farmers' agitation in Punjab, the following express special trains will be diverted. The 05909 Dibrugarh-Lalgarh special train running from Dibrugarh from October 20 to November 2 will be diverted via Rohtak-Bhiwani-Hisar-Shadulpur-Hanumangarh. The 05910 Lalgarh-Dibrugarh special train running from Lalgarh from October 22 to November 4 will be diverted via Hanumangarh-Shadulpur-Hisar-Bhiwani-Rohtak.

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parcel express special every Monday leaves Kolkata at 13.45 hrs, Bandel at 15.15 hrs, Vardhaman at 16.20 hrs, Asansol at 18.30 hrs, Jhajha at 22.05 hrs, on second day Barauni at 01.05 hrs, Samastipur at 02.20 hrs, Muzaffarpur at 03.30 hrs, Hajipur at 04.45 hrs, Chhapra at 07.15 hrs, Siwan at 08.40 hrs, Deoria Sadar at 10.20 hrs and reaches Gorakhpur at 11.50 hrs. During the return journey the 00326 Gorakhpur-Kolkata parcel express special every Wednesday departs from Gorakhpur at 17.00 hrs, Deoria Sadar at 18.40 hrs, Siwan at 20.20 hrs, Chhapra at 21.45 hrs, Hajipur at 23.55 hrs, on second day from Muzaffarpur at 01.10 hrs, Samastipur at 02.20 hrs. Barauni at 03.25 hrs, Jhajha at 06.20 hrs, Asansol at 10.00 hrs., Vardhaman at 12.05 hrs and Bandel at 13.20 hrs and reaches Kolkata at 14.50 hrs.

PANTRY CAR NOT TO BE ATTACHED: The railway administration due to unavoidable reasons with immediate effect will not attach pantry car in 02589/02590 Gorakhpur-Sunderabad-Gorakhpur special train and 02591/02592 Gorakhpur-Yesvantpur-Gorakhpur special train till further orders, senior PRO CP Chauhan said.

Freight Business Portal Service starts

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

In order to promote goods loading on Indian Railways, the Ministry of Railways to provide information about facilities being provided to traders and industries has started the 'Freight Business Portal Service' which can be accessed through the link <https://www.fois.indianrail.gov.in/RailSAHAY/Home.jsp> or through the Railway Board website. Through this portal the traders can through their FNR number track the current

status of their goods, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said. Through this portal they can get booking and registration-related information, arrival/departure and movement time of goods trains etc. On this portal information related to freight-related regulations and facilities available at goods sheds such as aggregator, transporter, ware house and labourers is available. Besides information regarding container rail terminal and private freight terminal can be

obtained. In case of any kind of inconvenience, the designated nodal officer can be contacted. Moreover in case of inconvenience suggestions can be sent to the online portal for improvement. For monitoring at the zonal railway and divisional level of North Eastern Railway (NER) an officer of the level of the assistant commercial manager has been nominated. With the help of this portal, traders can avail every facility any time and anywhere through their smart phones or laptops.

Five touts caught

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

On DM's directive deputy collector Amit Shukla raided the ARTO office on Friday and caught five touts. Reports said that the officer left his government vehicle far away from the office, found ARTO on his chair and two out of 18 employees absent. At the counter of licence the officer found a large gathering, caught the five touts and handed over them to Dehat Kotwali and submitted a detailed report to the DM.

ELECTRONIC MACHINES GIVEN: CDO Avinash Singh distributed dozens of electronic machines useful for making clay idols and colouring them at a simple programme organised at Vikas Bhawan on Friday. Addressing the potters, he said that under the scheme run through Khadi Gramodyog the government had decided to promote rural artisans. He said the government's initiative aimed at strengthening rural economy and appealed to gathering to remain aware about government's schemes and avail themselves of the facility in the larger interest of the indigenous art.

Training given

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Under the Mission Shakti drive training in martial arts was given to girl students of Kamla Arya Kanya PG College on Friday. Addressing the trainees on the occasion, trainer Pragna Lata said training was given so that they could cope with any emergency situation with more confidence and strong will power. The trainer appealed to girls to become confident so that they could help others. She was of the view that self-confidence was an ability to face any challenge whether it was in the field of academics or in our life. On the occasion principal Neelam Kumari extended her best wishes to the students.

Webinar on carpet testing organised

PNS ■ VARANASI

Under the guidance of Chairman, Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC), Siddh Nath Singh, in order to educate member exporters about various testing for carpet sector as per requirements of various importing countries, CEPC organised a webinar on carpet testing. Second Vice-Chairman, CEPC, Umer Hameed, members COA, Abdul Rub, Bodh Raj Malhotra, Husain Jafar Husaini, Shree Ram Maurya, and CEPC Executive Director Sanjay Kumar were present at the webinar. CEPC Second Vice-Chairman Umer Hameed welcomed members and experts and expressed the hope that the webinar will be beneficial for the Indian handmade carpet industry. Minhazuddin Sheikh, Deputy General Manager - TGRC R&D head, Technical Governance and Regulatory Compliance (TGRC), M/s TUV SUD South Asia Pvt Ltd, Gurgaon, a Germany based testing company made power point presentation on different testing requirements and regulations in UK and European markets. Dr RK Malik, Dean, Indian Institute of Carpet Technology

(IICT), Bhadohi, made a presentation on different testing facilities available in IICT, advantages of testing - assuring quality as per customer's requirement, developing customer confidence, reducing wastage and optimisation of the process. During the question-answer session the speakers answered the queries of participants. Some members inquired about the availability of fibre testing facility which is necessary to maintain the standard of the products. Rajesh Kumar from M/s Jaipur Rugs inquired about additional testing requirement in EU and USA due to Covid-19 scenario. Some members inquired about the validity of the testing reports. Dr Malik informed the participants about the Kaleen Bandhu Scheme of IICT for exporters. After becoming member under Kaleen Bandhu Scheme members are eligible for 20 per cent discount on all testing charges, publication, software and design developed at IICT, 10 per cent discount on consultancy fee and charges, free access to library for reference, liaison by IICT team for consultancy etc. Sanjay Kumar informed the members that Council is issuing the Kaleen labels for all handmade

carpets, druggets, dhurries etc signifying that the user of 'KALEEN' label is abiding by the code of conduct adopted by the CEPC for eradication of child labour. He said the Kaleen labels are available in all Council offices and their cost is nominal. The Council and Government of India is going to launch a special drive to popularise the Kaleen labels, he said and requested the members to use them on all their carpets and other floor coverings. Sanjay Kumar said regulations are important and sooner or later we will have to comply with them for EU and USA which is our major market. Although in carpet industry we have already adopted the set pattern but it is the need of the hour that we have to do the compliance as per the norms, he added. Husain Jafar Husaini proposed the vote of thanks. He mentioned that although various facilities are available in IICT at affordable rates and there is need to improve response time from it by creating a separate marketing cell which will not only be beneficial for members but also increase revenue. Finally CEPC requested members to send their suggestions on the testing facilities they required in IICT.

Concern over stray cattle on roads

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kanpur District Magistrate, City, Alok Tiwari, while carrying out a surprise inspection of Cow Protection Centre, Patara and expressed concern over the stray cattle on the roads and directed that a special drive be launched to trap these animals and put them in the cow shelters being run by the government. He warned that there should not be any crisis of fodder, medicine, water and directed the authorities to ensure that there was a regular visit of veterinary doctors to take care of the ill or ailing cows in the sheds.

He said there were complaints that people first domesticate cows for milk but leave them on te roads to graze but when these cows stop giving milk they were abandoned and thus they survive on the litter on the roads. He said the UP government had launched umpteen schemes to ensure there was proper protection of the cows. He said there should be a night watchman at all the shelter homes so that they



cows do not stray out or come to harm in any way.

He expressed concern over the emaciated appearance of the stray cows and directed the authorities to ensure that proper fodder was provided to them so that their health improved.

The DM was informed that the Cow Shelter in Patara currently has housed 70 abandoned cows and their upkeep

was done by the shelter.

He was informed that people has also been advised that instead of abandoning the cows when they become 'dry' they should ensure they were handed over to these cow shelters. He later visited the Paddy purchase centre and directed that they should work to the optimum.

He said the lekhpal should work in close coordination

with the authorities and added that all such farmers who were refused purchase on account of damp paddy a special register should be maintained and full details of the farmers and the details of the crop should be entered. He said a video clip need to be prepared in support as well.

He then checked the dampness of the crop by the measuring meter.

Webinar on domestic violence against women

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The general secretary of Mahila Manch, Neelam Chaturvedi while addressing a national webinar on 'Domestic Violence against Women' on Saturday said in the initial four phases of COVID-19-related lockdown, Indian women filed more domestic violence complaints than recorded in a similar period in the last one decade. The officials figures reported were the tip of the iceberg as 86 per cent women who experienced domestic violence did not seek help in India.

She said the number of domestic violence complaints received by the National Commission for Women doubled from 123 distress calls to 239 domestic violence complaints, from March 23, 2020, to April 16, 2020. She said in such a backdrop, it was imperative to understand domestic violence and steps taken by the government to facilitate access to resources against domestic violence. She said National Domestic Violence Awareness

Month was an annual designation observed in October and Mahila Manch carried out 23 awareness camps all over the city especially in the sub-urban areas and slums. She said it was true that in India women were at the lowest rung of the patriarchal, hierarchical society and this can be supported by the fact that in India last census showed child sex ratio was highly skewed with only 857 girls per 1,000 boys in some northern states and one potent reason which emerged was that the average literacy rate of rural women was yet not over 20 per cent.

Chaturvedi said country-wide lockdown turned it into a torture chamber for women majorly illiterate and semi-literate women. She said the fact which emerged was that the perpetrators were from home itself. She said one factor which was a significant contributor was the gender unequal domestic labour. She said on an average a woman in India spent up to 353 minutes a day on household work compared to the 52 minutes spent by men. She said

as per the survey by the Indian Psychiatry Society, within a week of the start of the lockdown, the number of reported cases of mental illness in India had risen by 20 per cent and the situation has yet not improved despite the lockdown withdrawn.

She said there was no doubt that there were umpteen laws protecting women but somehow it continued unabated. She said India must abide by these human rights instruments and ensure the same for its female population. She added that Public Interest Litigations (PILs) was a popular recourse in India used by activists to advance human rights and highlighted issues of gross injustices but thousands of PILs had been filed in high courts across the nation but emancipation was still awaited.

Chaturvedi said instead of focusing on women as victims, they should be portrayed as agents capable of changing their own lives. She said Mahila Manch had always been in the forefront for counselling and played a pivotal role inspred-

ing awareness and creating a social support mechanism and positive sensitisation through the media.

She said that the government must assure its people, especially women that the health, economic, mental and social aspects of the pandemic will be dealt with and policy framework should include the provision of temporary shelters for women and families away from abusers.

She further informed that as the COVID-19 pandemic raged on, reports of domestic violence upsurged all over the world especially in India and the pervasive spread of the virus had forced domestic violence victims to stay at home with their abusers, leaving them with little options to find any shelter or even solace. She said in abusive households, women had to battle the male aggressor inside and the virus outside.

Prominent other who addressed the webinar were Archana, Mala, Shipra, Prabha, Kusum and several other women activists.

Markets need to follow COVID-19 protocol in view of festival: DIG

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The DIG Police, Pritinder Singh while addressing a meeting with various religious and trade bodies that in view of the festival period the markets need to strictly follow the COVID-19 protocol. He said during Dussehra and then Diwali shopping all will witness massive rush in shops and on roads thus those violating norms will face strict legal action. He advised them to ensure that social distancing and wearing of face mask and use of hand sanitisers was strictly followed.

He said it was the duty of the shopowners to ensure there was no overcrowding in shops and social distancing was maintained. He said it had been decided in principle that

if there was crowd in shops heavy fine will be imposed on the shopowner. He said thermal screening and washing hands with sanitiser was mandatory prior to entering the shop.

He said it had been decided in principle that in case there was an increase in number of people at religious gatherings at one point of time then FIRs will be filed against the organisers and legal action will be taken. He said the police had been asked to ensure strict action and fine on people who do not wear face mask when on roads. He said strict monitoring will be carried out on the roads and markets to ensure that there was no rush.

He advised people to come out of homes if it was essential. He said school will

have to ensure that the students followed the COVID-19 protocol.

WOMAN DUPED: A woman was duped of ₹ 42,000 by cyber crooks on pretext of providing her a job under the Chakeri police station. The victim has lodged complaint with the police which have started investigations. Madhumati of Kailash Nagar, Jajmau, had her account in Jajmau branch of UCO Bank. In her complaint, Madhumati said on August 24, she had received a call on her mobile phone when the caller asked her to deposit ₹ 10 online towards fee for providing her a job in the bank. She immediately transferred ₹ 10 on the link sent by him. Thereafter, ₹ 42,000 were withdrawn in three installments from her bank

account. On receipt of message about the withdrawal of ₹ 42,000 on her mobile phone, she suspected to have been duped. She lodged her complaint with the police and the bank. Station Head Officer Ravi Srivastava said with the help of cyber cell, investigations were on in the matter.

ROAD MISHAP: Two friends of Kailash Nagar were killed after they fell into a 30 ft. deep ditch along with their bike from a culvert on Kanpur-Lucknow highway under Gangaghat Kotwali police station in Unnao on early hours of Saturday. The incident took place when they were returning to Kanpur from Rae Bareilly. On the basis of Aadhaar cards recovered from their possession, police informed the kin of the deceased.

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

and China and does not want the situation to escalate.

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

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

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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



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

Reddy asserted.

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

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

valour and dedication, he said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

Out of the 7,324 adolescents surveyed, 31 per cent admitted to battling extreme anxiety worrying about the pandemic's impact on their family's financial status.

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

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

own mobile phones," the survey found.

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



TMC MPs Nusrat Jahan, Mimi Chakraborty dance to traditional dhakis on Durga Puja Maha Ashtami in Kolkata Agency

Stay vigilant in fight against polio amid pandemic: WHO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

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

world, putting millions of children at risk of diseases like polio, diphtheria, and measles.

The disruption of such routine immunisation services may be unprecedented since the inception of the expanded programme on immunisation (EPI) in the 1970s, in both government and private sectors.

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

The COVID-19 case fatality rate has further declined to



1.51 per cent.

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

Farooq Prez, Mehbooba VP of Gupkar Alliance

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

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

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

erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir as its party symbol.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pak's quadcopter shot down by Indian Army in Kupwara

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Andhra equips farmers with crop advance register to remove middlemen

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Campaign in Kerala for Trump's victory

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

IPL betting racket busted by Delhi cops,

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

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

During the interrogation, the accused revealed they also used betting assistance WMC application on the lap-

top.

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

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

Meghalaya parties urge Centre to resolve disputes with

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

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

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

Assam. Shullai in his letter said that the Centre's earlier decision to resolve border disputes among the northeastern states by 2021 is a perfect step but Assam-Meghalaya border disputes must be solved at the earliest. "There are many patches between Assam and Meghalaya where border disputes are very often causing clashes, tension and hostility among the people living in both sides of the border," the BJP MLA said adding that people in the "disputed areas" are facing hardships.

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

There are at least 12 dis-

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

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

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

The Regional Democratic Alliance (RDA) and Hill State People's Democratic Party

(HSPDP) have recently meet Sangma and suggested the urgent need for Meghalaya and Assam to resolve the border issues between the two states, which has been a major bone of contention among the northeastern states.

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

Meanwhile, after a series of meetings and following the interventions of the Centre, the fortnight long Assam-Mizoram border troubles earlier this week have been tamed as the border hitch took an

ugly turn with around 20 shops and houses being burnt and over 50 people injured in the attacks and counter attacks by the people living along the border on October 17.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also spoke to Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Mizoram CM Zoramthanga several times to defuse the crisis while Union Home Ministry's Joint Secretary (North East), Satyendra Kumar Garg took part in the meetings held in Assam and Mizoram.

Border tussle between Mizoram and Tripura also witness during the past two weeks forcing the two states to deploy additional forces along the borders and promulgated prohibitory orders. **IANS**



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

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

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

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

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

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

During her visit to "Matoshri", Geeta had been



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

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

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

An influential leader from

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

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

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

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

IANS ■ SRINAGAR

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

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

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

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

Maha records 6,417 new corona cases, 137 deaths

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

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

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

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

As 10,004 more people were discharged from various hospitals in the state, the number of people discharged from various hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year went up to 14,55,107.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

PTI

AP arranges buses at Telangana border to facilitate festival travel

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Meanwhile, Venkatramiah justified the

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“It’s a grouping of countries

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

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

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

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

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

In November 2017, India,

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

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

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

September 2019.

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

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

Beijing claims sovereignty over all of the South China Sea.

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

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

I voted for a guy named Trump, says President

AP ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

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

Trump said at a Florida rally



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

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

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

with rallies scheduled in North Carolina, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Oli’s office rejects claims of using Nepal’s old map in PM’s Dussehra greeting

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli has been criticised by netizens for deliberately not using the updated map of Nepal, showing three Indian areas as part of its territory, in his Dussehra greetings, a claim rejected by his office which said the revised map was not visible due to its tiny size.

In June, Nepal’s Parliament approved the new political map of the country featuring Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura which is part of Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand.

In response to the criticism, Prime Minister’s Press Advisor Surya Thapa in a statement claimed that the revised map was used in the prime minister’s message, but was not visible due to its tiny size.

“It is natural for the map to appear in such a manner due to its tiny size but the same map, if enlarged, may clearly show the updated areas,” he claimed.

He also asked the people not to be misled by such pre-planned efforts to spread rumours about the map included in the greetings.

“How can we consider using Nepal’s old map in the PM’s greeting without incorporating Limpiyadhura as a simple error?” asked main Opposition Nepali Congress spokesperson Bishwa Prakash Sharma.

Many people in their social media posts asked why did the prime minister’s office remove the government’s coat of arms from the map which includes Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura.

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“There should not be any confusion that the map used in the greetings is the updated version which was endorsed by Nepal’s Parliament,” Thapa said. The Press Advisor in his press note issued through social media also included an enlarged version of the map, which clearly shows the map which includes all the three territories. The ties between the two countries came under strain after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated an 80-km-long strategically crucial road connecting the Lipulekh pass with Dharchula in Uttarakhand on May 8.

Nepal protested the inauguration of the road claiming that it passed through its territory. Days later, Nepal came out with the new map showing Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura as its territories.

India too had published a new map in November 2019 showing the areas as its territories. After Nepal released the map, India reacted sharply, calling it a “unilateral act” and

□ In June, Nepal’s Parliament approved the new political map of the country featuring Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura which is part of Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand

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

□ Many people in their social media posts asked why did the prime minister’s office remove the government’s coat of arms from the map which includes Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura

cautioning Kathmandu that such “artificial enlargement” of territorial claims will not be acceptable to it.

In its reaction, after Nepal’s lower house of parliament approved the bill, India termed as untenable the “artificial enlargement” of territorial claims by the neighbouring country. India said Nepal’s action violates an understanding reached between the two countries to resolve the boundary issues through talks.

Prime Minister Oli has been asserting that Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura belong to his country and vowed to “reclaim” them from India.

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

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Teens behind latest art damage on Berlin’s Museum Island

AP ■ BERLIN

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

A huge granite bowl in front of the Altes Museum, which is part of the German capital’s museum complex and

houses antiquities, was defaced Friday night by some teenagers and adults, Berlin police said. Two of the suspects were temporarily detained.

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

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

any obvious sign of anyone applying the liquid.

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

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

Poland’s President tests positive for coronavirus

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

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

AP ■ OKLAHOMA CITY

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

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

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

President Donald Trump,

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

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

disasters, scientists are issuing urgent warnings that big cuts in burning oil, gas and coal are needed right away.

Republicans, eager to shift focus away from the president’s handling of the intensifying coronavirus pandemic, say Biden’s plan would cost jobs. Biden “just killed paycheck(s) earned by hardworking families in Texas,” Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, a Republican, tweeted after Thursday’s final presidential debate saw Trump and Biden spell out their worlds-apart stances on climate-damaging fossil fuels.

“Joe just wants to transition away from Texas. Remember that on election day,” Abbott

wrote.

Even some Democrats distanced themselves from Biden’s comment. Rep. Kendra Horn, a Democrat who flipped a Republican seat in Trump-loyal Oklahoma in 2018, tweeted: “We must stand up for our oil and gas industry.”

So did Rep. Xochitl Torres Small, a first-term Democratic congresswoman in a tossup race in New Mexico, in the oil and gas-rich Permian Basin.

“We need to work together to promote responsible energy production and stop climate change, not demonize a particular industry,” she tweeted, adding that she was ready to “stand up to” the Democratic Party.

Big suicide bombing in Kabul kills 18 at education centre

AP ■ KABUL

The death toll from the suicide attack Saturday in Afghanistan’s capital has risen to at least 18 killed and 57 people wounded, including students, the interior ministry said.

The explosion struck outside an education center in a heavily Shiite neighborhood of western Kabul, Dasht-e-Barchi.

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

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

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

with the attack.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CASHBACK OF EXTRA INTEREST ON LOANS SOON: CENTRE

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

“Something concrete has to be done,” a Bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan had said, adding, “Benefits of waivers to borrowers up to Rs 2 crore must be implemented as soon as possible.” The top court, which posted the matter for hearing on November 2, told the advocates appearing for the Centre and banks that “Diwali is in your hand.”

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

“inevitable financial constraints”.

The top court is hearing a batch of petitions which have raised issues concerning the six-month loan moratorium period announced due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Bench, also comprising Justices RS Reddy and MR Shah, said when authorities have decided something then it has to be implemented.

INDIA VOWS TO SAVE HIMALAYAN ABODE OF SNOW LEOPARDS

Similarly, the Gangotri National Park in Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand is home to 15 species of mammals that include some of the rare and endangered species such as snow leopard, ibex, tahr, bharal, Himalayan snowcock and Himalayan monal. The Khangchendzonga National Park is one of the 18 Biosphere Reserves of India situated in the North and West Sikkim districts. And the Namdapha National Park of Arunachal Pradesh is the third largest national park in India, in terms of area and one of the richest protected areas in terms of biodiversity. The park is home to a great diversity

of mammal species including the 4 big cat species that includes snow leopards, clouded leopards, common leopards and tigers along with other large predators such as dholes, wolves, and Asiatic black bears.

KITCHEN BUDGET...

To cool down the price of pulses, the Centre recently released 40,000 tonnes of tur from the buffer stock in open market sale (OMS) in small lots, so that the releases may reach the retail market at a faster pace and help in cooling off rising prices. Dhuli urad is being offered at Rs 79 per kilo for K-18 (stock of kharif-2018), and Rs 81 per kilo for K-19. Similarly, tur is offered for retail intervention at Rs 85 per kilo.

According to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs data for October 24, the maximum price of rice is Rs 55 a kg in Pune and Tiruchirappalli. Wheat is selling at Rs 48 a kg in Nashik. Atta is selling at Rs 55 a kg in Port Blair while gram dal is being sold at Rs 96 in Nashik. Tur and urad dal’s maximum price is reported at Rs 130 a kg in Varanasi and Tiruchirappalli. Moong dal is selling at Rs 138 a kg in Mumbai. As per data, the maximum price of onion is reported at Rs 95 a

FROM PAGE 1

HOME THEATRE

Mirzapur 2 as good or bad as 1



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

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

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

Short & sweet

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

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

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



Worth a watch

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

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

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



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

Of magic and life lessons

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

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

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

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

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

Retelling a classical tale

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

Many of us have either seen or read *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier. Hence, there are no surprises when it comes to the climax or what is to come next. What is different here than the 1940 psychological thriller directed by Alfred Hitchcock is of course the way the two films have dealt with the same story. Then there is the whole black and white as opposed to colour. The chilliness and the cold reserve that played out so brilliantly in the Hitchcock version is totally missing here. There is Laurence Olivier and Joan Fontaine as opposed to Lily James and Armie Hammer. This *Rebecca* leaves you cold, unmoved and somewhat disconnected. Though it is never right nor fair to compare two movies with the same story as a viewer it is difficult to look at this film without doing the unforgivable. However, for those who have not seen the Hitchcock version, it will be a treat to watch the book come alive. While there is no way one can even compare Laurence Olivier and Joan Fontaine characters to Lily James and Armie Hammer's, the latter manage to hold their ground well. James, who has done movies like *Mama Mia*, *Here We Go Again!* and *Cinderella*, plays Mrs de Winter well. But instead of coming off as somebody who is naive and innocent, she comes across as a person who is more curious and we know where that leads. Still one can't ignore her performance here which is delivered well. One however, finds it difficult to understand what her motive is especially when she realises that her husband did kill albeit an accident and covered it up — is it because she realises that she is the only woman her husband loved or it is something entirely different? This *Rebecca* leaves the viewer to interpret the last look of the second Mrs de Winter. A movie to watch if not seen Hitchcock's version. — Shalini Saksena

TELLY TALE

KULFI TURNS HOST

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



entire team has been kind and helpful especially Sugandha *didi*, she has been the best partner to me. I get to learn so many things while shooting for this show since singing is my favorite hobby. In the coming days, I wish to learn the music from Shankar Sir who is the mentor on our show." Gear up to watch a unique show which explores the talent, personality and goofiness of young singing wonders.

THE UNBREAKABLE JODI

Sony SAB's widely acclaimed historical fiction show, *Tenali Rama*, continues to win viewers' hearts by reviving the ancient tales and anecdotes of the legendary scholar and poet Tenali Rama and taking them right into the heart of Raja Krishnadevaraya's Vijayanagar. The show continues to gain immense love and support for its engaging and values driven storyline that offers entertainment across all ages in a family. Talking about the glorious success on television and sharing their experience so far, Krishna Bharadwaj — everyone's beloved Pandit Rama Krishna and Tarun Khanna — the celebrated king Krishnadevaraya, get



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

those few actors."

BEATING THE BLUES AWAY

Given the tough past six months that we have spent during the lockdown, the current festive season is giving a whole lot of positive energy to everyone! Last year during this time, we all were excited and in a festive mood spreading cheer all around. In the same way, Sayantani Ghosh who is currently seen as Rasiya in Colors' *Barrister Babu* & will also be seen in Colors Shandaar *Ravivaar*, misses being in Kolkata for Durga Puja. The actress says she feels nostalgic about being away from all the festivities in Kolkata. However, the popular show *Barrister Babu* and the upcoming two-hour



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

'Interesting to play traditional father'

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

■ What is your role in the show?

The show represents three generations — grandfather, father and son. I play Pratap Ratan Bansal who is the eldest in the family. He lives his life according to what he thinks is right. He doesn't belong to the era where the father is not a friend but someone who needed to be heard when he spoke without being questioned. According to him each relationship is defined and need not be merged. ■ What is the best thing about your character?

It is his quirkiness that is interesting. It is not as if he is in a foul mood all the time. However, the other person may think otherwise. He is a fun person to be with. He has fun with this grandson. But he has a grudge. He wanted his grandson to be a cricketer but he could be one. So, Bansal keeps taunting him about this. But he loves his family. ■ Was it tough to go back to shooting after the lockdown opened?

Yes, definitely. Before the show started its shoot, we had a virtual meeting with a doctor. He told us that while on the sets, we must always think that the person in front of us is asymptomatic. He told us that despite all the precautions the production house takes, we must not let our guard down. But doing this was so tough and scary. When we reached the set, the normal was to hug and greet each other. But on the first day, nobody exchanged more than two lines. Each one of us was scared that more conversation will mean a hand on the shoulder and we had to maintain distance. We avoided talking to each other. It will take time to get things back to normal. ■ You have played the role of a father a few times, how is this different?

The first thing is that I have never played a father who is from the 40s and the 50s. Till now, I had played the role of a progressive father. Here I play a traditional father which is interesting. Also, the way I deliver the dialogues is different, language here is different. The character is Marwari. I don't know anything about the accent or how they behave. ■ You have been in the industry for over two decades now. How have things changed?

Back then there were fewer people in the industry but we managed to get



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

things done. Now, there are a lot more people and jobs are defined. Earlier, a verbal agreement was enough. Now everything has to be done via emails — it has become a corporate set-up now. This could be because there is far more work involved. ■ Does this mean that competition has increased?

Yes, there is competition. But it also means that there is much more work in the industry. Many youngsters now don't have to struggle for work. There is theatre, there is TV, there is web and films that offer all kinds of diverse work. There is no dearth of work today. This means one gets to do varied work. Even cinema has changed. This is because the younger generation has access to more information. ■ You have done TV shows and films. How are the two different when it comes to acting?

There is no difference. For each platform, be it theatre, TV or films, I have always done my work honestly. The only difference is that in cinema, one gets more time to prepare for the character. The director has time to pay attention to how the character needs to go forward. In TV, this is not possible since the director has little time. So here, I have to be prepared 90 per cent before I reach the set. ■ How did your acting career begin?

It began with Marathi theatre. I met Satish Kaushik and ended up doing more theatre. In time, I ended up with a Marathi serial. Since I didn't have any Godfather my previous work propelled me further. Wherever I am today, is due to the people I met in my work and I am grateful to them for it. ■ What are your future plans?

I am working on two shows. One, of course, *Tera Yaar Hoon Main* and the other is *Mere Dad Ki Dulhan* on Sony Entertainment Television. In between, if I get a film, I will do that as well. Also, I love to work with new-age directors. Working on web series doesn't involve too much time since they are finite.



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

At 23. She has seen the worst

Monsoons laden one danger

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



'It's a matter of perception on how to value artwork'

■ What is Nazarband about?

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

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

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

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

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

movies?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

■ You have done theatre productions

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

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

■ Is Bengali cinema changing?

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

■ What next?

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

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



FOR A BEAUTIFUL FAREWELL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"There are some people who

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

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

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

'I shifted to NY to explore international music'

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



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

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

■ Was it tough to get a break?

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

■ Did you train professionally?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hi5 'WE TAKE PLEASURE IN WATCHING THE DARK SIDE OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR'

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

■ What is Footfairy about?

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

■ Why release it on TV?

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

■ Some memories from the sets.

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

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

Mystery and crime thrillers are

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

■ What next?

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

Heart-warming Kiwi hospitality

SHALINI SAKSENA ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

IPLT20.com

DC trapped in Varun's Chakravyuh

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

'Our most complete performance so far'

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

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

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

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

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

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

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

team.

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

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

"He has gelled really well in the team. I think he's been one of the positive stories out of our campaign so far," he said of the man who has been their leading

wicket-taker this season with 12 from 10 matches.



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

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

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

ship.

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

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

RCB look to seal play-off berth

PTI ■ DUBAI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Virat Kohli & Ab de Villiers

IPLT20.com

the table toppers MI and Delhi Capitals.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ DUBAI

Kings XI Punjab made an incredible comeback at the death, taking five wickets in the final two overs to beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 12 runs in an Indian Premier League match here on Saturday.

Chasing a modest 127-run target, SRH batsmen committed 'harakiri' after a solid 56-run opening stand between skipper David Warner (35) and Jonny Bairstow (19) to be all out for 114 in 19.5 overs. The win, their fourth on the trot, kept KXIP in the fray for play-offs as they jumped to fifth spot in the eight-team standings with 10 points from 11 games.

The defeat made life difficult for SRH even though they are mathematically still in with a chance of making the play-offs, but for that to happen they will need to win their remaining three games with good net run rates.

SRH made a brisk start to their chase with skipper Warner and

Bairstow adding 56 runs for the opening stand in 6.2 overs before KXIP bowlers inflicted three quick blows to make a return to the contest. Both Warner and Bairstow soon perished in quick succession before Abdul Samad (7) too failed to rise to the occasion.

After the three quick blows, the going became tough for SRH as KXIP bowlers used the slow conditions to perfection to take the match deep.

SRH's last match heroes, Manish Pandey (15) and Vijay Shankar (26) looked in good nick but both the players struggled to get the ante and departed in the process.

From thereon, SRH batsmen made heavy weather of the chase as KXIP bowlers reduced the equation to 17 runs off the last two overs.

Bowling the penultimate over, Chris Jordan (3/17) dismissed Jason Holder and Rashid Khan in successive deliveries to tilt the match in KXIP's favour. With 14 runs needed from the last over, Arshdeep

Singh (3/23) dismissed Priyam Garg and Sandeep Sharma, and Khaleel Ahmed was run out as KXIP recorded a memorable victory.

Earlier, SRH bowlers produced a clinical performance to restrict KXIP to a modest 126 for seven.

SRH bowlers responded impressively to their Warner's decision to field first, picking wickets at regular intervals to control the innings. KXIP Skipper KL Rahul (27), Chris Gayle (20) Mandeep Singh (17), who lost his father Hardev Singh earlier on Saturday, all got starts but their innings never got going as they failed to grab the momentum.

Even though Mandeep didn't make a significant score, he and Nitish Rana, who made 81 for KKR despite the bereavement of his father-in-law Surinder Marwah, drew appreciation from batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar for their lion-hearted efforts to play the games.

"Loss of loved one hurts, but what's more breathtaking is when one doesn't get to say a final goodbye. Praying for @mandeeps12, @NitishRana_27 and their families to heal from this tragedy. Hats off for turning up today. Well played," tweeted Tendulkar, who too lost his father a day before scoring an emotional unbeaten 140 against Kenya during the 1999 ODI World Cup.

SRH perfectly planned Gayle's dismissal who came at one down. They kept the big-hitting batsman quiet for a long time, consistently bowling wide of the off stump and in the process frustrated him.

Gayle repeatedly tried to force his way out of the shackles but was dismissed by his West Indian teammate Holder (2/27), caught at long-off by Warner with a wide of the stumps delivery in the 10th over.

Rashid (2/14) then went through the defence of captain Rahul in the first ball off the next over as KXIP slumped to 66 for three.

One last chance for Royals

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

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

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

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

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

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



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

@mipaltan

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

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

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

sition.

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

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

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

For Rajasthan, the biggest

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

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

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

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

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

On the bowling front too, RR lack consistency.

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

DUGOUT

MOTION PICTURE



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

@KKRiders



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

@mipaltan



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

@SunRisers



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

@chetans1987

GAME WAS ALMOST OVER IN POWERPLAY

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

POINTS TABLE

		P	W	L	NRR	PTS
1	MI	10	7	3	+1.448	14
2	DC	11	7	4	+0.434	14
3	RCB	10	7	3	+0.182	14
4	KKR	11	6	5	-0.476	12
5	SRH	10	4	6	+0.092	8
6	KXIP	10	4	6	-0.177	8
7	RR	11	4	7	-0.620	8
8	CSK	11	3	8	-0.733	6

Virat most complete player across formats: Root

PTI ■ LONDON

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

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

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

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

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

he's weaker against spin or pace."

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

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

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

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

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



Mendy, Maguire & masterclass

Foden rescues Cityzens from Hammer blow

AFF ■ MANCHESTER/LONDON

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

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

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer sent on Cavani before the hour mark and the 33-year-old striker, who was signed as a free agent on deadline day, almost scored with his first touch for United. Neither side was able to find a winner, with Chelsea sitting sixth in the table and United 15th, though they are only separated by two points.

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

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

Those shots came either side of Azpilicueta — who fea-



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

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

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

Mason Greenwood returned for United as a late substitute and Mendy produced another stunning save to deny Rashford, who produced the

first and only shot on target of the second half in stoppage time.

FODEN RESCUES CITY

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

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

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

last four Premier League games.

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

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

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

"I'm not a guy who can predict the future. We've already dropped seven points, which is a lot," Guardiola said.

"We suffered in the last 10 or 15 minutes of the first half. In the second half we were better and scored early.

"We had the chances we needed to win the game, but unfortunately we couldn't score again. "We've struggled a lot for many reasons. We have to take things game by game and see what happens."

Adding to Guardiola's problems, Sergio Aguero suffered a "muscular injury" according to the City boss, who did not know how long his star striker would be sidelined for.

Aguero hasn't scored in the top flight since January and is notoriously slow to return to his best after injuries.

3 goals, 3 points

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

AFF ■ BARCELONA

R eal Madrid averted a crisis in the best possible way on Saturday by beating Barcelona 3-1 in the first empty Clasico, landing an early blow in La Liga's title race. Barca had the chance to inflict a third consecutive defeat on their rivals and increase the pressure on Zinedine Zidane.

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

Sergio Ramos' penalty and a late Luka Modric goal finished off Barcelona after Federico Valverde and Ansu Fati had traded early strikes in a frantic game that defied those expecting further evidence of two heavyweights in decline.

Barcelona might feel hard done by, especially as Ramos' penalty was awarded after a

check by VAR and a hugely exaggerated fall by Madrid's captain after Clement Lenglet tugged his shirt.

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

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

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

Every Barca set-back is now seen through the lens of Messi's future too. The Argentinian, who failed in his

attempt to leave last summer, has still to score from open play this season.

MADRID REBORN

In the previous week, Real Madrid had lost to Shakhtar Donetsk and newly promoted Cadiz, while Barcelona were beaten by Getafe last weekend.

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

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

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

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

Messi, from almost left-

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

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

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

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

Normal weekend for Robert

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

AFF ■ MUNICH

R obert Lewandowski took his Bundesliga tally to 10 goals in five games this season with a hat-trick as Bayern Munich thumped Eintracht Frankfurt 5-0 on Saturday.

Lewandowski has scored nine goals in his last three league games and wrapped up his treble within an hour at the Allianz Arena.

Defending champions Bayern have scored 22 goals this term — 10 more than league leaders RB Leipzig who stayed top with a 2-1 win over 10-man Hertha Berlin.

Bayern sit one point behind in second place.

In Munich, Leroy Sane marked his return from injury with the fourth goal during a brief cameo, before England Under-17 midfielder Jamal Musiala also came off the bench to net the fifth.

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

Lewandowski underlined his status as one of the world's best strikers last season by scoring a career-best 55 goals in 47 games, including 34 in the Bundesliga.

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

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

minute.

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

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

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

Manuel Neuer pulled off a great save to deny Frankfurt striker Bas Dost before Musiala grabbed the final goal as the visitors suffered their first league defeat of the season.

LEIPZIG FIGHT BACK

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

minute.

Leipzig drew level when defender Dayot Upamecano fired home from a free-kick on 11 minutes, but Berlin were reduced to 10 men after the break when substitute Deyovaisio Zeefuik was shown two yellow cards within four minutes of coming on.

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

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

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

Inter pass Genoa test

AFF ■ GENOA

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

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

The Nerazzurri failed to register a single shot on target in the first half of a league

game for the first time under Antonio Conte, who has been under increasing pressure.

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

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

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

"Today we dominated for 90 minutes, we did well in not conceding goals and for bringing home three points that do us good." The Italian then commented on the importance of teamwork when defending.

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

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जौसरा, भटौलीघाट, मीरजापुर



**नवरात्र एवं विजयदशमी की शुभकामनायें**
घनश्याम साहू
वरिष्ठ नेता
समाजवादी पार्टी, मीरजापुर



**नवरात्र एवं विजयदशमी की शुभकामनायें**
पंकज कुमार पाण्डेय
सद्गुरु फ्यूल सेण्टर
मड़िहान, मीरजापुर



**नवरात्र एवं विजयदशमी की शुभकामनायें**
केशव नाथ तिवारी
प्रबन्धक निदेशक-विन्याचल किसान प्रोड्यूसर कम्पनी लिमिटेड पहाड़ी, बरकछा, मीरजापुर



**नवरात्र एवं विजयदशमी की शुभकामनायें**
अजय ओझा
प्रबन्धक-श्री ज्ञानानन्द इण्टर कालेज पड़री, मीरजापुर



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Dussehra at Kulasekaranpatinam

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

2



4

Season of empowerment

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

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



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

THE RETURN OF DELHI SMOG

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

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

WHAT'S BEHIND THE DELHI SMOG?

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

CONTRIBUTION OF STUBBLE BURNING TO DELHI SMOG

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

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

According to Government's analysis of Delhi

smog during 2019, the contribution of stubble burning was variable, only peaking at 44% once.

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

CASE OF STUBBLE BURNING

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

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

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

SUPREME COURT IN ACTION

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



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



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

ACTION BY EPCA, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND NEIGHBOURING STATES

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

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

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

TOWARDS A SMOG FREE DELHI

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

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

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

STEPS TAKEN BY DELHI GOVERNMENT

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



WHAT'S GRAP (GRADED RESPONSE ACTION PLAN)

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



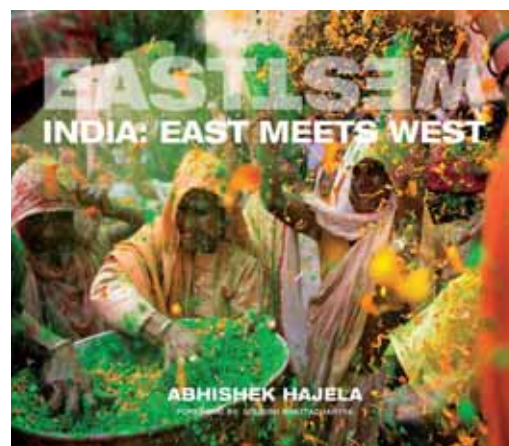
IT'S NOT THAT GOOD
DOESN'T TRIUMPH OVER
EVIL, IT'S THAT THE POINT
SPREAD IS TOO SMALL
— BOB THAVES



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

DUSSEHRA

OF KULASEKARANPATINAM, TUTICORIN



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

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

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

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



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



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



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

Larger than life US elections and Trump's comeback

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

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

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

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

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



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

AP

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

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

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

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

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

In the contemporary times,

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

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

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



MANAN DWIVEDI

PERSPECTIVE

Hard task ahead for charismatic Jacinda

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

AP

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)



MAKHAN SAIKIA

