

OPINION 8
OUTWITTING
THE GENERALS

WORLD 11
NIRAV MODI'S LATEST BAIL
ATTEMPT REJECTED

SPORT 14
ROHIT OUT OF OZ TOUR
WITH HAMSTRING INJURY

LUCKNOW, TUESDAY OCTOBER 27, 2020; PAGES 14 ₹3



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A FILM IS
BEYOND JUST
ACTORS: JIM
13 VIVACITY

India, US discuss ties, China

Defence, Foreign Ministers' talks come day ahead of 2+2 meet today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and the US on Monday reviewed the entire range of strategic and defence ties, besides the growing expansionist behaviour of China during the separate meetings between the Defence and Foreign Ministers of the two nations. The bilateral meetings came a day ahead of the high profile 2+2 ministerial level meeting on Tuesday when the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) will be signed paving the way for the Indian armed forces to access real-time precision data and topographical images from US military satellites.

In both the bilateral meetings that Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had with their counterparts Mark Esper and Mike Pompeo, the common refrain was the growing ties between the two countries and concern over China's aggressive designs in many theatres of the world, including Ladakh and the South China Sea.

In the hour-long meeting between Rajnath and Esper, the two sides reviewed bilateral defence cooperation spanning military to military cooperation, secure communication systems and information sharing, defence trade and industrial issues and also discussed ways to take bilateral cooperation forward. The three Services chiefs and Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat were present during the delegation-level talks.

Earlier, Esper was given a guard of honour at the South Block housing the Defence Ministry.

The two Ministers expressed satisfaction that BECA will be signed during the visit. The US also welcomed Australia's participation in the exercise MALABAR 2020 later this year in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. Four navies, including India, US, Japan and Australia, will take part in the naval exercise. The participation of Australia earlier in 2007 had led to China expressing its reservations.

The signing of BECA will see the US sharing advanced satellite and topographical data for navigation for missiles in the military sphere.

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Defence Minister Rajnath Singh welcomes US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper at South Block in New Delhi on Monday PTI

Covid death rate 1.5%, lowest since March 22

Daily count below 50K
2nd time this month

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

New coronavirus infections reported in India in a span of 24 hours have dropped below 50,000 for the second time this month, while the new fatalities registered during the same period fell under 500 after 108 days.

The Case Fatality Rate (CFR) of Covid-19 has touched 1.5 per cent, the lowest since March 22 while new cases were at 45,148, taking the tally to 79,09,959. India has one of the lowest fatality rates in the world.

Out of the total Covid-19 cases, 6,53,717 are currently active, 71,37,228 have been discharged, while 1,19,014 lost the battle against the pandemic, said an official from the

Union Health Ministry.

"India continues to report a trend of steadily decreasing active cases. Presently the active cases comprise merely 8.26 per cent of the total positive cases of the country standing at 6,53,717. This is the lowest since August 13 when the active cases were 6,53,622.

At least 78 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 10 States/UTs. Karnataka has contributed the maximum to the single day recoveries with more than 10,000 cases followed by Kerala with more than 7,000 cases.

"Similarly, India has one of the lowest fatality rates in the world. The case fatality rate is lowest since March 22 and is continuously declining. 480 deaths have been reported in the last 24 hours in the country," the official said.

With 480 new deaths, the

Covid-19 toll mounted to 1,19,014. According to the WHO, CFR is a measure of the severity of a disease and is defined as the proportion of reported cases of a specified disease or condition, which are fatal within a specified time. There are 14 States and UTs with CFR lower than 1 per cent.

Collaborative efforts of the Union and State and Union Territory Governments have resulted in the strengthening of the health facilities across the country, said the official.

"As many as 2,218 dedicated Covid hospitals are providing quality medical care. Till date, 25 tele-sessions have been held and 393 institutions across 34 States and UTs have participated in them. As a result, there are 14 States and UTs with CFR lower than 1 per cent," he said.

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Be ready for exigency: CDS Bipin Rawat

Troops told to put on hold all peacetime activities at LAC as mark of solidarity

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the troops dig in for a harsh winter in Ladakh against the backdrop of the ongoing stand-off at the Line of Actual Control (LAC), Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat has exhorted the armed forces to be ready for any exigency and put an end to all peacetime activities.

He said with the soldiers

gearing up for a long haul in Ladakh where the temperatures will dip to minus 20 degrees in another few weeks peacetime activities should be curbed as a respect for frontline troops and a mark of solidarity.

As per reports, the CDS also said the situation was not normal with eyeball to eyeball confrontation with China and both the sides ramping up their troop levels besides heavy weapons.

With the whole northern command of the Army and western air command fully deployed to deal with any challenge at the 1,700 km long LAC in Ladakh, Rawat urged the

three services to refrain from ostentation and peacetime activities like playing golf during the festival season.

These reports came on a day when the Army Commanders commenced their brainstorming session here to review the situation in Ladakh. The four-day conference will see Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Army Chief General MM Naravane, Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh and IAF Chief RKS Bhaduarua besides Rawat addressing them on Tuesday.

The commanders will also try to plug gaps if any in guarding the entire 4,000 km

long LAC stretching from Ladakh in the west to Arunachal Pradesh in the east since the face-offs started in early May.

The operational preparedness and logistical back up for troops to perform effectively during the harsh winters will also be discussed. The Army has adequate stocks of winter clothing, food and prefabricated huts to face the winters and the conference will review seamless supply chain to sustain the troops. India and China have deployed over one lakh troops on the LAC since the stand-offs started.

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Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 79,40,120

DEATHS: 1,19,403

RECOVERED:

71,85,076

ACTIVE: 6,34,283



STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	16,45,020	43,264	14,60,755
Andhra Pradesh	8,08,924	6,606	7,73,548
Karnataka	8,05,947	10,947	7,19,558
Tamil Nadu	7,11,713	10,956	6,71,489
Uttar Pradesh	4,72,068	6,902	4,38,512
Kerala	3,97,218	1,353	3,02,017
Delhi	3,59,488	6,312	3,27,390
West Bengal	3,53,822	6,546	3,10,086
Odisha	2,82,695	1,312	2,66,105
Telangana	2,31,834	1,311	2,11,912
Bihar	2,12,705	1,058	2,02,007
Assam	2,04,386	908	1,88,584
Rajasthan	1,88,048	1,853	1,69,962
Chhattisgarh	1,75,959	1,818	1,50,398
Gujarat	1,68,081	3,693	1,54,222
Madhya Pradesh	1,67,969	2,890	1,47,566

CAPSULE

INDIA PROBES LOW-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE DUMPING



New Delhi: India has started a probe into the alleged dumping of low-density polyethylene from six countries, including Singapore and the US, following a complaint by an industry association.

COAL SCAM: 3-YEAR JAIL FOR EX-MIN DILIP RAY

New Delhi: A Delhi court Monday awarded 3-year jail term to former Union Minister Dilip Ray in a coal scam case pertaining to irregularities in the allocation of a Jharkhand block in 1999, saying white collar crimes are "more dangerous" than ordinary ones because of the "damages inflicted on public morale"

WB GUV SHARES AILING EX-CM'S PIC, SLAMMED

Kolkata: CPI(M) on Sunday criticised West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar for uploading photos of ailing former Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee on social media, saying that it was "unethical".

SC keeps in abeyance stubble fire panel as Centre steps in

Laws to deal with air pollution soon, Govt informs SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday kept in abeyance its October 16 order appointing one-man panel of retired apex court judge Justice Madan B Lokur to monitor the steps taken by neighbouring States to prevent stubble burning, which is a major cause of pollution in the Delhi-NCR.

A bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde passed the order while considering the Centre's stand that it is coming out with a comprehensive legislation to deal with air pollution, including the aspect of stubble burning.

"The only issue is people are choking because of pollution and it is something which must be curbed," said the

bench, also comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the bench that the Centre has taken a "holistic view" of the matter and the draft of the proposed law on curbing pollution would be submitted in the apex court within four days.

In its October 16 order, the top court had ordered deployment of National Cadet Corps, National Service Scheme and Bharat Scouts and Guides for assisting in the monitoring of stubble burning in the agricultural fields of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi-NCR, saying all it wants is that "people of Delhi-NCR can breathe fresh air without any pollution".

During the hearing conducted through video-conferencing on Monday, Mehta told the SC that coming out with a proper legislation to deal with the issue is a "welcome step".

Continued on Page 11

High-octane Bihar 1st ph poll campaign ends

Vote on Oct 28 in 71 Assembly constituencies; 6 Ministers' fate to be decided

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rival political parties and their top leaders were busy wooing voters until the last hours on Monday as the hectic campaign for 71 Assembly constituencies across six districts of Bihar that will vote on October 28 in the first phase of the Assembly elections ended with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD)-Congress-Left alliance seemingly giving a tough challenge to the BJP-JD(U)-led ruling National Democratic alliance (NDA).

The Opposition RJD is contesting 42 seats — the most number of seats in the first phase of polling by any party followed by JD(U) 35, BJP 29, Congress 21 and the Left parties 8.

In the 2015 Bihar Assembly poll, 49 Assembly segments of 10 districts went to poll in the first phase that witnessed a turnout of 57 per cent.

The political fortunes of over half-a-dozen Cabinet ministers in the Nitish dispensation like Prem Kumar, Ram



BJP MP Manoj Tiwari leaves in a chopper after an election campaign rally ahead of Bihar Assembly polls in Kaimur district on Monday PTI

Narayan Mandal, Jai Kumar Singh, Krishna Nandan Verma, Shailesh Kumar, Santosh Nirala, Vijay Kumar Sinha and Brij Kishore Bind will be decided in this phase. So will be the fate of former Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi, who is contesting from Imamganj Assembly constituency as an NDA candidate this time round.

The war of words between Chief Minister Nitish Kumar

and Opposition RJD leader Tejashwi has already become acrimonious in the last few days with the two rivals exchanging barbs over unemployment, law and order and development issues.

Kumar stepped up attacks against the RJD by accusing it of taking the State backwards and failing to maintain law and order and exhorting people not to bring back the old days when kidnappings, murders

and massacres were commonplace.

Tejashwi, whose public rallies attracted huge crowds, did not spare Kumar saying, "Nitish has no more energy left and people are tired of listening to his hackneyed and boring speeches. A tired Nitish is running away from reality, reasoning and facts. He is now looking at the stale pages of history by ruining the present and future of millions of youths".

The role of Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) under Chirag Paswan has added another flavour in the polls with the party, which is not part of the NDA now, is opposing JD(U) while backing the BJP, giving rise to speculation whether it is playing as a B-team of the BJP with an eye on the post-poll scenario.

The LJP, which is contesting 143 seats in Bihar, is fighting the first phase with the slogan "BJP se bair nahin, Nitish teri khair nahin". Its main tagline for campaign is "Bihar First, Bihari First".

Continued on Page 11

RS: BJP names 8 for UP seats

New Delhi (PTI): The BJP on Monday announced its eight candidates for the Rajya Sabha polls from Uttar Pradesh and one from Uttarakhand.

Earlier this month the Election Commission had announced elections to 10 Rajya Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh and one in Uttarakhand, falling vacant on November 25.

With the BJP having 304 members in the Uttar Pradesh assembly, the November 9 election for the ten Rajya Sabha seats from the state may turn out to be a nearly one-sided affair for the party, feel poll analysts. The BJP's all eight nominees for Rajya Sabha from Uttar Pradesh are likely to win as the party has the three-fourth majority in the state assembly. The BJP's candidates for Rajya Sabha polls from Uttar Pradesh include Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri, party's general secretary Arun Singh and Neeraj Shekhar. All three are sitting MPs.

Besides them, other five candidates are Geeta Shukla, Haridwar Dubey, Brijlal, BL Varma and Seema Dwivedi.

SC rejects TN plea for 50% OBC quota in medical seats in current session

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday rejected the interim prayer of Tamil Nadu and the AIADMK for grant of 50 per cent quota in medical seats surrendered by the State in all India quota for undergraduate, postgraduate and dental courses for the 2020-21 session.

A bench comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao, Hemant Gupta and Ajay Rastogi dismissed the interim prayer made in the pleas for implementation of 50 per cent quota for the current academic year. The Tamil Nadu Government and the AIADMK have challenged the Madras High Court order of July 27 on the limited point by which it had cleared the decks for OBC reservation under All India

Quota (AIQ) medical seats in non-central institutions and gave the Centre three months' time to take a decision on the percentage.

The State Government and the ruling AIADMK party in their limited point had sought relief saying that the HC had not specified that the OBC quota should be implemented in the current academic year itself. The Centre has contended that it would not be practically feasible to implement the 50 per cent quota in the current academic year.

The high court had held that on principle there is no legal or constitutional impediment for extending the benefit of reservation to OBC in the state surrendered AIQ seats of the UG/PG medical courses in the state-run medical colleges

within Tamil Nadu, subject to any further directions or orders of the apex court.

It had disagreed with the contention of the Medical Council of India that permitting reservation in AIQ seats would compromise merit and said that the argument gets diluted as NEET examinations are now clearly designed to allow only such candidates to be admitted, who secure a minimum merit.

"Thus, application of any reservation rule, be at the instance of the state specific law or as per any reservation policy framed by the central government for AIQ seats will not affect merit," the high court had said. It had, however, restrained itself from passing a mandamus

Continued on Page 11

MP HC order for virtual rallies for bypolls stayed

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the Madhya Pradesh High Court order asking parties to conduct their campaign for the November 3 Assembly bypolls virtually instead of holding physical rallies due to Covid-19.

A bench headed by Justice AM Khanwilkar asked the Election Commission of India (ECI) to take an appropriate decision with regard to political rallies keeping in mind Covid-19 guidelines.

The bench said the high court must have felt that situation on ground was not changing.

"Taking overall view of the subject matter, we stay the

operation of the impugned judgment..., but direct the Election Commission of India to consider the issues referred to in the impugned order(s) and proceed in the matter in that regard in accordance with law appropriately," the bench said. It is not expressing any opinion either way on the merits of the process to be adopted or about the decision to be reached by the ECI, the bench said in its order.

The top court said all contentions available to the parties are left open as also to approach the ECI in respect of any other issue concerning the ensuing elections, to ensure free and fair election.

The bench issued notice and sought response within six

weeks from the PIL petitioner before the High Court on the plea.

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for ECI, said it is following all the directions issued by the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) and its own norms for conduct of polls amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The bench told Dwivedi that ECI must ensure that elections are held as per the laws and it may stay the high court order but the poll panel will have to act as per the law, so that the situation on the ground changes. "We will stay the high court order and will leave the issue to the ECI to ensure that everything is done as per the law," the bench observed.

2 founders among 3 leaders quit PDP over Mehbooba's utterances on national flag

PNS ■ JAMMU

The Peoples Democratic Party suffered a big blow in Jammu as three of its senior leaders, including two founding members, forwarded their resignation letter to party chief Mehbooba Mufti claiming that her recent utterances regarding the national flag have "hurt patriotic sentiments".

In a joint letter to Mehbooba, former PDP MP TS Bajwa, Ved Mahajan and Hussain Ali Waffa said, "We feel uncomfortable and suffocated, forcing us to take a difficult decision of leaving the party." Waffa, is a former PDP state secretary, and Mahajan a

former MLC.

In her first press conference after over 14 months of detention, Mehbooba on Friday had said she was not interested in contesting elections or holding the tricolour till the constitutional changes enforced on August 5 last year were rolled back.

The PDP leader had also said that she would hold the tricolour only when the separate flag of the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir was restored. The Centre on August 5 last year had abrogated the erstwhile state's special status and bifurcated it into union territories of Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Continued on Page 11

PM to hold virtual dialogue with Svanidhi beneficiaries from UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold a virtual dialogue with beneficiaries of 'PM Street Vendors Atmanirbhar Nidhi Scheme (Svanidhi Scheme)' from UP on Tuesday.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, UP Urban Development Minister, Ashutosh Tandon, Urban Development Minister of State Mahesh Chandra Gupta, Chief Secretary of UP and other senior officers will also be present on the occasion.

The scheme was launched on June 1, 2020, by the Central Government to help street vendors and hawkers resume their livelihood impacted by COVID-19.

In a creditable performance in implementation of the scheme, Uttar Pradesh has disbursed loans to 2,59,147 beneficiaries by October 26, 2020. Over 6 lakh applications were submitted by the vendors while loans have been sanctioned to as many as 3,62,785 vendors. To avail the benefits of the scheme, over 6.40 lakh applications were submitted by the street vendors in UP.

According to Deepak Kumar, Principal Secretary of Urban Development Department, there are 3,050 registered vending zones in the 651 Urban Local Bodies (ULB) of the state and in these zones, over 7.78 lakh vendors have been identified. While the state has over 6.68 lakh registered vendors, the government has issued certificates to 4,70,923 vendors. Over 4.77 lakh I-cards have also been issued to these vendors to ensure that they can carry on with their business smoothly and without any hassles.

Bheem Army chief alleged attack on his convoy, case registered

Lucknow (PNS): An FIR was registered against unnamed persons in connection with alleged firing at Bheem Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad in Bulandshahr, police said on Monday.

"There were reports in media about shots being fired at Azad Samaj Party's Chandrashekhar Azad, the occurrence of the incident has not been established. A ruckus erupted between workers of Azad Samaj Party and AIMIM on Sunday," disclosed Bulandshahr SSP SK Singh while talking to local media persons.

"Another FIR registered, based on a complaint of AIMIM leader Dilshad Ahmad that he was attacked," added SSP Singh.

Earlier Bheem Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad Ravan was allegedly attacked, late on Sunday night, when he was returning after addressing a rally in Bulandshahr district. Azad said that the convoy he was travelling in had been fired upon. "Opposition parties are terrified of our candidate in Bulandshahr elections and Sunday rally worried them, due to which my convoy was fired at in a cowardly manner. This shows their desperation... they want the atmosphere to be toxic but we will not let this happen," Chandrashekhar Azad tweeted late on Sunday night.

Azad, who is also the convener of Azad Samaj Party, said his convoy was fired at when members were campaigning for the upcoming by-election. It is not clear whether he himself was present during the incident since the Bheem Army chief was scheduled to address a rally in the district. The incident comes days ahead of the November 3 Bulandshahr by-election.

The by-polls in Uttar Pradesh for seven seats, including the Bulandshahr one, mark the political debut of the Bheem Army which has, till now, remained a quasi-political outfit. Chandra Shekhar has named Haji Yamin as his party's candidate for the Bulandshahr bypoll and his Azad Samaj Party is contesting as many as 30 seats in Bihar under the Progressive Democratic Alliance (PDA) banner, which is led by Jan Adhikar Party of Rajesh Ranjan aka Pappu Yadav.



NOTICE

I have changed my name from Mohd. Azeem Khan to Azeem Khan. In future I shall be known as Azeem Khan S/o Shareef Alam, 99/8 A, Vishwakarma Nagar, Kanpur-208021.

NOTICE

It is reported that in some documents the names of my son (Aryan Gupta) and my wife (Sheela Devi) are written as Aryan and Aryan Gupta and Sheela and Sheela Devi respectively. In fact Aryan, Aryan Gupta and Sheela, Sheela Devi are both same individuals. In future it is to be regarded that my son and my wife should be identified with the names of Aryan Gupta and Sheela Devi respectively. Laxmi Narayan S/o Lt. Ram Ratan Gupta, R/o 71, Balabh Nagar, Orai, Dist. Jalaun-285001 U.P.

Street vendor to interact with PM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Vijay Bahadur, a street vendor from Chowk, is a happy man because he will be the only vendor from Lucknow to be interacting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi through video-conferencing at a programme organised at LMC headquarters on Tuesday. Vijay is one of the beneficiaries of a Central government scheme. He got a loan of Rs 10,000 under the micro-credit scheme, especially for street vendors.

Vijay, who will be sitting along with his wife and two sons (Akhilesh and Shiva), said it was the first time in his life that he would be talking to such an important person. "I have a *thela* puffed rice and gram (*laiyya-chana*) in Chowk where I live too. I have been running this cart for the last 15 years," he said. On whether he was briefed by LMC regarding his interaction with the PM, he said he had no briefings. "I have prepared a list of all the possible questions which the PM is likely to ask me, such as how I secured the loan, what was the process and if I faced problems during lockdown," he added.

He said he faced a lot of problems during lockdown. "It was difficult to manage two square meals,

The scheme aims at facilitating working capital loan up to ₹ 10,000 at a subsidised rate

IN A CREDITABLE PERFORMANCE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHEME, UTTAR PRADESH HAS DISBURSED LOANS TO 2,59,147 BENEFICIARIES BY OCTOBER 26, 2020. OVER 6 LAKH APPLICATIONS WERE SUBMITTED BY THE VENDORS WHILE LOANS HAVE BEEN SANCTIONED TO AS MANY AS 3,62,785 VENDORS



Vijay Bahadur

but we got some help when the government distributed ration kits. Now, with the loan which I have got, I will get the raw material for my business," he said, adding that he earns Rs 6,000 to Rs 7,000 per month.

LMC officials said three street vendors had been short-listed and Vijay was selected for the interaction.

The scheme aims at providing benefits to street vendors or hawkers in urban, pre-urban and rural areas. It needs to be mentioned that seven cities of UP find a place in the list of top 10 cities of the country with the latest addition of Ghaziabad and Kanpur.

While Varanasi, Lucknow and Aligarh are the top three cities in the list, other cities of the state include Prayagraj (4th), Gorakhpur (5th), Kanpur (8th) and Ghaziabad (9th). Other Indian cities in the list are Indore (6th), Bhopal (7th) and Hyderabad (10th).

ODOP Virtual fair to conclude on Tuesday

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The country's first One District, One Product (ODOP) virtual fair has been a huge success and will now continue till Tuesday, according to an official statement.

The fair, inaugurated by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on October 19, was widely promoted on online platforms like Facebook and Google by the ODOP Cell, FICCI and MSME Department.

The fair aims to provide Uttar Pradesh's traditional products a platform at the national and international level and help craftsmen, artisans and traders get a new identity. A state government has organized such a fair for the first time amid the pandemic.

"As many as 1,000 buyers from 35 countries participated in the ODOP virtual fair. In addition, more than 700 ODOP artisans have set up their stalls in the fair. More than 24,000 people logged on to the ODOP site and more than 40,000 people have registered their presence in the fair. A total of 47,273 business cards were awarded during this time. With this, attendance of about 7,000 people was recorded in the online auditorium of the virtual fair," said an official statement.

"The virtual fair has proved to be a boon for traders facing recession in the time of coronavirus. The ODOP virtual fair allows traders to market their products online and sell products on the appropriate platform. The fair organised by the Uttar Pradesh government attracted not only consumers but also buyers from all over the world," Amit Gupta, Head, UP State Council FICCI, said.

Meanwhile, the chief Minister's commitment towards the artisan community has revived the '*ghunghroo*' (anklet bells) industry in Etah district.

The ghunghroo industry had been pushed into oblivion but the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme has led to its revival.

The state government has succeeded in taking talent and hard work of the artisans of Etah to international forum. The demand for ghunghroos from Etah is now coming from countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, UAE and Iraq, along with African countries.

Jalesar town in Etah district is mainly known for the production of the finest quality brass bells or ghunghroo.

Shakshi Maharaj stokes controversy again

Lucknow (PNS): Known for making controversial statements, BJP MP Shakshi Maharaj alleged that Hindus were facing "injustice" as Muslims had larger graveyards in villages.

The BJP from Unnao, while campaigning for the Bangarmau assembly bypoll on Sunday, said the size of graveyards and cremation grounds available in a village should be as per the population of the communities living there. Bangarmau is one of the assembly segment falling in Unnao Lok Sabha constituency. "Anupat ke adhar pe qabristan aur shamshaan hona chahiye (graveyards and cremation grounds should be as per the population)," said the MP. "Even if there is a single Muslim in the village, the qabristan is very large. But you (Hindus) cremate your dead in the farms or in the Ganga. Is this not gross injustice," Sakshi asked. A video of the speech by the controversial BJP MP, often accused of divisive comments, was widely shared on social media. It is not clear in what context Sakshi made the comments. Sakshi further said that the Hindu community's patience and decency should not be tested. While campaigning for the UP Assembly polls in 2017, prime minister Narendra Modi had suggested discrimination under the then ruling Samajwadi Party and said that if a graveyard was made in a village, it should also have a cremation ground. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is scheduled to address a meeting in Bangarmau constituency on Tuesday, which was vacated after the conviction of BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in a rape case.

Lucknow to have 65-foot tall statue of Atal

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 65-foot tall statue of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee will be installed at the Prerna Sthal in Lucknow, which was also his Parliament constituency. Sources said that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the proposed Atal Rashtriya Prerna Sthal in LDA's Basant Kunj scheme has been agreed to by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Atal Rashtriya Prerna Sthal is now being finalised for the installation of the statue. After

approval of the DPR, the government has sent it to the Finance Department. After concurrence of the Finance Department, the Authority will start the tender process related to its construction. For the initial works, the government has already approved '50 crore in the budget. Preparations have also been made to build a rally venue at the Atal Rashtriya Prerna Sthal in about 30 acres. This rally venue will be 'green' rather than of concrete. It has also got the consent of the Chief Minister.

Covid: Recovery rate improving

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh registered 1,814 fresh cases of COVID-19 in a day which took the infection tally in the state to 4,72,075 on Monday, while the death toll rose to 6,902 with 21 more people succumbing to the disease during the same period, officials said. The number of active cases in the state has come down to 26,652 while the number of people who have recovered and have been discharged from hospitals has gone up to 4,38,521, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad said here on Monday. With this, the recovery rate has gone up to 92.89 per cent while the fatality rate was 1.46 per cent, he said, adding the number of active cases have been declining for the past 39 days. On Sunday, over 1.12 lakh tests for the detection of COVID-19 were done taking the total number of tests carried out so far in the state to over 1.41 crore, Prasad said. Appealing to people to continue taking all necessary precautions against coronavirus, Prasad it was important to ensure that there is no second wave like being seen in many countries.

Meanwhile, 257 persons tested positive for coronavirus in Lucknow on Monday while 269 patients recovered. The new patients included 29 from Rae Bareilly road, 28 from Gomtinagar, 25 from Indiranagar, 19 from Alambagh, 16 from Chinhat, 14 from Aliganj, 13 from Chowk, 11 each from Madaion, Ashiyana & Sarojininagar, and 10 each from Mahanagar, Talkatora, Jankipuram & Vikasnagar.

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Regd. & Corporate Office: Kamla Tower, Kanpur-208 001 (U.P.)

NOTICE

It is hereby notified that Share Certificate No. 42235 for 15 Equity Shares bearing Distinctive Nos.42964359 to 42964373 standing in the sole name(s) of Sham Sunder Gupta of Ludhiana issued by the Company is reported lost. Any objection for issuance of duplicate share certificate must be filed with the Company within 15 days from the date of publication of this Notice, failing which duplicate share certificate will be issued without incurring any liability for the said issue.

For J.K.Cement Ltd. (Shambhu Singh) Asst.Vice-President (Legal) & Company Secretary

Place : Kanpur Date : 26.10.2020 M.No:FCS 5836

ईमानदारी अपनाओ नया समाज बनाओ

सतर्कता जागरुकता सप्ताह 27 अक्टूबर से 2 नवम्बर, 2020

सतर्क भारत-समृद्ध भारत

'जीरो टॉलरेंस' नीति के तहत भ्रष्टाचार के विरुद्ध जन-जागरुकता का महाअभियान

हमारा संकल्प

- भ्रष्टाचार मुक्त व्यवस्था
- पारदर्शी, निष्पक्ष एवं न्यायोचित प्रशासन
- लोक सेवा के प्रति संवेदनशील

भ्रष्टाचार की शिकायत के लिए कॉल करें

हेल्पलाइन नं. 9454401866 | कन्ट्रोल रूम नं. 0522-2304937

सतर्कता विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

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Girl found hanging in parlour

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 20-year-old beautician was found hanging at her beauty parlour in Sushant Golf city (SGC) police station area on Monday afternoon. The girl, identified as Komal of Ambedkarpuram under PGI police station, ran a beauty parlour from her house. Around 2:30 pm on Monday, she was found hanging at the parlour and was rushed to Medanta Hospital where she was declared brought dead. Police sent the body for autopsy and started further probe.

In another incident, a 52-year-old vegetable vendor was found hanging at his house in Aliganj on Sunday morning. As per reports, Sriram Sahu of Aliganj (Sector-C) was found hanging from an iron grill with a shawl tied around his neck. Police said the man was spotted hanging by his wife Anju. The police did not get any suicide note from the scene.

Meanwhile, a computer operator working with the police headquarters at Signature Building in Sushant Golf City, consumed some poisonous substance at his house in the area on Monday.

Identified as Sachin Yadav (28) of Azamgarh, he was staying at a flat in Jahnnvi Enclave. He had returned to the flat on Sunday evening. On Monday, his family members called him, but the calls

went unanswered. Later, they called police. A police team reached there and broke open the door, only to find Sachin lying dead on the bed with foam-like substance oozing out of his mouth. The police sent the body for autopsy and started further investigation.

WOMAN FOUND MURDERED

An unidentified woman, aged around 35 years, was found murdered in Kakori on Monday. As per reports, some residents spotted the body lying on the roadside at Narayanpur turn in the morning and they alerted the police.

There were deep cut wounds on the throat and head, and the deceased was clad in a kurta and a pair of leggings. She was also wearing three rings in different fingers.

The police tried to ascertain the identity of the deceased, but in vain. They said the woman was murdered somewhere else and the body dumped in Kakori. “The police did not find much blood on the spot. Her clothes and ornaments were intact, and thus the possibility of murder for loot was feeble,” a spokesman said. The police sent the body for autopsy and started further investigation.

FATAL FALL

A youth fell off the second floor of his house in Gomti Nagar police station area and died later. The

Contractor shoots self

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 46-year-old contractor shot himself at his house in Chowk on Monday afternoon. He left a suicide note in which he had written that he was taking the step on his own and no one should be held responsible for it.

The deceased was identified as Vikrant Khanna of Kaliji Bazaar lane. The SHO said Vikrant separated from his wife in 2008 and was staying with his younger brother Nitin Khanna. “Around

1:30 pm, Vikrant shot himself with his licenced revolver at his house and was rushed to KGMU Trauma Centre where he was declared brought dead,” he said.

He added that the police were investigating the case to find out if there was any foul play. He said a suicide note was recovered and Vikrant had written that he had got fed up with his life and did not want to live any longer. “He ended the letter with Jai Bhola,” the SHO said.

deceased was identified as Mahip Barnwal (25) of Siddharth Nagar. He was staying at the house of his uncle in Vinay Khand.

Reports said Mahip was preparing for chartered accountancy exams. Around 10:50 pm on Monday, he had dinner with his family and reached the second floor of the house. A little later, he fell down and was rushed to Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences where he died during treatment.

However, doctors at the hospital could not ascertain if Mahip fell down or jumped off.

FIRE

A fire broke out at the office of

Skill Development Mission Centre in ITI premises in Aliganj on Sunday afternoon. As many as nine fire tenders were pressed into service and the flames were doused.

As per reports, some of the ITI inmates spotted fumes emanating from the office and alerted the police. A team of police and fire-fighters reached the scene but the fire had engulfed the offices on the first floor by then.

More fire tenders were summoned and firemen had to work hard to douse the fire. Police said the firemen had to break the window panes of different chambers and cabins during the operation.

Devotees bid adieu to Goddess Durga

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

No major *visarjan* processions were taken out as devotees bid adieu to Goddess Durga on Monday. Bengali women took part in ‘sindoor khela’ as they applied vermilion (collected from Durga idols) to one another.

Head of Lucknow Durga Puja Visarjan Samiti Rupesh Mandal said a total of 140 idols were immersed at Jhulelal Ghat by the evening, including 57 from various committees and the remaining of ‘Maa Sherawali’ from various *jagrans* held across the city. He added that 16 small idols were immersed at Laxman Mela ground.

“At Jhulelal Park, we had made three *kunds* — two used for smaller idols and one bigger idols. There was one big idol of six feet which was immersed with the help of a crane. *Kunds* are periodically cleared and filled with more water so that idols can be immersed properly,” he said.



He added that *visarjan* went off smoothly as people moved out in small groups.

He said 100 idols of *jagran puja* were immersed on the day of

Dussehra. “It was good that some idols were immersed on Sunday too, otherwise it would have been a lot of pressure on the ponds on Monday,” he added.

Redressal of people’s problems priority: LDA VC

Lucknow (PNS): District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash, who has assumed additional charge as Lucknow Development Authority Vice-Chairman, said on Monday that priority would be given to redressal of public grievances at the earliest.

Addressing officials and engineers of LDA, he said immediate attention needed to be paid to people’s problems and efforts should be made for redressal.

He stressed on the need to maintain transparency, especially on money transaction and routine expendi-

ture. He also reviewed the ongoing and proposed projects. He said best quality building material should be used. He said he felt the proposed projects should be launched as scheduled and completed within deadline.

He appeared dissatisfied with the conditions prevailing at the head office and pulled up the sanitation staff for poor upkeep of the campus. He said collective efforts should be made to boost revenue and properties be maintained so that people were not at the receiving end of hardships.

Corona graph plateaus, but stress on caution

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The coronavirus graph in Lucknow has plateaued at 300 cases per day, but health officials said it could be hard to tell if it would go down further. A senior official at CMO office said the thrust of containment activities continued to be on monitoring of patients under home isolation and contact tracing.

Regarding the carelessness setting in among people during the time of festivals, he said the CMO teams’ visits to areas like Faizullahganj and other areas revealed that people were roaming around without masks. “Even small shopkeepers were not wearing masks. We appealed to mask up and practise social distancing as the pandemic is not over and it is important to prevent the spread of infection,” he said. He added that the district administration was carrying out enforcement activities and IEC had upped the awareness campaign.

Officials said there was a considerable decrease in the number of active Covid cases, which were more than 9,000 at the start of September but came down to less than 4,000 now, although the death rate remained the same.

District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash, along with CMO Dr Sanjay Bhatnagar, inspected ERAs Lucknow Medical College and Hospital and issued directions for improved services for patients. The DM told mediapersons that monitoring of private hospitals was aimed at ensuring quality treatment and taking feedback from patients. “These visits are made to ensure that patients get proper treatment. We want to minimise the number of deaths in the district. We also discussed how the virus could be contained in the coming months,” he said.

Meanwhile, SGPGIMS, under the directives of UP minister Suresh Khanna, has initiated a series of programmes on medical ethics. A programme was conducted through video-conferencing on ‘Covid-19: Ethical conduct during the festive season’.

Ways to avoid the surge of coronavirus infection during the season of festivals were discussed in the programme. The minister said people look up to doctors in distress and it was the duty of healthcare workers to serve them with ethical conduct.

Additional Chief Secretary, Medical Education, Rajneesh Dube talked about the importance of ethics in medicine and said values should be inculcated in medical students for ethical practice. SGPGIMS director Dr RK Dhiman said mask is the only vaccine at present.

Faculty incharge, Bioethics Cell of SGPGIMS, Dr Vinita Agrawal moderated the session and said keeping everyone safe was a collective responsibility. Executive registrar, SGPGIMS, Dr Soniya Nityanand said ethical behaviour is involved in safeguarding and protecting patients. Participants joined the programme from within the institute and from more than 52 medical colleges of UP.

Meanwhile, 56 per cent patients of Rajdhani Covid hospital rated the services as excellent while 32% as good and 11.2% as satisfactory and 0.8% as unsatisfactory. Forms were distributed amongst the patients and the feedback was taken from 88 of them.

She said they had also received appreciation letters from distinguished ministers, civil servants and MPs for the excellent services.

Plant shopping centre inaugurated

Lucknow (PNS): A plant shopping centre has been set up near gate number 2 of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University by the Horticulture and Beautification department. It was inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor Acharya Sanjay Singh.

“This shop has been opened with a view to providing good quality seeds, plants, compost, manure and other gardening accessories to people at reasonable rates,” the VC said.

Meanwhile, under the ‘Mission Shakti’ initiative of UP government, various programmes based on women empowerment were organised from October 17 to 25 by Committee for Basic Facilities for Women, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan Team, Gender Champion Committee and NCC unit of BBAU. The purpose was to make women aware and empowered as well as to ensure the participation of women in the society. A poster competition was organised on the theme ‘Safe women, safe India’ while a slogan competition on ‘Strong women, strong nation’ and rangoli competition on ‘Social empowerment of women. Students from various departments of BBAU participated in the competition.

“We have seen the perseverance and the fighting spirit of the street vendors and hawkers during the trying times of Corona. Our government is constantly taking steps to ensure financial support to them.”

- Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi

Prime Minister

Narendra Modi

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with

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In august presence of

Yogi Adityanath

Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

Ashutosh Tandon 'Gopal Ji'

Minister, Urban Development

Urban Holistic Development, Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation Programme Department, Uttar Pradesh

Mahesh Chandra Gupta

Minister of State, Urban Development

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MISSION ROJGAR

Urban Development, Urban Holistic Development, Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation Programme Department, Uttar Pradesh

Seven sadhus injured in road mishap

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Seven ‘sadhus’ were injured as their car overturned after colliding with a road divider in Kannauj on Monday. They have been admitted to a nearby hospital for medical assistance.

The accident took place near Amolar village after one of the tyres of the car they were travelling in burst while they were coming from Rajasthan for taking a holy dip in Ganga river.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has taken cognisance of the incident and directed senior officials to reach the spot and provide all the necessary help, said the Chief Minister’s Office (CMO).

Meanwhile in another tragic incident, three persons were killed and two injured when a speeding car hit them in Budaun on Sunday. According to reports, the incident took place on the Moradabad-Farrukhabad road near Kunar village in Budaun’s Wazirganj area. Reports said that a few morning walkers were hit by the speeding car as it went out of control. According to Sankal Sharma, SSP, Budaun, cops have seized the car and the driver has been arrested. A case has been registered and further investigations are underway.

According to ASP (Rural) Siddharth Verma, the incident took place in the early morning when Yogendra (21), Sachin (19), Jugan (20), Devpal and Rahul, who aspired to join the Army, were running on the road when the car hit them. While Yogendra, Sachin and Jugan died on the spot, Devpal and Rahul have been admitted to the district hospital, where their condition is stated to be stable.

The bodies of the victims have been sent for post-mortem. After the young boys were hit by the car, the family members of the victims attempted to block traffic on the road. The police reached the spot and brought the situation under control.

Govt to construct 5,000 warehouses

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

UP government will construct 5,000 godowns in rural areas. The scheme has been launched to facilitate storage of the agriculture produce in villages. One warehouse is proposed to be constructed for every ten villages in the area.

The scheme will not only help farmers in saving their produce from the vagaries of nature , it will also help farmers to get remunerative price of the agriculture produce as they will not be forced for distress sale for lack of storage facilities.

The government also aims to strengthen the basic infrastructure of the state. The ₹ 2,500 crore scheme will increase the storage capacity of the state by 8.60 lakh MT and will also come as a relief for the famers who face a lot of problems at the time of selling their produce.

For the fear of their produce getting destroyed, most of the farmers are forced to sell their produce at very low prices and the businessmen and middlemen exploit such situations. With the facility of storage, farmers can keep their produce safe and can sell them at a better price in the market later.

Construction of warehouses will be



an effective step towards increasing the income of the farmers and it will come as a boon especially for the small and medium farmers of the state. Besides storing the seasonal food grains procured by the government, the farmers can also store their produce in the warehouses. Besides increasing the income of the farmers, the warehouses will also create numerous employment opportunities for the rural youths as there will be requirement of caretakers, accountants, security personnel, supervisors, etc.

Kidnapped iron trader ‘rescued’

Baghpat (PTI): An iron trader who was allegedly kidnapped for ransom from Badaut here on Monday morning was rescued from the jungles of a village later in the day, police said.

The kidnappers fled after seeing large police deployment, they said.

Aadesh Jain left his residence in Khatri Gadhi locality for his shop at Bhagwan Mahaveer Marg around 5 am but did not return. His family later informed the police that they received a call asking for a ransom of Rs 1 crore, the police said.

The trader was rescued from the jungles of Ratoul village, they said. Jain, who was produced before the media, said the kidnappers told him that they had mistakenly kidnapped him.

Addressing the press conference, ADG, Meerut zone, Rajiv Sabharwal said the kidnappers fled after seeing the large deployment of police personnel.

“We have received some inputs about them through which we are trying to nab them,” he said.

District borders with Meerut, Ghaziabad, Muzaffarnagar and Sonapat in Haryana were sealed soon after getting the information of kidnapping, he added. Earlier in the day, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra took to Twitter to slam the Yogi Adityanath government over the law and order situation in Uttar Pradesh.

Along with her tweet, the Congress general secretary in-charge of Uttar Pradesh tagged a media report about the kidnapping of the iron trader.

“An iron trader was kidnapped in Baghpat this morning. Women are not safe in UP. Traders are not safe. Children are not safe. Those in government make hollow speeches in election meetings. Fear prevails in public,” Priyanka Gandhi tweeted in Hindi.

Gangwar starts process to build 100-bed ESIC Hospital in Bareilly

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar has initiated the process of building a 100-bed Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) hospital by performing Bhoomi Punjab ritual on Sunday at his constituency Bareilly.

Notably, Gangwar is an eight-time Member of Parliament.

“Bhoomi Pujan of 100-bedded new ESIC hospital, Bareilly, was done by Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour and Employment on Sunday,” the labour ministry said in a statement.

During his address, Gangwar hailed and expressed gratitude for the efforts of central as well as state governments and also district administration for realising the dream into reality of medical needs of the people of his constituency.

In the statement, he also said this hospital will now ease the difficulties of IPs, who are insured persons of ESI scheme run by ESIC, and beneficiaries as earlier they had to either travel to AIIMS, Delhi or Lucknow for higher (level) medical treatment.

The minister has also announced that the facilities of this ESIC hospital will be made available to common people by charging nominal user fee.

He further said this hospital will be turned into a model hospital in future.

According to the statement, the construction of this hospital will be done on a plot area of 4.67 acres with an estimated cost of Rs 90 crore.

It will prove to be beneficial about 2 lakh ESI beneficiaries of Bareilly and nearby areas.

This hospital will be



equipped with may state-of-the-art facilities such as minor OT, resuscitation room, casualty ward, fracture clinic and X-ray. The ESIC is a social security organisation providing comprehensive social security benefits like reasonable medical care and a range of cash benefits in times of need such as employment injury, sickness and death.

The Employees’ State Insurance Act applies to premises or precincts where 10 or more persons are employed.

The employees drawing wages up to ₹ 21,000 a month are entitled to health insurance cover and other benefits, under the ESI Act.

Today, it is covering about 3.49 crore of family units of workers and providing matchless cash benefits and reasonable medical care to its 13.56 crore beneficiaries.

In 1952, the corporation had only 21 dispensaries with no ESI hospital. Currently, its infrastructure has increased manyfolds with 1,648 dispensaries or AYUSH units and 159 ESI Hospitals, 793 branch and pay offices, 43 dispensaries-cum-branch offices, and 64 regional and sub-regional offices.

The ESI scheme is today stands implemented in 566 districts in 34 states and Union territories of the country.

फाइल सं० : 26(1)/Estate/2020-21

राष्ट्रीय शर्करा संस्थान

आईएसओ 9001:2015 प्रमाणित संस्थान

उद्योगात्मक मामले खाद्य एवं सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्रालय (खाद्य एवं सार्वजनिक वितरण विभाग) (भारत सरकार)

कल्याणपुर, कानपुर, दिनांक: 26.10.2020

तिथि विस्तार सूचना

संदर्भ: 26(1)/Estate/2020-21 दिनांक 18.09.2020

"Boring of tube well of size 6" and depth 300 feet (approx.)" हेतु दिनांक 19.09.2020 को समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशित निविदा सूचना के क्रम में निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 06.11.2020 तक विस्तारित की जा रही है। विस्तृत विवरण संस्थान की वेबसाइट www.nsi.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है। अन्य शर्तें अपरिवर्तित रहेंगी।

(**डॉ. जाह्नव सिंघ**)

सहायक आचार्य शर्करा प्रयोगिकी एवं वरिष्ठ प्रशासनिक अधिकारी

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, असोसियाटेड-अन्वेस्टकरनगर वृत्त, लोअरनोवि०, असोसियाटेड

पत्र संख्या : 5251/2 घाता अन्वेस्टकरनगर/2019-20 दिनांक : 14.10.2020

निविदा सूचना (ई० टेण्डरिंग)

1- उपर्युक्त में महाविद्यालय परिसर में आवासीय भवन की ओर से अधीक्षण अभियन्ता असोसियाटेड-अन्वेस्टकरनगर वृत्त, लोअरनोवि०, असोसियाटेड द्वारा जलक निर्माण किया जा रहा है। ई० एच० टी० सी० में जलक बनाने के लिए निविदा सूचना एवं अनुबंधित केबलिंग से उपर्युक्त जलक को जल प्रदायक से जोड़ा जा रहा है। निविदा सूचना के क्रम में निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 06.11.2020 तक विस्तारित की जा रही है। विस्तृत विवरण संस्थान की वेबसाइट www.nsi.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है। अन्य शर्तें अपरिवर्तित रहेंगी।

(**डॉ. जाह्नव सिंघ**)

सहायक आचार्य शर्करा प्रयोगिकी एवं वरिष्ठ प्रशासनिक अधिकारी

प्रधान कार्यालय, निदेशक मत्स्य विभाग, 30प्र० लखनऊ

पत्र संख्या-4759/रा०कृ०वि०यो०/2020 दिनांक-23 अक्टूबर, 2020

सार्वजनिक सूचना

राष्ट्रीय कृषि विकास योजनान्तर्गत मत्स्य पालन हेतु संचालित परियोजनाओं हेतु आनलाइन आवेदन का आमंत्रण

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि मत्स्य विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश हेतु वित्तीय वर्ष 2020-21 हेतु राष्ट्रीय कृषि विकास योजना के अन्तर्गत मत्स्य विकास की लामार्थीपरक परियोजनायें संचालित की गयी हैं जिसके लिए अनुमत्य शासकीय अनुदान का लाभ लेने हेतु इच्छुक व्यक्तियों से विभागीय पोर्टल <http://fymis.upscd.gov.in> पर आनलाइन आवेदन दिनांक 21.11.2020 के सायं 05.00 बजे तक आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। आवेदनकर्ता उक्त विभागीय पोर्टल पर स्वयं अथवा जनसेवा सूचना केन्द्र के माध्यम से पोर्टल पर अपना आवेदन कर सकते हैं। योजना हेतु मार्ग निर्देश उक्त विभागीय पोर्टल एवं विभागीय वेबसाइट <http://fisheries.upscd.gov.in> पर उपलब्ध हैं जिसमें लामार्थी की पात्रता एवं अनुदान सीमा का उल्लेख किया गया है।

1. शासन से अवमुक्त धनराशि के सापेक्ष प्रथम चरण में सामान्य वर्ग के लामार्थियों को आश्चर्यित किया जायेगा।

2. वर्ष 2020-21 के लिए योजनान्तर्गत चिन्हांकित परियोजनाओं/गतिविधियों का संक्षिप्त व सांकेतिक विवरण निम्नवत् है :-

क्र.सं.	परियोजना का नाम	इकाई लागत	परियोजना का क्षेत्र
1.	मत्स्य पालन हेतु निजी क्षेत्र में तालाब निर्माण कर जलजीव पालन (Promotion of Aquaculture by Increasing Coverage area through Establishment of Private Ponds)	₹0 8.50 लाख प्रति हेक्टेयर	प्रदेश के सभी जनापद
2.	आगरा एवं अलीगढ़ मण्डल में शिम्प कल्चर हेतु नये तालाब का निर्माण। (New pond construction with shrimp culture in Agra and Aligarh Division)	₹0 10.00 लाख प्रति हेक्टेयर	जनपद मथुरा एवं अलीगढ़

परियोजनाओं के सम्बन्ध में अन्य जानकारी हेतु मत्स्य विभाग के सम्बन्धित जनपद/मण्डल स्तरीय कार्यालय से अथवा टोल फ्री नं०-18001805661 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

(एस०के०सिंह)

उप० 156322 दिनांक-24.10.2020, विभाजन वेबसाइट www.upgovt.in पर उपलब्ध है। निदेशक मत्स्य, उप०, लखनऊ।

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ DIVISION

Tender Notice No: 4320202021 E-Tender Notice Dated: 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 up to 13:30 hrs. on 18.11.2020. The details of the Tender are as under:

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Name of Work	Approx. Cost (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Completion Period	Date of Opening of tender	Eligibility Criteria for Similar work
1.	137	Switch and crossing renewal by TWS and WCMS in DDU-PRYJ section and miscellaneous work related to lifting of track by track machine (along with T/outs) in the section of ADEN/CAR.	349.65 Lakh	3,24,800/-	18 Months	18.11.2020	P. Way work
2.	138	Miscellaneous work related to Lifting of Track by Track Machine (along with T/outs) in, DDU-PRYJ Section of ADEN/MZP	396.04 Lakh	3,48,000/-	18 Months	18.11.2020	P. Way work

Note: - (1) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on website www.irps.gov.in up to 13:30 hrs. on the due to 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 entry in any other form/ letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. (4) The supplier/ contractor of goods and /or services would be subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. (5) Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (6) This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. (7) Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. (8) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (9) Tender on line can be submitted up to 13:30 hrs. on 18.11.2020. (10) E-Tender Form will be issued free of cost to all tenderers. (11) The tenderers shall submit a 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.

1129/20 (AN)

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in © CPNCR

Minor girl ‘kidnapped’ from UP, rescued in Bhopal

Lalitpur (PTI): An express train with an ‘abducted’ minor girl was made to run non-stop on Monday for more than 200 kilometres from Lalitpur railway station here till Bhopal with police there in waiting to catch hold of the kidnapper, who eventually turned out to be the child’s father.

Police said the father apparently had a fight with his wife and left home with their three-year-old girl around 3 am on Monday. The couple’s home is said to be close to the Lalitpur station.

It appears that the girl’s mother had all along known that her husband had taken away their daughter.

Yet, the mother informed the

RPF jawans posted at the Lalitpur railway station in the early hours on Monday that her child had been ‘kidnapped’ and the ‘kidnapper’ had boarded one of the trains to escape, Lalitpur Superintendent of Police (SP) Capt MM Beg said.

On going through CCTV footage, it was found that one person with the girl was boarding Rapti Sagar Superfast Express which had just left for Bhopal, the SP said, adding that RPF personnel informed their inspector at the Jhansi Junction who in turn informed the operating control room at Bhopal and requested the train be allowed to run non-stop to avoid the ‘kidnapper’ from escaping.

Counselling and Guidance Cell of LU inaugurated

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Counselling and Guidance Cell (CGC) of Lucknow University was inaugurated on Monday by Vice-Chancellor AK Rai, former UP Chief Secretary Alok Ranjan and IIM-Lucknow director Archana Shukla.

The topic of the keynote address of the inaugural session was ‘Mental healthcare and support: Perspective of NEP 2020’. The opening remarks of were given by CGC director Madhurima Pradhan, who highlighted the mission and vision of the cell and welcomed the speakers to share their thoughts on the need of counselling and guidance for students.

Rai talked about how big a challenge mental health issues are posing for people, especially students. He underscored the importance of institutions such as CGC to guide students towards wellbeing. He extended full support to the department of Psychology to make this initiative a success.

Ranjan talked about the extreme stress faced by students in their endeavours to achieve success and how it results in frustration and disappointment. He said intelligence is not just limited to cognitive ability but it has different dimensions.

“The goal of Counselling and Guidance Cell is to identify and develop inner creative abilities of students. In the present times, emotional and spiritual intelligence has been considered far more superior than cognitive skills and intelligence for maintaining positive mental health. It is the duty of parents and teachers to teach their children and students how to accept failures in life and learn from them and keep moving forward,” he said.

The IIM-L director stressed on the role of parents. She said parents should not impose their own dreams on children. She said mental health practitioners and policy-makers focus should not just be on the mental health of students but also that of teachers.

“Priority should also be on upskilling teachers and guiding students, not just for achievement but also for fulfilment. Teachers’ wellbeing is important because they are the medium through which the noble objectives of the new education policy can be implemented,” she said.

बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda

Zonal Stressed Asset Recovery Branch, Prayagraj
19-A, Dwarka Bhawan, 1st Floor, Tagore Town, Prayagraj-211002

बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda

NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

"APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]

E- Auction sale notice for sale of immovable assets under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso of rule 6(2), 8(6) & 9 of 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 properties mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor, the Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda secured creditor, will be sold on **"As is where is, As is what is", and "Whatever there is"** basis for recovery of below mentioned account/s The details of Borrower/s/Guarantor/s/Secured Assets/s/Dues/Reserve Price/E-auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below:

Date & Time of Auction: 04.12.2020, 02:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) shall be paid online through i.e. NEFT/Transfer (After generation of Challan from <https://www.mstcecommerce.com>) in bidders Global EMD Wallet. Global Wallet must contain sufficient fund equivalent to EMD amount before the scheduled auction date

Sl. No.	Name & Address of the Borrowers/Guarantors	Description of Immovable Properties	Total Dues	Date & Time of Property Inspection	Reserve Price /EMD/ Bid Increase Amount
1.	Borrower(s):- M/s Seth Srinivas Agarwal Memorial Samiti, Through its President- Smt. Maya Devi Agarwal, (1)- Smt Maya Devi Agarwal, President of- M/s Seth Srinivas Agarwal Memorial Samiti, (2)- Mr. Sudhir Kumar Agarwal, Vice President of- M/s Seth Srinivas Agarwal Memorial Samiti, (3)- Mr. Sunil Kumar Agarwal, Member of- M/s Seth Srinivas Agarwal Memorial Samiti, (4)- Mr. Sushil Kumar Agarwal, Secretary of- M/s Seth Srinivas Agarwal Memorial Samiti, (5)- Mr. Devang Tayal (Treasurer), All Resident of 339 Vishnupuri, Kanpur, Pin-208002. Guarantor:- (1)- Mr. Sunil Kumar Agarwal, (2)- Mr. Sushil Kumar Agarwal, (3)- Mr. Sudhir Kumar Agarwal, (4)- Smt Maya Devi Agarwal, (5)- Mr Devang Tayal, (6)- M/s Tayal Pipe Industries, All Resident of- 339 Vishnupuri, Kanpur, Pin-208002.	Property No- (1)- Equitable Mortgage Of College Land and building situated at Plot No- 833 AB, 834 & 850 at Village- Baghdaudi Kachhar, & Pagahi Kachhar, G.T. Road, Tehsil & District- Kanpur vide Original Sale Deed dated 31.08.1987 in the name of Sri Niwas Agarwal Regd. In the office of Sub- Registrar- Unnao in Book No.1 . Vol. 1001, Page No. 88 to 90 at Sr. No. 4965 on 11.12.1987 and Memorial Samiti, Bounded as below:- East- Plot No. 978,972, & 970, West- Plot No. 835,836 & 845, North- Plot No. 830, 831 & 832, South- Plot No. 849,851,897 & 898. Property No- (2)- Equitable mortgage of land situated at Plot No.153-Ka,155-Ka, 907 M1, 908, 913, 920, 1008, 1009, 1011 & 1012 at Village Baghdaudi Kachhar, Tehsil & Dist- Kanpur in the name of Mr. Sudhir Kumar Agarwal, Mr. Sushil Kumar Agarwal, Mr. Sunil Kumar Agarwal and Mrs. Maya Devi Agarwal vide original Sale Deed dated 31.08.1987 in the name of Sri Niwas Agarwal Regd. In the office of Sub- Registrar- Unnao in Book No.1, Vol. 1001, Page No. 88 to 90 at Sr. No. 4965 on 11.12.1987, Bounded as below:- (RHS from Kalyanpur to Mandhana G T Road NH 91, Khasra No. 153 Ka, 155 Ka, 907,908,913 & 920), North- Khasra No. 638, South- Khasra No. 902,903, 904, East- Khasra No. 943,944,945, West- Samiti Land. (RHS from Kalyanpur to Mandhana G T Road NH 91, Khasra No. 1008, 1009, 1011 & 1012), North- G.T. Road, NH 91, South- Railway Line, 904, East- Khasra No. 1007, West- Junction of G.T. Road & Railway Line. Property No- (3)- Equitable Mortgage Of Land situated at Plot No.13K and 833 Ka at Village- Baghdaudi, Kachhar ,Pagahi Kachhar, Tehsil & Dist- Kanpur owned by M/s Tayal Pipe Industries Vide Original Sale Deed dated 26.02.1990 in the name of M/s Tayal Pipe Industries Regd. In the office of Sub- Registrar- Kanpur in Book No.1, Vol. 349, Page No. 45 to 54 at Sr. No. 30192 on 03.05.1990 and original sale deed dated 10.09.1987 in the name of Tayal Pipe Industries Regd. In the office of Sub- Registrar, Kanpur in Book No. 1, Vol. No. 4450, Page No 396 to 398 at Sr. No. 17900 with musanna 17991 on 15.03.1988, Bounded as below:- (Plot No 13K)- North- Land of Village Sandila, South- Road, East- Road, West- Plot No.12, (Plot No. 833 Ka)- North- Arazi No. 830, South- Remaining Part of Arazi No. 850, East- Remaining Part of Arazi No.833, West- Arazi No 835. Property No- (4)- Extension of equitable Mortgage Of House No 4/248-B(4-A), Vishnupuri, Kanpur in the name of Smt. Maya Devi Agarwal W/o Late Sri Niwas Agarwal vide Original Lease Deed dated 25.08.1987 executed in favour of Maya Devi Agarwal Regd. In Book No.1, Vol. 645, Page No. 129, Additional Folio Book No. 1, Vol. No. 659, Page No. 204 to 224 S. No. 588 with duplicate No. 589 on 20.11.1987 (This property is also mortgaged in the credit facility granted to M/s Krishna Spun Pipe works at Bank of Baroda, Tilak Nagar Branch, Kanpur), Bounded as below- North- 80 Ft. Road, South- Bungalow of Sri J.P. Srivastava, East- Bungalow of Sri J.P. Srivastava, West- Plot No.28.	Amount Outstanding as on 27.06.2020 (inclusive of interest up to 29.04.2015) ₹ 3,60,73,738.63 (Three Crore Sixty Lakhs Seventy Three Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Eight and Sixty Three Paise only + Interest charges) and other expenses w.e.f 30.04.2015.	27.10.2020 to 03.12.2020 Between 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM	₹ 11,63,27,000/- (RP) ₹ 1,16,33,000/- (EMD) ₹ 1,00,000/- (Bid Increase Amount)
				27.10.2020 to 03.12.2020 Between 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM	₹ 5,25,51,000/- (RP) ₹ 52,55,500/- (EMD) ₹ 1,00,000/- (Bid Increase Amount)
				27.10.2020 to 03.12.2020 Between 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM	₹ 1,49,00,000/- (RP) ₹ 14,90,000/- (EMD) ₹ 1,00,000/- (Bid Increase Amount)

Status of Possession:- Symbolic

Note: Notice for sub statutory 30 days sale notice under Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6) of the SARFAESI act. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Bank of Baroda secured website i.e., www.BankofBaroda.in/e-auction.htm & <https://ibapi.in>. Also, prospective bidders may contact the authorized officer on Mobile No. 9554951670, 7984127855.

Date : 27.10.2020 Place: Prayagraj

Authorized Officer, Bank of Baroda

106 COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 106 new COVID-19 patients have been detected in the district on Monday, increasing the total number of cases to 16,525. The day also saw two more deaths, increasing the toll to 265. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 73 patients. Out of them, 72 have been recovered from home isolation and one from the hospital, increasing the number to 12,668 and 2,804 respectively. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 15,472, leaving 788 active cases. The recovery rate in the district is 93.62 per cent, while mortality rate 1.59 per cent.

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 3,152 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 3,07,320 and the results of 1,374 are awaited. Out of them, 2,90,821 were negative, while 16,499 positive. The total number of samples collected was 3,24,703. Earlier, two males aged 70 and 72 from Sudamapur and Phulwaria respectively succumbed to COVID-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital (SSH), Banaras Hindu University (BHU).

With the addition of six new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,283 including 246 red zones. Six green zones have been converted into red zones again. There are 2,037 green zones with seven new ones.

Earlier, for safety, respect and self-confidence of women under the 'Mission Shakti' campaign being run in the district on the direction of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Amit Pathak, the girls/women of various schools / colleges and public places in different police station areas were made aware by giving information about the helpline numbers (112, 1098, 1090, 181, 1076, 108, 102) issued by the government through posters / banners / pamphlets / audios / video clips on Sunday. A total of 6,098 women / girls were mobilised at 223 places by Mission Shakti Police Team. Besides, 2,772 leaflets were distributed and a total of 963 women / girls were sensitised by the Anti-Romeo Squad while checking at a total of 75

places. Action was taken against 16 persons under Section 151 CrPC while four each under Sections 107/116 of CrPC and MB Act, eight under 34 Police Act, four under Section 290 of IPC and three under Section 188 of IPC apart from issuing warnings to 95 others.

Besides, the police of various police stations arrested as many as 35 persons under Section 151 of CrPC, while challaned under Section 188 and took action under Section 51 of Disaster Management Act against eight persons. During checking at various points, 1,063 vehicles were challaned and 13 seized. Apart from this, ₹ 44,800 were realised from 48 vehicles while ₹ 37,250 from 950 persons for moving on the roads without wearing masks.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

This is good news for the residents of the Prayagraj city. Samples of suspected patients of corona were tested, but the report was also very relieving. In the last 24 hours report, only 88 new corona infected patients have been found. Not only this, it is also a good thing that not a single corona patient lost his life on the festival of Dussehra. Such a shortage of corona patients came in the month of July.

On July 23, 98 corona positives were found. Since then, the number of patients increased and the sequence continued till October. Recently, on October 18, there was also a shortage of corona patients in which 98 patients were found positive. Now once again the Health department has breathed a sigh of relief. Similarly, in 24 hours, 155 infected patients got free from corona infection, all of which were now fully healthy.

The number of corona patients has increased to 23,284 while the number of active

cases has decreased to 1,351. Dr. Rishi Sahai, the Nodal Officer for COVID-19, said that those who got infected included Swaroop Rani Nehru Covid Hospital orthopedist, teacher of Army Public School New Cantt, a bank manager and other prominent people.

Meanwhile, the deadly virus hit three people on Saturday night, while 108 new cases have been reported on the same day. In addition, 147 people have become infection free. Of these, 20 people were discharged from different hospitals, while home isolation of 127 people was completed.

CMO Dr GS Bajpai said that with the findings of 108 new cases on Saturday, the total number of corona infected in the district had increased to 23,196. Of these 21,466 people had become infection free. 1418 cases were active. Of these, 199 people were admitted in different hospitals, while 1319 patients were in home isolation. As on Saturday, the number of people recovering was higher than those who were newly infected.

The Health department and the district administration are breathing relief as corona cases continue to decline. The CMO said that it was pleasant that corona cases are decreasing in the district. But, vigilance is still being done completely.

Those who got infected on Saturday included Block Development Officer (BDO) of Jasra, Chief Engineer of Power Grid Corporation, Dhanupur Village Development Officer, Medical Officer of CHC Shankargarh, a doctor of private hospital, Branch Manager of Bandhan Bank at Chowk, Superintendent of MNNIT, an Engineer and High Court advocate. The Health department has prepared a list of those who came in contact with these infected persons and conducted a test for COVID-19. Nodal Officer for Corona, Dr. Rishi Sahai said that a survey will be conducted in the vicinity of the infected people. Any suspect found will be tested.

On Saturday, two elderly men, including a woman, succumbed to corona. The woman

was a resident of Dhoomanganj.

While both of the elderly were from Allapur and the other was from Naini Industrial Area.

All three were admitted to Swaroop Rani Nehru Hospital for treatment. The funeral was held at Phaphamau after their death.

According to Dr. Rishi Sahai, the Nodal Officer for Corona, the elderly of Allapur was 86 years old. While the second patient was a 69-year-old elder of the Naini Industrial Area. Both had fever, shortness of breath, lung infection.

The elderly of Allapur also had problems with sugar, BP. In addition, a 59-year-old woman from Dhoomanganj had trouble breathing. All three were undergoing treatment at SRN Hospital.

All three died at different times. According to Health department data, the total number of people who died from corona in the district has increased to 312 due to the death of three more people on Saturday.

Effigies of Ravana burnt at many places

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

To mark the victory of good over evil, the effigies of 'Demon King' Ravana were burnt at many places to celebrate the festival of Dussehra (Vijayadashmi) here on Sunday evening but the occasion lacked its grandeur as it was generally seen on this auspicious occasion in the previous years. It was a rare occasion in the recent past, when in the name of festival just formalities were done to maintain the tradition as in view of worldwide coronavirus pandemic, the famous festival of Vijayadashmi at some places including in Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW) which attracted gathering of huge crowds was suspended this year.

However, at some places including at Mahavir Mandir Crossing (Orderly Bazar), the people burnt the effigy of Ravana and during the burning some participants also burnt the posters of Pak Prime Minister and Chinese President. They held the China responsible for spreading COVID-19 across the world which claimed the lives of several lakh people. They also said that Pakistan continued trying to give its patronage to terrorist organisations. Though Ravana Dahan programmes were organised on



Effigy of Ravana being burnt at Mahavir Mandir crossing on the occasion of Vijayadashmi in Varanasi on Sunday evening

small level, Mahavir Mandir crossing attracted the gathering of hundreds where the people could not maintain social distancing.

Besides, on the occasion of Vijayadashmi, Shastra Puja programme was organised under the auspices of Bajrang Dal (Kashi Unit) at a lawn in Nariya (Lanka). After offering prayer to Goddesses Durga, Kali and Aprajita, they also recited musical Sundarkand Path. The programme ended with yagya havan. Speaking on the occasion, city chief of

Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) Kanhaiya said that the purpose of the programme was to highlight the rich cultural heritage of the country. Sundarkand Path was held under the leadership of Dhiraj while Shastra puja was led by Satya Prakash Singh. The function was presided over by Shashikant Singh, while attended by Harinath Singh, Asish Srivastava, Ranjeet, Rajesh, Manish and Sumit.

Shastra Puja was also organised under the auspices of Swarnkar Kshtriya

Committee which is organising the programme since 1954. In the beginning, committee chief Kishore Kumar Seth offered puja which was followed by Durga Saptasati Puja by priests led by Pt Mithilesh Shukla and then traditional puja of Shastra (arms) was held.

The function was also attended by Saroj Seth, Vinod Kumar Seth, Shyam Sundar Singh, Ravi Saraf, Krishna Kumar Seth, Murli Manohar Singh, Kailash Singh Vikash and Kamal Kumar Singh.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The fervour of Durga Puja was dampened this year owing to COVID-19 threat, and so was the idol immersion ceremony. Following the guidelines a good number of Puja organisers preferred not to erect huge attractive pandals like previous years, and organise Ghat Shapana only. However, some of the Barwaris installed Durga idols for four days and performed the traditional puja. As per the guidelines, the size of the idols was a bit smaller and the organisers were not allowed to hold community feast (Bhog).

The Barwaris started idol immersion from Sunday evening itself which continued even on Monday. Hindi date Dashmi started from Sunday afternoon and continued till Monday.

The district administration had not created a make-shift pond on the Ganga bank here near the Sangam like previous years, and the Barwaris were asked to take the idols to Andawa pond in the trans Ganga area. The Bengali associations objected to it initially, but they were given no option other than taking the idols to Andawa.

SHARDIYA NAVRATRI COMES TO AN END: The Shardiya Navratri came to an end here on Sunday. Durga Puja pandals were also crowded at different places in the city in Navratri. Security arrange-



Idol of Maa Durga being immersed in a pond in Prayagraj

Pioneer

ments were also put in place everywhere. People worshiped the Goddess Durga by following the rules of COVID-19. They also shouted 'Jay Sharda Maiya Ki'. The entire atmosphere was reverberated with religious ambience. Puja pandals continued to resonate with devotional songs. Children, elderly, youth all indulged in devotion to the Goddess Durga.

People were not allowed inside the Durga Puja pandals without masks. Puja Committee officials were posted at the main gate along with police personnel at all places

including South Malaka, Rambagh, Bai Ka Bagh, Netnagar, Indian Girls College. The hands of people coming to Durga Puja pandal were sanitised. In Rambagh, masks were also being distributed to those who came without masks. Devotes were allowed into the puja pandal after they were made beeline outside the puja pandal.

Durga puja committees had put up banners on the main gate regarding COVID-19. It was written that 'Do Gaj ki Doori Mask Hai Jaruri' (two yards' distance and wearing a mask is necessary). People

were being made aware to prevent corona infection through loudspeakers. Special emphasis was placed on maintaining physical distance.

A bhandara was held on Sunday at the Samia Mai temple on Beli Road. A large crowd gathered here. People accepted the offerings of the Maa Durga and started cheering the goddess. Similarly a bhandara was also organised at Bai Ka Bagh, Netnagar. Bhandara took place in South Malaka, but the prasad was distributed here through a packed packet.

Idols of Goddess Durga immersed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

With the immersion of dozens of idols of Goddess Durga at different ponds here on Monday, the Durga Puja came to an end and at all the puja pandals of Bangiya Samaj, the women of Bengali families did the traditional rituals of Sindur Khela and then gave an emotional Vidai (farewell) to Maa Durga. The immersion of most of the idols was done during the day as due to Sunday, most of the puja committees avoided to do the same a day ago. During the immersion procession, the committees avoided to invite crowds in view to maintain COVID-19 guidelines.

Earlier, on the auspicious occasion of Navmi and the last day of Shardiya Navratri, Kanya Pujan programmes were organised at different places in



Women offering rituals before taking out of immersion procession at Jim Sporting, Bhelupur in Varanasi on Monday

Pioneer

the city here on Sunday. At some places such programmes were also held on occasion of Asthmi. In majority of houses, the devotees who observed nine-day vrat also completed the same offering meals to

some unmarried girls.

Like the previous years, the programmes of Kanya Pujan and Bhairav Pujan were held at Baba Kinaram Ashram in Ravindrपुरi on the occasion of Navmi. Under the guidance

of Pithadhishwar of Kri-Kund Baba Siddharth Gautam, the Kanya Pujan was performed maintaining social distance and following COVID-19 guidelines, various articles and meals were offered to nine girls. Bhairav Puja was conducted by Acharya Prakash and Sangeeta Singh. Among those who were also present were Arun Singh, Gunjan, Nanaji, Virendra, Navin, Golu, Anshu, Dabbu, Govardhan, Mintoo, Fagu and Abhishek.

Apart from this, scores of devotees thronged Siddhidhatri Devi temple at Golghar in Bulanal area on the auspicious occasion of Navmi, the last day of the Shardiya Navratri. Besides, as usually heavy rush was also seen throughout the day at Durga Mandir (Durga Kund). Rush of devotees was also seen at all other temples of goddess.

Police seize 4 stolen motorcycles

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Sarnath police claimed to have arrested an autolifter and seized four stolen motorcycles from his possession here on Sunday. According to information when Puranapul out-post incharge Mithilesh Kumar was checking vehicles at Panchkosi crossing he received information about the presence of an autolifter in Nakhhi ghat areas. Later, responding quickly, the police team reached there. When a person tried to escape after seeing police signal, he was caught and the police seized a stolen bike from his possession. Later, the police also seized three more stolen bikes kept at a lonely place behind Panchkosi Mandi on the information given by arrested autolifter Mohd. Imran, who has a criminal history as a case against him is pending



Sarnath police arrest an autolifter in Varanasi on Sunday

Pioneer

with Sarnath police.

Meanwhile, Chetganj police registered a success in arresting a chain snatcher who was involved in snatching the necklace of a woman near Lahurabir Baba Mandir recently. The chain snatcher was arrested from the timber

market of Chowkaghat on Sunday and the police also seized one countrymade pistol, one cartridge and a necklace of yellow metal. The arrested person Kallu alias Shyam aged around 30 belongs to Khajuri Pandeypur (Cantt.) was involved in

snatching golden chain from Munni Devi, a resident of Rajghat (Adamapura) area two days ago.

In another incident, when Kotwali police were checking vehicles near Maidagin, they received information about a person with illegal cartridges. Later, the police arrested the same from Lohatia area. The police seized two cartridges from Shamim Hashmi, 30, a resident of Lal Khan area under Adamapura police station. Besides, Lalpur-Pandeypur police arrested a person from Edde crossing who was involving in stealing mobile phones. The police seized two stolen mobile phones from his possession. The arrested youth aged around 19 is Deepak Kumar Patel from Madhwa area under Lalpur-Pandeypur police station.

DC issues directive to ensure attendance in offices

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar, on Monday issued strict directives to all the divisional officials to ensure compliance of government order of attendance in offices with immediate effect. He said in addition it had also been made mandatory to ensure good upkeep of the offices including public amenities like sitting area, clean and good toilets and drinking water facilities in the next 15 days and to submit a

detailed report to the Commissioner.

He carried out a surprise raid at the office of the Assistant Director Basic and for that the AD Basic was absent from duty. He also found that out of the total staff of seven people only one was present and the remaining six were absent without the permission from the competent authority. He said it had been directed to every government office to ensure that latest by 10.10 am they must be in office in case their office

opened at 10 am.

The DC said what could be more shameful that the entire office was badly kept and cleanliness was totally absent and the things were lying in a shabby manner. He said what could be more shocking that people did not keep their working desks clean and properly arranged. He directed that salaries of all the staff absent be stopped and showcase notices were issued within three days failing with strict disciplinary action will be taken. He said replies of the

showcase notices should be mandatorily submitted on October 29 without fail.

Shekhar also issued showcase notice to the AD Basic for being absent without prior sanction and his apathy towards cleanliness and hygienic environment of the office. He directed him to ensure better upkeep and maintenance of the office in a good condition in the next 15 days and to submit a report along with photographs to the Commissioner's office latest by November 10, 2020.

49 more test positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar reported 49 more coronavirus positive cases on Monday evening.

Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 49 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Sunday evening and Monday evening taking the tally of confirmed cases to 27,622 cases. He said three COVID-19 deaths in the city were reported till Monday evening keeping the death toll to 727. The CMO said at present 1057 active cases were undergoing treatment. Dr Mishra said 4066 samples were sent for testing in the city.

Youth held for threatening to blow up railway station

KANPUR (PNS):The Surveillance Team has arrested a youth for his threats to blow up the Central railway station, bus stand and Regency hospitals from the bomb here on Sunday night. Police have also recovered the mobile phone used in threatening the authorities of these places from his possession. Resident of Babupurwa, the youth was found having one-sided affair with a girl of Kidwai Nagar here. On the toll-free number of Central railway station, an unidentified person threatened to blow out it from the bomb on Saturday. Thereafter, he threatened to blow out the Jhakarkati Bus Stand on its toll-free number, the Regency Hospital, Motihjeel, and Shanti Niketan Sweet House, Kidwai Nagar, on their landline numbers. On receipt of the phone calls, GRP squad along with cops of different police stations carried out investigations. Superintendent of Police (South) and Superintendent of Police (West) also deputed their Surveillance Team on the job which succeeded in arresting the youth from a hotel near Jhakarkati on Sunday night. SP (South) Deepak Bhuker said the accused was identified as Arshad of Begumpurwa, Baupurwa. Police have also recovered the mobile phone used in giving threats and a fake aadhaar card of Rahul Singh from his possession. The hotel room was also booked in the name of Rahul Singh. He was found to be having one-sided affair with a Kidwai Nagar girl and on failing to meet her, turned upset. Police have lodged FIRs with the Swarup Nagar, Kidwai Nagar, Babupurwa and Rail Bazar police stations against him and sent him to jail on Monday. During interrogation, Arshad said he was employed in a hotel on Delhi-Jaipur highway as Rahul Singh. Some time ago, when he had arrived Kanpur and met a girl of Kidwai Nagar, he began to adore her. When he again arrived Kanpur recently and did not find the girl there, he asked the landlord about her location and on his feigning ignorance, had to exchange punches and bouts with him. Thereafter, he turned upset and threatened to blow up the railway station, bus stand, Regency hospitals and Shanti Niketan Sweet House on their phone numbers displayed on the way.

One held with stolen motorcycle

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

The Chunar police arrested one accused along with a



The accused caught by Chunar police along with the stolen motorcycle

stolen motorcycle on Sunday. Police said that sub-inspector (S-I)Sanjeev Singh during his routine patrolling was tipped off by an informer that one person was trying to sell a motorcycle at Tekaur Tiraha in Chunar town. Thereafter the police team reached the place and arrested Vijay Yadav, son of Phoolnath Yadav, a resident of Mungawar village under Rohaniya police station in Varanasi. A case of motorcycle theft was already registered at Mirjamurad police station in Varanasi in this connection. After completing the legal formality the police sent the accused to the jail.

THANA SAMADHAN DIWAS: The Thana Samadhan Diwas was held at all police stations of the district. The DM and SP attended it at Katra Kotwali. On the day only two applications were received on which joint teams of Police and Revenue departments were sent to the spot with the direction to inform the authorities concerned after satisfaction of the aggrieved party. District Magistrate Sushil Kumar Patel and Superintendent of Police Ajay Kumar Singh directed the officials concerned to dispose of the matters in such a way that it could earn the trust of the people.

‘No plan to hike MRP of DAP, NPK fertilisers’

CORRESPONDENT ■ BAREILLY

IFFCO Managing Director Dr US Awasthi said although there is a huge spike in the cost of raw materials in the international market still there is no plan to increase MRP of DAP and NPK fertilisers. During a virtual press conference, Awasthi said, “our aim is to serve the farmer community by reducing input agri cost for them. It also aims to double the farmers’ income by 2022.” IFFCO is looking to produce a new nano technology based on nitrogen fertiliser soon, the MD added. The company plans to produce 25 million bottles/year. Each bottle of 500 millilitres will be able to replace a 45 kg bag of urea, Awasthi added. If successful, the product has the potential to reduce the use of urea fertiliser in the country by 50 per cent as well as raise crop output. “This will also reduce fossil fuel emissions, any water contamination and increase soil health. The farmer also does not need to carry a heavy load and it will also



reduce subsidy payments by half, which is the biggest problem of the country,” said Awasthi.

ED Aonla unit IC Jha said in order to strengthen country's efforts to fight Covid-19 IFFCO had contributed ₹25 crore to PM CARES Fund in service of the nation. Apart from it IFFCO is also contributing by distributing masks, hand sanitisers, disinfectant soaps, vitamin C tablets and essential food kits to farmers and villagers at various places across the country, he added. IFFCO launched ‘Break the Coronavirus Chain’ a campaign to raise awareness on how to stay to safe, Jha said. He said that they had IFFCO Yuva programme for skill development and training. Besides they have been distributing sewing machines and giving proper training to girls so that they could earn their living, he said. Among those present were senior GM, Rakesh Puri, DGM AK Shukla and PRO Vineet Shukla.

ED visits NTPC Rihand station

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

Executive Director, Safety, EMG, Ash Management, SD Subojit Malik Chaudhary visited the NTPC Rihand station and gave necessary directions to his subordinates for safety. Earlier on reaching the Shivalik guest house of Rihand station the officials of the station welcomed him by presenting a bouquet to him. He

inspected the station's residential complex-situated Lake Park (Nandan Kanan Park) and Kaushal Vikas Kendra and became aware of the situation there. During the inspection of the project, Chaudhary visited the unit II's chlorination plant and silo area and asked the departmental heads to take special precautions in terms of safety. He inspected the unit-I's PAPH, turbine floor

and control room. Chaudhary also did plantation on the occasion. During the inspection he was mainly accompanied by Executive Director (Rihand) Balaji Iyengar, Chief General Manager (O&M), General Manager (Maintenance), General Manager (ADM) N Reddy and others.

DISTRIBUTED: Under the guidance of chairperson of Ekta Mahila Samiti of Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) Sunita Agarwal, and vice-chairperson Pratima Pandey, Dr Sunita Kumari, Suchandra Sinha and Lakshmi Dubey under Gyan Jyoti (Prayas) campaign tiffins, water bottles, fruits and biscuits were distributed among the children in Birkunya village recently. On the occasion the children present there were advised to wear masks, follow rules of social distancing and wash their hands frequently in order to prevent coronavirus infection. It may be pointed out here that the Kriti Mahila Mandal through its multipurpose campaign ‘Prayas’ three branches — ‘Jeevan Se Maitri’, ‘Pankh’ and ‘Gyan Jyoti’, is doing remarkable work in NCL premises in the direction of creating public awareness about health and cleanliness in their daily life, health care, distribution of medicines, environmental protection, skill development, empowerment of women and self-reliance, child nutrition and child education.

23-year-old youth commits suicide

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

A 23-year-old youth committed suicide in an area under Katra Kotwali police station. As per the received reports, the family members were taken aback when they saw Mukul Yash Anand, son of Sohanlal, a resident of Sohata Ka Adda under Katra Kotwali police station, hanging from the roof. On getting information about the matter the police reached the spot and took the body of the deceased into custody for completing the legal formalities.

Meanwhile the cyber crime branch of police succeeded in getting ₹9,999 back which had been fraudulently withdrawn from the account of a resident of Sariya village. As per reports, Satish, son of Krishnanand, a resident of Sariya village, had informed the police on September 25 that Rs 12,052 had been withdrawn from his account fraudulently. Acting on the complaint the police got success in getting ₹9,999 back in the account of the victim.

SHAKTI MAHOTSAV: Under the aegis of state culture department Shakti Mahotsav

was organised at Pakka Ghat Vindhychal under Mission Shakti on Saturday. Usha Gupta mesmerised the audience with her lines ‘Mata Bhawani Ho..’ Jata Shankar, a renowned artiste of ‘Chaular’ (a folk dance of Vindhya region) along with his team presented a song ‘Naari Shakti Duniya Me Sabse Balwaan Hau..’. A tableau dance presented by the artistes. The programme was convened by Om Prakash Upadhyay assistant Information Officer and attended by Sushil Srivastava, PRO to the director, Culture department, and others.

Online workshop discusses social entrepreneurship

CORRESPONDENT ■ BAREILLY

The Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education (MGNCRE), Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India, organised an online workshop at the national level in which Vice-Chancellor, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand University (MJPRU), Bareilly, Prof KP Singh, was invited as the chief guest. It was attended by principals of colleges, heads of departments and teachers. In

the online workshop social entrepreneurship, cleanliness in universities and colleges, promotion of greenery, more use of solar energy etc. were discussed. In his presidential address the V-C said that there was migration from villages towards cities a few years ago which affected their population demography. However, owing to the efforts of the government production had increased in the villages, access to roads had increased and means of communication, mainly mobile smart phones had widely

extended better communication in the villages. Due to increasing use of information technology and works done in the field of solar energy by the government a huge transformation has taken place in villages. The schemes of Ministry of Rural Development and Small Scale Industries like SFURTI Yojana have brought extensive improvements in the rural areas. The programme was conducted by Sudhir Kumar of MGNCRE and the vote of thanks was proposed by Dr Amit Singh.

People made aware about Covid appropriate behaviour

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Following the Jan Andolan Abhiyan launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Covid-19 appropriate behaviour on October 8 awareness drives are also being conducted in Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW) daily. The objective of this campaign is to motivate DLW personnel and officers to wear masks, maintain social distance and taking care of hand hygiene.

The slogan of this campaign is ‘Jab tak dawai nahi tab tak dhilai nahi’ (No callousness till medicine is found). In this sequence the Railway Protection Force (RPF), DLW, Varanasi, on



shopkeepers and residents of the colony were encouraged to wear masks regularly. Along with it awareness about appropriate Covid-19 behaviour was created through social media.

UPMRC sets another benchmark

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corportion (UPMRC) set another benchmark in a very short span by accomplishing the casting of 200 U-girders at Lakhanpur casting yard along with the erection of 114 U-girders stretched over the 9 km long Priority Corridor which was being constructed from IIT to Motihjeel. On an average 40-45 U-girders were being cast every month in the yard and a total of 638 U-girders were to be placed between IIT to Motihjeel.

On the other hand, there will be a total of 384 double T-girders to be erected under the Priority Corridor.

As per the recent update received from the officials, 183 double T-girders were ready in the casting yard while 118 double T-girders had been erected on the track. Expressing happiness over this achievement, Kumar Keshav, Managing Director of UPMRC said, the casting



UPMRC completes laying of 114 U-girders stretched over the 9 km long Priority Corridor between IIT-K and Motihjeel

and erection work was going on with tremendous speed under the Kanpur Metro

Project so as to be completed exactly on time. He said the UPMRC was fully committed

and dedicated to giving a world-class Metro to Kanpurites.

Floral tributes paid to Vidyarthi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Congressmen paid floral tributes to Shaheed Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi on his 130 birth anniversary and also to Shaheed Hameed Khan on his 12th birth anniversary at Tilak Hall, the party headquarters on Monday.

Addressing the gathering the city president, Har Prakash Agnihotri termed Vidyarthi as Mahanayak, Patriot and source for promoting communal harmony. He said despite being born in a humble family he joined a weekly newspaper ‘Dainik Pratap’ and promoted patriotism and instilled people with courage to stand up against Britishers. He said similarly Hameed Khan was born in a small village of Derapur and giving up studies he joined the freedom struggle. He want to jail 13 times in 22 years. He was voted as MLA twice but continued to stick to his revolutionary principles.

He said Vidyarthi was an ideal prototype of activist journalist who used journalism to aspire political engage-



Rich tributes being paid to Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi and Hameed Khan on their birth anniversaries at Tilak Hall on Monday.

ment and develop critical thinking among the masses. He said the first Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi in India i.e. the Champaran Satyagraha of 1917 began after Vidyarthi started to serially report on the plight of Indigo farmers of the region. He then took to serious reporting of Bijolia peasant movement in princely state of Mewar and brought it on the national platform.

Agnihotri said Vidyarthi also played significant role in

organising and propagating the famous Awadh peasant-tenant movement and its offshoot the Eka Movement. He was also one of the leaders of the Kisan Sabha in Kanpur. He said Vidyarthi, apart from organising peasants and raising their issues was also involved with the working class movement, especially in the city of Kanpur which during his times was an industrial city. He said Vidyarthi organise the mill workers of

Kanpur and established the Kanpur Mazdoor Sangh in 1928 and fought for their rights. He said the ‘Dainik Pratap’ regularly carried the plight of Kanpur millworkers who had to work overtime, were paid less than the minimum wage and had to live under pitiable condition.

Prominent who took part were Subodh Bajpai, SD Mishra, Nizamuddin Khan, Rajesh Dwivedi, Dr Alam, Iqbal Ahmed and many more.

ABVP activists stage dharna

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

In protest against the brutal attack on one of their activists Nirbhay Pratap under the Panki police station on Sunday night, dozens of Akhil Bhartiya Vidhyarthi Parishad (ABVP)'s activists, led by their Vibhag Convener Rituraj Misra, staged dharna at the office of Senior Superintendent of Police on Monday. They alleged the Panki Station Officer for defending the assailants and hushing up the issue and demanded magisterial probe in the issue. District Convener Mrityunjaya Chauhan said the ABVP would continue to agitate till the justice was not done to the victim activist. In the absence of SSP, a delegation led by the District Organisation Secretary Satya Chaudhary, met the Superintendent of Police (West) and handed over a memorandum to him demanding disciplinary action against the guilty Panki SO by setting up a magisterial probe. Vibhag Convener Rituraj Misra said the SP (West) has direct-



ABVP activists handover memorandum to SP (West) on Monday.

Pioneer

ed to carry out probe in the matter by a Circle Officer rank officer. Himanshu Pal, Dinesh Yadav, Avinash Shukla, Gopal Misra, Ashish Shukla, Sahil Chaurasia, Shifa Noor, Salman Khan, Aman Singh, Jagriti Tewari, Jyoti, Srijal Tewari, Rishabh Sahu, Gaurav Yadav, Ayush Tripathi, Rajat Dwivedi, Sujit Misra, Akash Sahu, Adarsh Paswan, Vivek Kumar, Harsh Gupta, Nitesh Kumar, Shivam Gupta, Suryansh Verma, Vishal Kumar Gupta and Ayush Gupta were present.

ICAI TO EXTEND FINANCIAL HELP TO OLDAGED CAS: The Institute

of Chartered Accountants of India has in principle decided to extend financial and medical help to chartered accountants who have attained the age of 75 years and above. The institute had identified over 50,000 chartered accountants who were above 75 years in the entire Central Indian Regional Council. This decision comes after the strong demand constantly being raised for the past several years that the institute should provide fiscal and medical help to such senior CAs.

The CIRC vice-president, Atul Mehtotra informed on

Monday that it had been agreed to provide financial and medical help to CAs who were above 75 and not on a position to meet their ends and also the costly treatment. He said the CIRC will ensure they got the full and proper medical treatment in case they were unable to afford it. He said it would also provide them financial help per month which will be enough for them. He said VCare portal has been set up in seven states-UP, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, MP and Rajasthan. He said in the times to come this form will be put online.

He said in Kanpur there were over 2,000 CAs and a survey was being carried out to find out such CAs who were economically weak and can be provided help. He said it was estimated that there should be somewhere within 50 and they will be provided the facilities through the help desk. He said the help desk will be functional 24 hours and will also provide legal help if the need arose.

More Cong hates Modi, more people will support him: Nadda



PNS ■ NEW DELHI



‘Nehru-Gandhi dynasty has never respected PM’s office’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre and the BJP on Monday hit out at Congress chief Sonia Gandhi for her criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in an article.

While Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said that her angst stemmed from the fact that the people chose a “poor, yet strong and fearless” leader as the Prime Minister instead of her son Rahul Gandhi, BJP president JP Nadda said the more the opposition party and its leaders “lie” and “hate” Modi, the more people will support him.

Javadekar lashed out at the Congress president for her claim that democracy is being “hollowed out” in India. The Union Minister lamented that Sonia expressed support for the anti-CAA protests at Shaheen Bagh despite the Supreme

Court’s verdict in this regard.

Lauding the Centre’s handling of the Shaheen Bagh protests, he reminded her of how the police during the UPA tenure had fired tear gas shells and resorted to lathi charge on Baba Ramdev and his supporters in 2011 to end his fast on the black money issue.

For his part, Nadda tweeted: “Combination of despondency and shamelessness is dangerous. Congress possesses both. Empty rhetoric of decency and democracy by the Mother (Sonia Gandhi) is ‘complemented’ by live demonstrations of politics of hate, anger, lies and aggression by the Son (Rahul Gandhi). Double standards galore.”

Congress’s chief spokesman Randeep Surjewala responded to Nadda asking him not to divert and get back

Condemning what he called “Rahul Gandhi-directed drama” of burning Prime Minister’s effigy in Punjab as “shameful”, BJP president J P Nadda on Monday said the act was “not unexpected” as the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty has “never respected the office of the PM” during UPA regime. “Combination of despondency and shamelessness is dangerous. Congress possess-

es both. Empty rhetoric of decency and democracy by the Mother is ‘complemented’ by live demonstrations of politics of hate, anger, lies and aggression by the Son. Double standards galore!”, Nadda tweeted referring to Congress agitation in Punjab.

He said Congress was known to show disrespect to the office of Prime Minister. BJP president was indirectly referring to the tenure of Manmohan Singh as Prime

Minister.

“The Rahul Gandhi-directed drama of burning PM’s effigy in Punjab is shameful but not unexpected. After all, the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty has NEVER respected the office of the PM. This was seen in the institutional weakening of the PM’s authority during the UPA years of 2004-2014”, said Nadda.

“If there is one party whose conduct reeks of disgust, it is Congress. Atrocities

against SC/ST communities are at an all time high in Rajasthan, women are unsafe in Rajasthan as well as Punjab, and their Punjab Ministers are committing scholarships scams”, he alleged in his tweets.

The BJP president said Congress can never pontificate to others on freedom of speech.

“They have contempt for dissenting voices for decades. We saw glimpses of it during

the Emergency. Later on, the Rajiv Gandhi Government made a brazen attempt to weaken press freedom. A free press rattles Congress”, said Nadda who also gave a reference of governance in Maharashtra.

“If anyone wants to see a laboratory of usage of brute state power, troubling opponents, curbing freedom of speech in trademark Congress style, see the working of the Congress blessed Maharashtra

Government. Except governing, they are doing everything else” he said.

“One dynasty’s deep personal hatred against a person who was born in poverty and became PM is historic. Equally historic is the love people of India have showered upon PM Narendra Modi Ji. More Congress’ lies and hate increases, the more people will support PM Modi!”, Nadda claimed in his tweets.

NPAs should be shown exit door: Gadkari

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Peeved over a ‘delayed’ work culture at the Centre’s road making agency NHAI, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday said it was time to show the exit door to ‘non-performing assets’ complicating and delaying projects by creating obstacles.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has become a breeding ground for inefficient officials who are creating hurdles and referring every matter to committees and it was time to ‘suspend’ and ‘terminate’ them and bring in reforms in its functioning, said the the Road Transport, Highways Minister while addressing a virtual gathering during the inauguration of NHAI building at Dwarka which took about nine years to complete.

“Non-performing assets (NPAs) not worth of doing even vermiculture are preserved here and being promoted... I feel ashamed at the attitude of such officials who are carrying such legacies. They are delaying decisions and creating complications and at the helm, these are CGMs (Chief General Managers) and GMs (General Managers) sitting for years,” Gadkari said while expressing his unhappiness over the delay in construction of NHAI building.

He said the building project for which tender was awarded in 2011, took almost nine years to complete and saw seven NHAI chairmen and two governments. “Finally it could be completed during the tenure of the eighth Chairman (SS Sandhu) ...A research paper

should be prepared on this classic case of delay with photographs of CGMs and GMs who were behind the delays...There should be a ceremony to make their names and photos public like the ministry does to facilitate those who do exceptionally good work,” the minister said.

Gadkari said he has been emphasising on widespread reforms in NHAI but of no avail and said when mammoth work for Rs 1 lakh crore Delhi-Mumbai Expressway is planned to be executed within three years, how could a single building take about ten years in completion.

“I feel ashamed...I had personally conducted three-four meetings for it...I have been insisting on reforms...Now as the tradition is, records will be prepared to blame the contractors alone,” the minister said and warned officials to mend their ways.

The Minister wondered as to why the Authority was not able to retain engineers from IITs and other institutes and why those “who were not even fit to work for states were being promoted and their “wrong decisions” were costing the exchequer heavily.

Warning the officials to change their work pattern, Gadkari said he would personally oversee termination,

suspension and removal of guilty officials. Gadkari has been stressing on the need to expedite decision-making by NHAI and ministry officials while cautioning that non-performers would be given compulsory retirement.

The minister had earlier this year said that he had sought a list of non-performing officials for showing the exit door. He had warned “non-performing” officials or “dead assets” who neither take decisions nor allow others to work of showing exit door while saying that red-tapism will not be tolerated.

NHAI’s new building has been constructed over a 6,086 square meter plot in Dwarka area, adjacent to NHAI’s existing office complex. It has ground plus seven stories, with two levels of basement. NHAI plans to shift around 400 of its employees to the new building, which is equipped with latest building management system, computer automation and state-of-the-art facilities for enhanced work performance.

NHAI has been mandated the task to develop, maintain and manage National Highways, the arterial roads of the country, for inter-state movement of passengers and goods.

Modi didn’t accept even a cup of tea during 9-hour questioning by Gujarat riots SIT: Raghavan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Without parrying a single question out of the 100-odd ones put to him by the 2002 Gujarat riots SIT, Narendra Modi as the then Gujarat chief minister “kept his cool” throughout the marathon 9-hour questioning and did not accept even a cup of tea from investigators, the probe team’s chief at that time R K Raghavan has said in a new book.

Modi had also readily agreed to come to the SIT office in Gandhinagar for the questioning and brought his own bottle of water, Raghavan has written in his autobiography, ‘A Road Well Travelled’.

Before being asked to head the Supreme Court-appointed SIT that probed the 2002 Gujarat riots, Raghavan had also served as head of premier probe agency CBI. He was also involved in several other high-profile investigations over years, including those relating to the Bofors scam, the 2000 South Africa cricket-match fixing case and the fodder scam.

Talking about the time the SIT had called Modi for questionings as the then Gujarat chief minister, Raghavan writes in the book, “We had it conveyed to his staff that he had to come in person to the SIT office for this purpose and that meeting him elsewhere would be misconstrued as a favour.”

“He (Modi) understood the spirit of our stand and readily agreed to come to the SIT office within the Government complex in Gandhinagar,” Raghavan said. The former police officer

Before becoming SIT chief, Raghavan had served as CBI head

further said he took the “unusual step” of asking Ashok Malhotra, an SIT member, to do the questioning, mainly to avoid any “mischievous allegation” later that Modi and he had struck a deal.

“This stand was endorsed months later by no less a person than amicus curiae Harish Salve. He told me that my presence would have vitiated Modi’s statement and would have robbed it of its credibility,”

Raghavan said, adding that he had never consulted Salve prior to the event. It was my personal decision flowing from sheer intuition, said the retired IPS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre, who was also appointed as High Commissioner to Cyprus in 2017.

“Modi’s questioning lasted nine hours in my own chamber at the SIT office. Malhotra told me later that Modi kept his cool right through the marathon session which ended late at night,” Raghavan said.

“He (Modi) never parried questions. Nor did he give the impression of padding up his responses. When Malhotra asked him whether he would like to break for lunch, he initially turned down the offer. He brought his own bottle of water and did not accept even a cup of tea from the SIT during the marathon questioning comprising a hundred-odd questions,” he said.

Trial underway for use of Cordyceps in Covid

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Three regional AIIMS have taken up the translational trial for using Cordyceps Capsules for treatment in COVID-19 and the efforts and trials are going on for preparing it as a preventive and curative medicine for Corona.

The first trial has already started in AIIMS Bhopal, AIIMS Nagpur and MGM Medical College, Navi Mumbai and its result is likely to be known by the end of this year.

Uttarakhand-based Ambrosia Food Farm has initiated the translational trial using Cordyceps capsules in COVID-19 patients. “The final result of the trial will be available by December. Cordyceps immunity booster capsules are food supplement capsules. Cordyceps is a herb with immunological and anti-viral

properties and the capsule has no side effects. Services of farmers are being taken for growing medicinal mushrooms and it has great potential for employment opportunities also,” said Gourvendra Gangwar, Managing Director of the Ambrosia Food Farm at Nainital.

Research and Development were initiated by the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Drug Research, Punjabi University, Patiala. Maj. Gen. (Dr) Vibha Dutta, SM (Director and CEO, AIIMS Nagpur) and Prof. Sarman Singh (Director and CEO, AIIMS Bhopal), both laboratory physicians, are working closely with Prof. Dr. Sankalp Dwivedi (Dean and Director SSIMS, Bhilai), who serves as the Chief Medical Advisor for the trial.

One in NIA net in Kerala gold smuggling racket

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday arrested fugitive Rabins K. Hameed, 42, in connection with the Kerala Gold Smuggling Case following his arrival at Kochi International Airport from Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The case relates to the seizure of 30 Kg gold worth Rs14.82 crores on July 5, 2020 at Air Cargo of Trivandrum International Airport by Customs (Preventive) Commissionerate, Cochin,

from the diplomatic baggage.

“Investigation in the case has revealed that Rabins Hameed while being in UAE and India had conspired with the arrested accused Ramees K. T., Jalal A. M. and others besides arranged funds and purchased gold at Dubai, for smuggling to India, through diplomatic baggage,” the NIA said in a statement.

Earlier, the NIA Special Court at Ernakulam had issued a non-bailable warrant of arrest against the fugitive Rabins Hameed, a key accused in the case.

Maha Dy CM Ajit tests Covid +ve, hospitalised

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra’s deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar got himself admitted to Mumbai’s Breach Candy Hospital on Monday, after he tested positive for Covid-19.

In a development that came two days after the leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Devendra Fadnis of the BJP tested positive for Coronavirus, Ajitdada – as Ajit Pawar is known in the state political circles – announced through a tweet that he had tested positive for Covid-19.

“I have tested positive for Coronavirus. I am doing well. As a health precautionary measure, I have got myself admitted to Breach Candy Hospital,” Ajitdada tweeted.

“My appeal to citizens, NCP workers leaders, office bearers and workers is that there is no need for you to get worried. My health is good. After some rest, I will resume work,” he added.

Sixty-one-year-old Pawar had not been keeping well. After his tour of flood-affected areas of Solapur and Pune districts last week, he had developed fever. On Thursday, the senior NCP leader had tested negative for coronavirus but was in home quarantine as a precautionary measure. After he skipped the function organised by the NCP at the party headquarters in south Mumbai on Friday last to welcome ex-BJP Ajit Pawar, party chief Sharad Pawar had said: “If Ajit Pawar he is absent today, it is because of Covid-19 precautions he is taking. We have asked party leaders and workers to take adequate precautions”

Paddy stubble fire cases rise by 53% this year to 18,127

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The number of paddy crop residue burning incidents surged to 18,127 this year as compared to 11,780 in 2019 and 11,440 in 2018 raising fears of the air quality deteriorating further in northern India from the “very poor” levels recorded in recent days. NASA’s images have spotted 18127 incidents in four states- Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh between October 1 and 25 this year. Ferozpur Ambala, Mathura has the highest number of farm fires on Sunday. The farm fires rose to 14,232 in Punjab, 2218 in Haryana and 702 in Uttar Pradesh during the same period. Punjab has spotted highest number of stubble burning this year than in 2019 while In Haryana and UP, the cumulative number of farm fires are lower this year. The farm fires this year in Punjab is highest as compared to 7,572 in 2019 and 6801 in 2018. The number of farm fires rose from around 921 on Saturday to 1,515 on Sunday in Punjab. According to satellite data, 1267 farm fires were detected on October 23 as compared to 1343 on October 22.

With 2579 stubble burning

percent of harvesting is done but another half is left. The situation will further worsen in the next 15 days. Farm fires in these four states have surged, raising fears of the air quality in northern India including Delhi deteriorating further from the “very poor” levels recorded in recent days.

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cases, Tarn Taran is on top in the list in Punjab, followed by Amritsar of 1407; Ferozpur 1361; Patiala 1180; Gurdaspur 1090 and Kapurthala 677. In Haryana, farm fires have been spotted 406 in Karnal, 382 in Kurukshetra, 342 in Kaithal and 265 in Ambala.

Madhya Pradesh reported 125 on October 25, 123 on October 24; 156 on October 23; 157 on October 22 and 88 on October 21. Between October 10 and 25, as many as 975 incidents were spotted in the state.

Meanwhile, air pollution levels remained high on Monday in entire northwest India. Baghat, Panipat, Ghaziabad, Ballabgarh, Faridabad, etc remained in the “very poor” category. This is mainly due to a reduction in wind speed across the northwest region. “Wind speed has reduced in the entire north-western region and stubble burning has also increased. Moisture levels are rising in the morning hours leading to further accumulation of pollutants and a shallow fog like situation.

As per data till October 20, the Haryana government has issued 252 challans and imposed Rs 6.50 lakh fine on farmers of 11 districts for burning crop residue so far.

Faultline in Ladakh region found to be tectonically active: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Contrary to the conventional belief, the faultline in Ladakh region, where the India and Asian Plates are joined, has been found to be tectonically active, suggesting that the rocks along the fault zones are very weak and fragile.

So, in terms of landslides due to rainfall, it has much more implications, said Indian scientists in a study published in the journal ‘Technophysics’. Earlier, the suture zone was conventionally thought to be locked.

India and Asian Plates are joined at the suture zone of the Himalayas or the Indus Suture Zone (ISZ) in the Ladakh region.

The findings could have major implications in terms of earthquake study, prediction, understanding the seismic structure of the mountain chains well as its evolution. The Scientists from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), Dehradun, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology, found through observations and detail mapping of geo-



logical features that the suture zone of Himalaya that was conventionally thought to be locked is tectonically active.

The Indus-Tsangpo suture zone marks the limit of the Indian plate where it collided with the Asian plate.

“Since we have shown that fault in this area (Ladakh) is also active, the rocks along the fault zones are very weak and fragile. So, in terms of landslides it has much more implications. Seismically, this area is also active, but the activity is very low to moderate.

“If there is any major rainfall event along the Indus river fault, it is more prone to landslides,” said Koushik Sen, one of the co-authors of the paper.

The geologists observed that sedimentary beds are tilted and thrust broken, the rivers are associated with uplifted terraces, and the bedrock shows brittle defor-

mation that occurred at much shallower depths.

These deformed geological features were then dated in the laboratory at Dehradun using a technique called Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) (method for carrying luminescence dating of geological sediments) and data of seismicity and denudation rate was reviewed.

The combination of field and lab data suggested the region of the Indus Suture Zone (ISZ) has been neotectonically active since the last 78,000-58,000 years and a recent earthquake in 2010 of low magnitude 4.0 near the village of Upshi occurred due to a thrust rupture.

Himalaya were known to be made up of north dipping thrusts like the Main Central Thrust (MCT), the Main Boundary Thrust (MBT), and the Main Frontal Thrust (MFT).

As per the established models, all of these thrusts except MFT are locked, and overall deformation in the Himalayas is being accommodated only along with the MFT.

SC stays contempt proceedings against Union Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the contempt proceedings initiated against Union Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal for alleged non-compliance of the Uttarakhand High Court’s last year order on payment of rent by former Chief Ministers of the state for occupying Government accommodation.

A bench headed by Justice R F Nariman stayed the contempt proceedings on a plea filed by the Union minister of Education.

The Uttarakhand High Court had on May 3 last year ordered the former Chief Ministers of the state to pay market rent for the entire period they continued to occupy Government accommodation since demitting office.

Kingpin’s wife reveals MLA’s role in gold smuggling

KOCHI: The CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front in Kerala suffered a jolt on Monday as the wife of one of the kingpins in the gold smuggling scam busted by the Customs at Thiruvananthapuram airport reportedly told the agency that the stuff was being smuggled for Karat Razack, an MLA supporting the front and his relation Karat Faizal, a municipal councillor in Koduvalli Municipality. Soumya, wife of Sandeep Nair, one of the key accused in NIA custody told Customs officials that she knew her husband and another accused K T Ramees were smuggling gold for the Karat cousins. According to sources in Customs, the sleuths could identify the prime accused Swapna Suresh and Rameez Swapan on the statement by Soumya. Faisal, a business baron with interests in jewelry trade was in the news earlier because of his close connection with Kodyiyeri Balakrishnan, the CPI(M) strongman in Kerala. Balakrishnan had used the high end car owned by Faisal for his 2016 Kerala Yatra. Faisal was an accused in gold smuggling cases at that time and the incident had embarrassed the party cadre.

Scaling new peaks

No matter who comes to power in the US after the elections, a common suspicion of China will drive Indo-US relations even closer



The visit of US Secretaries of State and Defence Mike Pompeo and Mark Esper to New Delhi, meant to fructify the 2+2 dialogue between them and their Indian counterparts S Jaishankar and Rajnath Singh, is an important step in firming up India-US ties as both nations fight Chinese expansionism. And while it appears increasingly likely that the US will have a 46th President come January 20, 2021, the strengthening of bilateral ties and the antagonism between the world's two largest democracies against the Chinese Communist Party-run People's Republic of China will only grow. The visit just confirms the continuity of diplomacy on this front and

a commitment to a shared purpose. There is no doubt that Donald Trump is a polarising figure and his negligence in dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic might cost him the presidency. But he has decisively changed the discourse around China's malignant nature, of which India is just the latest victim. The third India-US 2+2 ministerial dialogue focusses on a comprehensive global strategic partnership and expansion in cooperation to promote stability and prosperity in the India-Pacific region as well as the world. This will include regional security cooperation, defence information-sharing so that the two sides can tackle neighbourhood challenges more effectively, including public health collaboration to cope with COVID-19, and economic alliances. The two nations are also expected to sign the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA), one of four so-called foundational pacts. It will provide for sharing of high-end military technology, logistics and geospatial maps between the two countries. With both India and the US becoming more upfront about countering China's hegemonic claims, our eastern neighbour has clearly become anxious and deeply uncomfortable. So in its official mouthpiece, *Global Times*, it ran down the partnership, saying, "It's difficult for Washington to form an alliance with New Delhi as it has with Tokyo. As a country which believes it is destined to become even more 'powerful,' India will not be subject to any other global competitor." However, in the past few months, the US has been consistent in its interest in the region, calling out China directly and making India its arrowhead, too. It has been ramping up attack on China over a range of contentious issues, including the border row with India, its military assertiveness in the South China Sea and the way Beijing handled the anti-Government protests in Hong Kong. India is not only buying additional hardware from the US, its closer military and economic collaborations will be important in case of any potential future conflict with China. Indeed, the speed with which Boeing, not only an airplane maker but also one of the latest military contractors in the US, delivered the last batch of Apache and Chinook helicopters following the incidents in the Galwan Valley, highlights the strengthening of bilateral relations. There is also no doubt that the US has pushed India to stop dilly-dallying on confronting China and take sides. It is almost certain that our invitation to the Australian Navy to join the Malabar exercises with Japan and the US, thereby formalising the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or Quad coalition, would not have happened without the US pushing New Delhi. The grouping has definitely helped to create resilient supply chains, explore alternative markets, counter disinformation and increase maritime security and clearly needs to be upscaled to the heads-of-State meeting level.

India will have to work assiduously and overtly in building a coalition against China and shed all pretensions of pursuing the dream of a multi-polar world. It is the US vs China now and New Delhi has to extract the best advantages for itself by engaging with nations one-on-one. Chinese President Xi Jinping has already used economic imperialism to get malleable leaders like Turkish President Recep Erdogan on his side. And though Russia may want India to fob off Chinese heft, the fact is its President Vladimir Putin is sufficiently compromised by long-standing infrastructural and economic deals to sacrifice India at the altar of Chinese money. India must reconsider the amount of Russian military hardware it buys. The US might have courted India for years but now the latter must formalise the shotgun marriage with Washington. The dragon is not India's friend and if that means strengthening ties with the US, that may not be a bad thing after all.

Mamata's gamble

Gorkha leader Bimal Gurung drops BJP for TMC. But how much has the latter had to give up to meet him half-way?



Bimal Gurung has been a bit of a maverick as a leader who won't settle for anything less than a separate State of the Gorkhas by fair means or foul. He has been absconding for three years after an agitation for statehood turned violent, killing a police officer. And for his disruptive and militant value, he has been patronised by the BJP to make significant inroads in north Bengal and increase both seats and vote share in the State during both the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. The Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) that he founded is itself a divided house today with moderates wanting a rule-based political solution and wary of Gurung's

wild ways. One that the BJP has also not encouraged after an unexpected Lok Sabha verdict in Bengal last year. So Gurung has switched sides and decided to support Trinamool Congress (TMC) in next year's Assembly elections. Turncoat politicians are not trustworthy but TMC leader and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is a bit hemmed in here, having failed to break through Gorkha parties on her own. She is now using him to contain the BJP and wrest the political ground she ceded to it. This is not quite a coup but a political necessity for her though she has exposed herself to the criticism that she may have had already conceded Gorkhaland as part of a trade-off and forgiven Gurung after issuing a lookout notice for him in 2017. Of course, having rehabilitated and protected himself with this new arrangement, Gurung is taking the high moral ground, saying 12 years of aligning with the BJP, which as a Central party he thought could make statehood a reality, had been an empty promise. And claims that while the BJP never fulfilled his demands, Mamata always delivered whatever she committed to. This has led to speculation on what she must have promised in exchange for his support. TMC has steadily waned in the region as BJP, which propped up Gurung in 2009, has made huge gains and more or less become a national champion for the Gorkha cause. Now after the BJP's powerful showing in the Lok Sabha, Mamata is scrounging for every bit of cushion that she can get as the Central party chases her down to the finish line. Faced with a threat to her political survival, she is willing to take a risk with Gurung. Apart from Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong, Gorkhas matter significantly in about 17 Assembly seats in north Bengal. Gurung still has a magnetic hold on the Gorkha vote and can determine political outcomes of any party he chooses to align himself with. Although the TMC had some hold here, with 23 of the 54 seats in 2016, post-Gurung and his tie-up with the BJP, it has been virtually wiped out. With him, it hopes to improve its performance in the region and halt the BJP run.

But how encashable is Gurung after three years of being in the wilderness? Now that the GJM has factions, can he hold it together? Also many are wondering if he has compromised his original stand on full statehood in return for the TMC Government pausing the cases lodged against him. Yes, the TMC may hold the Damocles' sword over him but that could also mean that Gurung cannot afford to sound as fiery as before. The risk here is that another firebrand leader could then easily be inspired or propped up by parties to replace him. Gurung has cleverly bought time till 2024, saying he will work with Mamata to fulfil the dream of statehood. He can always jump ship again if things don't work out. Gorkhaland is more about the political economy than the realisation of a people's dream. And no party that wants to rule Bengal would want to part with it but keep it on the boil.



BHOPINDER SINGH

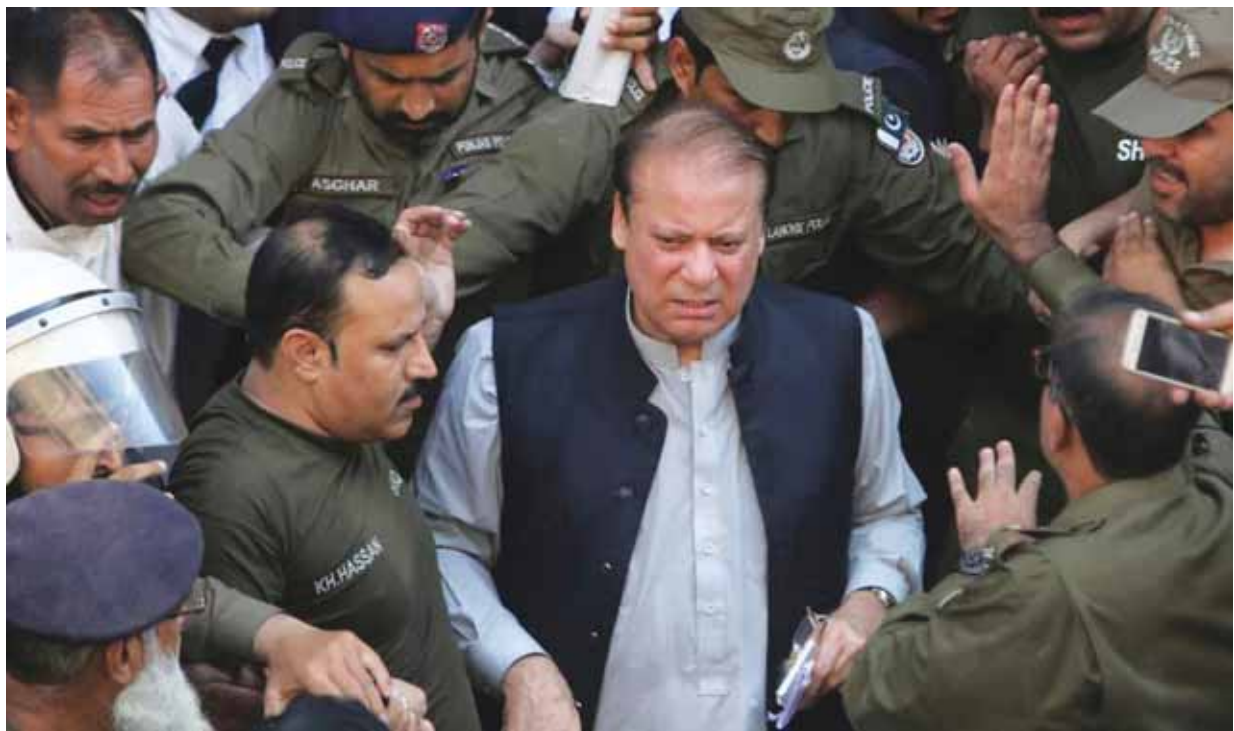
Mian Saheb is an unlikely Pakistani politician who has spent a career trying to be someone he really isn't. When the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif, was incarcerated in jail and was asked about his health, he had spouted Mirza Ghalib, "*Unko dekhne sey jo aa jati hai muh par raunaq, woh samjhtey hai ke bemaar ka haal acha hai*" (On seeing her, my face lights up and she presumes that I'm much better now)." The portly Punjabi politician is the principal Opposition leader to the reigning Pakistani Prime Minister, Imran Khan, except that he is not based out of Pakistan (declared "absconder" of bail and currently in the United Kingdom) and is actually of Kashmiri ethnicity (paternal side from Anantnag and maternal side from Pulwama). Nevertheless, the thrice elected and the longest-serving PM is a trapeze artist who revels in managing contradictions. Sharif has now fired his most calculated salvo against the Pakistani "Deep State" or military.

In Pakistan's stuttering democracy, the ubiquitous shadow of barrel-chested military men operating out of Rawalpindi headquarters is mentioned only in deferential whispers — addressed euphemistically as *Farishtas* (angels) or *Khalai Maqlook* (alien creatures), who usually manipulate from the background. And occasionally they step in formally, like Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan, Zia-ul-Haq or Pervez Musharraf. But the veteran of Pakistani intrigues has broken traditions of indirect allusions and brazenly name-called the Chief of Pakistan Army Staff, General Qamar Bajwa, along with the infamous Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to be the real movers and shakers of Imran Khan's Government. In one stroke, Sharif has torn the traditional Pakistani cover of the "civilian government" and made the military directly accountable and responsible for the country's ongoing and inevitable fate and predicament in the public imagination.

Sharif's current democratic grandstanding notwithstanding, he himself is a product of the Pakistani military establishment and its machinations. While it is widely presumed that Sharif was born of the former military dictator, General

Outwitting the Generals

In one stroke, Sharif has torn the traditional Pakistani cover of the 'civilian govt' and made the military directly accountable and responsible for the country's fate



Zia-ul-Haq's personal preference, it was actually another quintessentially slippery Pakistani General, Ghulam Gilani, to whom *Mian Saheb* owes his political initiation.

Lieutenant-General Ghulam Gilani's colourful past had included taking a year-long sabbatical to fight in the Kashmir valley as an "irregular" (Indo-Pak war of 1947-48), fighting the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak wars, serving as the Director-General of the notorious ISI, partaking in Zia-ul-Haq's *coup d'état*, which was ironically code-named "Fair Play" and ill-advising Zulfikar Ali Bhutto till his end to the gallows.

Later, General Zia appointed Lieutenant-General Ghulam Gilani as the Governor of the all-powerful Punjab province, where he deliberately plucked out an ostensibly safe, non-feudal and pliant industrialist, Nawaz Sharif, to be the Finance Minister of Punjab. The urbane, obliging and malleable Sharif soon wormed his way to be the Chief Minister in the dark and transformational days of Zia's Shariaised Pakistan, even though Sharif was hardly a modicum of religious piety.

Though not really a Punjabi, feudal or a military man, Sharif was a player, manipulator and a survivor. Soon after Zia's mysterious plane crash, he tactically aligned with religious parties, took ISI's beneficence and split with a rival faction within Zia's political party, Pakistan Muslim League (Pagara group) to later form Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) or PML-N. Sharif's then rival Benazir Bhutto (Pakistan People's Party) had earlier paid a

THIS TIME, SHARIF HAS DRAWN BLOOD, REDRAWN THE BATTLE LINES AND FOR ONCE, BOXED THE MILITARY GENERALS INTO A HUDDLE. UNFORTUNATELY, FOR THE PAKISTANI GENERALS, THE IMRAN KHAN GOVERNMENT IS FAILING DESPERATELY AND THE MILITARY IS UNABLE TO EXTRICATE ITSELF FROM THE 'TITANIC' PORTENTS

more personal price of losing her father in the fight against the Pakistani Generals but Sharif was more conversant with the inner workings of the "Deep State."

But even the wily Sharif has erred, miscalculated and underestimated the power of Pakistani Generals. *Mian Saheb* has had to deal with six Pakistani military chiefs (including appointing four of them personally) and has the dubious record of fractious relations with all, without exception. Sharif's first appointee, General Waheed Kakar, had later presurised him into resigning as the PM. By Sharif's second term, he had inherited Benazir Bhutto's appointee, General Jehangir Karamat, with whom Sharif differed and who he forced into a premature resignation. In hindsight, hardly-the-wiser, Sharif selected an ostensibly safe *Mohajir*, General Pervez Musharraf, who not only initiated Kargil on his own but also bumped off Sharif to Saudi Arabia after yet another *coup d'état*. In his third innings as the PM, Sharif had to tread carefully with the unpredictable General Pervez Kayani (appointed earlier by Sharif's *bête noire*, Pervez Musharraf), who, too, extended his tenure unilaterally. Sharif's third personal and unlikely (again superseding others) choice of General Raheel Sharif was to be no different with the "Army House" routinely calling all shots and defining the "red lines" for the Sharif dispensation.

General Raheel Sharif elicited embarrassing retractions (for example, post Ufa summit), policy flip flops and publicly lectured the civilian Government on cor-

ruption (for example, Panamagate). But it is the fourth personal choice of Sharif who is at the centre of the ensuing gambit, General Qamar Bajwa — who too superseded others and was supposedly apolitical and low profile. The Generals have historically got the better of Nawaz Sharif, because they consistently outwitted or bulldozed *Mian Saheb* by tactically propping his political rivals with no real ideological preferences, except for protecting their own institutional turf. The invaluable cover and protection to the Pakistani military was afforded by the façade of the civilian Government.

This time, Sharif has drawn blood, redrawn the battle lines and for once, boxed the military generals into a huddle. Unfortunately, for the Pakistani generals, the Imran Khan Government is failing desperately at all levels and the "Deep State" or the Pakistani military is unable to extricate itself from the "Titanic" portents.

The Pakistani public is increasingly restive, suspicious and convinced of the military ghosts at work. And the Generals cannot be saddled with the "failures" of the civilian Government as they delegitimise the institution that has thrived despite the humiliations of 1965, 1971 and Kargil. Sharif has punted on forcing the military establishment to pull the plug on the Imran Khan Government, as they have historically done, whenever in such situations. This time, *Mian Saheb* may just have outwitted the Generals?

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands)

SOUND BITE

It is unfortunate that he (Emmanuel Macron) has chosen to encourage Islamophobia by attacking Islam rather than the terrorists who carry out violence.

Pakistan Prime Minister
—Imran Khan



Outside noise can affect people in different ways. When I was younger, it affected me. It took me a while to understand that outside noise isn't what matters.

Cricketer
—Ben Stokes



Life is art. The greatest art there is. What happened does not matter. When you let go of your story and live in the present, infinite possibilities show up.

Writer
—Rituparna Chatterjee



It's a shame that at a time when the pandemic is raging, the doctors are forced to hit the streets, hold placards at places like Jantar Mantar to highlight their plight.

IMA chief
—Dr Rajan Sharma



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Breathing toxic air

Sir — Air pollution has worsened in several parts of north India. If anything, US President Donald Trump's remark that India has "filthy" air should encourage more introspection than anger. There is no denying what he said or the fact that nobody suffers more than Indians themselves. According to the State of Global Air 2020 report, India had the highest exposure to particulate matter (PM 2.5) last year. Fourteen of the 20 most populous countries have recorded a gradual improvement in air quality but India is among those with an increase in pollution levels. Vehicular and industrial pollution, farmers burning crop stubble to clear fields and festive fireworks, all contribute to the deadly cocktail. The courts and the National Green Tribunal have been actively pushing the authorities to do more. The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was also launched in January 2019 as the first-ever effort in the country to frame a national framework for air quality management with a time-bound reduction target. However, a concrete policy has not materialised. The endless bickering

Political drama continues in Bihar

Vast crowds are turning out to attend the public meetings addressed by the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav in a clear indication that the young leader has captured the imagination of voters in Bihar. People's response to such rallies enable us to see which way the wind is blowing. Yadav's promise to create 10 lakh new Government jobs on being elected to power seems to have galvanised the State's youth and rallied them together. In contrast, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar now looks a shadow of his former self. In the absence of any worthwhile achievement during the Janata Dal (United)-BJP rule, the latter is once again relying on its stock-in-trade of tapping "nationalist sentiments."

Narendra Modi has conveniently skirted his failure to fulfil promises on special State status and special packages for Bihar and the establishment of a central university in Bhagalpur made in the run-up to the 2015 Assembly elections. Bihar is at the bottom of the pyramid of economic indicators. Lok Janshakti Party (LJP)



leader Chirag Paswan's open hostility towards Nitish Kumar and his idolisation of Narendra Modi highlight that some moves in the game of politics are at times beyond our comprehension. Bihar is a politically significant State and the election result is bound to have a significant impact on the course of national politics.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

lakes for turning them into parks and recreational spots. Also, the story of urban flooding is more or less the same for most Indian cities because the pattern of accumulation of rainwater and its drainage has been conveniently forgotten in the last several decades. These disastrous floods should be a wake-up call for the administration to start working on the city's infrastructure that will be able to tackle future cases of urban flooding.

Ganapathi Bhat
Akola

Second Corona wave?

Sir — India, Brazil and the US account for over 51 per cent of the world's COVID-19 cases. Corona cases in India are declining significantly with 90 per cent recovery rate. However, the US is witnessing a new surge. And as India's festival season has just started, a few super-spreader events can change the course of the virus. People need to be careful while strictly following the WHO's guidelines.

Avani Jain
Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Poll promises up the ante in Bihar

In the end, it is for voters to make intelligent choices and elect a charismatic and incorruptible leader to govern them



DEVENDER SINGH ASWAL

Election time is a season of promises, of unleashing new hopes and aspirations and above all, a long-awaited occasion to demonstrate the real power of the people. In fact, as some political pundit rightly said, “it is the only *charan* (phase) when political parties are at the *charan* (feet) of the electorate, for, in the second *charan* (phase), once elected, the voters are at the *charan* (mercy) of those elected for the next five years.” The battle at the hustings in Bihar is full of electoral rhetoric and promises and they contain something for everybody, but proportionately more for the numerical segment which is likely to impact victory. The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and the *Mahagathbandhan* leader, Tejashwi Yadav, stole the electoral rhetoric when he announced that if elected, his Government would give jobs to over 10 lakh people, creating, for the moment, a youthful surge in his rallies. He was ridiculed and lampooned by his arch adversary as being utterly impractical. The promise of job creation was termed as the rant of an inexperienced and half-literate youth. Yet, sensing the ground swing, the BJP election *Sankalp Patra*, launched soon after, promised the creation of 19 lakh jobs and a free vaccine for every Bihar, giving credibility to the promise of the RJD.

Job creation is, indubitably, the biggest challenge, but a most alluring promise in these times of unemployment and despair, especially in Bihar. This has been accentuated by the colossal migration of the working class back to their homes and hearths and lockdown hunger. The unemployment rate, over 46 per cent in Bihar, has worsened due to lockdown migrants. And 52 per cent of the population of Bihar is below 35 years of age, which is a most restive segment and capable of swinging the popular pendulum. The turnout of the unemployed youth and their verbal outpouring are indicative of great simmering discontent and dissatisfaction.

There seems to be a certain disenchantment in a good segment, arising out of the long incumbency of 15 years and the opportunistic politics of holding on to the reins of power by Nitish Kumar. Fodder and other scams seem to have become things of the past. The magic of good governance is waning as the people want jobs and economic growth. Tejashwi has been described as callow, cribbed by a large family and too dominant a caste, constituting about 14.4 per cent of Bihar’s population. The voters are reminded of the rampant extortions and jungle raj of Bihar, leading to the exodus of the industry. The counter claim is that his father Lalu Prasad gave voice to the people if not prosperity: “*Swar diya hai, swarg nahin*.” Tejashwi, regardless of the baggage of being Lalu’s son, who has been convicted for squandering public money and is in prison for it, is attracting large crowds of youths. His public speeches and interaction with the media are suggestive of a certain maturity, poise and balance. He has certainly dented the constituency of the youth, blurring the deeply divisive caste lines.

“*Sushasan babu*” Nitish Kumar, who has a formidable reputation for good governance, is terse. His political moves are unpredictable. He has been Chief Minister (CMs) for long but there have been leaders who served as CMs for four or more terms consecutively. Leaders like Jyoti Basu in West Bengal, Pawan Kumar Chamling in Sikkim, Gegong Apang in Arunachal, Lal Thanhawla in Mizoram and Manik Sarkar in Tripura ruled continuously for 20 years or more. Naveen Patnaik, the current CM of Odisha, has been elected for the fifth consecutive term. Nitish sternly opposed the return of migrants to their homes in Bihar during the lockdown and was unable to manage the handling of the floods efficiently. This has certainly affected his popularity.

Elections are the biggest festival of democracy. It is enthusing that even a pandemic cannot dampen the spirit of our people, the home of many ancient republics, as evident from the election rallies in Bihar. Promises are made to win elections. The vow of peace and prosperity is the very cornerstone of a democracy. It’s not that all election promises are empty boasts. In a democracy, the mandate of the people has to be renewed periodically. So political parties in power endeavour their best to fulfil the promises made to the people in the interest of their credibility and hold over power. Studies show that a substantial percentage of promises are redeemed in stable democracies. In Bihar, the voters face a challenge of choice. One thing is certain, the promise of job creation has enthused the youth across the caste divide. It is for voters to make intelligent choices and elect a charismatic and incorruptible leader to govern them. After all, the old adage — we choose the people we deserve — is not without basis.

(The writer is former Additional Secretary Lok Sabha and an author)

THE REVOCATION OF ARTICLE 370 IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR WAS DONE CONSTITUTIONALLY AND IT WILL NOT BE RESTORED.
—UNION MINISTER
RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



UNLESS YOU ARE SUGGESTING THE SUPREME COURT TAKES DICTATION FROM YOU, PLEASE DON’T PRESUME TO KNOW WHAT JUDGES WILL DECIDE.
—NATIONAL CONFERENCE VICE-PRESIDENT
OMAR ABDULLAH

Stop the flip-flop

The policy drift on gas pricing must stop. The November 2014 norms provide a robust system of gas pricing which balances the interests of both the producers and consumers



UTTAM GUPTA

The Narendra Modi Government is keen to promote the use of gas and support it by increasing domestic production. But it wants to keep the gas price low so that it is affordable to key sectors, such as fertilisers and power producers, and is in sync with the macro objectives of keeping subsidy payments and fiscal deficit under check. This overarching objective is glossed over when it comes to pricing, even as the Centre is obsessed with giving a higher price to exploration and production (E&P) companies. Under the November 2014 guidelines for pricing of domestic gas, it did make an attempt to strike a balance between the interests of producers and consumers. Since March 2016 however, it has drifted to a point whereby the very soul of the extant formula is being undermined by fixing a floor price. This should be avoided.

However, the two major domestic producers of gas, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL), who together account for about 90 per cent of the total production in the country, have raised a hue and cry over the recent reduction in price of the fuel from \$2.39 per million British thermal units (mmBtu) during April 1- September 30 to \$1.79 per mmBtu from October 1. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MOP&NG) has promised a change in the methodology of pricing and set up a committee to examine various options. The relook is unjustified. The pricing of a crucial input such as natural gas has to strike a judicious balance between the overarching need to encourage consumption of this environment-friendly fuel (in sync with the Government’s aim to increase its share in the energy mix from the current level of about six per cent to 15 per cent by 2030) on the one hand and give necessary incentive to companies, who undertake investment in exploration and production in order to reduce dependence on import (currently about 50 per cent), on the other.

In particular, the price has to be affordable for major consumers such as the fertiliser and power manufacturers, which together account for nearly three-fourths of the total gas consumption. A vast majority of the consumers of fertilisers being poor farmers, the Government controls their price at a low level, unrelated to the cost of production, and reimburses the difference between the two as subsidy to the manufacturers. In power, too, the situation is similar, especially when it comes to fixing tariff on supplies to farmers and households. In this backdrop, a higher gas price will lead to higher subsidy payments; hence it is not desirable.

Prior to November 1, 2014, domestic gas was priced under an Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM). There was a multitude of prices depending upon the source of supply, namely from fields given to the ONGC and OIL on a “nomination” basis; blocks given to private operators or their joint ventures (JVs) with Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) like ONGC/OIL and those awarded under the NELP (New Exploration Licensing Policy). The price varied from about \$2 per mmBtu for supplies from ONGC/OIL to a high of over \$7 per mmBtu applicable on supplies from private operators/JVs.

The allocation was done by a Gas Linkage Committee (GLC) headed by Secretary, MOP&NG, which decided which sector/industry would get how much and even within each industry, which company would get how much and from which field. The guiding principle was to allocate most of the low-priced gas from ONGC/OIL to fertiliser and power

“IT WOULD APPEAR THAT OUR POLICYMAKERS DON’T CARE ABOUT PROTECTING THE INTEREST OF CONSUMERS. THEY ASSUME THAT USERS WILL PAY ANY PRICE THAT SUITS THE PRODUCERS. DON’T THEY REALISE THAT INCREASED PAYMENTS BY FERTILISER AND POWER MANUFACTURERS ON ACCOUNT OF HIGHER GAS PRICE WILL HAVE TO BE REIMBURSED AS ADDITIONAL SUBSIDY AND LEAD TO A HIGHER FISCAL DEFICIT?”



manufacturers — in line with the priorities laid down by the Government based on the recommendations of committees from time to time.

This GLC also had the responsibility of allocating imported LNG (liquefied natural gas). LNG is imported mostly by PSUs such as Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) and so on, who are also responsible for its handling, re-gasification/processing and transportation to consumption points. The APM regime suffered from several flaws, the most striking being controls on every aspect in the supply chain, multiplicity of prices and exercise of discretion by bureaucrats. As for basic objectives, it was neither helping consumers nor producers.

Though a price of \$2 per mmBtu on supplies from the ONGC/OIL was intended to help fertilisers and power producers, the requirement of these sectors being far more than what these PSUs could supply, the balance had to be met from LNG at a much higher price. This also led to an anomaly whereby some manufacturers would get away with a major share of their requirement (or even all it) from ONGC/OIL at a low price even as others had to contend with high-priced LNG. The Government then decided to introduce a uniform pricing structure and in November 2014, it fixed the price of almost all domestic gas (except for supplies from pre-NELP fields where the production-sharing contract with the operator did not provide for approval of price by the Government) based on a weighted average of gas prices at four international locations — Henry Hub (US), NBP (National Balancing Point) (UK), AGR (Alberta Gas Reference) (Canada) and Russian price for a full year, three months prior to the date from which the price takes effect.

This formula-based approach provided a “certain” and “stable” policy environment under which firms can take decisions based on their assessment of the expected movement in gas price at these trading hubs. It provides a level-playing field to all firms. It maintains a “neutral” stance between producers and consumers i.e. when, the price increases, the former gain whereas, under a decreasing price scenario, the latter benefit. As per the above guidelines, the price was \$5.61 per mmBtu from November 1, 2014; \$5.18 per mmBtu from April 1, 2015; \$4.24 per mmBtu from October 1, 2015; \$3.39 per mmBtu from April 1, 2016. During these periods, the producers were happy. Thereafter, even as the price declined further (from October 1, 2016, it was \$2.78 per mmBtu and from April 1, 2017: \$2.75 per mmBtu) they started mounting pressure on the Government to ensure that it does not go below a certain threshold. The latter refused to bow down, rightly so. But yielding to pressure in other ways, in March 2016, under a special package for supplies from deep/ultra-deep, high-pressure/high-temperature fields, it allowed a “premium” price linked to the prices of alternate fuels, including fuel oil, naphtha and imported LNG. In July 2017, it allowed Market-Based Price (MBP) on supplies from fields given under the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP). The MBP was also made applicable to unconventional fuels viz. shale gas, coal bed methane (CBM) from fields under NELP.

With these new introductions/packages, the Government has given a slipshod treatment to uniform pricing. With a multitude of prices back on the table, bureaucrats will rule the roost. They have the power to decide which pricing class a particular field has to be placed in or approve “how much of shale gas or CBM is coming from a field under NELP” as that quantity is eligible for higher price. Now

producers want even the base price of domestic gas to be altered to protect them from the downside. Reportedly, an option is to have a floor price to be determined on the basis of the Japan-Korea Marker (JKM), a benchmark index used to determine LNG tariff in North Asia with a discount. With JKM prices hovering over \$5 per mmBtu, even with \$1 mmBtu discount, the floor price will be close to \$4 mmBtu.

It would appear that our policy-makers don’t care about protecting the interest of consumers. They assume that users will pay any price that suits the producers. Don’t they realise that increased payments by fertiliser and power manufacturers on account of higher gas price will have to be reimbursed as additional subsidy and lead to a higher fiscal deficit?

This policy drift must stop. The November 2014 norms provide a robust system of gas pricing which balances the interests of both the producers and consumers. It also adequately takes care of so-called difficult fields like KG-DWN-98/3 operated by Reliance Industries Limited, which entail higher investment when compared to shallow or on-shore fields. The former yield output, which is “many times more”, resulting in corresponding higher revenue generation even with the same (albeit uniform) price. At the committed production rate of 80 million standard cubic meter per day even at \$4.2 per mmBtu, RIL would have recovered its entire investment of \$5.6 billion in KG-DWN-98/3 in 15 months.

There is not only a strong case for keeping the November 2014 guidelines intact but also rolling back subsequent pricing decisions. While the latter may not be possible, the least the Government can do is not tinker with the extant guidelines.

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

SAARC must watch divisive neo-imperialism

Unless trade ties between India and Pakistan are normalised, South Asian economic cooperation will not succeed



EDUARDO FALEIRO

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was created in 1985 to promote economic development and social progress in South Asia. At present, it has eight member countries, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

India was the Chair of the SAARC Summit in 2007 and this was arguably the most productive session that the group ever witnessed. The launching of negotiations to bring services into the South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA), the unilateral granting of zero duty access by India to SAARC Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the formal induction of Afghanistan into

SAARC as the eighth member, the setting up of the South Asian University, the establishment of the SAARC Food Bank and the SAARC Development Fund, the signing of the Convention on Mutual Assistance on Criminal Matters were some of the significant steps for regional integration taken at the Delhi Summit. The momentum generated was carried forward by the SAARC summit held in Colombo in 2008.

The economic and social welfare of a country is greatly advanced if it interacts as part of a regional bloc rather than individually. The emergence of a number of regional blocs in Asia, Africa and the US is evidence of this reality. An integrated regional economy accelerates the fiscal growth of member countries through the advantages of geographical proximity and economies of scale. Furthermore, member countries enjoy better leverage in dealing with the global systems of finance, investment and trade. A regional bloc also provides a stabilising cushion from the destabilising fluctuations in the global economy. Regional cooperation is pivotal for prosperity in South Asia.

Economic synergy often leads to

solution of disputes, including political differences. However, intra-regional trade among SAARC countries is at present less than five per cent, while it is 62 per cent in the European Union, 55 per cent in the North American Free Trade Area and 35 per cent in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. SAFTA is the first step towards a more intense synergy, which should ultimately lead to a South Asian Union and a single currency.

Though the Governments of the SAARC nations have made efforts since independence to improve the condition of their people, these attempts are often thwarted by multifarious religious, ethnic and linguistic problems. Discontentment and frustration among the masses, faced with such tribulations, embolden subversive forces both within and outside to exploit national inadequacies.

The solution to our common predicament requires peace and an atmosphere of dialogue and cooperation rather than of conflict and confrontation. Peace is essential for national as well as regional prosperity. For centuries the European continent was the stage of power rivalries and war. Now

Europe appears to be a rather peaceful continent. The very first step towards peace was found in the doctrine of “defence and detente.” While defence is an element indispensable in uncertain circumstances, detente stands for dialogue, arms control, the exchange of views at all levels and alternative thinking. Detente influences the understanding of a situation and broadens the scope of ideas on how to deal with a tense situation that causes war and affects the image of a country abroad. Europe has now progressed beyond “defence and detente” and has entered the path of effective regional integration. Experience has shown that bilateral agreements between countries of South Asia are mutually beneficial. The Indo-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement became operational in 2000 and produced good results within a short period of time. The Indo-Nepal Trade Treaty, too, is a good example of bilateral cooperation between two countries. India has now bilateral agreements with Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

There are problems sometimes and stumbling blocks on the way to economic cooperation but they can and

should be removed in the larger interests of all the countries involved. Unless trade ties between India and Pakistan are normalised, South Asian economic cooperation will not succeed. The normalisation of economic relations between the two countries is indeed crucial for the success of SAARC. The Governments of India, Pakistan and other countries of SAARC ought to join hands across national borders and religious differences, agree on zero tolerance towards every form of extremism and terrorism and redress the grievances of the disaffected and marginalised. They must beware the machinations of neo-imperialism and its strategy to divide and rule.

Governments apart, civil society, intelligentsia, the business community and the non-governmental organisations must all emphatically promote awareness about the need and advantage of regional cooperation. There ought to be a much greater interaction between civil society and the political class across the different countries of South Asia. Regrettably, such an interaction is minimal. South Asia continues to have the highest number of people in the world living below the

poverty line, outstripping sub-Saharan Africa in this regard. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) points out that among the 154 countries for which data are available, 28 did not attain any of the three objectives which the international community gathered at the World Education Forum had agreed should be achieved by all nations by 2015. The three goals are: universal primary education, free schooling of acceptable quality and the removal of gender disparities in education. All the countries of South Asia with the exception of Sri Lanka are among these 28 countries.

Regrettably, the subcontinent invests more in armaments than in social infrastructure. India and Pakistan spend more than three times as much on weaponry as they do on education or health. There ought to be a drastic reduction in the defence expenditure of both countries so that our scarce resources are utilised towards the welfare of our people rather than on the purchase of military hardware from abroad.

(The writer is a former Union Minister)



FREE THE WORLD OF WEAPONS

Though the responsibility of maintaining global peace falls on the UN, the problems we are facing are matters of concern to everyone. Not only the state, but all non-state actors, including civil societies, persons with international stature and scholars, should put in efforts and show their solidarity to make the world free of weapons. This will be in favour of all in general and the developing countries and their peoples in particular.

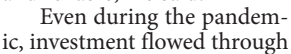
(The Kathmandu Post editorial)

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

This while sticking to India's commitment to reduce carbon footprint, he said, adding the

“Leading global bodies project that there will be a contraction in global energy

Stating that there were many areas of vibrancy, Modi said India is the third-largest and the fastest-growing aviation market and domestic carriers are projected to double their fleet size to 1,200 by 2024.



India's energy plan aims to ensure energy justice while fully meeting its global commitments of a smaller carbon

Highlighting recent efforts of his government, Modi said India has achieved 100 per cent electrification and LPG cover-

“We plan to grow our refining capacities from about 250 to 400 million tonnes per annum by 2025” to sync fuel

“There will be continuity of these robust energy policies that have been in place over the last six years,” Modi added.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The fourth annual meeting deliberated on demand sce-

The meeting, held over a virtual platform, was attended by nearly two dozen top CEOs,

Abu Dhabi National Oil Co CEO Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber and Qatar Petroleum President Saad Sherida al-Kaabi also attended the meeting. The Indian side included

Oil cartel OPEC Secretary-General Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo, International Energy Agency Executive Director Fatih Birol and International Energy Forum Secretary-General Joseph Mc Monigle also attended the meet.

PTI ■ MUMBAI

A sharp fall in the rupee and a negative trend in global markets further unnerved

The broader NSE Nifty tumbled 162.60 points or 1.36 per cent to 11,767.75.

Index heavyweight RIL accounted for most of the losses, sinking 3.97 per cent, after Amazon.com Inc won an interim arbitration award against its partner Future Group for selling its retail business to Reliance Industries for ₹24,713 crore.

New Delhi: Gold prices fell ₹59 to ₹51,034 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday, according to HDFC Securities. Silver also tanked ₹753 to ₹62,008 per kilogram from ₹62,761 per kilogram in the previous trade.

RUPEE vs Dollar

73.84

73.37
(-2p)
(-7p)

73.49
(-12p)
73.58
(-9p)
73.54
(+4p)
73.61
(-7p)

19
20
21
22
23
26

* Provisional
PTI GRAPHICS
Inverted Scale
OCT

	19	20	21	22	23	26
GMDCLTD	44.4		44.4	43.15	43.4	
TATAINVEST	858	860	831	837.65		
SFL	1282.65	1300	1260	1264.05		
PARAGMILK	111.45	112.3	107.9	108.75		
TATAMETALI	564	564	550.55	551.95		
SIJVN	22.4	22.4	21.75	22.05		
GREAVESCOT	72.85	73.15	71.4	71.8		
RELAXO	655.05	662.35	655.05	656.85		
LUXIND	1378.65	1398.5	1351.2	1357.15		
PRESTIGE	255	255	250.15	251.4		
STARCEMENT	86	86.75	84.25	85.15		
NH	339.95	344.35	334.35	336.25		
MINDACORP	72.8	72.8	69.05	69.4		
AAVAS	1543	1543	1478.6	1491.55		
VSTIND	3430	3445.55	3356.4	3363.45		
TECHTECHNO	39.5	40	39	39.2		
LAOPELA	208.95	223.05	207.65	208.9		
J&KBANK	15.09	15.09	14.59	14.75		
VARROC	305.5	305.5	295.5	298.6		
QUESS	420.1	421.9	407.6	410.45		
MASFIN	829.85	849.95	822.55	825.05		
WESTLIFE	363	369	363	365.15		
ASTERDM	137.65	142.05	137.4	139.9		
SOLARINDS	1007	1061.95	1007	1030.15		
SUPRAJIT	183.4	185.2	181	182.7		
VMART	1980	1980	1910.1	1923.7		
SUNDRMFEST	418.1	423.4	410.05	412.7		
IOB	9.2	9.35	9.19	9.29		
CREDITACC	644.95	655	630.05	632.7		

DIACIL	102.7	104.5	102.15	102.5
DCMSHIRAM	355.8	358.55	343	348.2
ARVINDFASN	131.4	131.4	127.25	127.9
NIKAMAL	1310.75	1314	1298.8	1309.4
CHOLAHLDNG	375	383.95	365	373.7
TGNSBRANDS	382.3	382.3	372.35	375.8
IFCI	6.37	6.39	6.05	6.1
BRIGADE	174.05	178	172.65	174.35
COB	458.95	459.9	445.35	447.5
GAFIBRES	1979.95	1987.4	1951.7	1965.5
USCAN	12.62	12.68	12.14	12.22
MINDAIND	301	331.5	323.1	325.3
MAHIFE	266.2	267.9	256.15	260.15
GILNETTA	170	171	167	168.1
PINCINFIRE	5267.6	5312.65	5257.85	5273.65
VTL	802	802	755	759.8
AIANG	1717	1763.2	1704.8	1710.7
POWERINDIA	968.05	969.55	956.3	961.15
EMAMILIND	362.05	362.05	357.3	358.75
MAHSEAMLES	225.25	226.5	222.1	223.5
JTEKINDIA	77.5	78.8	76.4	77.95
TCICEP	793.55	808.6	790.1	794.9
DECORP	75.05	75.5	74.65	75.05
ORIENTREF	190	192.7	184.95	188.15
TNPL	104.8	104.8	102.35	102.6
IFILWAM	906.65	911.85	896.25	896.6
MAHLOG	358.3	362.95	353.5	359.75
MMTC	16.6	16.6	16.15	16.25
ECLERX	728	728	704.95	709.1
GALAXYSFOOF	1680	1680	1652	1665.7
HERITGFUND	301.75	307.2	300	302
ITDC	223	227.2	223	223.75
MHRIL	169.05	170	164.9	165.9
GRINDWELL	570	576.05	551.45	554.5
TVTODAY	203.95	204.55	199.85	199.95
GDL	92.6	93.05	90.35	90.6
NAVNETEDUL	78.3	81.8	77.45	78.3
SIS	370	370	357.7	360
KRONCON	250	250.8	243.8	244.4
SCHAEFFLER	3810	3810	3669.25	3704.5
MOIL	137.05	138.15	134.75	135.15
ABCINDIA	1499.95	1499.95	1315.8	1340.9
ALLCARGO	118.5	119.4	118.5	119.1
TEAMLEASE	2213	2254	2213	2249.5
OMAXE	67.4	67.8	65.45	66.5
INDOSTAR	295.95	295.95	288.4	290.45
SCHNEIDER	72.85	73	71.65	72.05
CHALET	141.9	142	137.7	138.8
TPPRESTIG	5759.9	5800	5724	5728.3
SHIRAMCIT	802.85	802.85	795.35	796.25
TASTYBIT	10306.3	10306.3	10259.35	10289.35

US PRESIDENTIAL POLL

59 mn postal ballots could delay results

New York: More than 58.7 million Americans have voted in the 2020 presidential election so far, surpassing all early ballots cast in the 2016 polls, but an unprecedented number of mail-in ballots has given rise to the possibility that the result could be delayed as counting of votes may stretch beyond November 3, according to a media report.

The report in the CNN said that according to a survey of election officials in all 50 states and Washington DC conducted by the US-based network, Edison Research and Catalist, more than 58.7 million Americans have voted so far in the election, with still 9 days left for November 3.

The report said in 2016, around 58.3 million pre-election ballots were cast, including ballots in the three vote-by-mail states that year. That early vote accounted for about 42 per cent of all ballots cast in the 2016 presidential election.

“Pre-election voting for the

November election has surpassed all 2016 early ballots cast with 9 days left until Election Day,” the report said.

“Pre-Election Day voting is skyrocketing nationwide amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, and states are reporting record-breaking turnout as voters are energised to vote by mail or early in person before November,” it said.

Another CNN report, however, noted that despite the unprecedented mail-in voting, there is a possibility that full results of who between President Donald Trump and Democratic nominee Joe Biden will win the Presidential election may not be known on election night.

“Election night can be synonymous with unpredictability - just look at 2016 - but this year might be even murkier than usual. The pandemic has changed the way millions of Americans vote for president,” the report said.

While voters have already

cast an unprecedented number of mail-in ballots, in many locations, including potential battleground states, the mail-in ballots will not be counted until after the election, “potentially leading to long delays in the news media’s ability to call the election on election night,” it said.

CNN cited media experts to say that the counting could go longer than election night and “could last until the next morning or until the next afternoon or even later.

It said that 54 per cent of those 58.7 million votes already cast this cycle comes from 16 most competitively ranked states, which will play a crucial role in determining who wins the presidency this year.

Among those states, Minnesota has currently seen the largest percentage increase in early voting turnout compared to last cycle, according to Catalist data from both years in 14 key states. **PTI**

Trump intensifies fracking assault on Biden in Pennsylvania

AP ■ HARRISBURG (US)

In a late gambit to win the battleground state of Pennsylvania, President Donald Trump and his GOP allies have intensified attacks on Joe Biden over fracking, hoping to drive a wedge between the former vice president and the white, working-class voters tied to the state’s booming natural gas industry.

That assault is playing out in a barrage of TV ads and conservative and right-wing websites, and is repeated at every Trump rally in the state.

It relies on a series of confusing statements from the former vice president — including remarks on the oil industry from last week’s debate — to claim he intends to “ban” or end national gas extraction, although that is not the Democrat’s official position.

Trump’s fracking play comes as polls show the president is struggling to overtake Biden in Pennsylvania and in need of a boost from the rural and exurban white voters who helped him to a narrow victory in Pennsylvania in 2016.

It also shoots to snap the tightrope that Biden is walking between the Democratic Party’s left wing, which is hostile to fossil fuels, and its bedrock blue-collar union base that is building an expanding network of gas pipelines, power plants and processing facilities in Pennsylvania.

Biden’s climate change plan aims to reach net-zero greenhouse gases emissions by 2050, and does not involve banning fracking, the process formally named hydraulic fracturing that along with horizontal drilling made the United States an oil and gas superpower over the past decade.

He argues that net-zero threshold can be achieved by helping eliminate emissions from natural gas infrastructure, while redirecting federal subsidies for oil and gas to cleaner energies.

“I do rule out banning fracking because ... We need other industries to transition to get to ultimately a complete zero-emissions,” Biden said in Thursday night’s debate.

Supporters chant ‘Super Trump’ at election rally

Washington: President Donald Trump’s supporters have started calling him “Super Trump” as he has fully recovered from the coronavirus and started addressing multiple election rallies a day.

At an election rally in the battleground state of New Hampshire, which was attended by thousands of people, Trump said that he felt like superman upon being given an antibody treatment when he had COVID-19.

“I took something called Regeneron. Then following morning I felt so good. I felt like superman. I wanted to get back (to work). I did not want to cancel anything,” Trump told his cheering supporters in the Londonderry city of New Hampshire.

Soon, his supporters started chanting “Super Trump, Super Trump,” to which the president acknowledged with a smile and said “Thank You”.

Trump, 74, after resuming his normal life and hectic election campaigning following his recovery from coronavirus, appears to be more energetic.

Most of his speeches are

more than an hour long and some have lasted for over 100 minutes. On Saturday, he addressed as many as four election rallies, from morning to late night and on Sunday, he addressed two including the one in New Hampshire.

On Monday, Trump is scheduled to address election rallies in the key battleground state of Pennsylvania. In all these rallies, Trump makes it a point to tell his supporters that he got infected with the COVID-19 virus because he decided to work and not to hide in a basement or lock himself in a White House bedroom.

At the same time, he alleges that his Democratic challenger Joe Biden preferred to spend most of his time in a basement hiding from coronavirus.

Trump jokes that Biden’s election meetings are attracting a few people and describes the former vice president as a “low energy” individual or “Sleepy Joe”.

“I don’t know what’s wrong with him (Biden). He never goes anywhere...,” Trump said, referring to the drive-way reality of the Democratic presidential candidate in Delaware. **PTI**

Foreign students show less zeal for US since Trump took over

Chicago: On a recruiting trip to India’s tech hub of Bangalore, Alan Cramb, the president of a reputable Chicago university, answered questions not just about dorms or tuition but also American work visas.

The session with parents fell in the chaotic first months of Donald Trump’s presidency. After an inaugural address proclaiming “America first,” two travel bans, a suspended refugee program and hints at restricting skilled worker visas widely used by Indians, parents doubted their children’s futures in the U.S.

“Nothing is happening here that isn’t being watched or interpreted around the world,” said Cramb, who leads the Illinois Institute of Technology, where international scholars have been half the student body.

America was considered the premier destination for international students, with the promise of top-notch universities and unrivaled job opportunities. **AP**

In PNB scam case, UK court rejects Nirav Modi’s latest bail attempt

London: A UK court on Monday rejected the latest bail plea of fugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi, who has been lodged in a London prison since his arrest on an extradition warrant in March last year.

The application was reportedly made on the basis of “new evidence”, but Westminster Magistrates’ Court District Judge Samuel Goozee was not convinced to reverse previous bail rejections in Modi’s case.

The 49-year-old jeweller, fighting extradition to India on charges of fraud and money laundering in the estimated USD 2-billion Punjab National Bank (PNB) scam case, has made around six previous attempts at bail – at the magistrates’ court as well as at the High Court level.

However, each of the applications, which came with an offer stringent conditions akin to house arrest and a bail bond security of 4 million pounds, have been rejected each time as he has been deemed to have the financial means and motivation to abscond. “The repeated rejection of bail application is a result of excellent coordination

among the CBI, the Ministry of External Affairs and Crown Prosecution Service of the United Kingdom,” a senior CBI official said in New Delhi, commenting on Monday’s development.

At Modi’s last High Court bail hearing in March this year, Justice Ian Dove had said, “My central concern of a risk of absconding are not obviated by the measures presented.”

Modi’s legal team had offered a package of measures, which included a 24-hour electronic tag as well as a private security guard service and strictly-monitored access to gadgets and telephones. The court has also repeatedly been told of Modi’s fragile mental health and that his psychological condition was “deteriorating with the ever-increasing detention”.

Modi is next scheduled to appear via videolink from Wandsworth Prison in south-west London on November 3, for the hearing in his extradition case when Judge Goozee will be presented with arguments to determine the admissibility of the evidence provided by the Indian authorities. **PTI**

Sharif attacks Pak Army ISI chief as Opposition says ‘sun about to set’ on Imran Govt

Karachi: Pakistan’s deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has blamed Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and ISI chief Lt Gen Faiz Hameed for the current political situation in the country, as the Opposition parties held their third massive joint rally against Prime Minister Imran Khan-led government.

The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), a coalition of 11 Opposition parties, was formed to oust Khan from power on September 20. The alliance held two massive back-to-back gatherings in Gujranwala and Karachi this month. The third rally was held in Quetta, capital of the restive Baluchistan province, on Sunday.

Addressing the gathering via video link from London, the three-time prime minister and chief of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) again blamed Army chief Bajwa and ISI Director General Hameed for Pakistan’s current situation.

“Gen Bajwa, you will have to answer for record rigging in the 2018 elections, for horse-trading in Parliament, for making Imran Niazi prime

minister against people’s wishes and [by] tearing apart the Constitution and laws, for pushing people towards poverty and hunger,” 70-year-old Sharif said.

Sharif, who is entangled in a number of corruption cases, has been in London since November last year after the Lahore High Court granted him permission to go abroad for four weeks for treating the heart disease and an immune system disorder.

He also accused the ISI chief of “interfering in politics for several years with impunity” in violation of his oath. Sharif said that he names individuals “because I don’t want my Army to be defamed”.

Pakistan’s powerful Army has denied meddling in politics. Prime Minister Khan also denies that the Army helped him win the election in 2018.

“Looking at this enthusiasm, I am sure that no one will be able to violate the voters’ mandate now. I saw this enthusiasm in Gujranwala and Karachi, and now I’m seeing it in Quetta,” Sharif said, addressing the huge crowd at the stadium. **PTI**

France reacts to boycott calls; Erdogan ups Macron insults

Paris: French authorities denounced Turkish “propaganda” against France that they said was aimed at fanning hate at home and abroad, and asked on Sunday for calls to boycott French products cease immediately, saying such attacks were the work of a “radical minority”.

Meanwhile, the president of Turkey took a second insulting swipe at French President Emmanuel Macron in a growing, potentially high-risk dispute.

A day after saying that Macron needed his head examined for condoning caricatures of the prophet of Islam, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Sunday that the French leader has “lost his way.” In an unusual move, France announced on Saturday it was recalling its ambassador for consultations.

The French Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Sunday evening that its diplomats were mobilising to ask countries where boycotts were being organised or hate calls issued not to back them, and to provide assurances that French citizens would be safe.

“In numerous countries of the Middle East, calls to boy-

cott French products...and more generally, calls to demonstrate against France, in sometimes hateful terms, have been relayed on social media,” the French Foreign Ministry said. It added that such calls “denature” France’s positions on freedom of expression and conscience.

Meanwhile, Pakistan and a bloc of Muslim nations condemned, without using insults, remarks by Macron last week in which he refused to condemn the publication or showing of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad.

France considers religious satire to be among the kinds of speech that fall under the freedom of expression, while many Muslims consider any perceived attack on their prophet as a grave offence.

An 18-year-old man of Chechen origin beheaded near Paris on October 16 a teacher who had shown caricatures of Muhammad in class. While eulogising the teacher, Macron said last week that France will not renounce its freedoms.

The Turkish leader criticized his French counterpart during a party congress on Saturday, questioning the state of Macron’s mental health. **AP**

Greece, Turkey wrangle over military games in eastern Mediterranean Sea

Athens: Greece said on Monday that Turkey plans to carry out a maritime military exercise on October 28, a Greek national holiday, just hours after NATO’s secretary general said both Greece and Turkey had called off wargames on each other’s national holidays.

Government spokesman Stelios Petsas said Ankara’s move showed it was an “unreliable” partner when it comes to negotiations. “Over the last few days, Turkey has been making a persistent effort to prove that not only is it a troublemaker in our wider region, but it is also a completely unreliable interlocutor,” Petsas said.

Neighbours and NATO allies Greece and Turkey have had often frosty relations through the years. Most recently they have been locked in a bitter dispute in over maritime boundaries and energy exploration rights in the eastern Mediterranean Sea.

Turkey has sent a seismic research vessel, the Oruc Reis, to prospect for energy reserves on the seabed in an area Greece that claims is on its own continental shelf and where it has exclusive economic rights. **PTI**

Thai Parliament meets to debate political protest tensions

AP ■ BANGKOK

Thailand’s Parliament began a special session on Monday that was called to address tensions as pro-democracy protests draw students and other demonstrators into the streets almost daily demanding the prime minister’s resignation.

As Speaker of the House Chuan Leekpai began the session, only 450 of the total of 731 members of both houses had signed in for the meeting.

The demonstrations by student-led groups in the Bangkok and other cities have three main demands: that Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha step down, the constitution be amended to make it more democratic and reforms be made to the monarchy to make it more accountable.

Public criticism of the monarchy is unprecedented in a country where the royal institution has been considered sacrosanct, and royalists have denounced the protesters for raising the issue.

FROM PAGE 1

INDIA, US DISCUSS TIES, CHINA

Called foundational agreement, the two countries have already signed three such pacts including the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) and the Communications, Compatibility and Security Arrangement (COMCASA) in the past few years. On Tuesday, besides BECA, the two countries may also sign the Maritime Information Sharing Technical Arrangement (MISTA). This will enable enhanced navy to navy communication between India and the US.

Both the Ministers expressed satisfaction at the close engagements between the respective Armed Forces. They discussed potential new areas of cooperation, both at Service to Service level and at the joint level. They called for continuation of existing defence dialogue mechanisms during the pandemic, at all levels, particularly the Military Cooperation Group (MCG). They also discussed requirements of expanding deployments of liaison officers.

After his meeting with Pompeo, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar tweeted: “We discussed key bilateral, regional & global issues. Reviewed progress in ties: grown substantially in every domain. Our foreign policy consultations & cooperation have expanded. Working closely on plurilateral & multilateral formats.”

After the 2+2 talks on Tuesday, Pompeo and Esper will call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval. The two countries are likely to issue a joint statement after the conference listing the major achievements. Incidentally, Pompeo and Jaishankar had met in Tokyo earlier this month during the Quad Foreign Ministers’ meet.

Last week, the US said it was watching the India-China standoff in Ladakh closely and sharing information with Delhi. The US said it wanted to ensure that the situation did not escalate.

BE READY FOR EXIGENCY: CDS BIPIN RAWAT

Moreover, both the sides are preparing for continuing deployment for next few months as successive rounds of military and diplomatic level talks have so far failed to break the logjam.

The first day saw deliberations on matters related to human resource management, sources said here on Monday. The Army commanders will brain storm on a series of reform measures to cut down on ceremonial practices among other measures, a second source said.

The biennial conference is attended by senior officers of the Army including the Vice Chief, seven Army Commanders, Principal Staff Officers (PSOs) of the Army headquarters and other senior officers.

On Wednesday, the Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman and Nicobar Command, the only tri-service command, will give an update to the Army commanders. Several studies are currently underway for the formation of integrated tri-service commands beginning with a joint air defence command.

The last day of the conference will include an update by the Director General of Border Roads Organisation (BRO) on the various infrastructure development projects being undertaken by BRO and allied formations. Automation initiatives to optimise utilisation of manpower at various levels of the Army will also be discussed, the first source added.

COVID DEATH RATE 1.5%, LOWEST SINCE MARCH 22

According to the Ministry, a total of 45,148 new confirmed cases were registered in the last 24 hours in the country, the lowest since July 22 when 37,000 new cases were added.

Around 82 per cent of new confirmed cases are from 10 States and UTs. Kerala and Maharashtra contribute maximum to the new confirmed cases with more than 6,000 cases each followed by Karnataka, Delhi and West Bengal with more than 4,000 cases.

SC REJECTS TN PLEA FOR 50% OBC QUOTA

against the Centre to provide the reservation as it relates to a policy decision.

On July 13, the top court had asked the Madras High Court to decide the pleas, including one filed by Tamil Nadu government, against the Centre’s decision not to grant 50 per cent quota to OBCs in medical seats surrendered by the state in all India quota for under graduate, post graduate and dental courses in 2020-21.

The state government had moved the Supreme Court on July 2 seeking a direction to the high court to expeditiously decide its plea.

The state government and various political parties have challenged the Centre’s decision not to grant 50 per cent reservation to OBCs as per Tamil Nadu law.

Some of the petitioners, in their interim prayers before the High Court, had sought to stall the ongoing admissions for PG medical courses. The pleas had alleged that the Centre also did not follow its own policy of 27 per cent reserved seats for OBCs under the 2006 Act.

SC KEEPS IN ABEYANCE STUBBLE FIRE PANEL AS CENTRE STEPS IN

“We will come out with a legislation on this issue and please keep the last order at abeyance now,” Mehta said, adding that pollution must be “curbed on war footing”. Senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for the petitioner who has raised the issue of pollution caused due to stubble burning, said that the legislation would come only by next year.

To this, Mehta said, “This government acts fast”. The bench observed during the hearing that the SG has informed the court that the Centre is contemplating a comprehensive legislation and if that is so “then why we should pass the order which we have passed”.

“We don’t know what the committee is going to do and we don’t know what the Government is going to do,” the bench said.

Singh, who said that the Centre is opposing the panel like it had done on October 16, argued that Lokur committee would be filing its report in the meantime.

Mehta, however, urged the bench that October 16 order be kept in abeyance. The bench, while keeping its earlier order in abeyance, posted the matter for hearing on October 29 when another pending matter related to pollution is listed. The bench noted Mehta’s submission that the Centre has proposed a legislation to deal with the issues which are highlighted in the PIL.

“Having regard to the statement, we keep the order passed on October 16 in abeyance,” it said.

HIGH-OCTANE BIHAR 1ST PH POLL CAMPAIGN ENDS

He has also been dishing out the threat of putting Nitish behind the bars on charges of corruption if his party came to power in the State.

In a poll which is increasingly turning acerbic, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the main face of the NDA alliance, addressed three rallies and sought to attract voters by saying the NDA under Kumar, ended “jungle-raj” of RJD rule and developed Bihar where there is “no need for lantern (RJD’s poll symbol) as entire State is electrified”.

Modi has sought to score over the Opposition by citing Central Government’s act of abrogating Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir and thus bringing the State in the “national mainstream”. The BJP “Opposition parties dare say they will bring it back and still want votes in Bihar”, he said.

BJP’s poll promise of providing “free-vaccine” hogged much limelight in the campaign so far and came for heavy criticism from the RJD and Congress with Rahul Gandhi describing it as yet “another jumla” of the Prime Minister. The Opposition also sought to know as to how can BJP make promise for a vaccine which is yet to come into existence.

As against the NDA’s manifesto, the RJD promised that it would create 10 lakh

jobs and better health infrastructure in Bihar.

Congress leader Rahul attacked BJP’s failure in providing security to women in the country citing example of the Harthras rape and murder of a 19-year-old girl in the BJP-ruled UP as BJP accused him of being selective and not making any comments on atrocities against women in Congress-run Rajasthan and Punjab.

The BJP went to the extent of saying “Yadav brothers” were not questioning their alliance partner on rape incidents in the Congress-ruled States as they themselves were once reportedly accused of molestation.

The conclusion of the first-phase of campaign turned aggressive in the dying moments with top political leaders addressing as many public rallies as the time and their schedule allowed them.

2 FOUNDERS AMONG 3 LEADERS QUIT PDP

The trio in their two-page letter said, “We, your party colleagues in Jammu region, most of whom remained associated with the party through every thick and thin, since its formation, are feeling quite uncomfortable over some of your actions and undesirable utterances, especially which hurt patriotic sentiments.”

PDP founder Mufti Mohammad Sayeed had broader objectives behind the formation of the party which included creation of a viable political alternative in Jammu and Kashmir to represent the regional aspirations of the people, the letter read.

Forming the PDP was also meant to channelise dissent, especially among the youth, and prevent them from falling in the trap of anti-India elements in the absence of any credible platform to represent their genuine feelings, besides secularism and broader interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and interest of the nation, it said. These were the underlying principles behind the formation of the PDP, the letter read.

“The party received an overwhelming response to these initiatives and it could

emerge as a meaningful political force to attain power in a very short span and formed the government in coalition with Congress which performed very well and delivered in accordance with the set goals, achieving a lot in the direction of restoration of peace, harmony and ensuring equitable development of different regions,” it said.

The PDP-Congress was in power in Jammu and Kashmir from 2002 to 2008.

Referring to the last PDP-BJP government, which collapsed after the saffron party pulled out in 2018, the leaders said the party under the leadership of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed took a difficult decision of joining hands with the ideologically opposite BJP but the experiment did not work on the expected lines.

“The sudden death of Sayeed derailed the whole process and the later developments are a history and another phase of the struggle, and test of the leadership started post the August 5 last year development when the Centre abrogated the special status and bifurcated the erstwhile state into two union territories,” they said in their letter.

“Despite several undesirable developments and steps, we stood like a rock with the party and the leadership in spite of serious reservations on the handling and response of the party to the challenges of the situation in front of the party,” the leaders said.

Instead of overcoming the challenges from within and outside by a process of broader consultations and trust, “some elements within the party started pulling the party and leadership in a particular direction, thus deviating from the basic principles, agenda and philosophy, making it further difficult to face the saner voices in society,” the letter read.

“Some of the actions and utterances are unpardonable and unforgettable by the people, for the party to emerge out and move in the direction of its fundamental approach and identity, besides regaining its image as a political alternative to the people,” it said.

BJP leaders have hit out at Mehbooba for her remarks, saying seditious statements will not be tolerated.

DOCYARD
DR JAGDISH CHINNAPPA

Consultant paediatrician with interest in Pulmonology and ENT

MANIPAL HOSPITAL, BANGALORE



Let your child breathe easy



Allergy occurs when a person's immune system reacts to the exposure of any substances in the environment that are harmless to most people. These substances are known as allergens and are found in dust mites, pets, pollen, insects, ticks, moulds, foods and some medications.

According to American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology, people who have a genetic tendency to develop allergic reactions time and again suffer from disease called Atopy. Common symptoms are allergic rhinitis, asthma and atopic dermatitis (eczema). When atopic people are exposed to allergens, they can develop an immune reaction that leads to allergic inflammation. It results in the release of metabolites which can have an adverse effect on the eyes, nose, throat, lungs, skin, and the gut. The risk factors due to which a child can develop allergies are the genetic history, exposure to allergens and the duration, amount, and frequency of exposure.

Respiratory allergies and children
According to WHO's report *Air pollution and child health: prescribing clean air*, every day around a staggering 93 per cent of the world's children below 15 breathe air that is so polluted it puts their health and development at serious risk.

One of the most common allergies impacting children is allergic rhinitis. Symptoms include a runny and itchy nose, sneezing, postnasal drip, nasal congestion and blockage. Children with allergies also exhibit itchy, watery, red eyes and chronic ear problems

The immune system of children is in the developmental stage, lungs are still developing, and their bodies are less able to metabolise and detoxify toxicants present in air pollution. Children inhale more air per unit of body weight than adults, hence the exposure to allergens is more in proportion to adults. This results in impacting them severely as they are highly susceptible to various kinds of allergy.

One of the most common allergies impacting children is allergic rhinitis. Symptoms include a runny and itchy nose, sneezing, postnasal drip and nasal congestion and blockage. Children with allergies also exhibit itchy, watery, red eyes

and chronic ear problems.

Identifying and managing allergies
Identifying allergies at an early stage is very crucial and important. It is recommended to respond to the symptoms quickly to help improve child's quality of life and their day to day productivity. Visit and consult an allergist immediately when your kid showcases such symptoms persistently. Antihistamines nose sprays, decongestants and over the counter medication is prescribed on a case to case basis to avoid further aggravation of symptoms.

Few precautions that need to be taken are to ensure keeping indoors clean and dust free, identify causes of allergy, especially during seasonal changes, use clean cooking sources with exhaust systems and ensure children wear masks while outdoors. Continuous use of air conditioners also increases exposure hence limit use and keep windows open for cross ventilation and circulation.

In these unprecedented times, medicines and lifestyle management is a must to treat allergies and keep them at bay. Take your child to the doctor when the first symptoms appear so one can control and manage them appropriately. The right approach with lifestyle modifications and treatment is the key to manage your allergies especially during the pandemic.

WARMFOODS

ASHWAGANDHA: It is an ancient medicinal herb with multiple health benefits. It is used to tone, support, and revitalise body functions. It has been revered over time for its dual capacity to energise and calm at the same time.

Stress can cause fatigue, often manifesting as hyper signs like agitation and difficulty sleeping. By providing a nourishing, yet energising effect, *ashwagandha* can support a healthy nervous system.

With the use of *ashwagandha*, stress doesn't impact the nervous system with such intensity, and the signs of stress and agitation

will naturally resolve over time. Due to its heating effect, a small quantity of it can also help to cure cough and cold, which is undoubtedly the best property during the current time.

It also supports a healthy immune system and fosters healthy sleep patterns. It promotes thyroid health and proper functioning of the adrenals.



Don't let stroke strike you

According to the World Stroke Organisation, one in every four person suffers a stroke attack in their lifetime. DR VIPUL GUPTA tells you how by making simple changes in the daily routine, one can eliminate the risk

Since the COVID pandemic has shaken the world, the number of daily cases reported is on the rise. Along with this the addiction to screen has picked up pace giving rise to a new pandemic — a pandemic of addiction to screen.

According to the World Stroke Organisation (WSO), one in four person will suffer from a stroke attack in their lifetime. But a pertinent question that has transposed the notion of stroke risk is that instead of the geriatric population being highly vulnerable, the younger population is now equally seen susceptible to a stroke attack.

Earlier, stroke was considered to be a disease of the elderly (people in the age bracket of 60 years and above) but in recent years more stroke attacks are seen in the younger population. A current study elaborated that even though the overall incidence of stroke saw a downward trend in the recent years, there was a striking rise in the incidence of stroke among the younger aged 25 to 45 years. In comparison to the US, and other developed countries, India has a much higher prevalence of stroke cases among the younger group, which are almost double.

Stroke has been considered to be one of the most common and leading causes of morbidity and disability. It is estimated that, in every 40 seconds someone suffers from stroke and a person dies of stroke in every four minutes globally. While increased screen time is known to result in adverse health outcomes, stroke is one such complication that has recently been linked to it.

More screen time — higher the stroke risk

According to a recent US based study, the digital screen time has been found to be inversely proportional with the life expectancy. As per the study, for every hour of digital screen time, the life expectancy reduces by upto 22 minutes. The amount of screen time also had adverse outcomes including heart attacks, stroke, and cancer.

A large scale study from the United Kingdom with over 40,000 participants concluded that the stroke risk was significantly higher when screen time was more than two hours a day. Higher physical activity (1 hour walk a day for seven days a week) offered some protection against the adverse effects of prolonged screen time. In fact the cancer risk also increased with an increase in screen time.

One develops an addiction to the screen over a period of time and can be looked upon similar to addiction to recreational substances. There is a constant balance in the brain between the center for rationalisation (decision making) and the centers for motivation and rewards. Over time, the center for motivation and reward has an



upper hand over the center for rationalisation at which point addiction behavior develops.

A certain chemical substance called dopamine increases in the brain when an activity results in a pleasurable experience. With time a person addicted to screen would no longer perceive his/her favorite food, family and vacation time as a pleasurable experience anymore. This is because the threshold for dopamine levels that results in a rewarding experience increases.

Beyond two hours, every hour spent in front of the digital screen raises the risk of stroke by 20 per cent, a major contributing factor for stroke risk among the younger population.

Researchers have found that if one resorts to two to five minutes of physical activity for every 20 minutes spent on the screen, it significantly reduces the chance of developing diabetes and obesity.

Avoid blue light emitting devices when you go to bed. This reduces the amount of melatonin, a chemical substance that switched your brain from the wake to the sleep state. Using a device at night will prevent you from sleeping and in turn predispose you to a higher risk of stroke.

With recommendations and conclusions from the study explained that toddlers within two years of age should strictly refrain from digital screens, and an adult aged 16+ should maximum expose only two hours a day to cut down on the long-term risk of stroke.

Risk of stroke in younger population

Apart from other major factors contributing for stroke, regular physical inactivity also accounts for the onset of stroke at an early age.

“AVOID BLUE LIGHT EMITTING DEVICES WHEN YOU GO TO BED. USING A DEVICE AT NIGHT WILL PREVENT YOU FROM SLEEPING AND IN TURN PREDISPOSE YOU TO A HIGHER RISK OF STROKE”



Regular exercise not only helps in maintaining the overall health but also keeps at bay a list full of diseases. Other major ailments that are related to raising the risk of stroke include hypertension, Diabetes and high cholesterol levels.

Hypertension is one of the biggest risk factors for stroke, attributing to over 50 per cent of ischemic strokes (due to blockage) and increasing the chances of hemorrhagic stroke (bleeding in the brain). Thus regular exercise helps in maintaining the blood pressure levels, thereby reducing the risk for brain stroke by upto 80 per cent.

WHAT'S IN YOUR NAILS?



Nail hygiene is a crucial part of hand washing. But it fails to get its due attention. RAJESH U PANDYA shares tips that can help you keep nails clean and healthy

We are diligently washing our hands with soap and water every now and then and using hand sanitisers after touching any alien objects. But, are we maintaining the nail hygiene? We have been always taught to take care of our nails and keep them clean, but we are forgetting these habits. In India, all the things including eating, washing clothes, utensils and even mopping the floor are done with bare hands, so it is important to keep our hands and nails clean. Nail hygiene is crucial as without which hand hygiene is incomplete. It's an integral part of our overall health. However, it is also one of the most neglected aspects. While the need for washing hands and maintaining appropriate hand hygiene is adequately underscored but nail hygiene often fails to get the attention it deserves.

Practicing good nail hygiene involves following a systematic process to ensure longevity of your nail health structure. It includes ensuring that food particles are not sticking to your nail for a long duration and there is no build up of bacteria. It is important therefore to maintain healthy manicure practices. That means washing your nails, thoroughly, sanitising under and around them, and keeping them away from your mouth (i.e. no nail biting). Having a hygienic and personal nail clipper is another critical component of nail hygiene. Most people have no qualms about sharing nail clippers with others. This is however an extremely unhygienic practice. Nails harbor abundant germs, bacteria and viruses and sharing nail clippers is tantamount to exchanging those microorganisms.

Thankfully, maintaining good nail hygiene is not a difficult task. A little diligence, awareness and attention is sufficient to keep your nail healthy:

Keep fingernails dry and clean, this prevents bacteria and fungal infections from growing under your fingernails. It has been seen that prolonged contact with water can lead to split fingernails. It's always advisable to wear cotton-lined rubber gloves when washing dishes, cleaning or using harsh chemicals.

When you use hand lotion, rub the lotion into your fingernails and cuticles, too. Our fingernails are made up of laminated layers of a protein called keratin and they grow from the area at the base of the nail under your cuticle. Healthy fingernails are smooth, without pits or grooves. They're uniform in colour and consistency and free from spots.

Here are few ways through which one can prevent damage of nails:

Stop biting your fingernails: It damages the nail bed. A minor cut alongside your fingernail can allow bacteria or fungi to enter and cause an infection. Plus, biting nails ill transmit all the dirt and germs to your mouth.

Never pull off hangnails: Instead, carefully clip off hangnails. Refrain from using harsh nail care products.

Don't have your cuticles removed — they act to seal the skin to the nail plate, so removal can lead to nail infection.

The writer is MD, Kai India

DadiKaKehna

Canker sores are common, especially if one suffers from poor digestion and a weak immune system.

ROSHANI DEVI shares easy home remedies that can help ease the pain and discomfort



We all might have had that steaming red ulcer in our mouth at least once in life. While one of the most common reason is poor digestion, certain medication can also result in canker sores.

However, it is advisable to consult a doctor if the ulcer is large in size and lasts longer than two weeks, but in mild cases home remedies work just as fine.

Take ice cubes and allow them to melt on the ulcer. This will help reduce the redness and pain.

Rinse your mouth with salt water twice a day. This will help in reducing

extreme pain. Coconut oil can work wonders. Take a spoon of coconut oil and rinse your mouth with it to get relief.

Honey is known for its antibacterial and anti-inflammatory abilities. Apply honey on the sore thrice a day.

Canker sores can also be a result of a weak immune system. Zinc is a mineral that boosts your immunity. Taking zinc lozenges regularly may help your immune system fight off bacteria that cause these sores.

And last but not the least, don't forget to eat yogurt daily.



Secrets to beautiful skin

Beautician SHAHNAZ HUSAIN offers tips to get you a skin glow this winter

Do you want to add glow to your skin this festive season? Here is one important secret. Looking after the skin according to its type and needs is the essence of a glowing skin. With the festive season just starting, everyone would like to look good, especially after a hard year owing to the COVID pandemic. I would suggest everyone should adhere to a simple DIY regimen, from Head to Toe to feel and look good.

SKINCARE MADE EASY

■ For glowing skin on the body, tie a mix of powdered milk, ground almonds, rice powder and rose petals in a clean cloth, wet it and rub gently on your face. The ingredients work on your skin, gently cleansing it and leaving it soft, smooth and vibrant. It also leave the body naturally perfumed and refreshed, feeling as smooth as silk.

■ Night time cleansing is more important, in order to remove pollutants and make up before bedtime. So, cleanse



the skin daily at night and rinse well with plenty of plain water. For normal to dry skin, use a cleansing cream or gel. For oily and combination skin, use face wash or cleansing lotion.

■ Tone the skin daily with chilled rose water, using cotton wool pads. Wipe and stroke the skin with them. Then, pat briskly with the rosewater-soaked cotton wool pads.

■ *Multani mitti* is said to clarify the skin and bring about a glow. *Multani mitti* is a natural clay, which contains several minerals. It is of special benefit to oily skins. For oily

skin, mix *multani mitti* with rose water into a paste and apply on the face, avoiding the lips and area around eyes. Wash it off when it is dry. For combination skin, apply the mask on oily areas of the skin.

HAIR CARE AND STYLE

■ For dull hair, have a quick conditioning treatment before your shampoo. Mix one teaspoon each of Vinegar with one egg or a little almond oil. Massage into the hair. Then do the hot towel wrap. Wash hair after half an hour. It will look smooth, thick and shiny.

■ To soften rough frizzy hair, mix some water with creamy hair conditioner and put it in a spray bottle. Spray the mixture on the hair. Then comb the hair, so that it spreads through the hair.

■ Fringes are in. The side-swept fringe is popular, or you can part the fringe in the centre. Oval and long faces look good with a fringe. A layered fringe can make a large or round face look slimmer. Short fringes suit small faces.

INBRIEF

A robust immune system ensures a strong inner resilience to fight all perils, and rightly so. In line with the thought that tough times call for tougher mindsets and stronger immunity, Vahdam Teas, the award-winning Indian Tea and Superfoods brand, has launched a range of Turmeric Superfoods Lattes & Teas effortlessly boosting immunity amidst stressful schedules.

The Ministry of AYUSH highly recommends Turmeric, *aka* the Golden Son of Ayurveda, for boosting immunity. Curated with special attention to ongoing global predicament, Vahdam Teas, offers an exclusive range of certified Organic and Vegan Turmeric Teas and Latte Mixes.

The key active ingredient of turmeric, 'Curcumin' is responsible for Turmeric's multiple life-enhancing properties. The Turmeric range is also blended with black pepper which is scientifically proven to increase curcumin's bio-absorption significantly, thereby dramatically increasing the benefit of turmeric to one's overall health. Balancing premium & world's best quality Indian Turmeric, with other time-honored healthy ingredients such as ginger, ashwagandha, moringa, amongst an array of other spices which are 100% natural, pure and caffeine free, this turmeric range is sure to be an inevitable element of fitness in no time.

Trend Slazer

A film is beyond just actors: Jim

Actor **JIM SARBH** says not much credit is given to all the pieces that go into making a film.

"Everyone likes to think that actors are the greatest things on earth, but no. It's all (about) good film, good direction and things puts together, the way it is edited," he said.

"I think we give credit to all the pieces that go into a film. So, as long as you can stop thinking about yourself as the main and start thinking about more in terms of telling great stories I think things are fine," he added.

Jim will soon be seen in Bejoy Nambiar's revenge dram *Taish*, which also features Pulkit Samrat, Kriti Kharbanda, Harshvardhan Rane and Sanjeeda Sheikh.



'I was probably the first one to start serious fiction on the net. Maaya and Twisted are in their fourth

season now and that makes me really happy. However, in these years the OTT game has changed, and both content and competition are much more fierce. You need to get out there and play a scintillating knock every once in a while.'

—**Vikram Bhatt**

Actor **MANDIRA**

BEDI and her husband, filmmaker **Raj Kaushal**, have adopted a four-year-old girl named Tara. Mandira has revealed on Instagram that Tara became a part of the family on July 28 this year.



"She has come to us like a blessing from above... Our little girl, Tara. Four years and a bit. With eyes that sparkle like stars. Sister to her Vir. Welcoming her home with open arms and pure love. Grateful, thankful. Blessed. Tara Bedi Kaushal became a part of our family on July 28, 2020," she wrote.

Swift's Folklore million-selling album

Singer **TAYLOR SWIFT** has a reason to celebrate this year as her album, *Folklore*, has become the first million-selling album of 2020 in the US.

The album, which had released on July 24, returned to top spot on the Billboard 200 chart for an eighth non-consecutive week (on the chart dated October 31). It has also become the first album to sell a million copies in the US in 2020, reports billboard.com.

With another 57,000 copies sold in the US in the tracking week ending October 22 (according to Nielsen Music/MRC Data), the total album sales of *Folklore* jumped past one million (to 1.038 million), making it the first album to sell a million copies in 2020.



TIE IT LATER

Out of 15 countries, wedding reception cancellations have been found to be the highest in India amid the COVID-19 scare

With 23 per cent of couples going ahead only with the wedding ceremonies amid COVID-19, marriage reception cancellations in India is higher compared to other countries, according to a survey of to-be-weds in 15 countries.

However, wedding ceremony cancellations in India will remain low with 76 per cent of couples going ahead with the chosen dates, revealed the report by wedding technology company, The Knot Worldwide.

Most couples will reduce the size of their guest lists (68 per cent) and hire fewer ven-

dors (60 per cent) to ensure that COVID-19 norms are followed.

Abiding by local rules and regulations, a vast majority of to-be-weds (80 per cent) will encourage social distancing — between people and tables, said the survey.

About 90 per cent of the couples in India will be inviting only immediate family and close friends. A quarter would want their guests to take a COVID-19 test ahead of the event as a precautionary measure, the results showed.

"We are glad to see that couples in India are staying pos-



itive and are keen to celebrate their special day, despite the pandemic, by making necessary arrangements and precautions," Ankur Sarawagi, India Country Head, said.

At the ceremony, 75 per cent of Indian couples will conduct temperature checks for attendees, said the survey. Guests will be provided with complete safety measures like

hand sanitisers, face masks, and members of the staff and vendors such as photographers and makeup artists will be required to wear masks or PPE kits.

The traditional concept of an Indian wedding, one that spans through days, has also changed with 27 per cent of the couples opting for several small events on one day with limited people rather than several large one-day events.

Only 40 per cent of couples in India anticipate that their budget will be 25 per cent or more lesser than what they had originally planned, according to the 'Global COVID-19 Weddings Report.'

The findings are based on data among 9,767 couples who originally had weddings planned between October 2020 and February 2021. The survey was fielded in September 2020 to its users.



BAPU AS A MUSE

SUMATHI RAMASWAMY traces the journey of the most analysed Indian of the 20th century through 131 paintings, sculptures, installations and multimedia works by various artists. UMA NAIR pans her latest book — *Gandhi in the Gallery: The Art of Disobedience*

Traversing an odyssey of the prophet of disobedience who came to be known as a Mahatma, author and indologist Sumathi Ramaswamy's book, *Gandhi in the Gallery: The Art of Disobedience*, published by Roli Books, is a well-researched magnum opus. Brilliantly erudite and deeply driven by a rare quality of fine observation and critical prowess, Ramaswamy, a James B Duke distinguished professor of History at Duke University, has been scouring the nation, galleries, book periodicals and exhibitions to create this labour of love that looks at the Mahatma as a muse.

LN TALLUR

On the cover is LN Tallur's magnificent sculpture, *Eraser Pro* (2012, Nature Morte), which was unveiled at his historic show in New Jersey, *Interference Fringe*, which seemed more like a select retrospective of his series of definitive works. This sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi, which has been created as a dulcet fragmentation, incomplete in its insignia and dynamic in design, is a work that keeps one pondering. Tallur loves to keep his viewers guessing. He uses sculpture, wall pieces, interactive work and site-specific installations to expose the absurdities of everyday life and the anxieties that characterise contemporary society. His work incorporates handmade craftsmanship, found objects, organic and industrial material. They are symbolic of a developing India, at times, creating a correlation between its traditional and contemporary customs.

NAWAL KISHORE

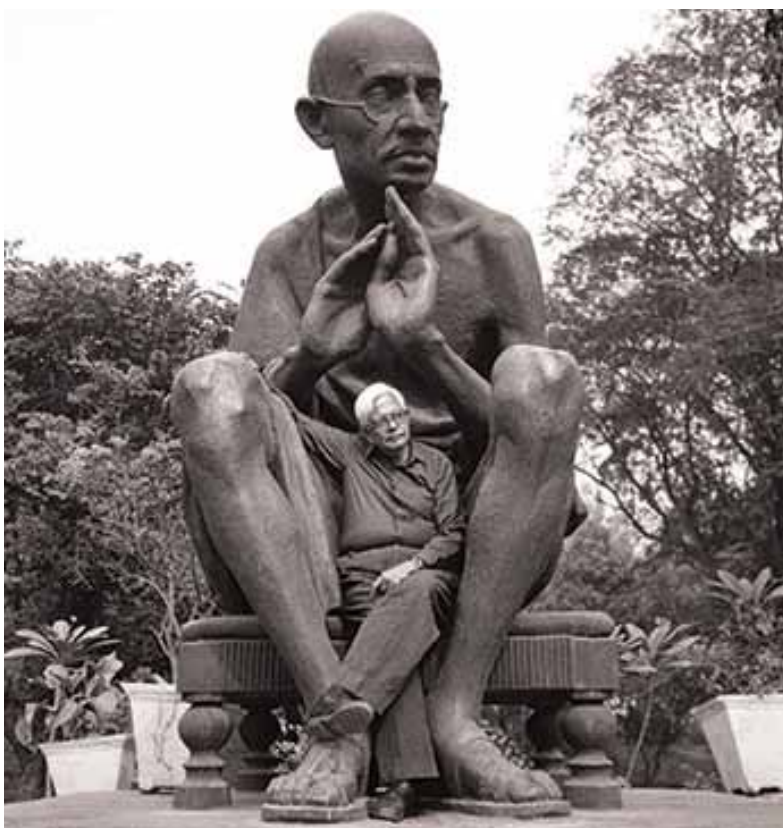
Ramaswamy reveals the many ways in which Gandhi has served as a muse for painters, sculptors and multimedia artists over the decades. The second example in the book, which contains 131 paintings, sculptures, installations and multimedia works on Gandhi belongs to the exhibition, *Bapu@150 Years*, was exhibited at the Lalit Kala Akademi, last year. This acrylic on canvas by Nawal Kishore is a flashback to January 10, 1908, when Gandhi was arrested for the first time, as he refused to carry an obligatory ID card in South Africa. *Gandhi: An*



Untold Story retraces when he was arrested for the breach of the registration law and was later clapped into prison for the same. The following month he was released after an understanding was made with the government. A few days later, he was severely beaten up by a patriot, who accused him of betraying the Indian cause. Kishore creates Mahatma with mask and wings. The mask was used as a metaphor for being silenced in the fight for recognition of exploitation and subjugation.

GIGI SCARIA

Yet another powerful image in the books is that of Gigi Scaria. It is a morphed photograph of Devi Prasad



Chowdhury's perennial sculpture of the Dandi March in Delhi, which was conceptualised many years ago and executed by DG, NGMA, Adwaita Gadanayak.

Scaria turns around the figures that follow Gandhi with the question — "Who deviated first?"

Scaria explained the analogy. "The

2010 work (digital print on archival paper) is based on the iconic Gyarah Murti sculpture in Delhi by Devi Prasad Roy Chowdhury that depicts the Dandi March led by Mahatma Gandhi in 1930. I was part of a group of artists who retraced that route in 2010, to commemorate 80 years of the iconic march. Gandhi had conceived this as a non-violent protest against the colonial salt laws. In my photograph, I have the 10 leaders walking in the opposite direction, who ask the viewers — When did we decide to deviate from the path? Gandhi has been relevant in different times in history but in our quest to reach higher goals, we have forgotten his ideals. The route we take to attain and assert freedom also matters. But that freedom comes with responsibility, and we need to be answerable for our actions. It is not just about the people who lead. Today, our nation is taking over us. To be willing to kill someone with the rationale that you are protecting Mother India is entirely wrong. This tragic understanding of the nation will only kill freedom, it can't lead to it," he said.

OTHER ARTISTS

Ramaswamy creates some immeasurable and unending islands of thought and contemplation. From MF Hussain, Atul Dodiya, Upendra Maharathi to Ram Rahman's famous image of Bhupen Khakar, sitting in the lap of a Gandhi statue in Delhi, the book is a collectible, rather, a souvenir, that every book and history lover must invest in.

One of Ramaswamy's aims is to bring to light the labour of art that an artist puts in creating Mahatma. She wrote in her introduction, "Gandhi is unarguably the most analysed Indian of the 20th century, and my fellow historians and other social scientists have produced an enormous body of important scholarship on the man and his movement from which I have benefited. But the deep suspicion of the image that is ingrained across the Social Sciences, and indeed, an unfounded conviction regarding its irrelevance, has meant that the labour of art in producing the phenomenon that we name the Mahatma has been largely ignored."

Glorious drive

Driving around Delhi in the mellow autumn sunshine is a pleasure



urers were unable to meet these stringent norms but Hyundai ensured the Venue did. The 'Sport' moniker on the Venue is not just a marketing term, the punchy engine powers the car

forward to highway cruising speeds rapidly, almost always has power on tap for overtaking and is a real delight to drive. Yet, with careful driving, the diesel engine can deliver incredible

real-world efficiency. We found over 17 kilometers per litre in efficiency. At a time when fuel costs are taking a big bite of your wallet, the Venue Sport offers a blend, which might seem contra-

dictory to some, frugal enjoyment!

On the beautiful greenery of the capital, the Venue Sport was a joy to drive. The combination of looks, power and fuel econ-

omy make it a combination that will please every buyers' heart and make the competition wary. If you are looking for a compact hatchback that offers just about everything, don't look any further.

All we need to do is back our strengths, which I am sure we will touch on, and just make small changes where we feel that the game got away from us

It took so long to get one for the team. I would have preferred to get this form two or three games before when we weren't relying on other results to get us through to the qualifiers

Sometimes you have to give credit to the opposition, and I feel that they really battled well. Our bowlers had not much to do; it was their skills & execution, which worked for them

Jofra has been magnificent for us in every game and bowling beautifully, we just need a bit more consistency from other guys around, trying to help him out

Final call for Orange Army

PTI ■ DUBAI

Delhi Capitals would look to complete the unfinished business and seal their place in the playoffs when they take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in a crucial Indian Premier League match here on Tuesday.

Two back-to-back defeats against Kolkata Knight Riders and Kings XI Punjab must be hurting but DC need to shrug it off and add two points to take their tally to 16, which will elevate them to the top of the table.

On the other hand, Sunrisers' hopes to reach the playoffs are hanging by a thread. David Warner and his men occupy the penultimate spot with eight points from 11 outings.

To reach the qualifiers they must win their remaining three games and hope all other results go their way.

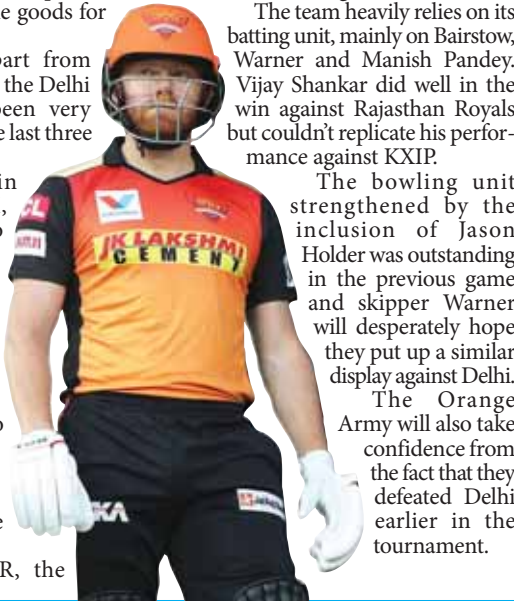
The Capitals possess an explosive batting department as well as a formidable bowling unit. They have not been dependent on any one person, as different players have raised their hands at different points of time to deliver the goods for the team.

However, apart from Shikhar Dhawan, the Delhi batsmen have been very inconsistent in the last three games.

In the win against CSK, Dhawan, who scored a century, did the heavy lifting with the bat.

The senior opener again notched up a hundred against KXIP but with no substantial contributions from the other batsmen Delhi lost the game.

Against KKR, the



MATCHES	16
SUNRISERS HYDERABAD	10
DELHI CAPITALS	08

Delhi batsmen crumbled under pressure, managing to put up only 139 runs in 20 overs while chasing

194.

Opener Prithvi Shaw, who has been going through a lean patch, was replaced by Ajinkya Rahane but to no avail as the senior Indian player perished without opening his account.

Rishabh Pant and Shimron Hetmyer have also struggled since their return to the playing XI.

The South African pace duo of Kagiso Rabada (23 wickets) and Anrich Nortje (14) has been exceptional. Tushar Deshpande and Ravichandran Ashwin's performance has been erratic in recent matches, while Axar Patel has done well to suffocate the opposition teams.

Sunrisers head into the clash after a demoralising loss. Chasing a modest 127 against KXIP, the complexion of the match changed following the dismissal of openers Warner and Jonny Bairstow in quick succession.

The former champions lost five wickets in the final two overs to suffer a humiliating defeat.

The team heavily relies on its batting unit, mainly on Bairstow, Warner and Manish Pandey. Vijay Shankar did well in the win against Rajasthan Royals but couldn't replicate his performance against KXIP.

The bowling unit strengthened by the inclusion of Jason Holder was outstanding in the previous game and skipper Warner will desperately hope they put up a similar display against Delhi.

The Orange Army will also take confidence from the fact that they defeated Delhi earlier in the tournament.

Gayle, Mandeep help KXIP move into top four

PTI ■ SHARJAH

Chris Gayle channelised his inner anger while Mandeep Singh played through immense personal grief as they conjured to script another chapter in a beautiful comeback story for Kings XI Punjab which beat Kolkata Knight Riders by eight wickets in the IPL on Monday. Chasing a target of 150, KXIP achieved the target in 18.5 overs losing only two wickets as they have now won their fifth successive match to keep play-off hopes alive.

Gayle, who was overlooked and was also ill during the first phase showed why he is the 'Universe Boss' during his innings of 51 off 29 balls with five sixes. Mandeep, who is grieving the loss of his father,

anchored the chase with an unbeaten 66 off 56 balls as the duo added 100 runs in 10.1 overs.

Such was the effect of Gayle-storm that it rubbed off on Mandeep (8x4, 2x6) who also completed a splendid sixth IPL half-century.

The duo added 100 runs from 61 balls to take them home with seven balls to spare.

KXIP's dream run of five wins on the bounce not only took them to top-four but also opened up the table before the penultimate round. KKR slipped to fifth with 12 points from 12 matches as with a negative run rate of (-0.479) things have become more difficult to make the last-four.

Opting to field, Kings XI Punjab dished out a disciplined bowling show, espe-

cially at the back-end, to restrict Kolkata Knight Riders to a modest 149/9.

Mohammed Shami (3/35) was the pick of the Kings XI Punjab bowlers while leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi (2/20) and Chris Jordan (2/25) claimed two wickets apiece to put brakes on KKR who were invited to bat first.

After a familiar jittery start, KKR got the momentum going with opener Shubman Gill (57 off 45 balls) and skipper Eoin Morgan (40) firing all cylinders inside the Powerplay.

But KXIP's last match hero Jordan pulled things back for his team by brilliantly mixing up his slow deliveries, while Bishnoi took the prized scalp of Morgan after KKR reached 54/3 inside the Powerplay.

Morgan holed out to

Murugan Ashwin at deep square leg as Bishoi ended the freeflowing partnership for 81 runs from 47 balls and from then onwards KKR struggled to get going.

Earlier, KKR had another messy start and looked in deep trouble at 10/3 inside two overs after Shami's exceptional first over.

But Morgan and Gill counter-attacked beautifully, getting the boundaries and sixes. The duo made full use of the Powerplay restrictions and Shami conceded 21 runs from his third over.

Gill showed his sheer class and timing, smacking Shami for back-to-back sixes.

This was after opener Nitish Rana got out for a golden duck and Shami dismissing Rahul Tripathi (7) and Dinesh Karthik (0) in the space of three balls.

Rohit out of Oz tour with hamstring injury

Siraj in Test squad, Chakravarthy in T20Is; Pant & Shaw only in Test team

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's limited-over vice-captain and senior opener Rohit Sharma was on Monday left out of all three squads for the tour of Australia due to a recurring hamstring injury which is set to rule him out of the remaining part of the Indian Premier League as well.

In Rohit's absence, KL Rahul will be Virat Kohli's deputy in the white ball teams. Rohit picked up the injury during the ongoing IPL in the UAE.

Pacer Mohammed Siraj is the fifth speedster in the Test squad while Kolkata Knight Riders' mystery spinner Varun

Chakravarthy has made it to the T20I squad.

Fast bowler Ishant Sharma, who is nursing a muscle tear, and Rohit will be monitored by the BCCI medical team.

There weren't any surprises save for Chakravarthy's inclusion in the T20 squad after his stellar show for KKR in the current IPL. He has already picked up a five-for and has a total of 12 scalps to his credit this season so far.

THE SQUADS

T20I squad: Virat Kohli (C), Shikhar Dhawan, Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul (VC & wk), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Sanju Samson (wk), Jadeja,

Washington Sundar, Chahal, Bumrah, Shami, Navdeep Saini, Deepak Chahar, Varun Chakravarthy

ODI squad: Virat Kohli (C), Dhawan, Shubman Gill, KL Rahul (VC & wk), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Mayank Agarwal, Jadeja, Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Bumrah, Shami, Navdeep Saini, Shardul Thakur

Test squad: Virat Kohli (C), Mayank Agarwal, Prithvi Shaw, KL Rahul, Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane (vice-captain), Hanuma Vihari, Shubman Gill, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Rishabh Pant (wk), Bumrah, Shami, Umesh Yadav, Navdeep Saini, Kuldeep Yadav, Jadeja, Ashwin, Siraj.

Outside noise doesn't matter to Stokes anymore

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

England's World Cup-winning all-rounder Ben Stokes says outside noise used to affect him in his younger days but now he pays no heed to it as he has realised that team and people around hold more importance.

Rajasthan Royals rode on Stokes' spectacular 107 off 60 balls and an unbeaten 54 by Sanju Samson to chase down a stiff 196-run target set by Mumbai Indians with 10 balls to spare on Sunday.

Asked how he dealt with the ups and downs as a cricketer in the last couple

of years, Stokes said: "Outside noise can affect people in different ways, when I was younger it affected me."

"It took me a while to understand that outside noise isn't what matters. It is all about what's within the team or people who have an influence on you, on your career," he told teammate Samson in a video uploaded on *IPLT20.Com*.

Stokes, who had missed the initial matches of the IPL to be with his ailing father Ged in New Zealand, was elevated to the role of an opener by the Royals but he struggled in his new position initially.

The Royals, however, persisted with the plan and the move finally paid dividends against Mumbai Indians as Stokes was back to his destructive best, smashing 14 fours and three

sixes in his unbeaten knock.

Stokes was delighted to repay the faith the team has shown in him over the years.

"I have had backing from everyone at the franchise, I know I haven't delivered to the expectations of that but having that backing from the people that matter in the franchise is really the thing that I sort of pride everything on. It's good to return the faith," Stokes said.

The comprehensive eight-wicket win keeps the inaugural season champions alive in the race for the playoff spot.

"To beat a team like Mumbai by eight wickets is fantastic especially considering the momentum that Mumbai probably carried in with the innings that Hardik played. Some special striking. So, yeah great to get a win," he added.

Shastri & coaching staff arrive in UAE

PTI ■ DUBAI

India head coach Ravi Shastri and his support staff have all arrived in Dubai and entered the bio-bubble as they get ready for the team's two-month tour of Australia next month.

Shastri, batting coach Vikram Rathour, bowling coach Bharath Arun and fielding coach R Sridhar have all reached from their respective home cities on Sunday.

"The head coach and his team arrived yesterday. They are now in iso-

lation and getting their three mandatory RT-PCR tests done. There is a separate bio-bubble created for the support staff along with Cheteshwar Pujara and Hanuma Vihari," a senior BCCI source privy to development told *PTI*.

It is expected that once Pujara and Vihari end their six-day isolation period, they will be training at the ICC Academy. Sri Lankan throw-down expert Nuwan and India's Raghu will be helping out the two Test specialists during their training session while their

teammates complete their IPL engagements.

Vihari was in fact doing his nets along with Sridhar in Hyderabad and Pujara was training at his own academy in Rajkot after most of the lockdown restrictions were lifted.

India is expected to travel with a 30-member squad across three formats for their tour of Australia with another 20-odd support staff which will make it a jumbo 50-plus contingent touring Down Under.

Zverev wins back-to-back Cologne titles

AP ■ COLOGNE

Alexander Zverev made it back-to-back AATP Tour titles when he beat Diego Schwartzman 6-2, 6-1 in the final of the Cologne Championship.

Zverev hit nine aces, saved the only break point he faced and converted five of his own to beat the French Open semi-finalist. The first set was over in 38 minutes, the second in just 33.

"It's getting better. I'll be back to my best form soon," Zverev said, referring to problems with his hip.

"I didn't know two days ago if I could finish the tournament. I'm happy I didn't give up."

It's Zverev's 13th title overall, and the third time the US Open finalist has won back-to-back titles after wins in Washington and Montreal in August 2017, and Munich and Madrid the previous May.

The German got the better of Felix Auger-Aliassime to win last week's Cologne Indoors final for his 12th title.



Ind-Aus Boxing Day Test likely to have fans

MELBOURNE: Fans are expected to be allowed into the Melbourne Cricket Ground for the blockbuster Boxing Day Test between Australia and India, officials said on Monday in a major boost for the series.

Australia's second largest city has been under a coronavirus lockdown for months, and on Sunday a decision was made to bar spectators at next week's Melbourne Cup horse race.

But on Monday officials announced an easing of restrictions after no new daily or deaths,



opening the door to some good news for cricket fans.

"The Boxing Day Test of course is very different (to the Melbourne Cup) because that is some way off," Victoria state premier Daniel Andrews told reporters.

CSA's entire board resigns

Johannesburg: Cricket South Africa's 10-member Board of Directors has resigned, clearing the decks for an interim administrative structure in the crisis-ridden body as sought by the country's olympic committee.

Six directors, including former acting president Beresford Williams, had stood down following a meeting on Sunday. The remaining four quit on Monday.

"After the Members' Council had deliberated and resolved that in order to best serve the interest of cricket in South Africa, the entire Board

should resign — which they did. All Independent and Non-Independent Directors have now resigned," CSA said in a statement on Twitter on Monday.

"Following the Members' Council meeting held yesterday, 25 October 2020, the Members' Council received and accepted resignations from Board members."

The development comes just days before the start of the domestic season on November 2. **PTI**



Kulusevski saves Juve day

AFP ■ TURIN

Dejan Kulusevski came off the bench to rescue a point as champions Juventus, playing without Cristiano Ronaldo, were held to a third Serie A stalemate at home against Hellas Verona on Sunday. Portuguese forward Ronaldo remains absent after testing positive for coronavirus with Juventus preparing for next week's Champions League tie against Barcelona in Turin.

"We had a too wait-and-see first half, we weren't very aggressive with the midfielders but we had the most dangerous opportunities," said Juventus coach Andrea Pirlo.

Substitute Andrea Favilli put Verona ahead after an hour in Turin but Swedish forward Kulusevski rescued Pirlo with 13 minutes to go.

"In the second half after the goal there was a good response, but we shouldn't need a slap in the face to wake us up."

"When you play against Verona it's hard for everyone, but we could have done better."

To add to Pirlo's problems before hosting Barcelona, defender Leonardo Bonucci went off with a thigh problem. Veteran Giorgio Chiellini is already out.

The nine-time reigning champions are fifth in Serie A, three points behind leaders AC Milan, who host Roma on Monday.



Jamie Vardy celebrates with his Leicester teammates after scoring vs Arsenal **AP**

Vardy hurts Arsenal again

AFP ■ LONDON

against them.

"Our plan was always to bring Jamie Vardy into the game and he can stretch it," said Rodgers.

"He makes the big contributions in the big games," he added after Leicester's first win at Arsenal since 1973.

"That shows you the level he is at and he is a world-class player. I'm lucky to have him." Leicester climbed to fourth after ending a run of two successive league defeats. While Arsenal are languishing in 10th after a second consecutive league loss following their 1-0 defeat at Manchester City last weekend.

The 33-year-old has made a habit of tormenting Arsenal and has now scored 11 goals in 12 Premier League games

DUGOUT

MOTION PICTURE



Mumbai Indians all-rounder Hardik Pandya takes a knee in support of *Black Lives Matter* movement after completing his fifty against Rajasthan Royals on Sunday **@hardikpandya7**



Sunrisers Hyderabad players play football during team's practice session ahead of IPL game against Delhi Capitals **@SunRisers**

WOMEN'S T20 CHALLENGE SCHEDULE									
Match	Date	Local Time	India Time	Team 1	Team 2	Venue	Referee	Umpires	TV
Match 1	28 Oct	14:00 IST	14:30 IST	India A	India B	Chennai	Shankar Dutt	Shankar Dutt, Shashank	Star Sports
Match 2	28 Oct	14:00 IST	14:30 IST	India C	India D	Chennai	Shankar Dutt	Shankar Dutt, Shashank	Star Sports
Match 3	29 Oct	14:00 IST	14:30 IST	India E	India F	Chennai	Shankar Dutt	Shankar Dutt, Shashank	Star Sports
Match 4	29 Oct	14:00 IST	14:30 IST	India G	India H	Chennai	Shankar Dutt	Shankar Dutt, Shashank	Star Sports
Final	30 Oct	14:00 IST	14:30 IST	India A	India H	Chennai	Shankar Dutt	Shankar Dutt, Shashank	Star Sports

Schedule of Women's T20 Challenge 2020 **@IPL**

SAINI DOUBTFUL STARTER AGAINST MI

RCB pacer Navdeep Saini is a doubtful starter for their next IPL match against Mumbai Indians after sustaining a split webbing in his right hand against CSK. It must be noted that Saini, who is set to be a part of India's touring team to Australia will also need the permission of BCCI's medical team, which is a keeping a tab on all the international players. In the 18th over, Saini was hit on the right thumb while fielding off his own bowling. He immediately left the field and got his webbing stitched up by a surgeon. "Saini has split his webbing in the last ball there," RCB team physio Evan Speechly told *RCB TV*. "He obviously got hit on the right thumb. Fortunately, we had a good hand surgeon, who stitched up nicely, put five stitches. "So we will monitor him overnight and check whether he can ready for next match. I cannot be sure when he's good to go but hoping he will play next match."

IT'S NOT A CRISIS: RABADA

Delhi Capitals' pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada, who has clinched 23 wickets in 11 matches, will look to help his team bounce back from their previous two defeats in the ongoing IPL when they take on SRH on Tuesday. Rabada has said that his team needs to back their strengths and work on a few things which would help them bounce back in this crucial stage of the tournament. "You are playing quality cricket here — this is not easy cricket. We started off well which is a huge positive as you always want to throw the first punch. And that's how it's going to happen in the, I say 'the curve' — now that's a relevant term these days. And we are just dipping a bit, but just need to do a few things to spike again," said the 25-year-old.

POINTS TABLE

		P	W	L	NRR	PTS
1	MI	11	7	4	+1.252	14
2	DC	11	7	4	+0.434	14
3	RCB	11	7	4	+0.092	14
4	KKR	11	6	5	-0.476	12
5	KXIP	11	5	6	-0.103	10
6	RR	12	5	7	-0.505	10
7	SRH	11	4	7	+0.029	8
8	CSK	12	4	8	-0.602	8