

OPINION 8
WHAT MAKES
BENGAL UNIQUE?**WORLD 11**
TURKISH LEADERS CONDEMN
HEBDO'S CARTOON OF ERDOGAN**SPORT 14**
LIVERPOOL, MAN CITY,
BAYERN WIN IN CL

LUCKNOW, THURSDAY OCTOBER 29, 2020; PAGES 14 & 3



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12 VIVACITY

Bihar voters defy corona, throng booths

Final turnout to be higher than provisional 54.26% in first phase of polls for 71 seats

PNS ■ PATNA

Voters of Bihar defied coronavirus as the provisional turnout of 54.26 per cent in the first phase of the Assembly polls for 71 seats matched the figure of 2015. It is expected that the final percentage could go still higher as the Election Commission is updating the data with more inputs from 71 constituencies spread across 16 districts.

Election Commission Secretary-General Umesh Sinha told reporters that the "projected" voter turnout was expected to be more than those in the last Assembly and Lok Sabha polls.

The large turnout of "maskless" people in the rallies of political leaders during the last two weeks showed that despite repeated appeal by the Prime Minister himself, the people were not ready to live under the fear of the virus anymore. On Wednesday, they exhibited the same disdain for the virus and queued up before the polling booths, much to the relief of poll officials.

The majority of the 71 seats came under what was once known as the "flaming fields of Bihar" due to bloody clashes between the private army of upper caste landlords



Voters, adhering to social distancing norms, stand in queues outside a polling station to cast their votes for the first phase of Bihar Assembly elections at Paliganj constituency in Patna on Wednesday

PTI

and the Maoists. The situation is near normal and the influence of the Maoists is limited to only some pockets now. Still, in the 35 Naxal-hit areas, the polling hours were curtailed.

Polling was conducted till 3 pm in four Naxal-affected constituencies of Chainpur, Nabinagar, Kutumba, and Rafiganj while in the other five Naxal-hit constituencies it went up to 5 pm. In the remaining

26 Naxal-affected constituencies, polling was held till 4 pm.

Of the 71 seats, 12 of them were decided by very narrow margins in the 2015 polls. The victory margin of the CPI(M-L) candidate from Tarari in

2015 was just 271 votes.

The presence of Chirag Paswan-led LJP has turned the contest interesting as his party has fielded candidates on each and every seats against the JD(U) candidate. Incidentally,

Prime Minister Narendra Modi who addressed three more rallies in the State on Wednesday did not mention Chirag's name or said anything to clear the air among the cadres of the BJP about speculation that Chirag enjoys the blessings of the BJP big wigs.

This is the first major election being conducted amid the raging Covid-19 pandemic in the country. According to the provisional data, the highest poll percentage is recorded in Banka district at 59.57 per cent. It had recorded 56.43 per cent in 2015 polls.

While the overall number was satisfactory for a State like Bihar which is not known for huge turnouts, the police firing during the immersion of Goddess Durga's idols two days ago played a spoiler in Munger. The district registered the least voter turnout at 47.36 per cent. It had recorded 52.24 per cent turnout in 2015.

The poll panel said the announcement of the elections, 534 arms, 193 cartridges and three bombs were seized from the areas that went to polls in the first phase. As many as 159 people were detained as a preventive measure during the polling on Wednesday, the poll panel said.

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RS POLLS IN UP

Setback for SP-backed independent; BSP set to see nominee elected

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

The nomination of BSP candidate Ramji Gautam for the Rajya Sabha was held valid on Wednesday even after four party MLAs claimed that their signatures on it were forged.

But the papers filed by the Samajwadi Party-supported independent candidate Prakash Bajaj were rejected after a scrutiny of the nominations filed for the November 9 polls for 10 seats from Uttar Pradesh which are falling vacant.

"The nomination of Bajaj has been rejected. Gautam's papers have been found valid," the office of the Returning Officer said.

With the rejection of businessman Bajaj's nomination, all 10 candidates in the fray from UP are expected to win unopposed.

Earlier, in the day four of the 10 BSP MLAs who had proposed Gautam's name had filed an affidavit, saying their signatures on the papers were forged.

Their dramatic claim came amid hints from them and two other BSP MLAs that they

may quit Mayawati's party and join the SP.

But an BSP MLA said the party has challenged their affidavit, saying the four MLAs were present at the time of the nomination on Monday.

He said the party had sent pictures to the Returning Officer to substantiate this.

The four MLAs were reportedly accompanied by two others when they met the Returning Officer, submitting in writing that their signatures on senior party leader Ramji Gautam's nomination papers were forged.

One of the rebels admitted that she met Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, while some others in the group of six a third of BSP's total strength in the assembly — expressed dissatisfaction over the way their own party treated them.

They, however, did not specifically target Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati.

Without taking names, a BSP leader indirectly laid the blame for the dramatic development on the SP, with which

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Suspension of global flights to/from India extended till Nov 30

DGCA takes call in view of 2nd Covid-19 wave

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday extended the suspension of scheduled international commercial passenger services to/from India till November 30 amid the coronavirus pandemic. Fresh concerns over international travel have been raised with another wave of infections in the USA and European countries.

In a circular, the DGCA said, "In partial modification of circular dated 26-06-2020, the competent authority has further extended the validity of circular issued on the subject cited above regarding scheduled international commercial passenger services to/from India till 2359 hrs IST of 30th November 2020".

The DGCA further stated that the restrictions shall not apply to all-cargo operations and flights specifically approved by DGCA. However,

international scheduled flights may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on case to case basis, the circular added.

The scheduled international passenger services have been suspended in India since March 23 due to the pandemic. But special international flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May and under the bilateral 'air bubble' with selected countries since July.

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HONG KONG BANS AI FLIGHTS TILL NOV 10 AS FLIERS TEST +VE

New Delhi: Hong Kong has banned Air India flights from Mumbai till November 10 after a few passengers on its flight earlier this week tested positive for Covid-19 post arrival, a senior Government official said on Wednesday. This is the fourth time that Air India flights from India have been banned by Hong Kong.

LAC stand-off bilateral matter, no space for third party: China

Reaction follows US' assurance to India to defend its sovereignty

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the US assured India of its support in "defending its sovereignty," in a sharp reaction on Wednesday China said the border standoff in Ladakh was a bilateral matter and there was no "space" for a third party. Beijing also said situation at the LAC is generally stable.

These remarks by the Chinese Foreign Ministry were in response to the USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's statement that the US stands firmly with India to confront threats to its sovereignty. He made these observations in New Delhi after the 2+2 ministerial level dialogue with India where the aggressive and expansionist behaviour of China and the ongoing tension at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) figured prominently.

Pompeo also referred to the bloody clash between the Indian and Chinese troops on



June 15 in the Galwan valley where 20 Indian Army personnel, including commanding officer, were killed.

"Our leaders and our citizens see with increasing clarity that the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) is no friend to democracy, the rule of law transparency...I am glad to say that the US and India are taking steps to strengthen our cooperation against all manner of threats and not just those posed by the Chinese communist party," Pompeo had said.

Beijing termed his statement as an attempt to impose American hegemony in the region. Reacting to the US push for closer defence ties with India, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing

in Beijing "the border affairs between China and India are matters between the two countries."

"Now the situation across the border is generally stable and the two sides are in resolving relevant issues through consultations and negotiations," he said. It was in an obvious reference to the military and diplomatic level talks between India and China to resolve the standoff.

Wang criticised the US' Indo-Pacific concept, saying "the Indo-Pacific strategy proposed by the US is preaching outdated Cold War mentality and preaching confrontation and geopolitical game. It is aimed to uphold the hegemony of the US."

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All schools in Delhi to remain closed till further orders

Parents of students welcome decision

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

All schools in Delhi will continue to be closed till further orders in view of the Covid situation, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia announced on Wednesday. The number of cases in the national Capital is on the rise.

Parents are not in favour of reopening schools either, Sisodia said at an online Press conference.

Parents of children have welcomed the Government's decision to keep schools closed till further notice.

While online learning has been challenging and does not match the social environment of a school, nothing is more important than the safety of "our children," said parents.

The Delhi Government had earlier announced that schools will remain closed till October 31.

"We keep getting feedback



from parents that they are really concerned about whether it is safe to reopen schools. It is not. Wherever schools have reopened, Covid-19 cases among children have risen. So we have decided that as of now schools in the national capital will not reopen. They will continue to be closed till further orders," Sisodia said.

Universities and schools across the country have been closed since March 16, when the Centre announced a countrywide classroom shutdown as part of measures to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus.

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Covid tally hits 80L, active cases taper off

Deaths per million population in India at 87, substantially lower than world's average of 148

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Even as India has been showing signs of flattening the curve lately, the number of coronavirus infections crossed eight million marks on Wednesday.

While the overall number of new cases remained subdued, Delhi, Kerala, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Karnataka continued to buck the trend.

The third-most-affected country by active cases and fatality, and second by total cases, India has added 10 lakh

cases in the last 18 days while in the last seven days, it added 341,541 cases. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has claimed that India has managed to sustain its global position of recording one of the lowest Covid cases as well as deaths per million population.

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Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL	
CASES: 80,20,566	
DEATHS: 1,20,312	
RECOVERED: 72,92,187	
ACTIVE: 6,06,696	

DELHI'S DAILY COUNT SURGES TO 5,000

New Delhi: Delhi's daily coronavirus cases crossed the 5,000-mark for the first time on Wednesday after a spike in cases in the past few days.

SMRITI IRANI TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID

New Delhi: Union Minister Smriti Irani on Wednesday said she has tested Covid positive and asked those who came in contact to get themselves tested.

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	16,54,028	43,463	14,78,496
Karnataka	8,12,784	11,046	7,34,682
Andhra Pradesh	8,11,825	6,625	7,77,900
Tamil Nadu	7,14,235	10,983	6,75,518
Uttar Pradesh	4,76,034	6,958	4,43,589
Kerala	4,11,465	1,404	3,16,692
Delhi	3,70,014	6,396	3,34,240
West Bengal	3,61,703	6,664	3,17,928
Odisha	2,85,482	1,337	2,70,130
Telangana	2,32,671	1,315	2,13,466
Bihar	2,13,383	1,065	2,03,244
Assam	2,04,789	914	1,91,027
Rajasthan	1,89,844	1,867	1,72,028
Chhattisgarh	1,81,583	1,936	1,57,480
Gujarat	1,70,053	3,704	1,53,095
Madhya Pradesh	1,68,483	2,898	1,55,232

41-YR OLD SDMC DOC DIES OF COVID

New Delhi: A 41-year-old doctor working with the South Delhi Municipal Corporation died of Covid-19 on Tuesday, officials said. The doctor posted at Maternity and Child Welfare Centre Rangpuri, Mahipal Pur had joined Covid-19 duty in April.

Marrying off minor girls in dire straits

Lockdown-induced poverty pushes parents to go for mass child marriage

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

For Champa, 13, marriage meant wearing new clothes, eating good food and dancing with her friends. On June 20 this year she was to get married along with two other minor girls of 14 and 15 years of age. Belonging to the lower caste family in Firozpur village in impoverished Chandauli district of Uttar Pradesh, the parents of these girls wanted to get rid of the burden of their daughters. A mass marriage was planned secretly to save money. The plans were leaked out and officials averted the marriage.

"I never thought in my wildest of dreams that parents will go for child marriage in lockdown and Covid pandemic when strict guidelines are issued and police are on high alert. But actually child marriages have taken place secretly. Some marriages were averted after they came to know-

edge but the actual number of marriages is much more than what is being reported," Sangeeta Sharma, member, Child Welfare Committee in Lucknow, State capital of Uttar Pradesh said.

Following the spread of the Covid pandemic and introduction of lockdown and social distancing, many people lost jobs and other income streams became uncertain, especially for people among the poorer strata. As the pressure on household finances mount, marrying girls off, even at a young age, is being seen as an option for parents for reducing future household expenditure and meeting parental responsibilities.

The comparative data shows that the number of child marriages has actually gone up in some provinces of India during the Covid pandemic. In the central Indian State of Madhya Pradesh the number of child marriages between November 2019 and March 2020 was 46



but it jumped to 117 in just three months of lockdown from April to June 2020. Similarly in Chhattisgarh only 18 cases were reported in five months prior to the spread of Covid but during the first three months of lockdown the number shot up to 58. In Uttar Pradesh, 36 marriages took place between November and March while 27 cases of child marriage were reported between April and June.

The ChildLine India claims that 5,214 marriages were reported in just four months of

lockdown between March to June across India.

"From our experiences and data reported with the district helplines shows that the majority of the cases have not been reported. If demographic survey data on district/State level prevalence of child marriage is taken into consideration, the reported cases are just tip of the iceberg," Priyanka Sreenath, Deputy Director MAMTA, an NGO that works with girl child, said.

Poverty and social norms are considered the primary factor which forces parents to marry off their minor daughters at a tender age.

"The poor people were worst affected. The lower strata in India still believe daughters as a burden on them. They want to get rid of them at the earliest because they believe by marrying off their daughter they will be able to save some expenses," Surjit Chatterjee of Save The Children said.

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Covid vaccine to be provided free of cost in Uttar Pradesh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A few days after the coronavirus vaccine was promised for free for Bihar, the Uttar Pradesh government too announced that the vaccine would be provided free of cost in the state.

The vaccines are likely to be available in the market by March 2021.

UP Health Minister Jai Pratap Singh, at a function on Tuesday night, said that the state government would provide free vaccines to the people of the state though the vaccine was expected to be available in the market by March 2021.

“Our efforts to improve Covid-19 handling will continue. During the coronavirus crisis, we worked as a team and the results of it are for everyone to see. The government has also managed to prevent dengue and encephalitis,” Singh said, adding that the Health department was striving for arrangements for better treatment of



cancer patients in UP.

The COVID-19 death toll in Uttar Pradesh rose to 6,940 on Tuesday with 38 more fatalities, while 2,018 fresh cases were reported on Wednesday, a health bulletin issued here said.

At present, there are 26,276 active cases in the state, while 4,40,847 people have recovered

from the infection and have been discharged. Additional Chief Secretary (Medical and Health) Amit Mohan Prasad told reporters.

The number of active cases in UP has come down by around 60 per cent since September 17 during which the state witnessed a peak of over 68,000 cases, Prasad said.

UP Govt to bear expenses of NEET topper

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government will bear all expenses of NEET topper Akanksha Singh, who created history by scoring 100 per cent marks in the National Eligibility Entrance Examination.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath met Akanksha and her family at his residence on Wednesday and said his government would be sponsoring her MBBS education (including expenses of mess and hostel).

Congratulating Akanksha for her success, the chief minister said that by scoring 720 out of 720 marks, Akanksha had made her town, Kushinagar, as well as Uttar Pradesh, proud. “Akanksha is a role model for every girl,” he said.

The chief minister also inspired Akanksha to pursue her dreams and work hard to achieve her goals.

The CM will also be writing a letter to the NEET Board asking it to rank her as first topper. Akanksha secured 2nd position under the exam rules which state that in the case of a tie, the younger candidate will get the 2nd position.

Felicitating Akanksha's parents with a shawl and Akanksha and her brother with android tablets, the CM asked her father, Rajendra Kumar Rao, who was a sergeant in the Indian Air Force, to inspire today's youth to join the IAF.



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath felicitating NEET topper Akanksha Singh at his residence in Lucknow on Wednesday Pioneer

It is to be mentioned that Akanksha's father took early retirement in 2017 to support her throughout her NEET preparations. Her mother, Ruchi Singh, works as a teacher in a government school in Kushinagar.

After meeting the chief minister, Akanksha said that it was her dream to meet Yogiji and today it was fulfilled.

Standing in front of him, “I fell short of words to express my feelings,” she said.

Sharing the success mantra with fellow students, Akanksha said that smart work was also required with hard work.

“Instead of getting depressed from failure, you must learn from it and make

a planned strategy to achieve success the next time,” she added.

The NEET topper also expressed her desire to pursue research in neuro surgery after completing her MBBS from AIIMS, Delhi.

The function was also attended by cabinet minister Suresh Khanna, Chief Secretary RK Tiwari, and other leaders.

London-returned doctor duped of ₹2.5 cr

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The desire to get all his wishes fulfilled without making much efforts landed a London-returned doctor in trouble when two tantriks in Meerut duped him of ₹ 2.5 crore by selling him the magical ‘Aladdin’ lamp.

The two promised the doctor that a ‘genie’ would do magic for him and he could easily get all his wishes fulfilled.

The incident took place in the Khairnagar area under Brahmपुरi police station of the city. The victim identified, as Dr Laeek Khan, has approached police against the cheats. The cops also swung into action and managed to nab the two culprits.

Reports said that in 2018, a patient named Sameena came in contact with the doctor. Later, the doctor frequently visited her home for her treatment.

The doctor said he met a tantrik named Islamuddin at the lady's house. The tantrik made big promises about his magical powers.

Islamuddin promised the doctor to make him a billionaire. After this, the tantrik and his friend promised the doctor to give him a magical ‘Aladdin’ lamp. According to the doctor, the two accused often made him see the ‘genie’ appearing from the lamp.

Whenever the doctor asked the tantriks to take the lamp to his home, they scared him, saying it would bode ill to him if he touched the lamp.

Later, the doctor realised that the ‘genie’ was none other than Islamuddin, the husband of his

patient Sameena. The doctor said the accused cheated him of ₹ 2.5 cr in total for selling him the magical lamp.

The doctor later approached Meerut's Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in this regard and sought his help to nab the accused.

Brahmpuri Circle Officer Amit Rai said they had arrested the two men, Islamuddin and his friend Anees, for the alleged fraud. The police are also making efforts to nab the woman.

WOMAN BEATEN TO DEATH

In Muzaffarnagar, a 55-year-old woman was allegedly beaten to death by four people for opposing their attempts to harass her daughters at Nara village under Manspur police station, police said.

Manspur police station SHO KP Singh said a case was registered against four people — Akash, Gopi, Binendra, and Rajesh — who were absconding.

According to the complaint lodged by the family members, the four neighbours were harassing the young women of the family and were bitterly resisted by their mother.

On Monday evening, the four accused entered the house and attacked the woman identified as Sevti Devi (55).

She was severely beaten up by the men. She was rushed to a nearby hospital where she was pronounced dead. The body was sent for post-mortem.

Meanwhile, police raided the residences of all four accused to arrest them but they were found missing.

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Intensifying his attack on opposition parties during the election campaign in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said that Nitish Kumar had brought the state back to glory from the dirty politics of nepotism, giving development a new meaning.

“The change is visible in Bihar. Instead of caste and religion, development has become the fulcrum of change. In 2019, the people of Bihar voted for development by voting in favour of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and this time too the people will vote for the development of the poor and the farmer,” the UP CM said while addressing three election meetings in Goriakothi (Siwan), East Champaran and West Champaran in Bihar.

He said during the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) regime, the poor, the farmers and the youths were never on their political agenda. “For them, only their family matters... what can you expect

from people who did not even spare the fodder meant for cattle,” Yogi Adityanath said, adding that it was because of them that the youths of Bihar were deprived of their identi-

“THE CHANGE IS VISIBLE IN BIHAR. INSTEAD OF CASTE AND RELIGION, DEVELOPMENT HAS BECOME THE FULCRUM OF CHANGE. IN 2019, THE PEOPLE OF BIHAR VOTED FOR DEVELOPMENT BY VOTING IN FAVOUR OF PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI AND THIS TIME TOO THE PEOPLE WILL VOTE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POOR AND THE FARMER”

ty.

He said the opposition parties could not be trusted and should never be given a chance to return to power.

Reminding the people of the commendable work done by the NDA government in Bihar, Yogi Adityanath pointed out that the NDA government, under the chief minister-

ship of Nitish Kumar, was

able to establish the rule of law and ensured all-round development as per the resolve of ‘Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat’.

Taking a jibe at the

Congress, the UP CM pointed out that terrorist attacks were frequent during the UPA regime but now our brave soldiers do not even hesitate to cross the borders and kill the terrorist in their hidings.

“August 5, 2019 was a historic day when Article 370 was abolished and many political entities are still feeling the

pain. It was the last nail in the coffin of terrorism and now our jawans have a free hand,” he said and added, “Now anyone can go to Kashmir, buy land and make a house.”

Emphasising on the action against mafia and goons in UP, Yogi said that while many of them were behind bars, others would follow soon.

“Bulldozers are busy demolishing their ill-gotten properties and so far, we have confiscated properties worth over ₹ 2,000 crores,” he said.

Referring to the rich heritage shared by the people of UP and Bihar, the UP CM said “people of Bihar and Jharkhand are like our brothers and sisters”.

“Bihar is even the maternal place of Sita Maata... let the coronavirus crisis get over, we will ensure that a representative of each and every village of Bihar gets an opportunity to get the blessings of Lord Ram in Ayodhya,” he said.

“It was during the early coronavirus pandemic times that we ensured that our brothers coming from various states

like Bihar, Delhi, Maharashtra, and Punjab had no problems in reaching back to their homes safely. We ensured food, water and shelter at every point and deployed state transport buses for them,” he said.

The UP chief minister is scheduled to address a series of election meetings in Bihar as a much sought after campaigner for the NDA.

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SC to consider plea of Abdullah Azam against quashing of his election next week

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Supreme Court Wednesday said it would consider next week a plea of Mohammad Abdullah Azam Khan, son of Samajwadi Party MP Azam Khan, against the Allahabad High Court order quashing his election to the Uttar Pradesh Assembly.



NOTICE

I have changed my name from Gagan Deep Singh to Jagan Deep Singh. In future I shall be known as Jagan Deep Singh S/o Amar Jeet Singh, 8/7, Nagar Mahapalika colony, Dada Nagar, Kanpur.

NOTICE

I Service No.-4568909 Y Rank Hav. DURGENDRA SINGH Son of Shri Matola Singh. My daughter's name ASHIKA SINGH wrongly written in my service record. Her correct name is ANSHIKA SINGH for all future purposes.

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My original pass certificates of class 10th year 2011 (ICSC BOARD) has been lost irretrievably Roll No- T/1936/147 Pass out from ST FRANCIS SCHOOL Ramnagar Varanasi Finder Contact: no. 8423828198 KALYANI VERMA 3/1431 Rampur Ramnagar Varanasi

Khan assailed the high court order quashing his election as MLA from Suar constituency on the grounds that he was underage and did not qualify for the 2017 polls.

A bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde was informed by senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for Election Commission of India (ECI), that an appeal has also been filed against the high court order on the limited aspect with regard to certain observations.

Dwivedi told the bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, that the ECI appeal was not listed for hearing on Wednesday.



The bench then said it would be better if the court hears both the appeals together and adjourned the matter for next week.

Last week, Allahabad High Court had asked ECI to start the process forthwith for holding bypoll in Suar constituency, which falls in Rampur district of the state.

On January 17, the top court had refused to stay the Allahabad High Court verdict annulling the election of Khan. It had issued notice and sought response from ECI and the defeated BSP candidate Nawaz Ali Khan, who had challenged Khan's election.

It said some doubts had been created by placing of documents other than school records to show that Khan was qualified to contest the election.

“We have read the Allahabad High Court judg-

ment, it is based on evidence,” the top court had said.

Khan had on December 17 approached the top court challenging the high court verdict which had ruled that he was not qualified to contest the election of the Legislative Assembly as he had not turned 25 when he filed the nomination papers for the 2017 polls.

In his election petition against Khan in the high court, Kazim Ali Khan had contended that the elected MLAs's actual date of birth was January 1, 1993 and not September 30, 1990, as claimed in the nomination paper.

Khan was elected as MLA on a Samajwadi Party ticket on March 11, 2017.

Webinar on Purvanchal

Lucknow (PNS): In its effort to open new opportunities in the state, particularly eastern Uttar Pradesh, the UP government will organise a three-day national webinar from November 27. The state government is preparing to bring together experts, ministers, legislators and officers from all over the country to be part of this initiative, a senior official said, adding that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will also hold discussions with ministers and officers of the Central and state governments. “The government is going to lay down a strategic plan for better industry prospects, agriculture, employment, education and business enhancement of Purvanchal in line with the proposals of the experts attending the webinar,” the official said.

Six booked for alleged corruption in recruitment

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Six people have been booked in connection with alleged corruption in the recruitment of cooperative employees during the previous Samajwadi Party government in Uttar Pradesh, a senior official said on Wednesday.

The FIR has been lodged on Tuesday evening against the then managing directors of Uttar Pradesh Cooperative Bank Limited, Hiralal Yadav and Ravikant Singh; former UP Cooperative Institutional Service Board chairman Ramjatan Yadav; secretary Rakesh Mishra; member Santosh Kumar Srivastava; and computer agency operator Ram Praveesh Yadav, the official said.

They were booked under various sections of IPC includ-

ing 420 (fraud), 467 (forgery for valuable security), 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating), 471 (using a genuine a forged document) and 120 B (conspiracy), he added.

Besides them the FIR mentions other ‘unnamed’ officials of UP Cooperative Bank and UP Cooperative institutional service board, he said.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had on October 23 directed that the FIR be lodged after a Special Investigation Team submitted its report in the matter.

According to the spokesperson, there were allegations of corruption in the recruitment of assistant managers (general) and assistant managers (computer) in Uttar Pradesh Cooperative Bank in 2015-16.

SCHOOLSCAN GOLD MEDAL



Parth Sarthi, a class VI student of City Montessori School, Rajajipuram Campus I, won gold medal at an online abacus competition organised at zonal level. The competition was organised under the aegis of educational institute Brainobrain in which students of several noted schools participated to showcase their analytical skills. Parth Sarthi opted for various abacus tricks to solve mathematical problems and emerged winner. Organisers of the competition were all praise for him and awarded him the gold medal and a certificate.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

Inviting Expression of Interest-cum-Proposal from the eligible organizations to be designated as State Level Coordinating Agencies (SLCAs) under Scheme of National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR)

Department of Social Justice & Empowerment invites Expression of Interest-cum-Proposal from eligible organizations to be designated as State Level Coordinating Agencies (SLCAs) under Scheme of National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) from each of the following States

i. Arunachal Pradesh	ii. Rajasthan
iii. Jharkhand	iv. Punjab
v. Meghalaya	vi. Uttar Pradesh

The interested organizations shall refer to the Website of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (www.socialjustice.nic.in) under the web link <http://socialjustice.gov.in/writereaddata/UploadFile/Inviting-proposal-eligible-SLCAs.pdf> for eligibility conditions, role of SLCA, financial norms, selection procedure and other relevant details e-Audaaan portal of the Ministry. The last date for submission of application is 22nd November, 2020.

Davp- 38101/11/0009/2021

Group Covid testing from today

2,049 more test +ve in UP, 294 in Lko

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Apprehending another surge in the COVID-19 cases in the state during the coming festivals, the Uttar Pradesh government has announced a special drive with focus on group Covid tests of vendors, beauty parlour operators and workers in sweet shops who will come in contact with the masses.

The 16-day-long group testing will start from Wednesday.

“These tests will be carried out on people who will come in contact with people in connection with the festivals of Karva Chauth and Diwali,” Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad said during his daily press briefing.

Prasad said on the opening day, the tests will be conducted on auto and three-wheeler drivers and rickshaw-pullers while on the second day, the workers of beauty parlours and mehndi outlets would be tested. Thereafter, tests would be carried out on the workers of sweet shops, restaurants, religious places, shopping malls and their security guards and electronic shops in a phased manner, he added.

The additional chief secre-

tary said most of the tests would be done on people who were likely to come in contact with people in view of the festivals. However, the tally of COVID-19 cases in UP reached 4,76,024 on Wednesday out of which 4,43,579 have recovered and 25,487 are admitted to the hospitals or are in home isolation.

Altogether 2,049 fresh cases of COVID-19 were reported during the past 24 hours in the state while 2,742 people recovered. The recovery percentage in the state has also increased to 93.18 points, which is higher than the national average.

Prasad said that the number of active patients was decreasing day by day and the decline was 63 per cent since September 17 last — the day the peak was witnessed. The positivity rate in October has also come down to 2 per cent. On Tuesday, a total of 1,54,450 samples were tested.

In Lucknow, 294 persons tested positive on Wednesday while 255 patients recovered. Th death toll in the state capital stands at 872. The new patients included 25 from Rae Bareli road, 24 from Gomtinagar, 21 from Indiranagar, 19 from Chowk, 18 from Cantt, 17 from Ashiyana, 14 from Madiadon, 12 from Mahanagar, and 10 each from Jankipuram & Alambagh. There were five deaths in Lucknow and two of the deceased belonged to Lucknow.

Focus on surveillance in urban part of city

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Health department will be focusing on surveillance of urban part of the district with the dip in coronavirus cases. Health officials said they were involving medical interns from both private and government medical colleges to supervise the work done by surveillance teams.

“Now the concentration will be on entire Lucknow, though we will continue to monitor areas with maximum cases like Gomtinagar, Indiranagar, Chinhat and Alambagh. We are planning to have support from medical colleges and will be deploying their interns for supervisory work. On Tuesday, we had a meeting with authorities at medical colleges and they agreed to provide us interns who would check on the surveillance teams and do supportive supervision,” a senior official at CMO office said.

He said the interns would be provided by KGMU, Integral hospital, Era and TS Mishra hospitals. “KGMU will give us 40-50 interns and the rest of the colleges will confirm their figures after having a talk with their management

and principals. We are looking at a total figure of 200-250 interns for this work,” he added.

On why this idea was taken up, he said, “It was taken up because when these doctors carry out supervision of the families, it will give a stricter message to people. These doctors will also be moving in the fields in areas which have had maximum corona cases,” he said. He said though there was a dip in the cases in areas with maximum cases, there was a possibility that the cases could rise again. About the old part of the city, the official said they did not have too many cases of coronavirus there. “The phase of maximum cases has already passed by. If the transmission is interrupted and surveillance activities increased, there won’t be any cases in these areas,” he said.

Meanwhile, spokesperson of Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences Dr Shrikesh Singh said the number of Covid patients admitted in the hospital has decreased and the occupancy now is 70 per cent. “However, older people are still getting infected. Most of our ICU beds have elderly patients,

with more than 80 per cent being above 65 years of age,” he pointed out. He said the number of Covid positive pregnant women has also decreased and the occupancy now is about 65-70 patients per day, which was around 110 to 115 patients per day earlier.

Meanwhile, National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI) will be carrying out a sero-survey of its staff members to determine the levels of antibodies in people. It will be done as a part of IGIB, New Delhi, study on the same. Director SK Barik said they would do it shortly and on a voluntary basis. It may be noted that sero-survey has been carried out by CIMAP and CDRI.

Besides, Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP), which was identified as the fastest testing lab three months back, continues to have no pendency. Director Vandana Prasad said they have tested over 80,000 samples till now. “We have a small team of eight members but they are well organised. Three months ago, ICMR had identified us as the fastest testing lab and we continue to have no pendency,” Prasad said.

Rajnath lays foundation for development works



Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia and others at the programme in which Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually laid the foundation for 176 development works worth Rs 5112.86 lakh under 14th Finance Commission

Pioneer

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone of 176 development works worth Rs 5112.86 lakh under the 14th Finance Commission at a programme organised at LMC headquarters on Wednesday. Singh took part in the programme through video-conferencing.

He said the money would be used in construction and repair of basic infrastructural works like drains, roads and footpaths. He said these works would help in solving the problems of people caused by water-logging and would also resolve traffic issues and help in

smooth movement of vehicles.

The minister said these are the problems affecting the common man. He said some of these works were being launched and some were already underway.

“Lucknow is one of the fastest developing cities not only in the state but also in the country. Bigger structures are being developed in the city and it is necessary to have the basic infrastructure in place,” he said.

Singh said two flyovers had already been inaugurated recently and work for the third overbridge was nearing completion. He said several big infrastructure works were

underway in railways to facilitate passengers. Construction works were also underway under the Smart City project in which LMC was playing a vital role, he added.

“I am happy that Lucknow got a good rank in the cleanliness survey, but we need to bring it the top three cities in terms of cleanliness,” Singh said. He added that the benefits of development works should reach all sections of the society. The programme also witnessed the presence of mayor Sanyukta Bhatia and municipal commissioner Ajay Dwivedi. Officials said these works were likely to be completed by December 25.

Constable arrested for shooting at friend

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A constable allegedly shot at his friend as he suspected latter’s affair with his wife. The incident took place in Kakori on Tuesday afternoon and the victim is a businessman. Police sat on the case as the accused involved was a constable, but brother of the victim informed mediaper-

sons after which a case was lodged against the accused and he was arrested.

As per reports, Chaand Khan of Durgaganj in Kakori was friends with the constable, identified as Rahul, who is presently posted at Gosainganj police station. Rahul and his wife, also a constable, live at a rented accommodation in Bhattha Tola, Kakori.

Chaand reached Rahul’s house to meet him for some work on Tuesday. Around 11 am, when both were chit chatting, Rahul’s wife made a call to Chaand and Rahul lost his cool after seeing his wife’s number flash on Chaand’s mobile. It led to a verbal spat during which Rahul whipped out a country-made pistol and shot at Chaand. However, the

bullet pierced through Chaand’s right arm and Rahul fled the scene. He was arrested by a police team later.

Victim’s brother Arif Khan, who lodged a case in this connection, said Chaand was admitted to KGMU Trauma Centre. He said Rahul suspected that his wife had an affair with Chaand and he shot at him with an intention to kill.

The police said Rahul was booked for attempt to murder. The police failed to explain from where Rahul got the country-made pistol.

The police spokesman said Rahul is a native of Bahraich and the police recovered the country-made pistol from his possession. He added that the police challaned Rahul under Arms Act as well.

Daughters of ex-armyman attacked

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A family attacked daughters of an ex-armyman over a trivial issue. A woman from the other group was also hurt in the incident. Police accepted complaints from both the sides and registered a cross-FIR in this connection. Kin of the former armyman alleged that police played safe in the case and overlooked their grievances.

As per reports, ex-armyman, Chandu Lal of Gayatripuram, and his wife Muni Devi were at home and their daughter Saloni was washing the floor. The waste water was flowing through a ramp outside the house. Chandu Lal’s other daughters, Sanjana and Aradhya, were also there as they had come to see him.

Seeing waterlogging on the road, neighbour Ramdev Yadav, his wife and their children came out of their house carrying sticks and attacked Saloni and her sisters. Saloni suffered head injuries while her sisters also suffered injuries in the attack. During the brawl, a woman from Ramdev’s family also suffered injuries.

Police sat on the case and tried to convince both the parties to strike a dialogue, and later registered a cross-FIR when the family of Chandu Lal did not agree for compromise.

2 killed in road mishaps

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two persons were killed in two separate incidents of road mishap on Wednesday. A 35-year-old labourer was killed while a truck driver and another labourer were injured in a road mishap at Shaheed Path in Sushant Golf City (SGC) police station area early morning.

The deceased was identified as Keshu of Rehmat Nagar in Gosainganj. The injured truck driver (Shekhar) and labourer (Chander) were admitted to a hospital with fractured limbs.

As per reports, Keshu

worked at Siyaram Brick Field in Gosainganj and had gone to Rajajipuram along with driver Shekhar and Chander to unload goods. After completing the task, they left for Gosainganj, but the truck developed a technical snag at at Shaheed Path around 3 am.

Keshu, Chander and Shekhar were standing beside the truck when another truck hit their vehicle from behind. The trio suffered injuries and Keshu died on the spot. Hours later, police were informed about the incident. A police team reached there and rushed the injured to a hospital where Keshu was declared brought

dead. Shekhar and Chander suffered limb fractures.

Meanwhile, helper of a truck was killed in a road mishap at Kisan Path in Chinhat police station area early morning on Wednesday. As per reports, a truck laden with wheat and driven by Lorik from Shahjahanpur to Bihar was hit by another truck laden with potatoes near Anaura Kalan village around 6 am. Sandeep Yadav (28) of Azamgarh, who was sitting in the cab of the truck laden with potato, suffered injuries. He was rushed to a hospital where he was declared brought dead.

Dr Mishra selected for award by NAMS

Lucknow (PNS): National Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS) has selected principal scientist, Division of Molecular Parasitology and Immunology, CDRI, Dr Satish Mishra for ‘Dr Tulsi Das Chugh Award’ for the year 2020 in recognition of his research work on malaria parasite’s life cycle, which is a complex process involving two hosts and three invasive stages. The invasion in both mammals and mosquitoes requires a coordinated sequence of events to be played out successfully. His work focused on ‘Secreted Protein with Altered Thrombospondin Repeat (SPATR)’. NAMS encourages and sponsors nation-wide CME programmes, symposia, workshops etc. Over the years, it has recognised the outstanding achievements made by scientists in the field of medicine and allied sciences and conferred fellowship as well as membership on selected persons through a peer-reviewed process and finally voting by all the fellows.

Woman duped of ornaments, cash

Lucknow (PNS): Two miscreants duped a cook of Kasturba Gandhi Hostel in Chinhat on Wednesday morning. The victim, identified as Radha Devi (47) of Barabanki, was going to her workplace when the miscreants intercepted her. The duo, clad in saffron robes, told Radha that they belong to an ashram in Haridwar. They told Radha that her husband’s drinking habit was the cause of troubles in her life. They then told a spellbound Radha that they could help her husband quit drinking. Radha asked them how and they told her to put all the ornaments that she was wearing and cash in their hands and they would pray for her. The woman put off her ornaments and handed it to the miscreants, who disappeared with the jewellery and cash in no time. Radha sought help from her family members and later lodged a case in this connection.

Tourism picking up as hotels extend massive discounts

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Tourism is picking up with people from city choosing hills and wildlife areas as their getaways. They are also finding an added advantage in massive discounts offered by hotels.

Chairman of UP and Uttarakhand Indian Association of Tour Operators Prateek Hira said that with long weekends, tourism was picking up and destinations such as Uttarakhand,

Himachal and wildlife areas like Ranthambore were much in demand.

He said people were indulging in ‘revenge tourism’, which is a new terminology. “People had been confined to their homes for so long that they now want to move out and a similar surge was seen when Europe opened briefly. The preferred distance range is 500 kilometers and people opt for their own vehicles even for destinations like Himachal Pradesh,” he said.

However, he pointed out that very few bookings were made through travel agents because the prices of hotels have come down drastically with up to 50 per cent discount offers through websites.

“Most of these bookings are not done much in advance or through proper planning the way it would happen earlier,” he said. He added that Nainital, Mussoorie, Ranikhet and Atal Bihari Tunnel in Himachal Pradesh were the much preferred places.

Hira said Corbett Wildlife Park did remarkably well till recently. “We are expecting Dudhwa National Park to do well when it opens on November 1,” he said.

In UP, Agra and Varanasi have witnessed an increase in the influx of tourists. Tourists are avoiding dhabas and hotels following basic sanitisation measures.

He said hotels were making inclusive packages as they want to cash in.

200 साल के विश्वास और परम्परा को आगे बढ़ाते हुए कानपुर में श्री जुगल किशोर ज्वैलर्स का पुनर्निर्मित आधुनिक शोरूम

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81 COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 81 new COVID-19 patients have been detected in the district on Wednesday, increasing the total number of cases to 16,656. The day also saw one more death, increasing the toll to 268. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 102 patients. Out of them, 101 have been recovered from home isolation and one from the hospital, increasing the number to 12,904 and 2,808 respectively. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 15,712, leav-

ing 676 active cases. The recovery has improved to 94.33 per cent and mortality rate to 1.60 per cent.

Meanwhile, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. VB Singh has informed that in the first report of the day, 55 positive patients were found out of 3,323 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 3,13,023 and the results of 1,623 are awaited. Out of them, 2,96,393 were negative, while 16,630 positive. The total number of samples collected was 3,30,655. Besides, under ongoing mass/ group antigen tests, all 390 tests at Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta

(SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura, 280 at adjacent Government Women's Hospital, 96 at Swami Vivekanand Government Hospital, Bhelupur and 116 at LBS Hospital, Ramnagar were found negative. However, one out of 80 at CHC Shivpur and one out of 155 at SSH BHU were detected positive.

Earlier, two males aged 75 and 62 from Munari (Choubeypur) and Shivpur respectively succumbed to COVID-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital (SSH), Banaras Hindu University (BHU). With the addition of four new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,298 includ-

ing 242 red zones. Five green zones have been converted into red zones again. There are 2,056 green zones with nine new ones. The district police arrested as many as 38 persons under Section 151 of CrPC while challaned under Section 188 and took action under Section 51 of Disaster Management Act against 13 persons.

During checking at various points, 1,456 vehicles were challaned and 11 seized. Apart from this, ₹ 2,65,500 were realised from 251 vehicles, while ₹38,800 from 992 persons for moving on the roads without wearing masks.

BMS activists take out protest march

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Annoyed with the anti-labourer policy of the government at Centre, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) on Wednesday took out protest march and made some demands including the restoration of old pension scheme.

On the call given by central leadership, the workers of BMS and it's sister organisations gathered at main post office in Nadesar and took out a protest march to raise their voice against the Central Government for its anti-labourer and privatisation policy.

Despite the earning profit manifolds, the Central Government has decided to hand over some lucrative public undertakings into private hands which is against the interest of employees, the members of organisation said adding, the government has made some changes in the labour laws which is against the interest of labourers.

The government should



BMS workers staging a protest at district headquarters in Varanasi on Wednesday

Pioneer

stop the privatisation of profitable public undertakings and it should also restore the old pension scheme in the larger interest of employees, they demanded and added, the government should also adjust apprentice trainees in the pub-

lic undertakings.

The march culminated at district headquarter and a delegation of organisation submitted a memorandum of their demands to the representative of the District Magistrate. The employees of various govern-

ment departments including railway, power, postal, transport, BHEL and others joined the march and prominent among them were Jamuna Pal, Rakesh Pandey, Ayodhya Prasad Shukla, Narendra Mishra and Visheshakar Rai.

Anjali Goyal takes charge as DLW GM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Anjali Goyal, an Indian Railways Accounts service officer of 1985 batch through UPSC examination, has taken the charge as the new General Manager (GM) of Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW) on Wednesday afternoon. Prior to joining this post, she was Principal Executive Director (Accounts), Railway Board. She has worked in various



capacities on the Railways, including DRM/ Jaipur, Executive Director Finance (Budget) and Executive Director Finance (Establishment) in Railway Board.

While on deputation to other Ministries, she held the charge of Advisor (Project Appraisal) in NITI Aayog and Director Finance in Department of Woman and Child Development. Anjali

Goyal holds a BA (Hons) in Economics degree from Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University (DU) and a Masters degree in Advanced Economics from Delhi School of Economics, DU.

She has several published articles to her credit, covering subjects like high speed Railways in India, sustainable development of Railways and general budgeting.

DM for vaccination drive from Nov

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

District Magistrate (DM), who is also the Chairman of District Health Committee, Kaushal Raj Sharma has directed the Health department to launch a special quarterly vaccination campaign from November this year to January next year for those children and pregnant women who were deprived of the same during the nationwide lockdown imposed for preventing the spread of worldwide coronavirus pandemic. He also asked the Health department and ICDS

to conduct door-to-door survey with the help of ANMs and Asha-Anganwadi workers and chalk out plans of vaccination, ensuring the availability of vaccines.

Sharma also instructed the Health department that cold chain should be streamlined and details of persons to be deployed in the special campaign should be made apart from making the co-ordination with other relevant departments.

‘The campaign should be made 100 per cent successful and monitoring should be

emphasised at both the rural and urban levels,’ he said, appealing to the people to contact concerned ANMs/ Asha-Anganwadi workers on the scheduled dates for vaccination of those children and pregnant women who could not be vaccinated due to lockdown.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh informed that the campaign would be conducted as per instructions received from Additional Chief Secretary, Government of UP. It will be conducted three days a week as vaccination will be

done on Wednesday and Saturday in the predetermined week apart from additional day on Monday. According to him, list of vaccination –deprived persons is being prepared by the ASHA and Anganwadi workers apart from including the same from the families of migrant laborers. Support will be provided from the collaborating institutions (WHO, UNICEF and UNDP etc.) in this work. All the incharge medical officers have been directed for the successful operation of the campaign,’ he added.

110 more test positive in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The fluctuations in the corona transmission remain intriguing. In Sangam nagari, within the last 24 hours, the number of infected people exceeded 100 late on Tuesday. Covid infection has been confirmed in 110 persons out of 3731 suspected tested on the same day. Once again, more than 149 people outnumbered the Corona. Among these, 28 patients were discharged form different Covid hospitals. Home isolation of 121 people was completed.

The number of Covid active patients in the district has increased to 1364. According to CMO Dr GS Bajpai, so far 16,368 people have become infection free by staying in home isolation.

According to Nodal Officer for Corona Dr Rishi Sahai, the names one CIT of the railways and three advocates have been infected on Tuesday. At the same time, the infected also include two advocates, one of the advocates posted in the District Court. Among the infected, 75 people underwent RTPCR, 30 people got their corona check done through antigens and five people underwent a trunat test, which was reported positive. A total of 3,731 people were screened

during the day.

Meanwhile, the Allahabad High Court has said that strict adherence to masks and social distancing is mandatory to prevent the spread of the second wave of corona infection. For this, the police should keep a strict vigil in every street and street locality so that no person comes out of the house without wearing a mask. The court has asked the task force monitoring it to give such powers so that it can do its job easily. Apart from Prayagraj, this order has been directed to implement in Kanpur, Varanasi, Lucknow and Agra. Next phase the court will also pass orders for other districts of the state.

The court had directed the DGP to submit an action plan to prevent corona infection. Accordingly, the DGP filed an affidavit detailing the efforts being made for prevention. Expressing satisfaction on the DGP's affidavit, the court said that to prevent the second wave of infection, it is necessary that every road and locality should be monitored in small streets. A large number of police personnel should be deployed on busy roads, while two constables should be deployed at both ends of low traffic roads.

Monitoring policemen

should be empowered to take action against those involved with the police. The court has directed the state government to appoint health officers in each municipal corporation and said that fogging and sanitisation should be continued to prevent infection. This order has been given by the bench comprising Justice Siddharth Verma and Justice Ajit Kumar while hearing the case related to the Covid and parking.

The court said that illegal possession of hawkers, vendors be removed from 57,136 places in Prayagraj. 28 vending zones have been earmarked in the city. It is directed to submit a report on this issue. The court has directed to provide proper space to hawkers removed from 9,39,759 sites in the entire state.

The court was informed that construction is being done on the roadside near the CMO Housing and Revenue Council. On this, the court has asked the municipal corporation and Prayagraj Development Authority whether the construction is being done under the master plan or not. The lawyers report stated that encroachment has been done again after removing encroachments at many places. On this, the court has said that no encroachment should take

place again and those removed should be given an alternative place. .

The court has sought a report from Advocate Commissioner Chandan Sharma and Shubham Dwivedi in the parking case in Civil Lines Prayagraj. On their report regarding Nawab Yusuf Road, the court has asked the Municipal Corporation to fix the street lights. On noting the lack of facilities in the parking lot behind the Yatri Hotel and Rajkaran Palace, the court has directed to provide all the necessary facilities in the parking lot, toilets etc.

Ramanuj Tiwari has filed an application in the court on the issue of closing the roads of cantonment area for common people. Senior advocate Anoop Trivedi spoke on this. He cited the order of the Central Government that the roads in Cantt areas cannot be closed for the movement of common people. The court has also directed the advocate of the Government of India to file the orders issued in this regard by the Ministry of Defense. It is also said that if they failed to give a written order to close the road the next hearing, then the responsibility officer should be present in the court with the record. The petition will be heard on November 9.

DC stays demolition of marketing complex

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Officials of the Prayagraj Development Authority, district administration and the police were all prepared to demolish a lavishly constructed five storeyed marketing complex of the mafia don Vijay Mishra, Gyanpur MLA, in Allahpur locality under the Georgetown police station, but the Divisional Commissioner, who happens to be the ex-officio chairman of the PDA, stayed the action, and will be pass an order in this regard on November 6.

Vijay Mishra had raised this unauthorised construction by using his muscle power in Allahpur besides many others in the same area. Under the drive against mafia dons launched by the Chief



Marketing complex of the mafia don Vijay Mishra,

Minister Yogi Adityanath, this marketing complex of Vijay Mishra had been spotted by the PDA. Getting information

through their sources, family members of the mafia turned politician moved an application requesting the Divisional

Commissioner to intervene. The Divisional Commissioner reserved his order, which was to be released on October 28.

The PDA team backed by a heavy police force and a good number of JCB machines reached Georgetown police station in an anticipation that they will get the order of the Divisional Commissioner in the forenoon hours to demolish the above property. They kept on waiting up to 4 pm, but could not proceed forward as the reports revealed that the Divisional Commissioner will pass his order on November 6, 2020.

Vijay Mishra has also built a house in Allahpur besides a hospital complex by the side of this marketing complex.

Smart meters found to run 30 times faster during testing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

With the aim of saving electricity along with reading and billing, consumers are forced to shell out more money through the smart meters installed in their houses in the city. Meters that were installed as economical and convenient have been found to run 30 times faster during the testing. That is, the public complaints of meter speeding have proved to be true. A total of 82,000 smart meters have been installed in all the seven divisions of the city.

In general, a house is estimated to consume 200 units of electricity per month. In this

way, if one estimates the amount to be recovered from smart meters running 30 times faster then it will reach crores. It is being said that if more than ₹ 600 is being charged on one meter, then an additional load of ₹ 4.90 crore per month is being put on the pocket of the public. According to the data, the plan to install a smart meter was first started in the Rambagh division of Circle I on July 10, 2019.

A few days later, a total of 68,000 smart meters were installed in Karelabagh, Naini, Kalyani Devi. After this, 14,000 smart meters have also been installed in the Tagore Town, Myohal and Bamharauli divi-

sions of Circle II. Meanwhile, there was a glut of complaints of smart meters jumping and running fast, but the officers were busy covering it continuously. Cross check meters were installed in hundreds of homes on the basis of complaints, but then smart meters were justified by smudging. It is being said that in the 13 months since July 19, more than ₹65 crore have been recovered from the pockets of the public. This amount may be even higher when examined.

Officials of the Electricity department said that complaints about smart meter speeding are being examined, but no such muddle have been

found so far. Where more turbulence has been found in meters, they have also been replaced. Now in the high-level investigation, after hearing the report of the smart meter running fast, the officials are tight lipped over the issue.

Any complaints of jumping smart meters are being resolved. No such complaints have been confirmed yet in Prayagraj, said the Chief Engineer OP Yadav. There have been complaints of smart meter running fast. Its investigation is also being done by installing a cross meter. No comment about the mess can be made now, added Ramesh Yadav, Executive Engineer (Meter).

Court denies any relief to Atique

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Special MP/MLA Court of Prayagraj is in no mood to give any relief to the mafia don Atique Ahmed who is languishing in Ahmedabad jail. Fearing his encounter or accident while travelling from Ahmedabad to Prayagraj for hearing, Atique had made a request for exemption from personal presence in the court and hearing through video conferencing, but the court did not grant the permission, and he will have to be present in the court on the next date of hearing in the case related to ‘self designed attack’ in the Kutchery premises of Allahabad, and a murder attempt of 2016. The court has directed to ask the Home Secretary Uttar Pradesh to arrange for the presence of Atique Ahmed in person in the court on the next date of hearing. About a decade back Atique had survived an attack on him in Allahabad Kutchery by lying down on the ground

during a hearing. Later the investigation revealed that it was a self designed attack, and the case is still being heard by the MP/MLA Court. Worried over the increasing number of encounters with the top criminals, and road accidents of the vehicles carrying them, Atique is avoiding his entry in Uttar Pradesh, and with an intention avoid a journey to Yogi's state, the mafia don had moved an application with a request of his hearing through video conferencing from the Ahmedabad jail itself. He had mentioned health grounds, but the court declined to give any such concession to Atique Ahmed. In yet another action against Atique Ahmed the Government has seized 11 bank accounts of the mafia don, seven of them were in Prayagraj itself. The other accounts were in other cities including Delhi, and the bank accounts were having about Rs 1 crore in balance. This action under the Gangster Act will bar the family members from with-

drawing money from the bank account. The district administration, the Prayagraj Development Authority and the police have already razed to earth a good number of properties of Atique, his family members and close associates worth crores of rupees.

CHEATING CASE: A case of cheating lakhs of rupees from the gullible youths has come to light in the name of getting them a job in the Supreme Court and Allahabad High Court. Retired army personnel Rajpati Yadav has filed a case against Shamim Siddiqui, Ramesh Chandra Yadav of Nawabganj, Pramod Sharma of Handia, Anees alias Laddoo, Mohammad Saif, Kaif, Pawan and Manoj Kumar. The Utraon police have started investigating the matter after registering an FIR in this connection. Retired army personnel Rajpati Yadav, resident of Utraon alleged that Shamim Siddiqui used to dupe gullible youths by posing himself as deputy registrar of the High

Court. Yadav also cheated by him in the name of getting a job in the High Court. When he could not get a job, he started asking for money, but the same not paid back to him. During this, it was found that there is a gang of Shamim who used to cheat the unemployed people in the name of getting jobs in the High Court and Supreme Court. The gang members have cheated more than ₹70 lakh from several people. The victim first complained about the case at the Utraon police station, but all his grievances were not heeded by the police there then the victim complained the same to the higher authorities. After this, the police have initiated a case against nine people by filing a case against them. Police said the case is two years old. Some of the gang accused had cheated the victim Rajpati in the name of getting the land. However, the police claimed that many startling facts can come up in the investigation of the case.

UCO Bank holds loan distribution camp

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

To facilitate the beneficiaries of the Pradhanmantri Svanidhi Yojana, the UCO Bank organised a loan distribution camp at its zonal office in Mahamoorganj, here and allotted UPI Code number to them by distributing loan under the scheme.

The zonal head Ghanshyam Parmar allotted UPI Code number and distributed loan to the beneficiaries Chatori Lal for tea stall, Gopal Kannoujia for vegetable shop, Manoj for the shop of paan, Rajesh Sahani for food stall and Sunita Pandey for vegetable shop.

Speaking on the occasion, Parmar said that the Central Government launched this scheme is to benefit such street vendors so as they could regain their loss suffered during the lockdown and informed, the beneficiaries can get loan digitally through UPI Code.

The zonal office distributed



Zonal Manager of UCO Bank Ghanshyam Parmar presenting loan sanction letter to a street vendor in Varanasi on Tuesday

Pioneer

a total of 1,568 loans under the scheme including 410 of only city areas. Prominent among

those who graced the occasion were the sub-zonal head SK Sinha, Chief Manager Bipin

Singh, Saif Mohammed, Amit Khanna, Prashant Rathore and Ashutosh Srivastava.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

FOUR THIEVES HELD

FIRE

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar, inspecting Awas Vikas on Wednesday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

CORRESPONDENT ■ RAE BARELI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

parency in every area of their activities. ADRM (Infra) Praveen Kumar, ADRM (Operations) SPS Yadav, SDPO Sanath Jain, SDCM Sanjeev Sharma, SDOM Rohit Gupta, SDE (Coordination) Rajeev Agrawal and SDFM Preeti Verma and many others were present, pledging to discharge their duties with honesty and transparency.

Meanwhile, under the auspices of the Department of Posts, Postmaster General (Varanasi Region) Krishna Kumar Yadav inaugurated the new post at the Regional Office located at Cantt. head post office building to mark the beginning of a week-long campaign with a call for 'Vigilant India, Prosperous India.' Yadav also administered a pledge of integrity to all officers and employees. PMG said for eradication of corruption, everyone needs to work together and as a government organisation we have to lead from the front.

Assistant Director Shambhu Rai, Accountant Mahendra Pratap Verma and many other senior officers were also present.

Modi doesn’t talk of unemployment in his speeches, alleges Rahul

PTI ■ BETTIAH (BIHAR)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Wednesday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying he talks about other countries in his speeches but not about the problems facing India such as unemployment.

Gandhi, who arrived in West Champaran district for his second round of campaigning in the ongoing state elections, also attacked Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar over unemployment and the issue of migration. Addressing his rally at Valmiki Nagar, the former Congress president said he was pained to see that Prime Minister Modis effigy was burnt in Punjab on the occasion of Dusshera, and added that it reflected the “anger” of youths and farmers.

“Youths and farmers of Punjab and Bihar and youths of Uttar Pradesh are angry

that our PM keeps making speeches with Bihar Chief Minister and talks about other countries, but not the problems confronting our country such as unemployment,” he said. He said the prime minister and the Bihar chief minister used to raise the issue of unemployment earlier but no longer now.

“Now, the PM does not say in his speeches that he would give two crore jobs. Because the people of Bihar have realised that he had lied. “I can guarantee that if the PM comes today and promises two crore jobs to youths, perhaps the crowd would shoo him off, telling him that he had lied,” Gandhi said. The Congress knows how to run a country, how to stand with farmers and give employment, but “we don’t know how to lie”, he said.

Criticising the Centre over the three recently passed

farm laws, he said its “pilot project” was implemented in Bihar in 2006 when the mandi system was abolished in the state. “What Nitish Kumar did in Bihar in 2006, Narendra Modi is doing in Punjab, Haryana and across the country,” Gandhi said.

The Congress has fielded Pravesh Kumar Mishra for the Valmiki Nagar Lok Sabha bye-election, while Rajesh Singh has been nominated for the assembly poll from there. The by-poll to Valmiki Nagar Lok Sabha constituency has been necessitated due to death of JD(U) MP Baidyanath Mahto.

The Lok Sabha by-poll will be held on November 7 and the results will be announced on November 10 alongside the results of Bihar assembly elections. Later in the day, Rahul Gandhi is scheduled to address a rally at Kusheswar Asthan in Darbhanga.

Maha mounts pressure on Rlys to restart locals in Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

More than a week after women commuters were allowed to travel by suburban trains for a specified number of hours during a day in Mumbai and surrounding areas, the Maharashtra Government on Wednesday mounted pressure on the Central and Western Railways to restart local trains to cater to the people living in Mumbai and Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR).

In a letter shot off to the Central and Western Railways, Maharashtra’s secretary for Disaster Management, Relief and Rehabilitation Kishor Raje Nimbalkar stated: “The State is looking to open up the local train services to the general public while ensuring adherence to following all COVID 19 protocols”.

In an effort to ensure that this is done in a staggered

manner, the state government recommended the following time slots—from the day’s first local to 7.30 am for any person with valid ticket or pass, from 8 am to 10.30 am for essential services with valid QR Code, I card along with valid ticket or pass, from 11 am to 4.30 pm for any person with valid ticket or pass, from 5pm to 7.30 pm for essential services with valid QR Code, I card along with valid ticket or pass and from 8 pm till local for any person with ticket or pass.

In its letter, the state government also recommended the operation of ladies special trains – one local each in every hour.

In all, a staggering 85 lakh commuters travel daily in suburban trains on the Main and Harbour lines of the Central Railway and the Western Railway to and fro from the distant suburbs to their offices, a majority of which are locat-

ed in south Mumbai.

In his letter, Nimbalkar stated the schedule suggested by the state government required an increased number of local trains to meet the demand of the categories of commuters specified by it.

Nimbalkar asked the Central and Western Railways to give their inputs on the suggestions made by the state government.

It may be recalled that on October 20, the Indian Railways on Tuesday permitted the WR and CR to allow all ladies to travel by suburban trains for a specified number of hours during a day in Mumbai and Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) from October 21. The move had come after initial hiccups that saw the Western Railway (WR) and Central Railway (CR) refuse to toe the line drawn by the Maharashtra government.

On October 16, the Maharashtra government had gone to town, saying that it would allow all ladies to travel by suburban trains for a specified number of hours during a day in Mumbai and Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) from October 17.

However, both the WR and CR refused to oblige the state government on the ground it had not got a go-ahead from the Railway Board. Both the WR and CR also told the state government that it was working out necessary modalities to permit women commuters. On its part, the Western Railway asked the State Government authorities to convey the quantum of passengers likely to increase due to the state government’s decision.

In its identical letters to the Western Railway and Central Railway, the state government said that all women

with valid tickets/passes would be permitted travel during non-peak hours (11 am to 3 pm and from 7 pm onwards till the local services for the day), besides the existing emergency/essential workers who are allowed.

Earlier after initial refusal by the WR and CR to allow the women commuters to travel by a specified number of hours during a day in Mumbai and MMR, the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) leaders had come down heavily on the Centre for its refusal to accept its request the WR and CR to start suburban train services for women.

Later on October 21, the Indian Railways – following intervention by the Railway Ministry -- allowed ladies to travel by suburban trains for a specified number of hours during a day in Mumbai and Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) from October 21.



NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ


Tender Notice No. : 4420202021
Dated: 22.10.2020

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

SN	Tender No.	Name of work	Approx Cost of Work (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Completion Period
1.	139	Providing roofing sheet and shed of RUB in SKB-FBD branch line underADEN/NCRFZD.	₹ 46274376.00	₹ 381400.00	06 Month
2.	140	CNB-Tundla Replacement of existing girder bridge No. 55 Km 1166/13-15 by providing PSC slab (UP Line) under SR. DEN/VI/ALD.	₹ 12086364.00	₹ 210400.00	04 Month

Date of Opening of Tender: For both Tender **18.11.2020.** **Note:** (1) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website **www.ireps.gov.in** up to **13.30 hrs.** on the due date of tender opening i.e. **18.11.2020.** (2) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with **IREPS** website along with Digital Signature Certificates issued by **CCA** under **IT Act-2000.** (3) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendor shall be straightaway ignored and shall not be considered. (4) Documents being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (5) This tender notice have also been uploaded on **www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in.** (6) Cost of Tender Document and Earnest Money can only be deposited Online through Internet Banking or Payment Gateway. (7) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (8) Supplier of Goods and / or Services would be a subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. (9) The tenderers shall submit a certificate as per ACS 01, of GCC as given in tender document in standard format, without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected.

 North central railways
www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in
 @CPRO NCR
1151/20 (A)


NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ



E-Procurement Tender Notice No.: 20/54
Date: 23.10.2020


E-Procurement Tender Notice

On behalf of the President of India, The **Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj,** (An ISO 9001:2015 certified unit) invites the following E-Procurement Tenders.

S.N.	Tender No.	Description	Qty.	Tender Opening Date
1	20203662B	Connection complete with clamping plate	10 Set	11.11.2020
2	40203188	SET OF 120 AH VRLE BATTERIES	155 Set	23.11.2020
3	30201777	SAB REPAIR KIT 'C' FOR SAB IRSA-600	882 Set	16.11.2020
4	30201664A	Hanger For Bolster Spring Suspension For Main Line Coaches	7040 Nos	23.11.2020
5	60185008A	Heavy duty electrically operated Horizontal type Hydraulic Hose pipes	01 Nos	19.11.2020
6	20201515	SET OF PRESSURE SWITCHES To RDSO's SPECN No-B-1/D-2 JAN76	10 Set	12.11.2020
7	30202700	Secondary Brake Beam Assembly	270 Nos	23.11.2020

Note: (1) The complete information of above E-Procurement Tenders are available on **IREPS** website i.e. **http://www.ireps.gov.in** (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 class III, digital signature certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall only be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendor shall be straight way ignored and shall not be considered. (4) This tender notice have also been uploaded on **www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in.** (5) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (6) The Contractors should submit valid Class 'A' Electrical License issued by State Government otherwise tender shall not be considered. (7) Rate Quoted by Firm will be inclusive of all Taxes & Duties. (8) Suppliers of goods and /or services would be subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. (9) **For SN- 2 & 4:-** The tenderer must have successfully completed "satisfactory execution of any LT/HT Work" during last 07 (seven) years, ending last day of month previous to the one in which tender is invited: (Three similar works costing not less than the amount equal to 30% of advertised value of the tender, or Two similar works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of advertised value of the tender, or One similar work costing not less than the amount equal to 60% of advertised value of the tender. The tenderer must have received contractual payments in the previous three financial years and the current financial year upto the date of opening of tender, at least 150% of the advertised value of the tender. The tenderers shall submit Certificates to this effect which may be an attested Certificate from the concerned department / client and/or Audited Balance Sheet duly certified by the Chartered Accountant etc. (10) **For SN- 3:-** The tenderer must have successfully completed "Satisfactory execution of work related to maintenance/Repair/Overhauling of DG sets of 100 KVA or above capacity or satisfactory execution of work related to maintenance of Power- Car" during last 07 (seven) years, ending last day of month previous to the one in which tender is invited: (Three similar works each costing not less than the amount equal to 30% of advertised value of the tender, or Two similar works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of advertised value of the tender, or One similar work each costing not less than the amount equal to 60% of advertised value of the tender). The tenderer must have received contractual payments in the previous three financial years and the current financial year upto the date of opening of tender, at least 150% of the advertised value of the tender. The tenderers shall submit Certificates to this effect which may be an attested Certificate from the concerned department / client and/or Audited Balance Sheet duly certified by the Chartered Accountant etc. (11) **For SN- 6:-** The tenderer must have successfully completed any of the following during last 07 (seven) years, ending last day of month previous to the one in which tender is invited: "Satisfactory execution of work related to supply, installation, testing and commissioning of APFC panels or Satisfactory execution of work related with supply, installation, testing and commissioning of HT/LT panels" (Three similar works each costing not less than the amount equal to 30% of advertised value of the tender, or Two similar works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of advertised value of the tender, or One similar work each costing not less than the amount equal to 60% of advertised value of the tender). The tenderer must have received contractual payments in the previous three financial years and the current financial year upto the date of opening of tender, at least 150% of the advertised value of the tender. The tenderers shall submit Certificates to this effect which may be an attested Certificate from the concerned department / client and/or Audited Balance Sheet duly certified by the Chartered Accountant etc.

 North central railway
www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in
 @ CPRONCR
1142/20 (P)



NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

Tender Notice No.: 24-Elect/G/PRYJ-20-21
DRM's OFFICE, NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ
Tender Notice (ELECTRICAL GENERAL SERVICES)

Senior Divl. Electrical Engineer / Gen / N. C. R. ly. / Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite the following e-Tenders on prescribed form for the following works up to **15.00 hrs.** on **18.11.2020.** The details of the tenders are as under:-

S. N.	T N	Name of work	Cost of work (In Rs.)	EMD (In Rs.)	Duration of completion
1.	ELG-87 -2021	Electrical work for "Prayagraj" Construction of 04 unit of Type V officer's quarter for officers of Prayagraj Division". (I/ind call).	₹ 4187207.14	₹ 83800.00	06 Months
2.	ELG-88 -2021	Electrical Miscellaneous Maintenance works, under SSE/PS/PRYJ (from -2021 BH-JJ to ASCE) for 01 Year.	₹ 6909708.50	₹ 138200.00	12 Months
3.	ELG-89 -2021	Comprehensive maintenance contract of DG sets of capacities more than 100 KVA under SSE/PL/PRYJ for two years.	₹ 12248022.50	₹ 211300.00	24 Months
4.	ELG-90 -2021	North Central Railway - Provision of escalators at platforms (29 Nos) (PB# 594/ 2019-20/ CR) PART (A): Provision of Escalators (372 Nos) on Railway Platforms (For ALD Divn.13 Nos). Part (B): Provision of Escalators (372 Nos) on Railway Platforms (For ALD Divn.-04 Nos). Part (C): Kanpur: Upgradation and modification of Central Substations at Kanpur and including civil engg works at Jamuniya Bagh and MTC sub stations. Part(D): Electrical work in connection with Khurja station: Provision of Foot Over Bridge (FOB) by 6.1M width by new FOB. (I/ind call).	₹ 25586603.66	₹ 277900.00	06 Months
5.	ELG-91 -2021	Part (A): Electrical work in connection with regarding temporary relocation of 05 Nos (Le 51,52,61,66&69) gate lodges (cabins between PRYJ-CNB section. Part (B): Electrical work in connection with Ekidil Etawah Provision of pedestrian Access at KM: 1155/27-29 near Farukhabad ROB at Etawah. Part (C): Electrical work in connection with Shikohabad - Provision of small PF shed on PF no. 1/2 & 3/4 with water sanitary fitting under ADEN/FZD. Part (D): Electrical work in connection with "Provision of badminton court hall adjacent to officer club & augmentation of capacity of ORH at Kanpur under ADEN/HQ/Kanpur.	₹ 2567752.66	₹ 51400.00	06 Months
6.	ELG-92 -2021	Electrical work in connection with Compliance of Energy Audit recommendations of 14 Nos.(PRYJ, PCOI, MKP, MZP, SFG, FTP, CNB, CPA, PHD, ETW, TDL, ALJN, KRJ & DER) stations over Prayagraj division.	₹ 14613696.75	₹ 223100.00	03 Months

Tender Opening Date: 18.11.2020, **Cost of Tender Form (In Rs.):** ₹ 0.00. **Note:** (1) The complete information alongwith tender document of above e-Tenders are available on Website **www.ireps.gov.in** up to 15:00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. (2) Bids other than in the form of e-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website alongwith Digital Signature Certificates issued by CCA under ITAct-2000. (3) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendor shall be straight away ignored and shall not be considered. (4) This tender notice has also been uploaded on **www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in.** (5) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (6) The Contractors should submit valid Class 'A' Electrical License issued by State Government otherwise tender shall not be considered. (7) Rate Quoted by Firm will be inclusive of all Taxes & Duties. (8) Suppliers of goods and /or services would be subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. (9) **For SN- 2 & 4:-** The tenderer must have successfully completed "satisfactory execution of any LT/HT Work" during last 07 (seven) years, ending last day of month previous to the one in which tender is invited: (Three similar works costing not less than the amount equal to 30% of advertised value of the tender, or Two similar works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of advertised value of the tender, or One similar work costing not less than the amount equal to 60% of advertised value of the tender. The tenderer must have received contractual payments in the previous three financial years and the current financial year upto the date of opening of tender, at least 150% of the advertised value of the tender. The tenderers shall submit Certificates to this effect which may be an attested Certificate from the concerned department / client and/or Audited Balance Sheet duly certified by the Chartered Accountant etc. (10) **For SN- 3:-** The tenderer must have successfully completed "Satisfactory execution of work related to maintenance/Repair/Overhauling of DG sets of 100 KVA or above capacity or satisfactory execution of work related to maintenance of Power- Car" during last 07 (seven) years, ending last day of month previous to the one in which tender is invited: (Three similar works each costing not less than the amount equal to 30% of advertised value of the tender, or Two similar works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of advertised value of the tender, or One similar work each costing not less than the amount equal to 60% of advertised value of the tender). The tenderer must have received contractual payments in the previous three financial years and the current financial year upto the date of opening of tender, at least 150% of the advertised value of the tender. The tenderers shall submit Certificates to this effect which may be an attested Certificate from the concerned department / client and/or Audited Balance Sheet duly certified by the Chartered Accountant etc. (11) **For SN- 6:-** The tenderer must have successfully completed any of the following during last 07 (seven) years, ending last day of month previous to the one in which tender is invited: "Satisfactory execution of work related to supply, installation, testing and commissioning of APFC panels or Satisfactory execution of work related with supply, installation, testing and commissioning of HT/LT panels" (Three similar works each costing not less than the amount equal to 30% of advertised value of the tender, or Two similar works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of advertised value of the tender, or One similar work each costing not less than the amount equal to 60% of advertised value of the tender). The tenderer must have received contractual payments in the previous three financial years and the current financial year upto the date of opening of tender, at least 150% of the advertised value of the tender. The tenderers shall submit Certificates to this effect which may be an attested Certificate from the concerned department / client and/or Audited Balance Sheet duly certified by the Chartered Accountant etc.

 North central railways
www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in
 @CPRO NCR
1143/20 (A)

New Delhi: Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat moved the Supreme Court on Wednesday against the Nainital High Court order for CBI probe into the allegations of corruption levelled against him by a journalist. The High Court verdict came on two separate petitions filed by two journalists— Umesh Sharma and Shiv Prasad

Semwal — seeking quashing of FIR lodged against them in July this year under various provisions of the IPC.

While quashing the FIR, the high court ordered CBI probe into the allegations levelled against the Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat.

Sharma accused Rawat, who was then Jharkhand in-charge of the BJP, of

alleged money transfers to accounts of his relatives in 2016 to support an appointment of a person in that State to head the Gau Seva Ayog.

Rawat moved the top court by filing an appeal against the high court judgement through lawyer Divyam Agarwal, who has not yet divulged the grounds of the challenge.

PTI

DU VC Tyagi suspended, Prez orders enquiry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing admission process, the Centre on Wednesday suspended Delhi University Vice Chancellor Yogesh Tyagi on the orders of President Ram Nath Kovind. The President has also directed initiation of an enquiry against Tyagi over allegations of dereliction of duty.

The move by the Ministry of Education (MoE) comes amid a power tussle in the Central university. The President, who is the Visitor to the university, has placed Tyagi under suspension to ensure that the enquiry is fair and that he is not able to tamper with material records or coerce the witnesses, an MoE official order said.

“All orders issued by or issued with the approval of Tyagi during the period of his absence on medical ground are set aside and to be treated as null and void,” the official said.

Tyagi has been on leave since July 2 when he was admitted to AIIMS under emergency medical condition. The Government had on July 17 given Pro-VC PC Joshi the charge of VC, until Tyagi

resumes office.

“The Vice Chancellor is not administering the university in accordance with (statutory) provisions...which has caused mis-governance and malfunctioning of University of Delhi. This is not conducive for appropriate academic as well as administrative environment of the university,” said a four-page order by the MoE.

“The President of India in his capacity as Visitor of the University, on consideration of facts and material available on record, has ordered to conduct an enquiry into the allegations of dereliction of duties and lack of commitment and devotion to duty against him. The President has also been pleased to place Tyagi under suspension with immediate effect until further orders as he may influence/coerce the witnesses and tamper with the material records of the university so as to ensure fair enquiry,” and MoE official said.

A controversy erupted last week when Tyagi removed Joshi as pro-VC on Thursday and appointed Geeta Bhatt, the director of the Non-Collegiate Women’s Education Board of the university, in his

place.


Joshi had, meanwhile, notified the appointment of a new Registrar, Vikas Gupta, whose interview had been completed and appointment cleared by the executive council on Wednesday.

However, the same day, Tyagi had approved and notified the appointment of PC Jha as Acting Registrar and director of the South Campus.

The Ministry then intervened in the power tussle between the Vice Chancellor and the pro-Vice Chancellor, saying appointments made by Tyagi were not “valid” as he is on leave.

The power tussle intensified with Jha writing to the Ministry citing himself as “acting Registrar” and saying all decisions taken by Tyagi are in accordance with university norms. The Ministry took objection to the letter and directed the varsity to take strict action against him.

Other charges against Tyagi include inordinate delays in appointments of Registrar, Principals of various colleges and his “biases” towards the colleges governed by the Delhi Government.


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ASSET RECOVERY MANAGEMENT BRANCH
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New Delhi-110060. Mobile : 9319891680
Website : www.karnatakabank.com

POSSESSION NOTICE
(For Immovable Property)

Whereas, undersigned being the Authorised Officer of **KARNATAKA BANK LIMITED**, under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest [Act], 2002(54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with [rule 3] of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued pursuant to notice dated **25.03.2019** calling upon the borrower/ mortgage/ guarantors: (1) **M/s Fortek Bio Sciences Pvt Ltd. Rep by its Directors, (ii) Mr Paresh Rastogi, (iii) Mr. Deepak Rastogi and (iii) Mrs. Sonia Rastogi, addressed at 27/18, Raja Ram Mohan Rai Marg, Lucknow, (2) Mrs. Sonia Rastogi, 67, Halwasiya Market, 1st Floor, Hazrat Ganj, Lucknow- 226001, U.P. (3) Mr. Deepak Rastogi, 14/1, Jopling Road, Lucknow- 226001 U.P. and (4) Mr. Paresh Rastogi, No.803, Rohtas Court, Gokhale Marg, Lucknow-226001 to repay the amount mentioned in the notice bearing **Rs.98,05,952.00 (Rupees Ninety Eight Lakhs Five Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Two Only)** under **Term Loan Account No.4537001600022301** along with future interest from **28.02.2019**, within **60** days from the date of receipt of the said notice.**

The borrowers, mortgagors and the guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers, mortgagors, guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest Enforcement, Rules 2002 on this the **23rd October of the year 2020.**

The borrowers, the mortgagors and the guarantors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property mentioned herein below and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **Karnataka Bank Limited, Lucknow Branch** for an amount of **Rs.1,05,88,029.00 under Term Loan Account No.4537001600022301** along with future interest from **30.08.2019**, Plus costs.

[The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.]

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY:

1) All that part and parcel of residential Flat No. 304 in "E" Block, measuring 119.66 sq. mtrs on Third Floor in the building known as "Plumeria Homes" built over plot No. TCG-3/3, situated at Vibhuti Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226010, belonging to **Mr. Paresh Rastogi.**

Boundaries:
East : Open to Sky
North: Open to Sky
West : Flat No. E-301
South: Lobby

2) All that part and parcel of residential Flat No.202 in Block-K, admeasuring 213.49 sq. mtrs on Second Floor in the building known as "Plumeria Homes" built over plot No. TCG-3/3, situated at Vibhuti Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226010, belonging to **Mr. Paresh Rastogi.**

Boundaries:
East : Open to Sky
North: Corridor/ open to Sky
West : Open to Sky
South: Block J Flat No. 202

Place: Lucknow
Date: 23.10.2020

For Karnataka Bank Ltd
Chief Manager & Authorised Officer

SOUTH ASIAN ENTERPRISES LIMITED
Regd. Off. : Milky House, K-Block, Kidwai Nagar, Kanpur- 208011 (U.P.)
Phone: 0512-2606859

Corp. Off. : 2nd Floor, 13, Sant Nagar, East of Kailash, New Delhi-110065
Ph. No. 011-46656666 **Fax:** 011-46656699 **E-Mail ID:** southasianenterprises@gmail.com
Website: www.sael.co.in **CIN:** L19900UP1990PLC011753

Public Notice for kind attention of the members

This is to inform that in view of the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the 31st Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the Members of South Asian Enterprises Ltd. ("the Company") will be convened through two-way Video Conference (VC)/Other Audio-Visual Means ("OAVM"), in compliance with the applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and the Rules made thereunder, read with General Circulars No. 14/2020 dated April 8, 2020, No. 17/2020 dated April 13, 2020, No. 20/2020 dated May 5, 2020 issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs ("MCA") collectively referred to as "MCA Circulars" and Circular No. SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD/1/CIR/P/2020/79 dated May 12, 2020 issued by the Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI Circular").

The 31st AGM schedule is as follows:

Day, Date and Time of Annual General Meeting	: Tuesday, 01/12/2020 at 12:30 p.m. through Video Conferencing ("VC") / Other Audio Visual Means ("OAVM")
Day and Date of Book Closure	: Wednesday, 25/11/2020 to Tuesday, 01/12/2020 (both days inclusive)
Cutoff Date for e-voting	: Tuesday, 24/11/2020
Date of remote e-voting	: Saturday, 28/11/2020 from 9.00 a.m. till Monday, 30/11/2020 upto 5.00 p.m.
E-voting at AGM	: At the end of AGM on 01/12/2020

Kindly note that no physical copy of Annual Report 2019-2020 will, therefore, be sent suo moto by the Company to the members either before or after the AGM and all communications from the Company relating inter-alia to AGM shall be made in electronic mode viz. email etc. The Company has approached National Securities Depository Ltd. (NSDL) for providing e-voting facility for the ensuing AGM. Any person who acquires shares of the Company and becomes its member after dispatch of the AGM Notice or whose email ID is not registered/ updated with the Company and holding shares as of cut-off date may obtain the Login ID and Password by sending a request at e-voting@nsdl.co.in or to the RTA of the Company at email ID- investor.services@rcmcdelhi.com or at their registered office address. For electronic voting instructions, Shareholders may go through the instructions stated in the Notice of 31st AGM and in case of any queries/grievances connected with electronic voting, Shareholders may refer the Frequently Asked Questions and e-voting User Manual for Shareholders available at the Downloads section of NSDL's e-voting website www.evoting.nsdl.com. Only a person whose name is recorded in the Register of Members or in the Register of beneficial owners maintained by the Depositories as on the cutoff date shall be entitled to avail the facility of e-voting or voting at the AGM. The e-copy of the Notice of the AGM alongwith the Annual Report for the Financial Year 2019-20 of the Company will be available on or before 9th November, 2020 on the website of the Company at www.sael.co.in, the website of the NSDL at www.evoting.nsdl.com, and on the website of the concerned stock exchange www.bseindia.com.

The Company hereby requests all members to update their Email IDs for sending of Notice of AGM, Annual Reports and other communications from the Company. Members holding shares in dematerialized form are requested to approach their respective Depository Participants for updating the Email ID, Bank Mandate, contact number, Address etc.

Members holding shares in physical form are advised to convert their holdings

Parl panel to Twitter: Distorted map act of treason

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Parliamentary committee on Wednesday came down heavily on Twitter for showing Ladakh as part of China, saying it amounted to treason and an explanation must be tendered by the US-based parent of the social media platform in form of an affidavit, sources in the panel said.

Appearing before the joint committee of Parliament on Data Protection Bill, chaired by BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi, representatives of Twitter India “begged apology”, but they were told by the members that it was a criminal offence that questioned the sovereignty of the country and an affidavit must be submitted by Twitter Inc, not by its ‘marketing arm’

Twitter India, sources added.

They were questioned for more than two hours by the panel members, mainly on Ladakh being shown as part of China on the Twitter app. “The committee was of the unanimous opinion that Twitter’s explanation on showing Ladakh as part of China was inadequate,” Lekhi informed media after the meeting.

The Twitter representatives told the panel that the social media company respects the sensitivities of India, she said. “But, it is not only a question of the sensitivity of India or Indians. It is a question about national integrity and sovereignty of the country, and not respecting that is a criminal offence. And dis-

playing Indian map improperly and incorrectly is an offence of treason and attracts imprisonment of seven years,” she said.

Lekhi said Twitter was also asked about its banning policy. “Shadow banning, banning policy... there is no clarity about it. Such actions are very subjective... Twitter is becoming a law unto themselves and under these circumstances, they are violating Article 19 of the Constitution about the freedom of expression,” she said.

Sources said some members also raised questions about Twitter’s transparency policy and its actions during elections, especially vis-a-vis their policies in other countries. Asked for their comments, a Twitter spokesperson

said in an emailed statement, “The recent geotagging issue was swiftly resolved by our teams. We are committed to openness, transparency around our work and will remain in regular touch with the Government to share timely updates.”

Multiple sources in the panel said Twitter officials “begged apology” for Ladakh being shown as part of China on its app, but they were told by members that whatever they wanted to say on the issue should be given in writing in form of an affidavit by Twitter Inc, the parent company of the social media platform.

They said Twitter India is “just a marketing arm” of US-based parent Twitter Inc, and therefore a written reply should

come from them. Twitter Asia, based in Singapore, mainly deals with advertisement revenues and takes all major decisions related to the region, some members opined.

Officials who deposed before the panel on behalf of Twitter India included Shagufta Kamran, senior manager, public policy; Ayushi Kapoor, legal counsel; Pallavi Walia, policy communications; and Manvinder Bali, corporate security. Officials from the Ministry of Electronics, Information and Technology, and the Ministry of Law and Justice also deposed before the panel.

The Indian Government on October 22 had warned Twitter about its location setting that showed Leh in China,

saying any disrespect towards the country’s sovereignty and integrity is totally unacceptable. In a strongly-worded letter, Ajay Sawhney, Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), asked Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey to respect the country’s sensitivities, sources in the ministry had said.

Twitter also came under heavy criticism and faced a backlash from social media users after its geotagging feature displayed “Jammu & Kashmir, the People’s Republic of China” in a live broadcast from Leh’s Hall of Fame, a war memorial for fallen soldiers in the Union Territory of Ladakh. At that time, Twitter had called it a technical issue that had been swiftly resolved.

NIA searches Trust, NGOs in Srinagar, Bangalore in terror funding case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday conducted searches at 10 locations in Srinagar and Bandipora (Jammu and Kashmir) and one in Bangalore in connection with a case pertaining to certain NGOs and Trusts raising funds in India and abroad in the name of charitable activities and then using those funds for carrying out secessionist and separatist activities in the Valley.

The case was registered by federal anti-terror investigation agency on October 8 this year under Indian Penal Code (IPC) Sections relating to criminal conspiracy and sedition besides relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act on receipt of credible information that certain NGOs and Trusts are collecting funds domestically and abroad through so-called donations and business contributions and are then utilising these funds for secessionist and terrorist activities

in Jammu and Kashmir, the NIA said in a statement.

Those whose premises have been searched include residence and office of Khurram Parvez (co-ordinator of J&K Coalition of Civil Society), his associates Parvez Ahmad Matta and Bengaluru-based associate Swati Sheshadri, Parveena Ahanger, Chairperson of Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDPK) and offices of NGO Athrout and GK Trust, the NIA said.

Several incriminating documents and electronic devices have been seized and are being analysed for further action. Further investigation in the case is continuing, it added.

Officials said a number of other such entities are under the scanner of the agency and action against them is being contemplated.

The move is expected to further check terror financing through legitimate channels, they added

6,738 new cases in M’rashtra

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Covid-19 deaths in Maharashtra went down below the 100 mark for the second time in three days and that too after a gap of five months, as 91 people succumbed to the pandemic, while 6,738 more tested people tested positive for coronavirus in various parts of the state.

A day after it logged 115 deaths and 5,363 new infected cases, Maharashtra continued to witness a near flattening of the Covid-19 curve, as the deaths dropped by 24 to touch a daily fatality tally of 91, while the infections rose by 1,375 taking infected cases to 6,738.

The deaths had on Monday dropped to 84, a tally that should be seen in the context of the fact that the previous low of 97 deaths was witnessed way back on May 26.

With 91 deaths reported on Wednesday, the total number deaths rose from 43,463 to 43,554. Similarly with 6,738 infections, the total infected cases jumped from 16,54,028 to 16,60,766.

As 8,430 more people were discharged from various hospitals in the state, the number of people discharged from various hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year went up to 14,86,926. The recovery rate in the state rose from 89.3 per cent to 89.53 per cent.

Of the fresh 91 deaths, Mumbai accounted for a maximum of 31 deaths, while there were 10 deaths in Nagpur, 7 in Pune, 6 in Nashik, 5 in Thane, 4 in Solapur, 3 each in Kolhapur, Jalna and Wardha, 2 each in Palghar, Ahmednagar, Jalgaon, Sangli and Akola and one death each in Raigad, Nandurbar, Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri, Aurangabad, Washim, Gondia, Chandrapur and Gadchiroli.

With 31 fresh deaths, the Covid-19 toll in Mumbai toll shot up from 10,165 to 10,196, while the infected cases rose by 1m354 to trigger a jump in the infections from 252,886 to 2,54,240.

Meanwhile, the mortality rate in the state stood at 2.62 per cent. The number of “active cases” in the state dropped from 1,31,544 to 1,29,746.

Pune district, which continued to be the worst-affected city-district in Maharashtra, saw the total number of cases increase from to 3,30,805 to 3,31,592 while the total number of deaths in Pune increased from 6629 to 6636.

H’Kong bans Air India flights from Mumbai till Nov 10 after 5 fliers test Covid positive

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hong Kong has banned Air India flights from Mumbai till November 10 after five passengers from Mumbai tested positive for the coronavirus infection on arrival there.

This is the fourth time that Air India flights from India have been banned by the Hong Kong Government for bringing passengers who tested positive for the infection after arrival. The previous bans were on the airline’s Delhi-Hong Kong flights during September 20-October 3 and August 18-August 31 and October 17-October 30. This time the ban is reportedly on flights from Mumbai alone.

According to officials, a passenger from India was among five who boarded an Air India flight from Mumbai on Monday. The other four were confirmed to be Covid-19 patients on Tuesday. “Subsequently, the Mumbai-Hong Kong flights have been barred from October 28 to November 10 by the Hong Kong government,” officials added.

Air India Express has advised passengers in a tweet

H’Kong Govt bans flights from India for fourth time

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hong Kong has banned Air India flights from Mumbai till November 10 after five passengers from Mumbai tested positive for the coronavirus infection on arrival there. This is the fourth time that Air India flights from India have been banned by the Hong Kong

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that that “passengers travelling on (its) flights to Kuala Lumpur (KUL) must ensure that their final destination should be Kuala Lumpur itself. Passengers who intend to travel onward via KUL should not book with us due to Covid-related travel restrictions.

Passengers from India can arrive in Hong Kong only if they have a COVID-19 negative certificate from a test done within 72 hours prior to the journey, according to rules issued by the Hong Kong gov-

ernment in July.

Moreover, all international passengers are required to undergo a post-flight COVID-19 test at the Hong Kong airport.

Besides India, a pre-flight COVID-19 negative certificate is mandatory for all passengers from Bangladesh, Ethiopia, France, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Russia, South Africa, the UK and the US, according to the Hong Kong government’s rules.

Talks on for peaceful resolution of LAC crisis: Rajnath

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the midst of prevailing tension at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday said talks were on for peaceful resolution of the crisis.

The troops were standing firm at the border and the gov-

ernment will ensure they get all the required equipment, he said.

Making these remarks during his address at the four-day Army Commanders’ Conference here, Rajnath expressed confidence while troops are standing firm, the ongoing talks for peaceful resolution of crisis will continue.

The conference ends on Thursday.

Expressing his gratitude to the soldiers, he remarked “It is our national responsibility to ensure availability of best weapons, equipment and clothing to our troops braving extreme weather and hostile forces to defend our territorial integrity.”

ED takes Sivsankar into custody in gold smuggling case

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Sivsankar, the former principal secretary to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, was taken into custody by a team of Enforcement Directorate officials on Wednesday morning from a private hospital in Thiruvananthapuram. Earlier the Kerala High Court dismissed the anticipatory bail application moved by Sivsankar. The route is now clear for the agency to arrest Sivsankar in connection with his roles in gold smuggling, misuse of official position and money laundering.

The former high profile IAS officer was brought to Kochi by the ED officials. Once

the entourage reached the Kochi office of the ED, officials from the Customs Department joined the team and interrogated Sivsankar. The questioning is continuing even at the time of going to Press.

Both the Customs and ED had informed the High Court that it was imperative that Sivsankar, who was not cooperating with the investigating agencies, be questioned in custody. The ED had submitted a sealed cover containing sensitive documents which nail Sivsankar to the gold smuggling cartel consisting of Swapna Suresh, Sarith and Sandeep Nair. The three kingpins in their statements to the investigating agencies had told that Sivsankar “was in the

Both the Customs and ED had informed the High Court that it was imperative that Sivsankar, who was not cooperating with the investigating agencies, be questioned in custody.

loop” about the gold smuggling through diplomatic channel. The close liaison between Sivsankar and the controversial woman Swapna Suresh led to his fall, said sleuths in the

investigating teams. The woman, who has not completed her matriculation course was appointed as boss of the Space Park, a Kerala Government undertaking at the instance of Sivsankar.

With the ED officials taking Sivsankar into custody, the continuation of Pinarayi Vijayan as chief minister has become untenable, according to former Chief Minister Oommen Chandy.

The former chief minister, for the first time since the gold smuggling scam hogged the limelight, demanded the immediate resignation of Vijayan. “This is the first time in the history of Kerala, the chief of the CMO has been taken into custody by a central

agency. This is a blot on the face of Kerala and hence Vijayan should resign immediately,” said Chandhi while speaking to reporters on Wednesday.

The arrest of Rabins K Hameed, the Dubai based head of the gold smuggling syndicate from Kochi airport on Monday and the statement by K T Rameez, a lead smuggler, to the Customs have put the Kerala Government in an unenviable position. B V Kumar, former chief of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, said Sivsankar has landed in major trouble. “The joint grilling by Customs and ED would be an entirely different experience and they would extract all relevant details from him,” said Kumar.

Bengal Guv to meet Shah before shifting home to Darjeeling

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Governor Jagdeep Bdhankhar will shift to Darjeeling Raj Bhavan on November 1, and he will stay there for a month, a communication from the Governor’s House in Kolkata said on Tuesday. Dhankhar’s Darjeeling trip will end on November 30 during which he will take part in a number of undisclosed programmes, sources.

But before he moves to Darjeeling the Governor will meet Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi on Wednesday where he is likely to appraise him about the law and order situation in Bengal, sources said. A Raj Bhavan communique said on Wednesday, “West Bengal Governor Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar would be on an official visit to Delhi from Oct 28-30. Governor Dhankhar leaves for Delhi on the evening of Oct 28 and returns to Kolkata on Oct 30. His engagements include calling on the Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah on Oct 29.” Besides, it also said that the Governor will shift to Darjeeling on November 1 and stay there till November 30. “Mr Dhankhar will be staying at the Raj Bhavan in Darjeeling,” the statement said.

The Governor’s visit to Darjeeling assumes importance against the backdrop of undivided Gorkha Janmukti Morcha president Bimal Gurung quitting the BJP fold and joining hands

with Trinamool Congress dealing a body blow to BJP’s aspirations in large parts of Darjeeling and Terrai region.

An “absconder” charged with sedition etc, Gurung suddenly resurfaced in Kolkata last week after three years and announced his re-alliance with TMC putting BJP on the back foot. Its clout with the Gorkha population explained much of the saffron party’s stupendous performance in last year parliamentary elections in parts of North Bengal.

The Governor who is expected to brief the Home Minister about the law and order situation in Bengal during his visit to Delhi ahead of his trip to Darjeeling is also likely to be briefed about his ‘responsibilities’ during his stay in North Bengal, experts say. “Since we function in a democracy anyone is free to visit any place in India and the Government is least bothered about such movements. It is true about the Governor too. But the timing of his visit to Darjeeling and long-stay there is significant because of the setback the BJP has suffered organizationally in North Bengal, particularly Darjeeling in the recent times,” said a Bengal Minister adding “he may use Darjeeling Raj Bhavan as a second BJP party office after the Kolkata Raj Bhavan... but that will hardly affect the local politics as people have understood the difference between Mamata Banerjee and BJP”

PM calls Tejashwi yuvraj of jungle raj

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday launched the second leg of his campaign for Bihar Assembly elections and attacked the main Opposition’ Rashtriya Janata Dal’ (RJD) for presiding over a “jungle Raj” during its 15-year-long rule. The PM referred to RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav as the “yuvraj of the jungle” raj and warned people not to elect a party whose very name would drive away investors.

The Prime Minister claimed that development has speeded up in the state under the Nitish Kumar government’s rule and also mentioned central government direct sending of about one lakh crore to farmer’s bank account under

Direct to Bank scheme.

Modi, who addressed public rallies at Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur and Patna also pointed to the voters that his government fulfilled the promise of the construction of a Ram temple at Ayodhya by laying its foundation. He was joining in the public meetings by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Promising that the NDA rule would make Bihar a “self-reliant” and “developed state”, Modi urged the people to defeat the opposition which, he said, had launched the state in a “jungle raj” and embezzled funds meant for development schemes. In a jibe at the ‘Mahagadhbhandan’ leader Tejaswi Yadav who is the son of former Bihar Chief Minister

Lalu Prasad, Modi said those who witnessed the old times know well that nothing much can be expected from ‘jungle raj ke yuvraj’ and there is a need to defeat such forces along with coronavirus pandemic in the state. He alleged that the RJD has a “copyright over kidnappings” in the state and the voters to view the assembly elections as “an opportunity to re-elect those who pulled Bihar out of darkness.”

“It is a party which patronised criminals and ensured the riches of one family grew,” he remarked, making a reference to the corruption scandals involving Prasad and his family members. Invoking the imagery of Goddess Sita and her father Janaka, the king of

Mithila of which this north Bihar town became the capital later on, Modi said those who used to taunt the BJP over the delay in construction of Ram temple were now forced to applause.

“I am happy to be here, in the birth place of Mother Sita. Construction of temple at Ayodhya has also begun. Those siyasi log (political opponents) who used to taunt us with the question what is the date (for commencement of construction), have now been forced to clap in applause,” Modi said.

The prime minister, who shared the stage with the Chief Minister, heaped praise on the latter, calling him the “bhaavi mukhyamantri” (prospective CM) and credited him with

Bihar’s economic turnaround.

“The people of Bihar have made up their mind to inflict yet another defeat on those responsible for the ‘jungle raj’ where crime graph had soared to an extent that living a normal life became difficult for the common people, our mothers and sisters,” Modi said in an obvious attack on the RJD-Congress combine, without mentioning either by name.

“They committed financial irregularities in the name of waiving farm loans. They took bribes to give jobs. The NDA stands for development. Beware of those who are greedily eyeing the funds earmarked for progress,” said Modi. He said those who were in power before the NDA government was

It's in the air

Research has confirmed our worst fears, polluted air not only exacerbates COVID symptoms, it traps the virus around us



The time for knee-jerk reactions is over and we better commit ourselves to cleaning up the air around us for good — through combined political will, implementable policies, lifestyle adjustments and sustainable practices — or else risk death. So latest scientific studies have confirmed what common sense has been telling us for some time, the higher the concentration of solid particles suspended in the air that lies heavy and low around us, the greater the chances of the COVID-19 virus getting trapped in them, making us more vulnerable to contracting it. And given that high air pollution levels damage the lungs, inducing or aggravating health conditions such as asthma, obstructive pulmonary disease, cardiovascular diseases and diabetes, the disease burden could turn COVID-19 fatal. Imagine the fallout on Delhiites, whose disease resistance has already been compromised battling winter haze every year. The National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has warned that Delhi could report around 15,000 cases daily this winter due to the prevalence of respiratory illnesses that can worsen the symptoms of the disease. A Harvard University study has proved that an increase of only one microgram per cubic metre in a particulate matter or PM 2.5 is associated with an eight per cent increase in the COVID death rate. So, the surge of PM 2.5 levels in Delhi could result in a spike in caseload besides exacerbating the severity of symptoms of those infected. Yet another study by the University of Cambridge in April established a link between patients living in a highly polluted area of England and the severity of COVID-19. Many parts of north India, especially Delhi, are already wrapped in a blanket of hazardous smoke. According to the 2019 World Air Quality Report, India has 21 of the 30 most polluted cities in the world, where air quality can be as much as 10 times over the safe limits recommended by WHO. Over the past few weeks, PM 2.5 levels in Delhi have averaged around 180-340 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and on an extended basis, such saturation weakens the lungs and the body's ability to fend off infections. Additionally, they can even act as a medium for the transmission of the virus as studies from Italy have recorded traces of SARS-CoV-2 RNA on pollutants. Stubble burning, festive fireworks and low wind speed conditions along with vehicular and industrial pollution have already worsened matters.

Hence we need to permanently solve the problem of pollution and that means going beyond tokenism. For starters, we need to stop stubble burning on an emergency basis across States, in mission mode to be precise. We must use the green cess collected so far to subsidise shredding equipment and maximise alternative uses of crop waste. We need a three-level combat strategy at the level of policy-making, economy and community. Both the Centre and State Governments have already rolled out various policies to address air pollution, one of the most recent ones being the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP). It calls on 122 cities across India to develop city-level clean-up plans to implement mitigation strategies for ambient PM concentrations. However, it has failed to enforce its targets and has remained ineffective. That's because in the absence of a legal mandate, the NCAP is toothless. Besides, ensuring compliance means appropriate monitoring and inspection and it lacks trained personnel for these tasks. Also, its budgetary allocation is just not enough. Delhi has 38 real-time air quality monitoring stations while Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra have 25 and 22 each, and Tamil Nadu has only five. This in turn causes data-related implementation hurdles, including poor data captured due to substandard monitoring stations and lack of appropriate methodology to leverage real-time data for reporting trends. In terms of policy, the Government needs to put a blanket ban on firecrackers. We must realise that life needs to be celebrated more than festivals at the moment. We also need to create a financial architecture where the private sector can help with cutting-edge innovations and unique technology solutions along with financing them. Having an investment fund with a dedicated green focus could catalyse the growth of such green industries along with addressing the problems of air pollution and climate change. Businesses should now disclose the air pollution footprint of their products and implement a cap on emissions. This can help the consumers make an eco-friendly choice. The number of premature deaths due to outdoor air pollution is predicted to increase from three million people in 2010 to six to nine million people globally in 2060. A study shows that approximately 2.2 million schoolchildren in Delhi are growing up with irreversible lung damage. There are various community-based solutions that can help the vulnerable sections. Researchers from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) have determined which trees are capable to put up with the assault of particulate matter gaseous pollutants (nitrous oxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone) in the city's urban pockets. Such information can be used by urban planners in managing urban forests. Thus, the academic community can help find innovative solutions while communities in rural areas are made aware of the harmful effects of using traditional cooking stove. People need to follow small initiatives like "Red Light On, *Gaadi Off*" at signals, a message that has caught on a bit. In the end, this pandemic is just the immediate threat and irreversible climate change may bring about far more infectious diseases that we can barely fathom now. The brown haze has just made us sick. Unattended, it may soon choke us to death.

March for democracy

Thailand's continuous cycle of protests over the past decades shows no signs of ending



The overall impression that many outsiders have of Thailand as an idyllic, sunshine-filled tourist destination, complete with beautiful beaches, pristine reefs and a vibrant nightlife, is far from the truth. Visitors over the past decades have often noticed protestors, usually identified by the colour of their shirts, who have championed various political goals, sometimes opposing the Government, sometimes supporting it and at other times standing up for the Thai monarchy and what not. Some protests became so volatile and violent that normal life and tourism, the lifeblood of Thailand, was impacted. However, the current movement for democracy has taken

on a completely new hue because the protestors, who have no overall leader, are not only asking for the removal of the current military oligarchy that runs the country but are also demanding monarchical reforms. Thailand is famous for its *lese majeste* laws, yet there appears to be significant anger against the actions of the new king, Maha Vajiralongkorn, who succeeded his father late King Bhumibol Adulyadej in 2017.

Although the past 15 years have been defined by political protests, events took an unusual turn in August, when a few students at a rally aired unprecedented criticism of the monarchy. The speakers boldly criticised the wealth accumulated by King Vajiralongkorn, his influence and also the fact that he spends much of his time in Germany. Among their calls were a greater oversight of royal budgets and an end to the practice of endorsing military coups by Thai monarchs. Shorn of the significant tourist income, thanks to the Coronavirus — although Thailand and the rest of South-East Asia are exemplars in managing the pandemic — the protestors have gained a lot of support from the youth, many of whom are jobless. The willingness by the military to suspend any "threat" from political parties it feels will strip it of its importance is further fuelling the anger. Will the protestors succeed? That depends on how much change the old Siamese Kingdom is willing to accept. Some of the demands are rather strong but it is important that proper democracy is restored in Thailand and that the monarch deals with some of the issues raised by his subjects, many of which stem from the high levels of secrecy that surround the palace and stories about the colourful past life of the king.

opinion08

What makes Bengal unique?

It is politically very different from the Hindi heartland States as the people are Bengali first and everything else, including religion, comes later



PRAFULL GORADIA

The clash between BJP party workers and the police on the west side of the Hooghly river on October 8 was not unusual for West Bengal politics. But such clashes should not be taken as a measure of the State's political ethos. The BJP is seeking to capture this bastion of the east but its leaders rue that since the unfortunate passing away of Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee in 1953, Bengal has not produced a single leader who particularly cared for the Hindus. That's because the State has always prided its cultural identity over the religious one.

Also, there was nothing concrete done for the Hindu refugees of East Bengal post-Partition and it was pretty much left to the State to handle the fallout. Instead of helping them out, the then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, wrote several times to Chief Minister Bidhan Roy in this vein. To quote from the PM's letter, dated August 16, 1948, "There is no reasonable solution of the problem if there is a large influx from East Bengal. That is why I have been terribly anxious throughout to prevent this, whatever might happen... I think that it was a very wrong thing for some of the Hindu leaders of East Bengal to come to West Bengal." On August 22, Nehru wrote another letter and I am quoting only a highlight: "If that (crossover) happened on a mass scale it would be a disaster of the first magnitude. I shudder at the prospect." When Nehru tried similar arm-twisting in Punjab, it was reported that his life was threatened.

Ironically, in the years before the Partition and for a while thereafter, the Congress was known as a Hindu party. All this goodwill drowned in the rivers of Bengal. The beneficiaries of the refugee voters in the following decades were the communist parties, who had actively supported the Partition. The Jana Sangh, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Hindu Mahasabha tried hard to be of help to the refugees but in Bengal of that time, they had very few workers and fewer resources. They were completely overshadowed by the communists. What a paradox! One-third of the refugee voters became the eventual votebank of the Left Front. The sun virtually set on the Bengal Congress in 1977 over four decades ago.

For a couple of general elections,



the Hindu Mahasabha won four MLA seats but only in Bankura district. The Jana Sangh and its allies could win little electoral support. Nor could they field a single popular leader since the death of Dr SP Mookerjee. It is true that Professor Haripada Bharati was a respected person but he was not a vote puller. For this, the substantial reason lies in his Bengali genius as well as the kindness of his heart. And this is something that the BJP needs to understand.

Whether Christian, Muslim or Hindu, the people in this State are Bengali first and everything else, including religion, comes later. For example, to illustrate this contention, the national anthem of Bangladesh is a song written by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. Reportedly, the finest singer of Rabindra *sangeet* today is the Dhaka-based Rezwana Choudhury Bannya, who wears a sari and a *tika*. Religion does not inhibit her, like many other Muslim women in Bangladesh.

The root of the Bangladesh liberation movement was language more than anything else. In February 1948, *Qaid-e-Azam* Muhammad Ali Jinnah visited Dhaka for the first time and happened to address university students. He asserted that Pakistan would have one national language and that was Urdu. When the audience asked, "what about

Bengali? We are the majority in Pakistan," Jinnah was provoked to counter them. He asked them if Bengalis of East Pakistan had any notable exploits or achievements to their credit. The response to this was the first agitation on the streets of Dhaka. Before long, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of Bangladesh's current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, resigned from the Muslim League, inaugurated the Awami League and led the movement for the assertion of East Bengal and its eventual secession from what was the initial Aligarh dream of not only a Muslim homeland but also a new *Medina*.

The abolition of the Caliphate in 1924 by Mustafa Kamal Pasha, the great moderniser of Turkey, was a big blow to the *momins* of Sunni Islam. The scholars at Aligarh University wanted Pakistan to throw up a new Caliph. But the East Bengalis were not a party to these dreams. In fact, in 1946-47, Fazlur Rahman, who was the Chief Minister of the eastern wing for a few years and a popular peasant leader, and Abdul Rahim, were negotiating with Sarat Chandra Bose, *Netaji* Subhas Chandra Bose's elder brother, for a united Bengal as the third dominion after Independence. The other two dominions would have been Hindustan and

Pakistan. Most of the Muslims in Bangladesh were converted by *maulvis*, who in turn had settled in Chittagong for generations. These Muslim clergymen had accompanied Arab traders since the 11th century. Except for being formally Muslims, the inhabitants of the then east Pakistan remained culturally Bengali. Many of them wore *dhotis* and the women mostly dressed in saris. Incidentally, even in Kolkata, Hindu gentlemen wore *lungis* at home.

When referring to their fellow Muslims, the Bengali *bhadralok* often called them "*bechara Musalman*." The explanation was that the richer Hindus had exploited and socially discriminated against the Muslims, especially in the villages. To the extent, when they were invited for dinner to a Hindu wedding, they had to clear their own *thalis* and often clean them as well. The servants served only the Hindu guests. In any case, most Muslims in East Bengal were treated like serfs by the Hindu *zamindars*. They never dared to describe Hindus as *kafirs* even when talking among themselves. Most of the offenders who abducted Hindu girls and created trouble to chase out Hindu property owners during Partition were those who had come from outside and settled in Bengal.

Even today, it isn't difficult to

recognise the difference between the locals and the once outsiders. For instance, Khwaja Nazimuddin, the second Prime Minister of Pakistan, belonged to a family of settlers whereas Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was a local ethnic Bengali, as is his daughter. But Khaleda Zia, the previous Prime Minister, clearly appears to be from a settler family.

One cannot deny an undercurrent of Hindu-Muslim differences regardless of what I have described above. The word *Hindutva* was believed to have been first used in a writing in 1863 by Raj Narayan Bose, the maternal grandfather of Sri Aurobindo. The Anushilan Samiti was founded in Bengal as was Hindu Mela. Similarly, whenever a Muslim thinks of a Bengali Hindu and his socio-economic superiority, he resents him. He expresses his resentment by being more Muslim than normally so. Otherwise, he looks upon the Hindu as a fellow Bengali. He does swing between using *akash paatal* and *asmaan zameen* (heaven and earth), as has been noticed in Bangladeshi media. Given this backdrop, it is clear that West Bengal is politically very different from say, the Hindi heartland States.

(The writer is a well-known columnist and an author. Views expressed are personal)

SOUNDBITE

I expect that the South, the North and the international community will leap over obstacles through dialogue and trust and broaden peace from the Korean Peninsula to Northeast Asia.

South Korean President
—Moon Jae-in



The Kerala Government and the CPI-M have been trying their best to thwart the present probe by various national agencies but nothing can prevent it from going forward.

Union Minister
—V Muraleedharan



The Indian Army has been successful in addressing several challenges to the security and sovereignty of this country since Independence.

Defence Minister
—Rajnath Singh



I have seen the current U-16 team and I believe that they are better than us and if they keep performing the way they have been, then they can qualify for the (U-17) World Cup.

Footballer
—Vikram Partap Singh



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Cold-blooded murder

Sir — Amid the nationwide uproar over the rape-murder of a 19-year-old Dalit girl from Hathras, we were shocked by the news of a 21-year-old student, who was shot dead in broad daylight in Haryana's Ballabgarh by her stalkers. This led to a massive outrage in Faridabad with people demanding speedy justice. The woman, a BCom final year student, was seen coming out of Aggarwal College after appearing for an exam when the incident took place on October 26. After launching a manhunt, the police was successful in arresting both the culprits.

The victim's family members have alleged that one among them had been harassing their daughter and that they had withdrawn the complaint filed against him in 2018 to protect her name. A CCTV footage of the murder has surfaced with the visuals showing the perpetrator getting out of the car and pulling out his revolver. After firing, an aide of the assailant is seen pulling him back in the car. They then fled the scene. The State Government should look into the case and ensure swift

Young voters to seal Nitish Kumar's fate

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is facing a strong anti-incumbency. That's why the ongoing Assembly elections are being billed as a referendum on his performance, especially since his third stint has been a pale shadow of the first two. His image took a severe beating with the lockdown and the hardships faced by the returnee migrants. The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), which Nitish ditched to realign with the BJP in 2017, has been quick to cash in on the palpable anger on the streets. The main Opposition party has propelled the development deficit and unemployment as key election issues, but translating the momentum into votes is what counts. The Lok Janashakti Party (LJP) has further muddied waters by fielding candidates against Nitish's party, making things even harder for the latter.

The caste arithmetic and shifting alliance configurations are a hallmark of Bihar elections, a robust political battlefield, but with historically a low voter turnout. The turnout would be of particular concern for every party this time, given the pandemic threat. With



7.3 crore voters, the Bihar election is not only the first major electoral exercise in India since the COVID outbreak but also the largest in the world so far. For the Election Commission, its successful conduct would itself count as a remarkable achievement.

N Sadhasiva Reddy
Bengaluru

The Oxford vaccine

Sir — British drugmaker AstraZeneca has stated that the Oxford vaccine triggers similar immune response or immunogenicity among both the elderly and the young. It also triggers lower adverse responses or reactivity among the older people. Hopefully, it will accelerate the process of developing a viable

vaccine against the Coronavirus. The Oxford vaccine or AZD1222 vaccine is made from a common cold virus found in chimpanzees with spike glycoprotein, a genetic material from SARS-CoV-2 added to it. The vaccine uses a modified version of the virus to deliver genetic instructions to the cells to induce an immune response against the causative agent of COVID-19.

The publication of the data collated from the large-scale third phase trial for review has to precede the approval for large-scale manufacture and roll-out of the vaccine for use among the general population. Developing a vaccine is indeed a time-consuming process. A vaccine that works for people of all ages across the globe is needed to win the battle against the pandemic and return to some measure of normality. It seems that the Oxford vaccine is nearing the finishing line.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

Importance of BECA

Sir — India and the US have signed the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for geospatial cooperation, which will strengthen the military partnership between the two countries. Washington can now share advanced satellite and topographical data for long-range navigation and missile-targeting with New Delhi.

M Pradyu
Kannur

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Armenia in for major trouble

Now the Azeri refugees will go home and 1,50,000 Armenians will have to seek new homes in Armenia proper



GWYNNE DYER

The month-old war between Azerbaijan and Armenia is so low on everybody else's list of concerns that when Azerbaijan won the war, hardly anybody in the media elsewhere even noticed. Shortly after 8 am local time on October 26, Azeri troops gained control of the road through the Lachin Pass. That is the sole land route between Armenia proper and Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian enclave inside the borders of Azerbaijan that the whole war is about. A new road further to the north, offering a quicker link between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, was opened in 2017, but it has been closed since October 1, shortly after the war started, "for the safety of civilians (i.e. because of shelling from Azerbaijani territory). Until October 26, the Lachin road was crowded with Armenian refugees fleeing west to safety and Armenian troops and military supplies heading east to the war.

Apart from one or two big strikes by Israeli-made LORA quasi ballistic missiles (hypersonic, 400-km. range, GPS and television terminal guidance), the road was fairly safe. But now there are Azerbaijani armoured vehicles across the Lachin road, and all of Nagorno-Karabakh is cut off. No more reinforcements, and more than half the Armenian civilian population of 1,46,000 people still there, trapped under constant shellfire and drone attacks. At least 2,000 people, most of them Armenians, have been killed in the fighting. The outcome of the war was inevitable once it became clear that Russia was not going to intervene militarily to help Armenia, despite the fact that both countries are members of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO). Azerbaijan is clearly the aggressor in this round of fighting, but it is a CSTO member too, so Russia had to make a choice. Azerbaijan has three times Armenia's population and a great deal of oil, and Armenia is of no great strategic value, so Russia restricted itself to mediating futile ceasefires. The Azeris signed each time, but they knew they were winning and they never stopped their advance.

The most recent (third) ceasefire was actually negotiated with the help of the US and was supposed to come into effect at 8 am on October 26, but the Azeris broke that one too. As usual, they blamed the Armenians for having broken it within five minutes of its coming into effect (that is, at 8.05 am) — but they tweeted their protest at 5 am, which rather undermined its plausibility. The Azeris did not commit to an all-out offensive until about 10 days ago, confining themselves to probing attacks and random shelling until they were certain that the Russians would stay out. Then they sent an armoured column west along the Iranian border through territory that had been emptied of its Azeri inhabitants in the 1994 war. The Armenians, outnumbered, overstretched and outgunned, did what they could, but by October 22, the Azeris had reached the Hakari River valley. There they turned right and headed north up the valley — and on the 26th they took Lachin. End of game.

It was a move that they would never have risked against a more mobile and better equipped enemy. The Hakari runs through the narrow strip of territory that separates Nagorno-Karabakh from Armenia proper, so they had Armenian-held territory on both sides of them, and a 100-km supply line behind them that was overlooked by Armenian troops on the right-hand side all the way. Fortune favours the bold but it's easier to be bold when you have total air superiority. Armenia has nothing to match Azerbaijan's Turkish-built drones and Israeli-supplied missiles and massive firepower on the ground. So now Azerbaijan holds the Lachin Pass, and all that remains is for Armenia to negotiate the return of Nagorno-Karabakh to its legal Azeri rulers (probably minus its Armenian residents). That will be very painful for Armenians after a quarter-century of holding the territory but they have no way of taking it back. They were bound to lose it in the end unless they could more or less match Azerbaijan's military spending, and they couldn't; the Azeri military budget was at least five times bigger, maybe more.

Like the Balkan wars of the early 20th century, nobody is in the right in the various wars that have been waged in the Caucasus since the old Soviet Union collapsed. The ethnic groups were already numerous and hopelessly intertwined, and Soviet policy deliberately made the situation even more complex.

The Armenians drove over half a million Azeris out of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and large adjacent entirely Azeri provinces in the 1992-94 war. Now the Azeri refugees will go home and 1,50,000 Armenians will have to seek new homes in Armenia proper. With supply lines severed, civilians in Nagorno-Karabakh could be cut off from food, running water and heat during the forthcoming Caucas winter. Furthermore, they may be denied a route by which to flee to Armenia. The result could be a humanitarian disaster in which casualties of trapped civilians spike due to lack of food and medical supplies, exposure to cold, and non-stop artillery bombardment. None of it is fair but that's how it still works in much of the world.

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

I WILL NOT CONTEST ELECTIONS OR HOIST THE TRICOLOUR UNTIL THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES ENFORCED ON AUGUST 5 ARE ROLLED BACK.

—PDP CHIEF
MEHBOOBA MUFTI

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



THE NATION AND THE NATIONAL FLAG COME FIRST, AFTER THAT COME STATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES. THE NATIONAL FLAG IS OUR IDENTITY.

—PDP REBEL
HUSSAIN A WAFFA

Dragon unscathed

Despite the severe fall in world trade and a strong anti-China sentiment, thus far it is business as usual, at least in the short run, for Beijing



DIPALI YADAV



SHUBHAM KUMAR

The world economy has witnessed a turbulent time ever since the pandemic began in December 2019. Leading economies like the US, Australia and the UK had directed a lot of anger and censure against China for the economic and humanitarian crises it had triggered. The global rumblings made it clear that the trade from China would come under wider sanctions and the world would seek alternatives in other export powerhouses. Plus, the present global order would lean towards a multi-polar world.

The estimates published by the *Trade Map* reveal that despite such assertions and a seemingly sturdy worldwide dissent, exports from China showed remarkable resilience. Comparing the monthly Chinese exports data from December 2019 (the pre-pandemic level) to that of July this year, *Trade Map* shows that overall exports seamlessly resumed the pre-pandemic level. The data nevertheless uncovers how variegated were the retorts of economies to the Chinese export basket during the global crisis.

Figure 1 shows that out of the 20 largest importers, that comprise just about three-quarters of total Chinese exports, nine importers have already surpassed the pre-pandemic level. That includes the US, Australia and the UK. The three economies which are far from the pre-pandemic level are India, Indonesia and Singapore. The remaining are struggling but within a 10 per cent range of their pre-pandemic level. Figure 2 relooks at these numbers on the basis of year-over-year change in Chinese exports. Most of the importing countries, including all the nine importers who surpassed the pre-pandemic level, and Vietnam, Malaysia, Russia and Singapore perform better than the global average. In this case as well, India and Indonesia perform way below average. These numbers should be put in the present context of slowing down of the world economy and wavering of international trade. Except for China, no other major economy has shown a positive Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate in the second quarter (Q2 April-June) of this year as per data published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Of all these, the two worst-hit economies are the UK and India. From the available data in *Trade Map*, we found that the UK, the US, Germany and France have nearly hit their pre-pandemic level in total imports. However, for India, as the figures from the Ministry of Commerce suggest, the total imports of July are still lower than that of December 2019. A strict nationwide lockdown (causing demand distress and sluggish supply), and a raging contagion are the main reasons for such results. Interestingly, the relative rise of Chinese imports is steeper than the overall imports for India. The maximum buoyancy for imports, including Chinese imports, is shown by the UK, despite a severe contraction in the quarter-on-quarter GDP growth.

So, are there "green shoots" all over for Chinese exports? Two economies — South Korea and Indonesia — tend to suggest differently. In terms of their GDP growth rate, they are among the least-affected major economies in the pandemic-induced contraction. For Indonesia, whether in terms of attaining the pre-pandemic level or year-over-year growth, imports from China fall short significantly. For South Korea, Chinese imports remain short of the pre-pandemic level but exceed the year-over-year imports. Again, these results should not be a big concern for China as similar to India, Chinese imports for these two economies are also increasing faster than overall imports.

How did China manage to resume its exports

“THE COSTS AND GESTATION PERIOD OF BRINGING SYSTEMIC CHANGES WERE HUGE AND THE ABILITY TO MAKE THOSE ADJUSTMENTS WAS WEAKENED BY THE CORONA-INDUCED WOES. HOWEVER, THE INCREASING COSTS OF THE PANDEMIC AND MORE FOCUS ON EQUITY, ENVIRONMENT AND GLOBAL HEALTH MAY LEAD TO FURTHER IMPLICATIONS IN THE DYNAMICS BETWEEN CHINA AND THE WORLD IN THE LONG RUN”

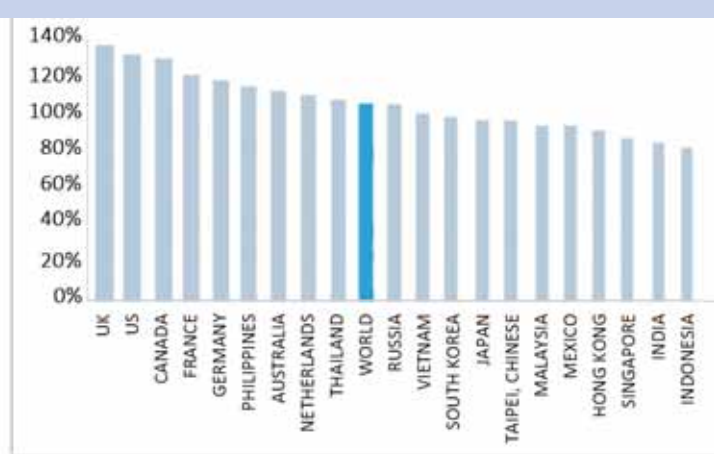


Figure 1: Chinese imports in July 2020 compared to December 2019

Source: *Trade Map, International Trade Centre*

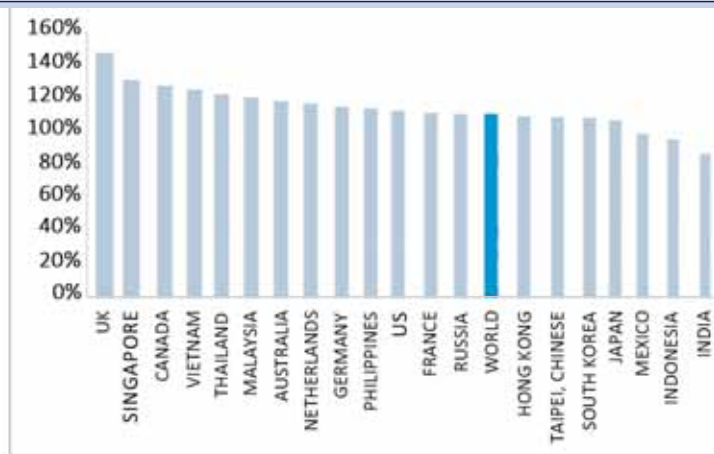


Figure 2: Chinese imports in July 2020 compared to July 2019

Source: *Trade Map, International Trade Centre*

and what are those products? To answer these questions, we explored the trends in the export basket over a one-year period. At the outset, let us see the usual suspects that are driven by the upsurge in global demand and are mostly relating to consumer durables and essentials in the pandemic times. Mechanical appliances like air conditioners and refrigerators; electronic goods like televisions and medical equipment like ventilators and surgical instruments sustained decent overall growth. Their share in total exports increased from 45 per cent to 47 per cent during the year. Nevertheless, the biggest winners were apparel, toys, chemicals and pharmaceutical products.

In particular, exports of textile articles like rugs, curtains and kitchen linen more than tripled this year. Similarly, toys, right from dolls, figurines and pedal cars to video game consoles, too, registered a big boost. Exports of miscellaneous chemical products, including laboratory-based and industry-based chemicals, showed a consistent and significant growth. Meanwhile, the decline in world trade marks a nearly one-fourth drop overall by the end of Q2 this year. Thus, there are some "brown shoots" visible in the Chinese exports, too, as the nation is facing the brunt of the global downturn in some of its key sectors. The worst-hit sectors are agri-food products, footwear,

leather, metals, minerals and the transportation industry. While there is somewhat stable world trade in agri-food products, it has not been the case for China. Whether it is fruits, nuts, meat, seafood or foodgrains, exports have slowed down significantly with the exceptions of dairy produce, tea, coffee and spices.

This decline in food exports is the result of increased trade barriers, the Corona outbreak and supply chain disruptions, along with shifting consumer preferences. The sluggishness in the metals and minerals industry comes from weakened industrial activities worldwide. The headwinds in all the sub-sectors of the transportation industry, including automotive, railways, shipping and aircraft, are due to the restricted community mobility because of the lockdown, and the slowing down of economic activities in many countries that led to limited spending on capital-intensive goods.

So, is this fall in export of agri-food products and other goods pandemic-induced? The answer is that the contagion is just part of the reason. A glimpse at the year-over-year trend of these products indicates that the exports for many of these products were already slowing down due to the trade wars and a mounting protectionist regime globally. The outbreak just further accelerated this decline.

Despite the severe fall in world trade and a strong anti-China sentiment, thus far it is business as usual, at least in the short run. Factors such as "first in, first out" from the pandemic, which exclusively enabled China to ramp up production for COVID-19 essentials, along with various comparative advantages such as scale production, technology and higher global exposure, impeded immediate changes. The costs and gestation period of bringing systemic changes were huge and the ability to make those adjustments was weakened by the Corona-induced woes. However, the increasing costs of the pandemic and more focus on equity, environment and global health may lead to further implications in the dynamics between China and the world in the long run. Amid all these dramatic changes, particularly in the context of India's socio-economic difficulties since March, we can't but help think of the "Ides of March." In our case they have come ... but not gone.

(Yadav and Kumar are Research Scholars at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi and Indian Institute of Management, Shillong, respectively.)

Innovative farming needed to combat climate change

Food production is critical to keep the wheels of the economy turning. We must not allow climate change to hijack our food security



KOTA SRIRAJ

The rapidly worsening condition of the environment is increasingly creating harsh terms for agriculture in India. The sudden floods, such as those experienced by Telangana last week, and unexpected droughts in many areas coupled with a sheer drop in yield per acre are creating financial havoc for the farming community. Moreover, the recently-passed farm Acts have added to the woes of the already burdened growers. Farmers have become unsure of the future, especially regarding the produce and how

the MSP (Minimum Support Price) will be impacted due to the entry of big players and whether the Government will continue to buy farm produce at the same price and quantity as before.

With the only means of voicing their concern being protests, the growers have of late tried to convey their feelings and insecurities regarding the Acts through demonstrations in Delhi, Punjab and other parts of the country. Sadly, their outcry has fallen on deaf ears till now. This muted response from the Government has now increased the farming community's distress. This angst is expected to reach a crescendo in November when the agricultural community is planning to scale up the protests.

Already, the country's farm sector is besieged by chronic problems such as mounting debt, poor quality seeds and overuse of pesticides besides the vagaries of the environment. However, being a hardy community and the spine of the Indian economy, the farmers have always fought their way

through hurdles. The challenges thrown up by the environment in the form of rising temperatures and erratic rainfall, too, need to be met and responded to by the growers effectively and innovatively. The Government must enable farmers to deal with this instead of giving the impression of being callous about their welfare.

As politics rages over the Acts, worrisome developments are escaping the attention of policy-makers and the authorities concerned. A decade-wise observation of rainfall patterns shows that from October to December, rainfall has been at a record low of 100.06 mm for the 2010-2019 period as compared to 106.29 mm during the similar period in 2000-2010. The average post-monsoon rainfall has fallen below 110 mm. Coupled with this, droughts are getting more frequent and prolonged each year. Mid-2018 saw heatwaves fanning across India followed by scanty rainfall in the same year and in 2019 as well. These circumstances exacerbated the already daunting challenges



for farmers, who had to bend over backwards to take the yield out of the parched land.

The adverse impact of the worsening environment on agriculture cannot be reversed overnight but the lot of the farmers cannot be allowed to deteriorate further as well. Therefore,

there is an urgent need to innovate and evolve agricultural methods and initiatives that are capable of rescuing them from the grip of climate change. There is also a need to provide a sustainable solution that can be amplified across the sector on a large scale. An example of how this turnaround can be affected is available in a study published in the journal *Earth System Science*.

The research focussed on rice crops, which are the mainstay of South India's agriculture. Rice also happens to be a major part of the diet of the southern population. The study concentrated on how the rise in temperatures, followed by scanty rainfall, was impacting the rice yield in Kerala, which was the chosen field of observation. The participants, who included experts from Japan, recommended altering the varieties of rice to a more heat-resistant strain that could withstand the fluctuating temperatures and yet be resilient enough to deliver an adequate crop yield. The experts also opined that the traditional sowing time

needs to be shifted in consonance with the changing weather patterns so that the crop is in tandem with the weather trends. They recommended sowing at the end of July or the beginning of August in order to improve the quality of crop and provide ideal crop maturity time.

The study is an essential tool that provides baseline observations for ensuring future crop planning and maximising yield that accounts for climate variables, maximum and minimum temperatures, rainfall and solar radiation. The fact that the study was able to assess future crop yield projection amid constant carbon dioxide and meteorological values is crucial.

Furthermore, the tool of Growing Degree Days (GDD) incorporated into the study helped provide robust outcomes and observations. For the uninitiated, GDD is a measure to estimate the growth and development of plants in the growing season. The study was conducted using the CERES-Rice Cropping System Model.

The importance of agricultural adaptation to climate change in the current period cannot be stressed enough as food security and nutrition levels have been compromised exponentially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. India accounts for 17.7 per cent of the world's population and a failure of the agricultural system in the form of yield and quality deterioration at this critical juncture can present a catastrophic scenario. The multiple challenges posed by the environment, policy issues and the long-standing systemic glitches can spell disaster for the agri sector. Unless the writing on the wall is understood and deciphered in time, India may be staring at a food crisis post the COVID-19 outbreak.

Food production is critical to keep the wheels of the economy turning. We mustn't allow climate change to hijack our food security. This is only possible by being a step ahead of climate change complications.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)

AMID MASSIVE SELL-OFF Investors' wealth tumbles by ₹1.56L crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Investors' wealth plunged by ₹1.56 lakh crore on Wednesday as markets witnessed a massive sell-off amid muted global sentiments.

The 30-share BSE Sensex plummeted 599.64 points or 1.48 per cent lower to end the day at 39,922.46 points.

During the day, the index plunged 747.5 points to 39,774.60.

Following the selloff in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies dropped by ₹1,56,739.58 crore to ₹1,58,22,119.75 crore.

"Markets traded under pressure and lost over a per cent. After the flat start, the benchmark gradually inched lower amid muted global sentiments due to rising cases in US and Europe," Ajit Mishra, VP (Research) at Religare



Broking Ltd, said.

IndusInd Bank was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, declining 3.45 per cent, followed by HDFC, ICICI Bank, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance and HDFC Bank.

BSE bankex, finance and metal indices fell up to 2.28 per cent while telecom and capital goods indices climbed as much as 2.90 per cent.

In the broader market, the BSE mid-cap and small-cap indices dipped up to 0.93 per cent.

New National Retail Trade Policy in final stages: Minister

ANS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is in the final stages of preparing a new National Retail Trade Policy, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Som Parkash said on Wednesday.

"We are in the final stage of drafting a National Logistics Policy, a New Industrial Policy, a e-commerce Policy and a National Retail Trade policy," he said at the inaugural virtual session of 'FICCI MASS-MERIZE 2020'.

The national retail trade policy is being formulated to support the development of the sector that will benefit 65 million small traders, besides contributing a significant chunk to India's GDP, he added.

Parkash said that the government will extend all support to the e-commerce and retail industry through various policies.

The minister also urged the industry to come forward and contribute towards making India

Atmanirbhar in every possible way and to elevate the country's image globally.

Parkash said that Covid-19 has had an impact on the people, economy and the businesses, but the industry has worked along with the government to contain the spread of the virus.

He also said that the government has already launched a series of programmes to transform India into a global economic hub.

"In the last few years, we have seen significant improvements in ease of doing business ranking, which has been possible due to transformative measures taken by the govern-



ment," he said.

Imported onion likely to ease prices in city wholesale market



PTI ■ KOLKATA

The skyrocketing onion prices in The retail market are likely to ease as imported bulbs have put a break, at least temporarily, on the rise in wholesale prices in Kolkata, officials said on Wednesday.

National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (Nafed) has also offloaded a large portion of its buffer stock of onion, which too helped in containing the price rise, they said.

Since the last few weeks, onion prices have remained northbound after crop loss in south India due to incessant rain. The retail price of the bulb had crossed Rs 90 a kg in Kolkata.

"Wholesale prices at Posta market have come down to Rs

55-60 a kg from a high of Rs 67.50 a few days ago. Some parcels of onion from Afghanistan and Egypt have arrived in the wholesale market which helped ease the price," agri analyst Sibul Malakar said.

Officials said that Nafed had created a buffer stock of 1 lakh tonne this year to manage onion prices. It is almost double that of the previous year.

According to reports, Nafed had already released 43,000 tonne from the buffer stock and another 22,000 tonne will be offloaded in the first week of November.

Rabindranath Kole, a member of the West Bengal governments task force on agriculture, said that the price of onion would remain firm till December.

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY50	11922.60	11929.40	11684.85	11729.60	-159.8
BHARTIARTL	446	488	442	447.75	14.4
UPL	440.35	454.5	437.5	450.5	11.95
M&M	599	613	594.2	605	7.85
EICHERMOT	2125.45	2146.35	2100.50	2142.00	23.75
HEROMOTOCO	2995.00	3035.00	2930.35	2938.90	26.95
IT	989.95	994.65	974.2	986	4.05
WIPRO	335.75	339.85	334.4	335	0.95
MARUTI	7,194.95	7,332.00	7,110.00	7,173.00	14.6
BAJAJFINSV	5678.00	5,743.00	5,605.00	5,670.20	2.95
IOC	78.1	78.35	77.1	78	-0.1
HDFCLIFE	590.75	594.8	583.65	586	-1.3
SBILIFE	777	778.2	766	772.55	-1.9
HINDUNILVR	2,183.95	2,183.95	2,144.10	2,156.90	-5.8
SELENIA	2,650.00	2,655.95	2,606.00	2,619.50	-10.65
AXISBANK	510.8	517.5	499.5	505.9	-2.2
BAJAJ-AUTO	2,947.00	2,967.00	2,890.20	2,932.90	-14.45
ONGC	67.25	67.4	66.1	66.5	-0.35
CPIA	771.4	780	762.15	766	-4.25
DIVISLAB	3,159.75	3,210.90	3,110.00	3,138.70	-18.15
POWERGRID	174.55	174.55	171.55	172.5	-1
TATAMOTORS	139	143.25	133.5	134.75	-0.9
GRASIM	789.7	789.7	773.05	773.6	-5.5
BRITANNIA	3,572.20	3,599.80	3,524.95	3,545.00	-27.25
BPCL	348.25	349.6	342.45	345.5	-3.15
ITC	168.5	168.5	165	165.5	-1.7
TITAN	1,231.80	1,241.00	1,185.35	1,218.00	-13.8
JSWSTEEL	309.95	315.15	304	305.5	-3.45
INFY	1,095.50	1,104.75	1,070.05	1,077.50	-13.35
RELIANCE	2,041.80	2,057.70	2,007.40	2,008.90	-25.6
NESTLEIND	17,150.00	17,295.00	16,934.00	17,022.00	-227.85
COTILINDIA	113.95	114	112.4	112.4	-1.55
GAIL	84.95	84.95	82.8	83	-1.2
ASIANPAINT	2,199.80	2,218.55	2,150.15	2,161.10	-33.35
SUNPHARMA	473	475.75	461.4	462.2	-8.25
HDFCBANK	1,228.00	1,232.00	1,201.50	1,210.30	-22.8
KOTAKBANK	1,575.00	1,575.00	1,541.00	1,556.00	-31.65
HCLTECH	852	852	821.6	829.9	-17.35
NTPC	89.45	90.65	87.5	87.55	-1.9
SBI	195	195	189.05	190.5	-4.15
TATASTEEL	411.45	418.2	405.45	401.8	-9.2
HINDALCO	174.45	177.1	169.25	170.45	-4
SHREFFANCE	21,560.20	21,788.00	21,231.20	21,231.20	-903.15
RAJINDRA	3,485.95	3,489.90	3,347.90	3,372.00	-81.25
ULTRACEMCO	4,593.90	4,593.90	4,453.00	4,456.55	-110.4
TECHM	830	836.45	801	805.25	-22.95
ICICIBANK	409	409.9	394.8	397.25	-12.9
ADANIPORTS	363	370	352	353	-11.4
INDUSINDBK	614.5	619.95	586.1	594.5	-19.5
DREDDY	5,110.00	5,130.00	4,920.00	4,935.00	-164.4
HDFC	2,045.00	2,045.00	1,965.00	1,969.10	-72.25

NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	27,560.00	27,577.00	27,197.15	27,236.20	-225.95
ADANIGREEN	776.85	776.85	776.8	776.85	36.95
DMART	2,197.00	2,249.00	2,175.00	2,236.00	59.8
MARICO	353.2	365.35	349.85	364.5	8
SIEMENS	1,266.55	1,294.00	1,249.00	1,285.65	19.1
HAVELLS	726	731.7	715.35	729	4.55
BAJAJHLNG	2,275.00	2,307.45	2,244.25	2,275.00	9.8
PGHL	10,444.95	10,444.95	10,247.80	10,413.00	24.45
ALKEM	2,694.95	2,694.95	2,652.00	2,685.00	5.7
COLPAL	1,540.00	1,559.80	1,521.05	1,540.00	-2.55
HDFCAMC	2,301.00	2,304.95	2,270.00	2,290.00	-5.4
LTI	2,915.00	2,948.80	2,874.60	2,890.00	-8.75
PIDILITIND	1,528.00	1,546.00	1,512.00	1,520.05	-5.95
BERGEPAINT	613	625.3	603.8	604.4	-3.95
SBICARD	818.65	819.8	807	808.8	-5.4
IGL	409	413.8	404.4	406.4	-2.8
NAUKRI	3,576.00	3,653.95	3,500.10	3,552.00	-25.8
GODREJCP	689.35	691.5	682.85	680.05	-5.3
HINDPETRO	173.5	175.8	171.35	171.85	-1.7
ICICIPRULI	421.2	422.15	403.45	408	-4.2
ICICI	1,255.00	1,255.00	1,228.05	1,236.00	-12.9
OFSS	3,234.00	3,234.00	3,155.00	3,185.25	-33.35
DABUR	523.15	526	515.4	517.7	-5.5
GICRE	120.65	120.7	118.65	119.35	-1.3
PNB	27.45	27.65	26.95	27.05	-0.9
MCDOWELL-N	518	522.3	510.65	511.9	-6.5
TATACONSUM	501.8	504.8	489.55	492.45	-6.3
ADANITRANS	288	290.75	284.65	285.2	-3.7
CADILAC	425	427.8	416.9	417.8	-5.7
BOSCHLTD	11,875.00	12,038.20	11,642.80	11,770.00	-172.8
PEL	1,311.00	1,311.95	1,268.00	1,278.25	-20.55
UBL	915	924.5	902	903.45	-15.4
AMBIJACEM	253.85	254.7	250.35	251.25	-4.6
NMDC	82.6	83.05	80.4	81	-1.6
ABBOTINDIA	15,550.00	15,605.10	15,235.00	15,250.00	-302.4
AUROPHARMA	794.3	799.9	771.6	778.1	-16
INFRATEL	190	194.25	183.7	185	-3.85
BIOCON	411.25	416.5	405	405.1	-8.5
CONCOR	399.55	401	385.05	389	-8.2
BANKBARODA	42.8	43.2	41.65	42	-0.9
LUPIN	958	972.6	935.15	936.55	-20.7
PETRONET	237	237.05	227.2	229	-5.65
HINDZINC	215	215.75	209.05	209.05	-5.65
BANDHANBNK	298	299.35	287	288.25	-7.95
INDIGO	1,322.00	1,348.00	1,288.05	1,290.85	-35.85
TORNTPHARM	2,598.00	2,635.00	2,525.00	2,530.00	-70.35
PFC	88.1	88.6	85	85.8	-2.7
MOTHERSUMI	108.9	111.7	105.8	106.4	-3.65
ACC	1,667.55	1,680.00	1,622.10	1,627.00	-56.85
MUTHOOTFIN	1,243.70	1,254.45	1,193.80	1,199.00	-51.1
DLF	165.15	166	155.2	156.2	-8.9

BSE 500

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP	Change
RELIANCE	2044	2057.9	2006.9	2010.7	-1729.60
INDUSINDBK	617	617	586.1	592.75	-159.8
INFY	1100	1104.45	1069.6	1076.6	-159.8
BHARTIARTL	446.4	487.8	443.2	451.45	-159.8
HDFC	2041.25	2041.25	1965	1969.05	-159.8
TATAMOTORS	138.2	143.15	133.5	134.8	-159.8
TCS	2653	2656.35	2607.2	2621.75	-159.8
BAJFINANCE	3453	3488.95	3350	3370.35	-159.8
HDFCBANK	1230	1231.7	1201.35	1205.35	-159.8
HINDUNILVR	2182.5	2182.5	2144.15	2164.45	-159.8
AXISBANK	510	517.5	493.6	504.85	-159.8
MARUTI	7170	7329.75	7106.5	7182.45	-159.8
DRREDDY	5114.45	5148	4921.5	4949.8	-159.8
ADANIGREEN	776.7	776.7	765	776.7	-159.8
HEROMOTOCO	2987	3034.5	2930	2945.8	-159.8
HCLTECH	852	852	821.7	829.6	-159.8
ICICIBANK	412.5	412.5	395	396.15	-159.8
LT	985	994.85	974.15	983.65	-159.8
SBIN	195.3	195.3	189.05	190.5	-159.8
ASIANPAINT	2200	2218.2	2150.6	2159.2	-159.8
KOTAKBANK	1580	1580	1541.5	1552.2	-159.8
TITAN	1242	1242	1186	1217.9	-159.8
IDEA	8.65	9.05	8.57	8.68	-159.8
ITC	168.25	168.25	165.05	165.55	-159.8
TECHM	828.1	836	801.15	803.95	-159.8
SBICARD	817	819.9	806.8	808.7	-159.8
SUNPHARMA	472.3	475.5	461.6	463.35	-159.8
NESTLEIND	17199.95	17299.4	16937.9	17119.95	-159.8
WIPRO	335	339.45	334.45	335.6	-159.8
HDFCLIFE	590.55	594.8	584	586.4	-159.8
ULTRACEMCO	4560	4571.25	4452.95	4465.2	-159.8
M&M	599	613	594.3	603.95	-159.8
TATASTEEL	411.05	418	400.5	402.3	-159.8
FEDERALBNK	54.3	54.3	51.6	52.2	-159.8
DLF	165	165	155.3	156.1	-159.8
RBLBANK	176.05	176.65	172.7	175.65	-159.8
ASHOKLEY	81.75	83.3	79.35	80.3	-159.8
POWERGRID	174.4	174.4	171.45	172.9	-159.8
JSWSTEEL	308.2	315	304	305.7	-159.8
MRF	681.50	681.50	654.35	667.60	-159.8
DMART	2199.95	2250	2176	2239.7	-159.8
JUSTDIAL	660.3	703.75	641.1	676.25	-159.8
ESCORTS	1230.05	1261.9	1188.6	1205.55	-159.8
ULBHSNGFIN	148	148.5	141.2	143.3	-159.8
CPIA	771	779.5	762.25	765.15	-159.8
BPCL	348.3	349.5	342.6	345.55	-159.8
BAJAJ-AUTO	2945	2965	2892.05	2943.95	-159.8
JINDALSTEL	191.65	200.35	189.2	190.55	-159.8
VEDL	94.6	98.55	95.5	95.5	-159.8
CONCOR	397	400.75	385.50	397	-159.8
DEEPAKNI	745.0	745.0	715.3	715.3	-159.8
HERCHMOT	213.5	213.5	205.5	205.5	-159.8
NTPC	40	40	38.5	38.5	-159.8
B&M&FN	125.3	125.3	122.5	122.5	-159.8
PVR	109	109	105.5	105.5	-159.8
BRITANNIA	357	357	350.5	350.5	-159.8
MOTHERSUMI	109	109	105.5	105.5	-159.8
TATACONSUM	500	500	485	485	-159.8
ICAPALAB	235	235	225	225	-159.8
HINDALCO	174.2	174.2	168.5	168.5	-159.8
DISSE	167	167	160.5	160.5	-159.8
BANKBARODA	41	41	39.5	39.5	-159.8
INFRATEL	191.1	191.1	185.5	185.5	-159.8
MININDTRE	1386.0	1386.0	1355	1355	-159.8
SUZLON	39	39	37.5	37.5	-159.8
CASTROLIND	11	11	10.5	10.5	-159.8
TRANSFRANS	73	73	70.5	70.5	-159.8
PEL	1304	1304	1275	1275	-159.8
BAUHAJINSV	566	566	545	545	-159.8
SAIL	34	34	32.5	32.5	-159.8
MUTHOOTFIN	1250	1250	1215	1215	-159.8
TATAMOTDRVR	57	57	54.5	54.5	-159.8
TORNTPHARM	260	260	250	250	-159.8
SHEECEM	2160	2160	2085	2085	-159.8
PILITIND	1533	1533	1485	1485	-159.8
FREDIATL	70.55	70.55	68.5	68.5	-159.8
LUPIN	956.1	956.1	925	925	-159.8
VOLTAS	701.1	701.1	675	675	-159.8
ONGC	67.1	67.1	64.5	64.5	-159.8
DELTAACORP	11	11	10.5	10.5	-159.8
TATAPOWER	54	54	51.5	51.5	-159.8
BHARATFORG	173.95	173.95	168.5	168.5	-159.8
HINDPREFRIG	760	760	735	735	-159.8
MAHARAJASTEL	298.15	298.15	285	285	-159.8
ADANIENTH	166	166	155	155	-159.8
AXISLXSI	171.3	171.3	165	165	-159.8
BLISSGVS	147	147	140	140	-159.8
APOLLOTYRE	137	137	130	130	-159.8
NAUKRI	31.3	31.3	30.5	30.5	-159.8
DFCCFIRBT	27.45	27.45	26.5	26.5	-159.8
PNB	1528	1528	1485	1485	-159.8
COLPAL	108	108	103	103	-159.8
AUBANK	128	128	122	122	-159.8
BOSCHLT	1191	1191	1145	1145	-159.8
&THD	66.45	66.45	64.5	64.5	-159.8
BIOCON	120	120	115	115	-159.8
THYROCARE	1340	1340	1285	1285	-159.8
BALKRISIND	136.6	136.6	131	131	-159.8
ADANISAG	329.9	329.9	315	315	-159.8
LAOKTEXT	22	22	21	21	-159.8
AXISBANK	510	510	493.6	504.85	-159.8

GOP hunts for new voters in Donald Trump territory

Slippery Rock: President Donald Trump's campaign has a bold theory for how he will win reelection: It can tap a universe of millions of supporters who did not vote for him in 2016 but will do so this time. Supposedly, these voters are overlooked by polls that show Trump consistently trailing Democrat Joe Biden. They are mostly the white working class from factory towns, farms and mining communities that Trump has elevated to near-mythic status as the "forgotten Americans."

They are disaffected and disconnected from conventional politics. Yet they flock to the president's rallies, plaster their yards with signs and have been filling up voter registration rolls, the campaign insists.



In few places will this strategy be tested as in Pennsylvania, a critical state that Trump carried by only 44,292 votes out of 6.1 million cast in 2016. A Democratic surge of votes in

cities and suburbs could quickly erase that narrow lead. To hold onto Pennsylvania's 20 electoral votes, the president needs to prove that a hidden groundswell of supporters exists — and will vote.

But the math behind the theory is tight. Trump's plan requires blowout victories and historic turnout in conservative strongholds across the state, places where he outperformed traditional Republicans four years ago and he knows must do even better. His mission is made clear by his campaign stops in Pennsylvania this week — a tour through GOP areas like Latrobe, Lititz and Martinsburg, "Trump has to drive turnout," said Terry Madonna, a professor at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster who has conducted polls in the state for almost three decades. "I don't see any evidence that he's expanded his base."

The strategy is more difficult to execute given the stunning disruption wrought by the coronavirus pandemic, both in terms of a public health crisis and nationwide economic dislocation. **AP**

Trump slams media for 'blocking' alleged graft cases against Biden

Milwaukee (US): US President Donald Trump has slammed the mainstream American media and big tech companies for blocking the alleged corruption charges against his opponent Democratic challenger Joe Biden.

They have accused each other of serious corruption charges during the election campaigning, with the president alleging that Biden got USD 3.5 million from Russia and it came through Russian President Vladimir Putin because he was very friendly with the former mayor of Moscow.

Biden has denied the allegations.

Trump, before leaving for a campaign trail on Tuesday, told reporters at the White House that the mainstream media was not showing corruption against Biden.

"Nobody has ever seen anything like we're witnessing right now. I think it's a very sad time and it'll go down as a very sad era for the media and certainly for big tech (companies)."

"I think what is going on with all of those companies -- I think they've hurt themselves very badly because they've been so restrictive... when they don't want to show corruption, like you have with Biden -- that's totally corruption and everybody knows it - - and they're trying to protect, because he can make them wealthy, whereas they understand me," Trump said.

"They understand where I'm coming from. It's very unfair. Nobody has ever seen anything like it. It's not freedom of the press... it's the opposite. And, of course, the media is in the same bag," said the president. **PTI**

Turkish leaders condemn Hebdo's cartoon of Erdogan

Ankara: Turkish officials on Wednesday railed against French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo over its cover-page cartoon mocking Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and accused it of sowing "the seeds of hatred and animosity."

The cartoon could further heighten tensions between Turkey and France, which erupted over French President Emmanuel Macron's firm stance against Islamism following the beheading of a teacher who showed his class caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad for a free speech class.

The Prophet cartoons upset many in the Muslim world. But it was Erdogan who led the charge against France and questioned Macron's mental state. France then recalled its ambassador to Turkey for consultations, a first in French-Turkish diplomatic relations.

"We strongly condemn the publication concerning our president of the French magazine, which has no respect to faith, the sacred and values," Erdogan's spokesman, Ibrahim Kalin, wrote on Twitter.

Kalin said: "The aim of these publications, that are devoid of morality and decency, is to sow seeds of hatred and animosity. To turn freedom of expression into hostility towards religion and belief can only be the product of a sick mentality"

"I condemn this incorrigible French rag's immoral publication concerning our president," Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay wrote on Twitter.

"I call on the moral and conscientious international community to speak out against this disgrace."

Macron's stance sparked anti-France protests in Turkey and in other Muslim countries as well as calls for the boycott of French good. **AP**

Hundreds of Muslims hold anti-France protest in B'desh

Dhaka: Hundreds of activists from an Islamist political party protested in Bangladesh's capital on Wednesday against the French president's support of secular laws that deem caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad as protected under freedom of speech.

The protesters from the conservative Islami Oikya Jote party carried banners calling President Emmanuel Macron "the world's biggest terrorist" and burned and beat an effigy of him. They also criticised the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, saying it should condemn Macron and France. Hasina has yet to officially comment. **PTI**

Trump's campaign website briefly hacked, defaced

New York: US President Donald Trump's campaign website was briefly hacked on Tuesday, just a week before the presidential elections.

The spokesman for the Trump campaign, Tim Murtaugh, said in a statement that the website was "defaced."

"We are working with law enforcement authorities to investigate the source of the attack. There was no exposure to sensitive data because none of it is actually stored on the site. The website has been restored," Murtaugh said.

A report in The New York Times said Trump's campaign website was briefly taken over by hackers and the hack lasted less than 30 minutes.

The paper said in a screen

posted to Trump's website - donalddjtrump.Com - the hackers claimed to have compromised "multiple devices" that gave them access to the president and his relatives' most internal and secret conversations, including classified information.

The hackers also accused the Trump administration of having a hand in the origins of the coronavirus and cooperating with "foreign actors manipulating the 2020 elections."

The NYT added that the hackers appeared to be looking to generate cryptocurrency and invited visitors to donate cryptocurrency to one of two funds - "Yes, share the data" and the other labeled 'No, Do not share the data'. **PTI**

Russia submits application to WHO for Sputnik V vaccine prequalification

Moscow (PTI): Russia has submitted applications to the World Health Organisation (WHO) for accelerated registration and pre-qualification of its COVID-19 vaccine Sputnik V to make it available globally in a shorter time frame than usual procedures, according to an official statement on Wednesday.

The WHO prequalification of medicines assesses the quality, safety and efficacy of medicines. A medicinal product is included in the list of prequalified medicinal products subject to compliance with established requirements and standards of

the WHO.

The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) submitted applications to the WHO for accelerated registration and prequalification of the Sputnik V vaccine, an official statement released by the Russian embassy in New Delhi said.

In the face of the ongoing pandemic, accelerated vaccine registration under the Emergency Use Listing EUL procedure will make the Russian vaccine available globally in a shorter time frame than usual procedures and will support global efforts to prevent the coronavirus infection,

it said.

Successful prequalification will enable Sputnik V to be included in the list of medicines used by international procurement agencies and countries to guide the bulk purchasing of medicines, it said.

Kirill Dmitriev, CEO of the Russian Direct Investment Fund, said: The Russian Federation was the first in the world to register a vaccine against the COVID-19 coronavirus, Sputnik V, which was created on a safe, effective and well-studied platform of human adenoviral vectors.

Poles join nationwide strike in revolt over abortion ruling

Warsaw: People across Poland are vowing to stay off their jobs on Wednesday as part of a nationwide strike to protest a top court ruling that bans abortions in cases of congenitally damaged fetuses.

The nationwide strike comes amid a deepening standoff between angry crowds who have been taking to the streets over the ruling and Poland's deeply conservative government, which has vowed not to back down.

The constitutional court ruling last Thursday has triggered daily mass protests across this central European nation of 38 million that are exposing deep divisions in a country long a bastion of conservative Catholicism that is now undergoing rapid social transformation. Rage over the ruling, which would deny legal abortions to women even in cases where a child is sure to die upon birth, has been directed at the Roman Catholic church and

Jaroslav Kaczynski, the ruling party leader and most powerful politician in the country.

In actions unthinkable before, women entered churches on Sunday to disrupt Masses, confronted priests with obscenities and spray-painted church buildings. Kaczynski accused protesters of seeking "to destroy Poland" late Tuesday and called on his party's supporters to defend churches "at any cost." **AP**

Pak PM asks Muslim countries to make collective efforts to confront Islamophobia

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday wrote a letter to the leaders of the Muslim states, asking them to make collective efforts to confront growing trend of Islamophobia.

"The recent statements at the leadership level and incidents of desecration of the Holy Quran are a reflection of this increasing Islamophobia that is spreading in European countries where sizeable Muslim populations reside," according to the letter posted on Khan's official Twitter account.

The letter came in the wake of publication of caricatures on the Prophet in France and comments made by French President Emmanuel Macron, who defended such depictions as protected under the right to free speech. "We won't renounce the caricatures," Macron said last week.

Khan urged the leaders of the Muslim countries to "collectively take the lead in breaking this cycle of hate and extremism, which nurtures violence and even death."

The prime minister said that blasphemy against any prophet, including those of Christianity and Judaism, was not acceptable to the Muslims. **PTI**

Around the Globe

Lagos: Nigeria's army has admitted its soldiers were deployed at the Lekki Toll Plaza in Lagos where live rounds were fired last week, killing several peaceful protesters prompting global outrage.

Dubai: Iran has begun construction at its Natanz nuclear facility, satellite images released Wednesday show, just as the UN's nuclear agency acknowledged Tehran is building an underground advanced centrifuge assembly plant after its last one exploded in a reported sabotage attack last summer.

United Nations: The United States and several Western allies on Tuesday accused the Syrian government of deliberately delaying the drafting of a new constitution to waste time until presidential elections in 2021, and avoid UN-supervised voting as called for by the UN Security Council.

Ankara (Turkey): Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened Wednesday to launch a new military operation in northern Syria if Kurdish militants are not cleared from areas along its border with Syria.

Male: The US will open an embassy in Maldives, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced on Wednesday as he held talks with leadership of the strategically located island nation in the Indian Ocean, weeks after the two countries clinched a key defence cooperation agreement.

FROM PAGE 1

BIHAR VOTERS DEFY CORONA

Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora said the Election Commission was "discouraged" from holding the Bihar Assembly polls amid the Covid-19 pandemic, but the poll panel was of the view that carrying out the electoral exercise was a "leap of faith and not a leap in the dark".

In a break from the past, the CEC attended the poll panel briefing here on voter turnout in the first phase of the Bihar Assembly elections held on Wednesday. Usually, the briefing is held by the deputy election commissioners concerned. The Chief Election Commissioner and fellow election commissioners announce schedule for the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls.

"We (EC), in a way I would say, were also discouraged as to why elections are being held amid Covid. But you would recall I had said on September 25 (when Bihar poll schedule was announced) that for EC, this poll is a leap of faith and not leap in the dark," Sunil Arora said.

Another senior poll panel official later said the "projected" turnout was expected to be more than that in the 2015 Assembly polls and the Lok Sabha elections. He said of the 16 districts which went to polls in this phase, 12 were Left-wing extremist (LWE) affected.

"Out of the 12, four are considered as extreme Left-wing affected," he said, while expressing happiness at the smooth conduct of the polling exercise. Based on the terrain and inputs provided by the district authorities, poll timings were shorter in the LWE districts.

In the 2015 Assembly polls, the voter turnout in phase one was 54.94 per cent, while in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the corresponding figure was 53.54 per cent, the CEC said.

SETBACK FOR SP-BACKED INDEPENDENT; BSP SET TO SEE NOMINEE ELECTED

Mayawati's party was in alliance dur-

ing the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

The BSP had on Monday fielded Gautam, its national coordinator and Bihar in-charge for the November 9 biennial elections for the 10 Uttar Pradesh seats that are falling vacant in the Rajya Sabha.

The BSP doesn't have the numbers in the assembly to win an RS seat on its own but party leaders had indicated that it may get the support of other non-BJP parties in the state.

The four MLAs who submitted an affidavit saying their signatures were forged are Aslam Raini, Aslam Chaudhary, Mujtaba Siddiqui and Hakim Lal Bind. Along with them, two others, Hargovind Bhargava and Sushma Patel, also met the Returning Officer, Raini told reporters.

Raini and Mujtaba Siddiqui told reporters that they were unhappy with the interference of BSP coordinators. "There is no respect in the party for us. I complained about a personal problem recently to our leader Lalji Verma, but to no avail," Allahabad MLA Siddiqui said, while making clear that he had no complaints against Mayawati. Mujtaba said he has been with the party for 25 years and is a three-term MLA.

Shravasti MLA Aslam Raini said when he recently contracted coronavirus and posted a video clip from the hospital, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath came to his help and this was disliked by his own party men.

"I was in hospital and the BSP coordinators were moving about in my constituency telling people not to meet their MLA," he claimed.

"It's the same problem with all six of us. Behenji (Mayawati) is not to be blamed, but the coordinators have acted in a manner which has depressed us and we thought what is the use of remaining with such a party," the MLA said.

When asked about the future course of action, Raini said there is a general impression that SP chief Akhilesh Yadav gives respect to his party men.

There were also reports that after meeting the Returning Officer, the BSP MLAs drove to the Samajwadi Party office to meet Yadav. Later, two of them told reporters that there was no such meet-

ing.

Sushma Patel, however, admitted having met the SP chief who she claimed had called them. But she refused to elaborate.

Meanwhile, senior BSP leader and MLA Uma Shankar Singh indirectly blamed the SP for Wednesday's developments.

Singh claimed that nomination of industrialist Prakash Bajaj for the Rajya Sabha, filled just two minutes before the deadline Tuesday, was part of a conspiracy.

He said the rebels were with party workers till the morning and wondered what could have happened in a short while for them to change their minds.

They were with us all through the nomination process. We have sent the pictures of the nomination to the Returning Officer, he said, asserting that the MLAs were present when the Gautam's papers were filed.

"If they had any objection, they should have given it to the RO by Tuesday. Why now?" Singh questioned.

Everyone knows how this has happened. They cannot take such a big step without any allurements. They should tell how much they got, Singh added, insinuating horse-trading of the MLAs.

Altogether, 11 candidates, including eight from the BJP, have filed their papers for the 10 Rajya Sabha seats from Uttar Pradesh going to the polls in the biennial elections.

Given the overwhelming strength of the BJP in the UP Assembly, all eight candidates including Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, fielded by the ruling party are expected to be elected.

Of the 10 Rajya Sabha seats from Uttar Pradesh that are falling vacant, three were earlier held by the BJP, four by the SP, two by the BSP and one by the Congress.

SUSPENSION OF GLOBAL FLIGHTS EXTENDED

India has formed air bubble pacts with around 18 countries, including the US, the UK, the UAE, Kenya, Bhutan and France. Under an air bubble pact between two

countries, special international flights can be operated by their airlines between their territories.

The second wave of the rise in the coronavirus infection in various European countries has further fuelled concerns that the industry might need to wait for a substantial amount of time before returning to the pre-Covid operations.

DGCA had previously extended the suspension of all scheduled international commercial passenger flights a number of times as the spread of coronavirus infection remains unabated. In its previous order, it had extended the suspension till October 31 and in its previous to previous order, it had extended the suspension of the flights till September.

While domestic flights resumed on May 25, the Government has kept a check on international operations.

MARRYING OFF MINOR GIRLS IN DIRE STRAITS

In Chitrakoot in Uttar Pradesh an alcoholic daily wage labourer took Rs 50,000 for the marriage of his 13-year-old daughter from the boy's family. The father was unemployed. The marriage was averted by members of civil society. The girl informed the team that she was against the marriage and her father was forcibly getting her married.

There are cases too where girl agree for marriage despite knowing that child marriage is illegal.

Neetu, in Shivpuri Madhya Pradesh, was to get married on April 20. Her family is a marginalised landless poor family and lives in thatched house. Mother and younger brother of Neetu work as daily wage labourers while Neetu stays at home and takes care of household responsibility. Neetu and her brother are school dropouts. Neetu left studies to take care of disabled sister who died 2 years ago.

Her marriage was stopped after administration came to know that she was minor. Neetu told officials that she was aware that marriage was illegal but she did not oppose it as she was frightened by some of the incidence of the molestations

in the neighborhood. She said as her mother and brother go to work, she has to remain all alone at home which causes threat to her safety.

"So when the mother asked for marriage, I gave her consent," she told the officials.

Ramesh Jatav, father of 12 children including six girls in Bahraich district was reprimanded after he tried to get his 17-year-old daughter to get married forcibly. The girl was against marriage and she called up the Women Helpline for help.

"In our society it is normal for a girl to get married once she is 15 or 16 years of age. It is difficult to resist the social pressures. I have six daughters and I need to get them married at the earliest," Jatav said.

In India the legal marriage age of boys is 21 years and that of girls it is 18 years. To prevent child marriage the Government of India enacted the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 which came into effect from November 1, 2007.

(Name of girls have been changed to conceal their identity)

LAC STAND-OFF BILATERAL MATTER

The Chinese embassy in a statement here also said "boundary question is a bilateral matter" and there is "no space" for a third party to intervene.

It said the development of ties between two countries should not "infringe upon legitimate rights and interests of a third party" and should be conducive to regional peace, stability and development.

"The boundary question is a bilateral matter between China and India. The two sides have been discussing disengagement and deescalation in the border areas through diplomatic and military channels. China and India have the wisdom and ability to handle their differences properly. There's no space for a third party to intervene," it said.

China also charged the US with pitching an Indo-Pacific strategy to maintain its dominance. "The 'Indo-Pacific strategy' proposed by the US is to stir up confrontation among different groups and

blocs and to stoke geopolitical competition, in a bid to maintain the dominance of the US, organise closed and exclusive ideological cliques," the statement said.

ALL DELHI SCHOOLS TO REMAIN CLOSED

The previous highest single-day spike of 4,473 cases was recorded on September 16.

A nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 25.

While several restrictions have been eased in different 'unlock' phases, educational institutions continue to remain closed. According to 'Unlock 5' guidelines, States can take a call on reopening schools in phases.

Several States have also begun the process of reopening schools.

Earlier, schools were allowed to call students from Class 9 to 12 to school on voluntary basis from September 21.

COVID TALLY HITS 80L, ACTIVE CASES TAPER OFF

The Ministry claimed that against the global figure for infections per million is 5,552, India is reporting 5,790 cases per million population. The USA, Brazil, France, UK, Russia and South Africa are witnessing much higher numbers.

"The Covid-19 deaths per million population in India is 87, substantially lower than the world average of 148. The country's case fatality rate at present is 1.50 per cent. India continues to report a trend of steadily decreasing active cases," the Ministry claimed.

After a brief lull, Kerala has reported 8,790 new cases, including 94 health workers, taking the total count to 3.98 lakh, while the toll climbed to 1,403 with 27 more fatalities. The State had reported 5,457 cases on Tuesday and 4,287 on Monday. Three districts accounted for over 1000 cases today-- Ernakulam 1,250, the highest, followed by Kozhikode (1149) and Thrissur (1018).

TrendSlazer

Realised my height next to Big B: SRK

SHAH RUKH KHAN conducted an interactive session with fans on Twitter, answering a lot of fan queries with trademark wit. When a user asked him to share some behind the scene moments of the film *Mohabbatein*, SRK recalled filming his first scene with Amitabh Bachchan. “I remember doing the first scene with @SrBachchan and realised how short and small I am,” he quipped. SRK also spoke about how he keeps himself busy lately. “Children, workout, watch IPL (feel bad/ good),” SRK wrote. The actor is currently in the UAE to support his cricket team, KKR.

‘Ever since I can remember, I would dance on Khaike paan Banaras wala! I would dance on all the Amitabh Bachchan dance numbers and entertain everyone. My mother was a doctor. Whenever she brought over friends home, I would go to them and say ‘I want to show you a dance’, and become the centre of attraction. The aunties would clap, laugh and give me gulab jamun! I wanted to be like Mr Bachchan!’ —Divya Dutta



Rapper Yo Yo **HONEY SINGH** does not consider himself as number one in anything as he says the position is only for his fans. He says people often do not like his music initially but his tracks grow on listeners gradually. “People don’t like it in the beginning but slowly my music and songs grow, and I keep believing in that. I always try to do something different even though people understand it late. Finally people like and love it. I don’t like to call myself a rapper. I am just an entertainer,” he said.

My kids love to wrestle: Anne

Hollywood star **ANNE HATHAWAY** says her two sons Jonathan and Jack have a cute relationship. She added that the siblings love to wrestle with each other. Talking about how Jonathan is “coping” with having a younger brother, Hathaway said, “No coping, just love. Now Jack’s big enough to wrestle with, and that’s brought a new element to their relationship that’s really cute.” Hathaway shared that she was pregnant with Jack while filming her forthcoming film, *The Witches*, adding that she had to deny wearing “tight” clothes on the film’s set.



An old school soul

Actor **FATIMA SANA SHAIKH** tells **AYUSHI SHARMA** that she doesn’t understand the concept of virtual dating and modern relationships. She believes more in the idea of in-person meetings and retro romance, similar to that of her forthcoming film, *Suraj Pe Mangal Bhaari*

One could easily recall the character of Geeta Phogat from *Dangal*. The credit goes to actor Fatima Sana Shaikh, who played it with utmost sincerity, honest emotions and sheer hard work, making people believe that she is a great talent for the future. However, things turned out to be different for her than how she expected them to be. Even though she received a lot of appreciation for her role, not only from the audience but from many actors and filmmakers too, she couldn’t bag many roles post that. Fatima understood, unlike many other young artists, that one big banner film could not always turn out to be your big break in Bollywood. And just like her reel self, she never gave up in her real life too. She stayed patient in her approach towards getting roles and only took the ones she wanted to play on the big screen. One such character is that of Tushi aka Tina in *Suraj Pe Mangal Bhaari* alongside actors Manoj Bajpayee and Diljit Dosanjh. The film, directed by Abhishek Sharma, is a slice-of-life story of a young man Suraj (played by Diljit) trying to find a life partner. As luck would have it, Suraj’s plans are interrupted by Mangal (played by Manoj) and the two find themselves caught in a chase. Here are the excerpts of the interview:

How does your character enrich your journey as an actor? I am playing a Maharashtrian middle class girl. She’s as simple as a “gharelu ladki”. There’s a boy who has come in to her life, a secret that she is hiding from her family. Her brother is a wedding detective, who does a background check of grooms. He is basically being very difficult. The story revolves around these three peo-

Even if Diljit (Dosanjh) is reserved around girls, he has this special trait to make you feel comfortable. And I think that is all you need... This quality of his actually helped both of us to create that chemistry



ple, their relationship and everything in between. I think whenever there’s a character which requires any sort of preparation, you tend dig a little deeper, which helps you in the long run. This is how a particular character enriches your journey as an actor. So here, I had to learn about the Maharashtrian culture, their dialect and their way of living. We had a dialect coach who would train me for Marathi accent and the words.

Set in 1990s, do you think the audience will be able to relate to the film’s narrative now in 2020? I think the 90s are not that old. People still relate to that era. It’s a decade that feels like only yesterday and at the same time, like ancient history. Usually what happens is that either we pick something as current as the COVID-19 pandemic or we go way back in time. But this is something in between, just right. I feel this film is a sweet and refreshing mix of both the eras, life before and after 90s. It is a clean family-comedy.

The film is set in a time when arranged marriages were more prevalent than today. How challenging was it for you to understand that scenario? The film is not only about the era. It is actually about the relationship and the characters. The story is very much relatable. It wasn’t difficult to capture the essence as I have been a part of many arranged marriages. In fact, everybody has grown up attending some or the other wedding... Isn’t it? Even though I don’t believe in the institution of marriage but for some people, it’s just the way it is. I think, the concept is very much prevalent now and it will be in the future.

How much do you think things have changed now given that you belong more to this era? The world has certainly changed rapidly, things have evolved. It doesn’t come as a surprise, it was a change of millenia after all. There used to be a time when there was no internet, mobile phone or social media. People had to deal with everything physically. This is what the film showcases. We have so much exposure now... Online dating has become wildly popular. It has transformed into one of the best ways for couples to meet. I haven’t done virtual dating so I don’t understand that concept. For me, I need physical presence. I am fond of in-person

meetings. Due to the idea of virtual dating, we seem to have lost sight of what it takes to build real, solid and healthy relationship. I do not connect virtually with people. It’s hard for me. I have tried dating apps too but *samajh nahi aaya mujhe*. I prefer it the old school way.

Diljit (Dosanjh) is way different in his real life than on-screen. He is shy and reserved, especially around girls... And since you are playing his love interest, how difficult or easy was it to create that chemistry between you two? Well, it was really nice to work with him, to get to know him. Trust me when I say that it wasn’t difficult at all. Even if he is reserved around girls, he has this special trait to make you feel comfortable. And I think that is all you need... This quality of his actually helped both of us to create that chemistry. I had a great time with him. Whenever I have reached out to him for anything, he has always been available. He’s lovely person.

How was it working with Manoj Bajpayee? I am a huge fan of Manoj Bajpayee’s work. I had a great time with him as well. All the films, the characters that he is played are such memorable and iconic ones. For me, every time I would go to the set, I would just ask him so many questions about his previous roles... You might say that I have tortured him a lot. When I got to know about the incredible cast, I was really excited just to be a part of the film.

Do you think that Dangal was your big break or do you think you could have got bigger opportunities? I did go through the process where I would be dropped out of some films, but that’s okay. I completely understand that part. I now have good films to look forward to such as *Ludo*, *Suraj Pe Mangal Bhaari* and a short film I did recently... I have had my share of disappointment. I feel it’s a part and parcel of the work that you do. Even if you give one huge hit that doesn’t always mean you’ll instantly be a cast for another. There’s a process for everything and I respect that. I would have had a major setback but I am still working. If there would have been no work at all then it would have been a different thing altogether. Let’s see what life has in store for me! (The film is set to release this Diwali on November 13.)

Priyanka in Hollywood rom-com

Priyanka Chopra Jonas stars with Grammy-winner Celine Dion and actor Sam Heughan in an forthcoming romantic drama, tentatively titled *Text For You*. “So excited to kick start this amazing film with such incredible people! Jim Strouse, Sam Heughan, Celine Dion. It’s my honour. Let’s gooooo,” Priyanka tweeted while sharing the screenshot of the announcement. Written and directed by Jim Strouse, the film is an English remake of the German-language film *SMS Fur Dich*, based on Sofie Cramer’s novel. According to the storyline, Priyanka’s character is a heartbroken woman who has just lost her fiancé. In her attempt to send constant messages to her fiancé’s old number, she will connect with a man across town suffering from a similar heartbreak. Celine Dion’s music aims at connect-



ing the two and give them the courage to take a second shot at love. Heughan is best known for his role as an actor and producer in the hit series *Outlander*. He was recently seen in the Vin Diesel-starrer comic-book flick *Bloodshot* and in the action comedy *The Spy Who Dumped Me*, co-starring Mila Kunis, Kate McKinnon, Justin Theroux and Gillian Anderson. “So excited to be joining this incredible cast,” wrote Heughan on Instagram. Priyanka will next be seen in the film adaptation of *The White Tiger*, which she has also executive produced, and *We Can Be Heroes*, directed by Robert Rodriguez. She is currently developing an untitled comedy with Mindy Kaling and Dan Goor, and also working on Russo Brothers’ *Citadel* and *The Matrix 4*. —IANS

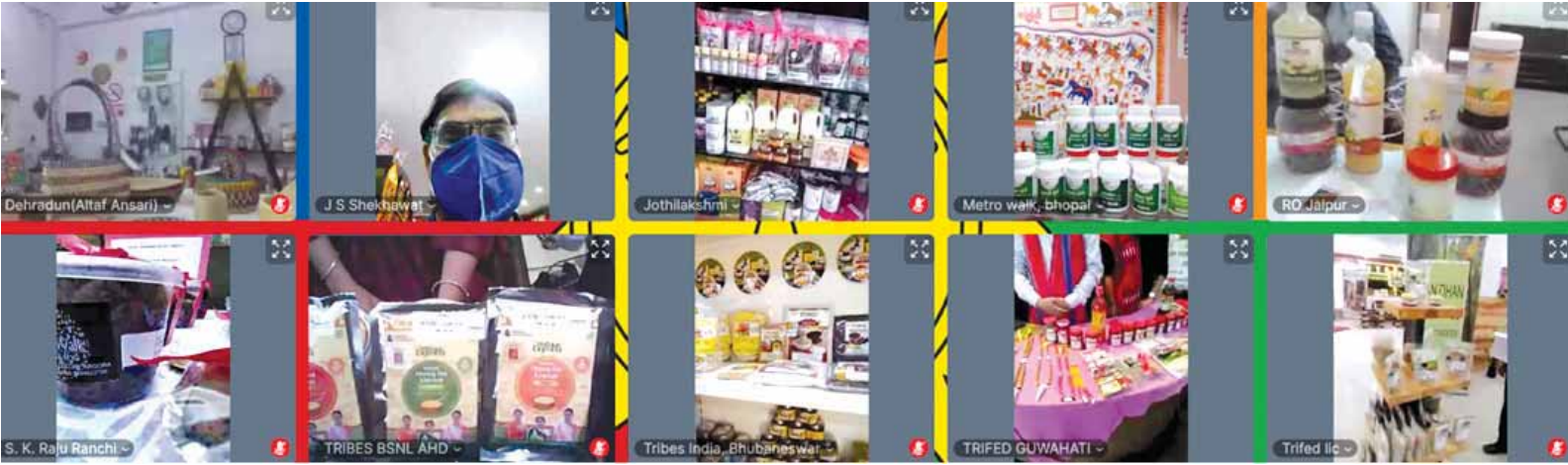
Not an accidental actor: Bhumi

My life has been a journey of survival, says actor Bhumi Pednekar. In her five year cinematic journey, Bhumi has entertained us with some great performances in films like *Dum Laga Ke Haisha*, *Toilet: Ek Prem Katha*, *Shubh Mangal Saavdhan*, *Saand Ki Aankh*, *Sonchiriya*, *Pati, Patni Aur Woh*, *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare*. She reveals why she decided to pursue a career in acting and her journey thereafter! Bhumi says, “It’s been five years and it still feels like a dream! I am not an accidental actor and I say this time and again. This is something that I really wanted to do and I have worked really hard to be here. I am born and brought up in Mumbai so that definitely helped because just having some sort of a support system in the city, it makes your journey slightly easy. However, because I am not from a traditional film



family or I really didn’t have any contacts, I was very confused at first about how to go about it.” She adds, “First, I was figuring how do I convince my parents that I want to be an actor. I mustered courage to speak to my parents about it. They weren’t very happy and I think they were being protective of me. So I decided to join film school and the fee was expensive so I took a loan.” She narrates how she failed in the film school, which really shook her. She shares, “I failed in film school not because I wasn’t a good actor but because I wasn’t disciplined enough and that was the biggest *jhatka*. I was like I have screwed up and I had this 13 lakh loan on my head. It was a huge amount. I started looking for a job for sur-

vival and to protect my dream to act. Again, my parents were completely against it because they wanted me to go back to studying but I told them that I’ll get a degree from an open school.” She then joined YRF as a casting assistant. She adds, “When I was doing casting, my intent wasn’t to gain information about if I want to be an actor. I was just observing as a film making student. I was like I want to be a part of this world and whatever door opens, I go in. In fact, that is how my life has been — a journey of survival. I have only tried to survive through the years till *Dum Laga Ke Haisha*. I was lucky that I kept getting these opportunities. Things kept happening one after the other and primarily from YRF.”



Forest Fresh Naturals and Organics, a new range of tribal produce, was unveiled by Tribes India on Monday.

On a weekly basis, 100 new products will be launched and included in the Tribes India catalogue. The first set of 100 products have been launched online. These and the subsequently included products will be available in 125 outlets, mobile vans and on online platforms such as the Tribes India e-market place (tribesindia.com) and e-tailers.

Pravir Krishna, Managing Director, TRIFED, said, "We are proud to unveil Forest Fresh Organics, our new range of tribal produce and products. We will be including 100 new tribal produce, predominantly natural produce and immunity boosters, sourced from tribal communities from across India. The inclusion of organic, essential natur-

VOCAL FOR LOCAL

Tribes India unveiled a new range of tribal produce, Forest Fresh Naturals & Organics, with an aim to support the livelihood of the community

al immunity-boosting products through different channels will help ensure that people adopt a sustainable and wholesome way of living. This will go a long way in promoting and empowering tribals (both artisans and forest dwellers) across the country. The sale proceeds of these goods, irrespective of the channel, will directly go to the tribals."

These new products, sourced from different parts of the country will enhance Tribes India's vast and rich repertoire. The products launched so far

include golden-green and red apples from Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh; baskets and boxes made from Munji grass from Uttarakhand; seeded tamarind, cloves, eucalyptus oil, coffee powder from the Nilgiri tribe in

Tamil Nadu; masks made by the Meena tribes of Rajasthan; varieties of organic, immunity-booster *churan* and *kadha* from the Gond, Bhil tribes of Madhya Pradesh; Mahua bamboo candles made by the Bhilala tribes from Shivganga and Jhabua of Madhya Pradesh; organic, immunity-boosting powders such as Giloy powder, jamun powder and a range of pulses and khichdi mixes from Maharashtra and Gujarat. From the Northeast, products being included are different kinds of

pickles like jackfruit and olive, juices like bel, and joha and red rice.

All the produce have been sourced from tribals pan-India from states such as Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and the Northeast to name a few.

In addition to these, certain products that have been processed, packaged under the Van Dhan tribal startups, a component of the MSP scheme, which has emerged as a source of employment generation for tribal gatherers and forest dwellers and the homebound tribal artisans, have also been

included.

Adapting Go Vocal for Local, a mantra in these troubled times, TRIFED has been striving to ameliorate the condition of the distressed and affected tribal people by putting in place several path-breaking initiatives, in addition to its existing flagship programmes and implemen-

tations, which have emerged as a panacea and relief. Keeping in line with the clarion call of the Atmanirbhar Abhiyan, TRIFED has also launched an exclusive e-marketplace for tribal producers — forest dwellers and artisans, to facilitate the purchase of MFPS, handicrafts and handlooms online. TRIFED is currently in the process of taking on-board approximately five lakh tribal producers across the country and sourcing their natural produce and handcrafted goods.

Need of the hour

Rajasthan Chief Minister ASHOK GEHLOT stressed upon the importance of IT-based and paperless governance to save time, money and other important resources

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that to save time, money and resources, IT-based and paperless governance is the need of the hour. All departments should innovate and move in the direction of this system. This will not only fulfill the resolve of sensitive, transparent and accountable governance but also better service delivery to the common man.

The minister addressed a virtual inauguration program of e-pensions and e-accounting system prepared by the finance department in collaboration with NIC on Tuesday. He appreciated the e-pension and e-accounting system designed for simplification of pension and accounting system, and said that the personnel retiring from this will get rid of complicated formalities and will not have to go round for pension acceptance. This will save time and provide mental peace to the workers who retire from service tax.

Also, there will be ease in other accounting functions including payment of salaries, medical, travel etc. bills of the personnel. Gehlot said that IT has a significant contribution in terms of financial discipline, monitoring of development projects, economy, efficiency and time in government work. In view of this, the IT department should create a team of technically skilled people who can create software and programmes as per the technical requirements of the government. The CM also said that despite the challenge of COVID-19, the state government has given impetus to development projects. He asked the officials of the finance department to strengthen financial management. Attempts should be made to ensure that the condition of the overdraft does not occur.

Chief Secretary Rajiv Swaroop said that e-pension and e-accounting system is a big step in the direction of paperless governance. This will bring transparency in the functioning as well as improve the government payment system. Additional Chief Secretary



Finance Niranjan Arya said that the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) was introduced for better financial management of the state government. He informed that financial management has been strengthened through softwares like e-Kuber, pay-manager, e-grass, treasury etc. Due to this, more than 25,000 personnel who retire every year from the e-pension system, will take less than 15 minutes to fill their application form. Government Secretary, Finance (Budget) T Ravikant informed that these two new systems will save the state government ₹80 crore of stationery, TA-DA allowance of personnel and printing cost.

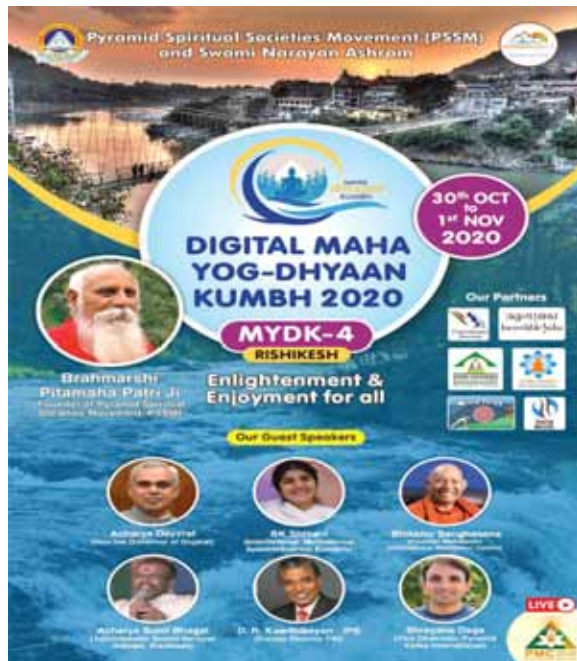
Principal Secretary, Information Technology Dinesh Kumar, Government Secretary Personnel Hemant Gera, Government Secretary Finance (Revenue) Dr. Prithviraj, Commissioner Information Technology Mr. Virendra Singh, Special Secretary Finance (Expenditure) Sudhir Sharma and other officers were present on the occasion. Treasury officers and regional pension officers also joined the program through VC.

WE ARE ONE

The Pyramid Spiritual Societies Movement and Swami Narayan Ashram are celebrating the Maha Yog Dhyana Kumbh IV digitally

The pandemic sweeping the world has set forth a new way of living, standing as a reminder that compassion is the only way humans can go forth in the coming times. It is also a reminder that holistic health, which includes physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being is of utmost priority. Now, more than ever, all the like-minded organisations need to collaborate to work together to spread the message of meditation and compassion as a tool for holistic well-being.

Keeping up with the scenario, the Pyramid Spiritual Societies Movement and Swami Narayan Ashram are presenting a digital Maha Yog Dhyana Kumbh IV, from October 30 to November 1. The purpose of this Dhyana Kumbh is to spread the message of vegetarianism, meditation, pyramid energy and enlightenment to one and all. The aim is to expand the foray and extend the family by



way of collaborations with MIMC (Mahabodhi International Meditation

Centre, Ladakh), Swami Narayan Ashram supported by Ministry of Tourism,

Government of India and Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB), Ministry of Tourism, Government of UK, Swami Vivekanand Meditation Pyramid, Ludhiyana, Atmshakti Dhyana Kshetra, Kurukshetra, Haryana. The lockdown has indeed united us all, beyond the boundaries of cultures, time and distance and truly is an example of oneness in action.

The objective of this event is to bring the Masters and the Seekers from across the country on a common platform to share, learn and grow from the collective wisdom. It will comprise of meditation sessions, workshops, spiritual literature stalls and cultural performances. It will prove to be an exciting fair for all meditators, healers and spiritual seekers, including medical doctors, academic scientists, students, businessmen and many more spiritual masters and scientists from across the world.

The event will be inaugurated on October 30 with Ganga Aarti by the founder of PSSM Founder Brahmashri Patri, Swami Narayan Ashram, Chief Administrator Sunil Baghat, B K Shivani, Padmashri Dr D R Karthikeyan, Cabinet Minister

of the Union Government Prahlad Patel, Acharya Devrat, Bhikku Sangha Sena, Founder Maha Bodhi International Meditation Centre, Leh Ladakh Vice Chairman Pyramid Valley International, Shreyans Daga.

The three-day event will commence everyday from 6 am to 8.30 am — Music meditation with Patri ji, followed by Enlightenment sessions by Masters on various topics such as Past Life Regression, Mind and Health Management using Psycho Neurobics, inner child healing and Astral Healing workshop. The event will progress with experience-sharing sessions by Pyramid masters, followed by cultural programmes from 6 pm to 9 pm.

A special programme on the 'Sharad Poornima' has been planned, which will go Live from Hyderabad and will be telecasted across India and global channels by Patri ji along with some other international artists. One can be a part of the event through PSSM's satellite channels, PMC T and PMC Hindi (unit of One Media).

Let's all come together, celebrate life and humanity! One can also subscribe to PMC Hindi on YouTube.



ESIC Hospital inaugurated in Bareilly

Bhoomi Pujan of new ESIC Hospital, Bareilly, UP, was done by Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour & Employment, Government of India on Sunday. He said that this hospital will aim at easing the difficulties of IPs and beneficiaries as earlier they had to either travel to AIIMS, Delhi or Lucknow for medical treat-

ment. He announced that its facilities will be made available to common people with a nominal fee. He also revealed that the hospital will be turned into a model hospital in future. Estimated to be done on a plot area of 4.67 acres with an estimated cost of ₹90 crore, the hospital will prove to be beneficial to about two lakh ESI beneficiaries of Bareilly and nearby areas.

HawaBadlo by GAIL launches initiative for clean air

HawaBadlo, an initiative of GAIL (India) Ltd, has launched an online campaign, titled #MotherEarthBlesses, for creating awareness about clean air and better environment. The initiative invites netizens to take responsibility towards saving environment and adopt befitting lifestyle habits such as planting trees, cycling, walking, carpooling, using public transport, conserving energy and using cleaner energy options. This initiative inspires and motivates younger generation to act upon curbing air pollution.

An engagement contest has been initiated for large participation of people who are enthused to share their stories, poems, and slogans in both photo as well as video showing their positive inclination towards preserving environment and cleaner inhabitant. Around 10 most interesting stories with befitting photos and videos will be acknowledged for recognition.

The initiative aims to inspire people for celebrating the festivities by being responsible to each other in view of the current COVID-19 pandemic and also being responsible to mother earth for a better environment.



NSIC
Vijayendra, IAS, CMD, NSIC, administered the "Integrity Pledge for Organisations" on the Vigilance Awareness Week. P Udayakumar, Director (P&M), Gaurang Dixit, Director (Finance), NSIC and Rajan Trehan, CVO, NSIC along with the company's employees were also present on the occasion. The campaign affirms their integrity and probity through citizen participation. All employees have been advised to adhere to COVID-19 guidelines and focus on internal (housekeeping) activities which are to be taken up in campaign mode. The week, started from Tuesday will be observed till November 2 with the theme of 'Satark Bharat, Samridh Bharat' (Vigilant India, Prosperous India).

NHPC Limited



Hydropower company and a 'Mini Ratna' Category-I enterprise of the government, NHPC Limited, commenced the observance of Vigilance Awareness Week themed Vigilant India, Prosperous India

The pledge of integrity

Vigilance Awareness Week is being observed at various organisations with an aim to maintain the highest standards of honesty and support the fight against corruption

on Tuesday at its corporate office in Faridabad and various power stations/ projects/ regional offices and field units. It will go on till November 2.

On this occasion, A.K. Singh, CMD, NHPC administered the oath of "Integrity Pledge" to the senior officers and employees. Ratish Kumar, Director (Projects), N.K. Jain, Director (Personnel), Y.K. Chaubey, Director (Technical), R.P. Goyal, Director (Finance) and A.K. Srivastava, CVO, NHPC were also present along with other senior officers and employees of the company. Speaking on the occasion A.K. Singh highlighted on the theme and appealed all employees to follow all procedures and guidelines to ensure transparency and accountability while working.

He also released Chetna, the e-magazine of the company's vigilance division. During this week, the company is organising activities such as quizzes, debates, essay writing, poetry competitions etc. for its employees across all its locations. The competitions shall be conducted on an online platform in view of the ongoing pandemic.

Kolkata Metro

Metro Railway, Kolkata is observing Vigilance Awareness Week till November 2. As a part of this programme, S.K. Srivastava, Additional General Manager, Metro Railway, administered the "Integrity Pledge" to his officers and staff at Metro Rail Bhavan on Tuesday in order to maintain probity and rule of law in all walks of life.

Srivastava emphasised on eradica-



tion of corruption in order to ensure economic, political and social progress of our country. He called upon all to be vigilant and show honesty and integrity and support the fight against corruption. Integrity Pledge was also administered at other offices of metro railway.

NDMC

"The citizens and organisations must look inwards at a time when the world is facing an unprecedented crisis. All organisations should focus on improvement of internal processes and activities during this year. Systematic improvements may be carried out to improve the delivery of public



services in all organisations. Training and capacity building of staff is an important component supporting this object." This was remarked by Central Vigilance Commissioner, Sanjay Kothari in his keynote address in a webinar organised by New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) on the theme of Vigilance Awareness Week — 'Satark Bharat, Samridh Bharat' — from October 27 to November 2 at Palika Kendra on Tuesday.

Chairman, NDMC, Dharmendra said that only those organisations that can manage their resources efficiently and effectively achieve success. "So, it is our responsibility to ensure transparency, accountability, fairness and objectivity so that NDMC's resources can be utilised optimally to the benefit of the public at large without any leakage," he added.

The webinar was attended by the heads and senior officers of all urban civic bodies of Delhi like North MCD, East MCD, South MCD, DDA and Delhi Cantt. Additional Chief Secretary (Urban Development), Delhi Government shared his experience on the best practice and innovation to increase the transparency.

Secretary, NDMC, Amit Singla presented his vote of thanks and the welcome address was given by Chief Vigilance Officer, Sanjay Kumar Tyagi on the occasion.

Former senior diplomat, quiz master and motivational speaker, Dr Deepak Vohara talked about 'Ethics in Public Life', and said that the entire society is being affected by corruption and breach of integrity at many levels.

Chief Technical Examiner of Central Vigilance Commission, Shailendra Singh interacted in another webinar with the employees and officers of NDMC on the technical issues of transparent tendering process and their specifications. He stressed upon the importance of self-explanatory provisions of the tender to avoid the delay in execution of work.

PFC

The Power Finance Corporation Ltd (PFC) began observing the Vigilance Awareness Week 2020 from Tuesday, which will go on till November 2. Ravinder



Singh Dhillon, CMD, PFC along with P K Singh, Director (Commercial) & Addl Charge of Director (Projects) and Parminder Chopra, Director (Finance) administered "Satyanishtha Pratigya" (Integrity Pledge) to all employees of the corporation to mark the beginning of week. PFC's Vigilance Unit is organising various events/workshops and competitions on the theme, 'Satark Bharat, Samridh Bharat' to raise awareness among its employees.

PNB

The Punjab National Bank (PNB) participated in the Integrity Pledge taking ceremony, commencing the Vigilance Awareness Week on Tuesday. The pledge was administered by CH SS Malikarajuna Rao, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, and Vijay Kumar Tyagi,



Chief Vigilance Officer.

Messages from President of India, Prime Minister of India, Vice-President of India and Central Vigilance Commission were echoed during the ceremony by Executive Directors. Rao said, "Everyone must imbibe the quality of being vigilant in day-to-day routine to protect against untoward incidents. Preventive Vigilance is basically a checkpoint to understand if we are adhering to the laid down guidelines."

NFL

Virendra Nath Datt, CMD, National Fertilizers Limited (NFL), administered the Vigilance Oath to employees, commencing the Vigilance Awareness Week, on Tuesday. Lalit Mohan Pandey, CVO, Nirlep Singh Rai, Director (Technical), YP Bhola, Director (Finance) were also present on the occasion.



I took a bit of responsibility at the top of the order... It's ready to play orthodox cricket in these conditions, so I have to open up 360 degrees

We still have two games. One win is all we need. We've been waiting for that since last three games. This loss is definitely going to motivate us. I think we lost it in the powerplay itself

We play MI next and RCB in the last match and if we keep playing the way we are, we will find it hard to win those games. So we have to change things and change them quickly

I asked David how should I approach and he told me that you should just bat freely. We needed to take chances in the first six overs and since it clicked, we got the momentum our way

CSK ready to play spoilsport for KKR

PTI ■ DUBAI

A ready out of play-off's reckoning, a relaxed Chennai Super Kings are ready to play party-poopers with an aim to foil Kolkata Knight Riders' desperate bid for a victory in an Indian Premier League game on Thursday.

KKR with 12 points from 12 games would like to win the next two encounters to ensure a smooth passage while CSK, currently at the bottom of the eight-team table, are only playing for pride.

A possibility remains that multiple teams will end up on either 16 or 14 points and a comprehensive victory at this stage of the tournament, will bring the superior net run-rate into equation when the play-off spots are decided.

It won't get too easy for KKR against CSK, who handed an eight-wicket thrashing to Royal Challengers Bangalore in their previous outing.

KKR's unsettled batting order is a point of concern for Eoin Morgan, who would hope that former skipper Dinesh Karthik produces his A game when it matters most.

Nitish Rana, who shone in the win over Delhi Capitals came a cropper in the subsequent loss to Kings XI Punjab.

If the top-order fires, KKR will be better served



as inconsistency has hurt the team in the course of the season as has the constant chopping and changing.

The bowlers have done a good job so far, with Tamil Nadu's mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy being impressive and earning a spot in the Indian T20 team.

They need to be at the top of their game against the CSK batting unit that has been frustratingly inconsistent but is more than capable of being destructive on its day.

Against CSK, which is missing out on the play-offs for the first time ever, Kolkata's batting faces a varied attack which was boosted with the inclusion of Mitchell Santner in the last game and needs to step up.

CSK, on its part, will be aiming to build on the win over RCB and end the season on a high, apart from hurting the chances of play-off hopefuls.

The CSK bowlers choked a strong RCB batting unit with a performance that reminded CSK of yore and that should be a worry for the KKR batsmen short on consistency.

For CSK, any win would be welcome as they endured a forgettable season which is just about to wind down.

England's World Cup-winning captain Morgan will hope to lead from the front but that would call for a collective performance.

There is a lot at stake for the Knights and they would settle for nothing less than a big win.

Suryakumar stars for MI

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Suryakumar Yadav made a statement with an unbeaten 43-ball 79 as Mumbai Indians put one foot in the play-offs following their five-wicket victory over Royals Challengers Bangalore in an IPL match here on Wednesday.

Not considered for the tour of Australia despite his consistent run in domestic cricket and IPL, Suryakumar led MI's chase of 165 and helped the defending champions reach the target with five balls to spare.

Earlier, Jasprit Bumrah (3/14) was his usual devastating self in the death overs as MI pulled things back to restrict RCB to 164 for six.

During the game, Bumrah picked up his 100th IPL wicket in the form of RCB captain Virat Kohli, who, incidentally, also was his first scalp in the lucrative event.

The win meant that Mumbai Indians continued to top the table with 16 points. With another two games left, they are all but through to the play-offs.

The second half belonged to Surya, who plundered 10 fours and 3 sixes, and he not only took the team out of trouble after early jitters, but also took them home.

Hardik Pandya (17) played a useful cameo.

MI were in spot of bother at 72 for three, having lost openers Ishan Kishan (25), Quinton De Kock (18) and Saurabh Tiwary (5) cheaply. But that did not deter Surya, who initially upped the ante in the 10th over, hammering a six and four off Yuzvendra Chahal (2-37).

Surya and Krunal Pandya



(10) collected 13 runs off the 12th over and then he took on Dale Steyn, hitting him for three fours. A determined Surya kept playing shots at will and hammered three boundaries in the 16th over as the equation came down to 35 runs from 24 balls.

He played round the park and fittingly finished the game with a boundary.

Earlier, Devdutt Padikkal pummelled the Mumbai attack into submission with a 45-ball 74.

Put in to bat, Padikkal, who smashed 12 fours and a six, added 71 runs for the opening wicket with Josh Philippe (33).

However, the RCB then suffered a middle-order collapse as Mumbai roared back into the game with lead pacer Bumrah doing the bulk of damage.

Padikkal began with a boundary over deep extra cover and then struck successive fours off Krunal Pandya, as RCB fetched 12 runs in the third over.

The two openers continued

six overs.

However, leg-spinner Rahul Chahar (1/43) pulled things back for Mumbai, removing Philippe, who was stumped by Quinton De Kock.

Padikkal, who hit another two boundaries off Chahar, completed his fifty with another four.

Skipper Virat Kohli (9) perished early as RCB slipped to 95/2, but Padikkal continued his onslaught against Chahar, hammering a six and two fours, as RCB got 16 runs in the 15th over.

Mumbai then took four wickets in quick succession, removing AB De Villiers (15), Shivam Dube (2), Padikkal and Chris Morris (4), as RCB slumped to 138/6.

Gurkeerat Mann made a quick 14 but Mumbai Indians, known for their effectiveness in the death, allowed RCB only 35 runs in the last five overs.



India to play D/N warm-up game ahead of 1st Test

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

The Indian cricket team will get an additional Day/Night warm-up game in Sydney as a tune-up to the series-opening Pink Ball Test against Australia in Adelaide from December 17, the host board announced on Wednesday unveiling the full schedule of the 69-day engagement.

The tour will include a 14-day quarantine-cum-training period in Sydney starting November 12 for the Indians who will fly in after the IPL final on November 10.

The Border-Gavaskar Trophy will begin with a Day-Night encounter at the Adelaide Oval on December 17, followed by Tests at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (December 26), the Sydney Cricket Ground (January 7) and the Gabba (January 15).

As per BCCI's demands, there is a week's gap between the Boxing Day Test at the MCG and the New Year's Test at the SCG.

"India's squad will arrive in Sydney on November 12 subject to Australian Border Force travel authorisation and the appropriate departure-approvals. The team will quarantine in Sydney prior to the first match of the series on November 27," Cricket

FIXTURE 2020-21	
AUSTRALIA VS INDIA	
Dettol ODI Series	Dettol T20 INTL
Nov 27: SCB	Dec 4: Manuka Oval
Nov 29: SCG	Dec 6: SCG
Dec 2: Manuka Oval	Dec 8: SCG
Vodafone Test Series	
Dec 17-21: Adelaide Oval (D/N)	
Dec 26-30: MCG	
Jan 7-11: SCG	
Jan 15-19: Gabba	

Australia stated.

"...CA can also confirm dates for four matches ahead of the Test series. India A will take on Australia A at Drummoyne Oval (New South Wales) (December 6-8), and India will play Australia A in a day-night match at the Sydney Cricket Ground (December 11-13)," the release stated.

According to the release, the three-match ODI Series will have matches at the Sydney Cricket Ground (November 27, 29) and Manuka Oval, Canberra (December 2).

That will be followed by the three-match T20 International Series at Manuka Oval, Canberra (December 4) and the Sydney Cricket Ground (December 6, 8).

The Adelaide fixture will be the first Day-night Test played between the two teams.

Neither side has lost a day-night Test previously, with the Australians winning all four twilight Tests in Adelaide against New Zealand, South Africa, England and Pakistan, and India winning its only encounter at Eden Gardens versus Bangladesh in 2019.

Nick Hockley, CA's Interim CEO, said that the Boxing Day Test might feature spectators at the MCG as the board is coordinating with the Victorian State Government on the issue.

"...We are working with the Victorian Government and the Melbourne Cricket Club on plans to safely host spectators at the iconic event with details to be confirmed in due course," Hockley said.

SRH to 'wait & watch' on Saha's groin niggle

DUBAI: Wriddhiman Saha's groin injury is "not serious" but his IPL franchise Sunrisers Hyderabad is expected to adopt a cautious approach after consultation with the BCCI's medical team as the senior wicketkeeper-batsman is Australia-bound after the T20 event.

Saha had picked up the niggle during his match-winning innings of 87 off 45 balls against Delhi Capitals on Tuesday and didn't keep wickets with substitute Shreevats Goswami replacing him.

"Unfortunately, he's got a little groin niggle but hopefully it isn't too bad," SRH skipper Warner said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

Saha is part of India's Test team which will play four games starting mid-December during the tour, which begins next month.

A senior BCCI source said that all the franchises have been told to be a bit cautious with regards to fitness of national team players.

"It doesn't look very serious at the moment but there is a three-day gap



before Sunrisers' next game (vs RCB on October 31). Let's keep our fingers crossed," the official said.

There is a possibility that Saha may be advised to skip the next two games and in case Sunrisers make it to play-offs, he would be fully fit.

During an IPLT20.com interview with star spinner Rashid Khan, Saha said that he would "hopefully" soon recover from injury.

DUGOUT

MOTION PICTURE



Delhi Capitals skipper Shreyas Iyer and opening batsman Shikhar Dhawan pose for photo after gym session @DelhiCapitals



Delhi Capitals' Australian fast bowler Daniel Sams cuts cake to celebrate his birthday with teammates Prithvi Shaw, Rishabh Pant and Shimron Hetmyer @DelhiCapitals

ROHIT NEEDS 2-3 WEEKS REST TO BE FIT

Indian cricket team physio Nitin Patel had informed the BCCI that opening batsman Rohit Sharma would require 2-3 weeks of rest to be fully fit and take part in India's tour of Australia before the selection committee picked the squads. Patel also sent a detailed medical report on Rohit Sharma to the board after consulting two other specialist doctors who also advised three more weeks of rest for the 33-year-old. "Patel had submitted a detailed fitness report of every player. It's a normal procedure where the Indian team physio informs the board and selection committee about which player is fit and which player is not. The selectors were informed that Rohit will not be available for selection due to injury. He even submitted two expert doctors' advice who both said Rohit needs rest for two to three weeks," a BCCI official said.

WE'VE TO RESET RIGHT NOW: PONTING

Delhi Capitals coach Ricky Ponting conceded that chasing is an area of concern for his team and it needs to hit the "reset" button to seal an IPL play-off spot in the remaining two league games after enduring a third straight loss. After a flying start, the Capitals suffered a hat-trick of losses — two of them while chasing — to slip to the third spot in IPL standings. "It's been a concern. When we decide to bowl first, we've given away big totals. We have to get better at that, we need to be better at bowling first and at chasing totals because so far, it hasn't worked for us," said Ponting during the post-match press conference. "We had a rough idea from the start of the game on how many points one might need to qualify. We got to seven wins quite quickly, and now lost three in a row. We have to reset right now," Ponting said.

GANGULY OVER THE MOON WITH RATINGS

BCCI President Sourav Ganguly has been overwhelmed with the response which the ongoing edition of the IPL is getting in terms of viewership and ratings. "Unbelievable and I am not surprised at all. When we were discussing with Star and all the people concerned — if we have to do it this year and one-month prior to the tournament, we were contemplating, whether this can happen or not, what will be the ultimate result of the bio-bubble and will it be successful," Ganguly said while speaking on Star Sports Cricket Live show. "We decided to move ahead with our plan, because we wanted to bring normalcy in everyone's lives and wanted to bring the game back. I am not surprised with the feedback. This is the best tournament in the world," he added.

POINTS TABLE

		P	W	L	NRR	PTS
1	MI	11	7	4	+1.252	14
2	RCB	11	7	4	+0.092	14
3	DC	12	7	5	+0.030	14
4	KXIP	12	6	6	-0.049	12
5	KKR	12	6	6	-0.479	12
6	SRH	12	5	7	+0.396	10
7	RR	12	5	7	-0.505	10
8	CSK	12	4	8	-0.602	8

Madrid in trouble despite late fightback

AP ■ MADRID

With one point from its opening two games, Real Madrid is facing another fight to preserve its proud record of qualifying for the knockout stage in all of its seasons in the Champions League.

It could have been a whole lot worse for the record 13-time European champions on Tuesday, though.

Heading into the 87th minute against Borussia Mönchengladbach, Madrid was losing 2-0 and on course for four straight losses in the Champions League for the first time.

However, goals by Karim Benzema and then Casemiro — in the third minute of stoppage time — rescued a 2-2 draw for the Spanish champions, who opened with a 3-2 loss at home to Shakhtar Donetsk last week.

Next up for Madrid is a double-header against Inter Milan, the team which was supposed to be its toughest rival in Group B but which is also still without a win.

A 0-0 draw at Shakhtar, during which Inter hit the crossbar twice, came a week after a 2-2 draw with Mönchengladbach.

Madrid is in bigger trouble, though, in its 25th campaign in the Champions League, in which the team has never been eliminated in the group stage.

Last season, Zinedine Zidane's side started in almost identical fashion, losing its opener — 3-0 to Paris Saint-Germain — and then drawing 2-2 in its second match against Club Brugge. The overall standard of its group is tougher this time round.

"This is going to be a difficult year for everyone," Zidane said.

Defending champion Bayern Munich is having no such trouble, with a 2-1 victory at Lokomotiv Moscow extending its winning run in the Champions League to 13 games.

Also on a maximum of six points is Manchester City after a 3-0 win at Marseille, as the English team continues its latest bid to become European



champion for the first time.

Liverpool is the other team to have won both of its games so far, with Diego Jota scoring the club's 10,000th goal of its 128-year history to set up a 2-0 home win over FC Midtjylland.

KIMMICH TO RESCUE

Bayern went unpunished for a sloppy performance in Moscow as Joshua Kimmich prolonged the German team's winning streak in the competition with a brilliantly

taken 79th-minute goal.

Leon Goretzka put Bayern ahead in the 13th, but the champions gave up plenty of chances before Anton Miranchuk finally took one in the 70th.

Bayern opened with a 4-0 win over Atletico Madrid, which got its Group A campaign back on track by rallying to beat Salzburg 3-2.

Joao Félix scored twice, including the winner in the 85th minute.

Marcos Llorente opened the scoring for Atlético before Salzburg went ahead through

goals by Dominik Szoboszlai and Mergim Berisha either side of halftime.

SLICK CITY

Playing without a striker didn't stop Man City racking up the goals against Marseille.

Sergio Aguero is back on the sidelines with a hamstring injury and with Gabriel Jesus also injured, City started at the Stade Velodrome with Ferran Torres then Raheem Sterling filling in as the makeshift center forward.

Both of them scored, either side of a goal by Ilkay Gundogan as City backed up its 3-1 win over Porto last week. Porto rebounded from that loss by beating Olympiakos 2-0

thanks to goals by Fábio Vieira and Sérgio Oliveira.

It was the 100th victory for Porto in the European Cup and Champions League.

Olympiakos opened with a 1-0 win over Marseille.

FABINHO INJURY

Liverpool's defensive woes deepened as Fabinho was forced off with a hamstring injury during the first half of the win over Midtjylland.

The Brazil midfielder has been filling in at center back for Virgil van Dijk, who is likely out for many months after damaging cruciate knee ligaments. With Joel Matip currently struggling for fitness, Liverpool has just one fit senior center half in Joe Gomez.

A 19-year-old, Rhys Williams, replaced Fabinho and Liverpool was shaky at times against the competition newcomers from Denmark.

However, Jota scored in the 55th for a historic goal for Liverpool and substitute Mohamed Salah converted a stoppage-time penalty.

Duván Zapata scored twice in six minutes as Atalanta rallied for a point against Ajax, who went 2-0 ahead thanks to Dušan Tadić's penalty and a scruffy goal from Lassina Traoré. Atalanta is two points behind Liverpool in second place.

Bartomeu resigns as Barca president

Drops European Super League bombshell

AFP ■ BARCELONA

Josep Maria Bartomeu resigned as Barcelona president on Tuesday, along with his board of directors, and left with a bombshell admission that he had accepted a proposal for the club to play in "a future European Super League".

Bartomeu's departure comes following mounting pressure from fans and his public falling-out with Lionel Messi.

His resignation could affect the future of Messi, who will now be given a new project after trying to leave in August.

"I want to communicate my resignation along with the rest of the board," said Bartomeu in an official announcement. "It's a composed and relaxed decision, agreed with all my fellow directors."

However, it was his revelation about a Super League which seems certain to make the biggest waves beyond Catalonia.

Bartomeu said he accepted a proposal on Monday for



Barcelona to play in "a future European Super League" which "would guarantee the financial stability of the club".

An election for Bartomeu's successor will take place within three months, with an interim board taking charge in the meantime.

Bartomeu's six-year tenure saw a dramatic decline in the performances of the team, culminating in the 8-2 defeat by Bayern Munich in last season's Champions League.

He then oversaw Messi, the club's greatest ever player, trying to leave for free.