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OF INNOCENCE

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10 VIVACITY**

Farm Bills anger farmers, protest spreads

Protests in Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, western UP; farmers' body plans rail roko from September 24 to 26



Farmers raise slogans during an ongoing protest outside the residence of former Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal against three agriculture-related bills, at Badal village in Sri Muktsar Sahib, on Friday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the Lok Sabha passed two contentious agriculture Bills, despite the opposition by BJP's oldest ally Shiromani Akali Dal terming it as an "anti-farmer" move, farmers' protests have spread in several States, including Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and western Uttar Pradesh.

A protesting farmer in Punjab on Friday tried to commit suicide by consuming poisonous substance. Farmers' organisations have decided to hold a "rail roko" agitation from September 24 to 26 in protest against the Bills. Thousands of farmers from western Uttar Pradesh held a sit-in protest on the Delhi-Meerut expressway on Friday.

The Congress has announced to launch a nation-

THE ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 2020

To remove commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onion and potatoes from the list of commodities
To attract foreign direct investment

Big players to have an edge and are likely to dictate prices
Latest decision to ban onion export creates uncertainty over execution

wide agitation against the farm Bills and is in talks with other Opposition parties to corner the Modi Government. Punjab Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal on Friday said Punjab alone would suffer a loss of ₹4,000 crore every year due to these legislations that will lead to mass destruction of rural livelihoods, increase farmer distress.

"We have decided to hold a rail roko nationwide agitation from September 24 to 26 against the three agriculture legislations," Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee general

secretary Sarwan Singh Pandher said. Already, different farmer organisations in Punjab have given a call for a "bandh" on September 25. A protesting farmer has tried to commit suicide in Badal village, the hometown of the Badals, in Muktsar district. He ate poison on Friday morning around 6:30 and his condition is still critical.

Thousands of farmers are sitting on dharna in Muktsar, Amritsar and other areas in Punjab under the banner of Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee, Bhartiya Kisan

Union, All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee and Rashtriya Kisan Mahasabha.

The farmers argue that the legislations would lead to the dismantling of the minimum support price (MSP) system, leaving them at the "mercy" of big corporates. According to Rakesh Tikait, Bhartiya Kisan Union, thousands of farmers have protested at the Delhi-Meerut Expressway against the passage of farm Bills.

A member of Punjab Aarathi Association, said, "These legislations will ruin the

The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill 2020

PROVISIONS
To provide for the creation of an ecosystem where the farmers and traders enjoy the freedom to sell and purchase products outside mandi
To encourage interstate and intra state trade
Reducing marketing /transportation cost

CONCERNS
State govts will not able to get mandi fee if farmers sell their purchase to private players
The Bill is against Minimum Support Price procurement system
The role of commission agent is eliminated if farmers trade outside mandi

The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020

To provide for a national framework on farming agreements that protects and empowers farmers to engage with agri
Access to modern technology
Farmers in a contract farming arrangement may find it difficult to negotiate
Monopoly of big players and exporters in the market

agriculture marketing infrastructure network created in the past five decades. Benod Anand of Rashtriya Kisan Mahasabha, an organisation of 62 farmers unions, he said, adding that farmers will hit the road on September 24 across India.

The Centre has brought the Bills without discussion with stakeholders, he alleged. "Agriculture falls in the State list of subjects," he said, adding that the Union Government's action impinges on the State's rights.

Traditionally at odds (farmers and arthiyas) are together in this one-on-one against the BJP-led Centre aided by Opposition parties, farmers' organisations and activists.

Perhaps the real issue is too technical and the threat of new ecosystem rendering MSP

Don't be misled by dalals' advocates: PM to farmers

Bills 'rakhsha kavach' to save interests of farmers, says Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Accusing the opponents of the agriculture Bills passed by the Lok Sabha of "standing with middlemen", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday assured farmers that the Government's purchase of their produce and Minimum Support Price (MSP) would continue. He asked them "not to be misled by the lies" of those "who ruled the country for

decades".

Asserting that three Bills passed by the Lok Sabha on Thursday were aimed at "reforming agriculture", the Prime Minister said the legislation would "free" farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country and fetch them more returns.

He said new moves by the Government would provide farmers with "rakhsha kavach" and save them from brokers. But a few people who ruled the country for decades are trying to mislead farmers and telling lies. They had promised about the reform in their manifesto but forgot after reforms and when

the NDA implementing them, these people are creating misgivings," Modi said on the occasion of inauguration of Kosi rail mega bridge in Bihar while addressing through video conference.

Without naming the Congress, Modi hit out at the Opposition party for "double crossing" farmers and creating "disinformation".

Praising Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Modi said, "Nitish understood what damage Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC), set up by States to regulate markets, had done to the farmers and "removed APMC Act in the State."

Dushyant meets Khattar to discuss way out

JJP leader Digvijay accuses Congress of misleading farmers, says coalition strong

MANOJ KUMAR ■ CHANDIGARH

A day after Akali Dal's Harsimrat Kaur Badal resigned from the Union Cabinet opposing the controversial farm Bills, Haryana Deputy Chief Minister and JJP leader Dushyant Chautala met Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Friday in a bid to find a way out of the vexed situation with farmers on the warpath in the State.

Sources said the State Government would reach out to the farmers and their organisations to take the same across that the Bills would actually help their cause.

JJP leader Digvijay Singh Chautala asserted that the

party's coalition with the BJP in Haryana is going strong and accused the Opposition Congress of trying to mislead the farmers. He downplayed reports that there was fissure in the alliance saying the Congress spreads rumours. Interestingly, JJP had earlier apologised for the lathicharge on farmers in Kurukshetra's Pipli last week when farmers were protesting against the three farm ordinances promulgated by the Union Government.

Asked if the JJP was facing any pressure in its alliance with the BJP after Harsimrat's resignation, Digvijay said, "Our tie-up is strong. Our responsibility is to ensure that farmers' crops are procured as per the MSP and we will ensure this in the upcoming procurement season."

The JJP's biggest issue is the MSP. It is our commitment to farmers that we will not allow their crops to be procured below the minimum support price."

13 more die of virus, State toll now 682

4,140 new positive cases; total 1,71,341

Day's highest 688 in Khordha again; 4,101 more recover; total rises to 1,37,567

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As many as 13 patients succumbed to the corona infection on Friday, pushing the State's Covid-19 death toll to 682, the Health and Family Welfare Department said. Three fatalities were reported from Khordha district, two each from Kendrapada and Puri and one each from Cuttack, Bargarh, Balangir, Gajapati, Kandhamal and Mayurbhanj districts.

The Khordha casualties included a 49-year-old man of Bhubaneswar and a 39-year-old man and a 78-year-old woman elsewhere in the district. The deaths in Kendrapada were of a 90-year-old woman and a 97-

year-old woman. The deceased in Puri were a 65-year-old man and a 79-year-old woman. The other deceased were a 25-year-old man of Bargarh, a 82-year-old man of Balangir, a 65-year-old woman of Cuttack, a 53-year-old woman of Gajapati, a 50-year-old man of Mayurbhanj and a 77-year-old man of Kandhamal.

Meanwhile, 4,140 new positive cases were reported on the day from all 30 districts and the State pool. With this, the State's total tally surged to 1,71,341.

Of the new cases, 2,466 were detected from quarantine and the rest 1,714 were local contacts.

Khordha again reported the day's highest 688 cases followed by Cuttack 492, Jaipur 184, Puri and Sundargarh 166 each, Mayurbhanj 163, Rayagada 160, Angul 155, Baleswar 133, Sambalpur 127, Jagatsinghpur 123, Kendrapada 121, Bargarh 100, Koraput 99.

Plus II admission: First phase merit list out

Ravenshaw gets top cutoff marks in all 3 streams

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

BJB Second, N'nagar Saraswati HS third top in science; admission from Sep 21 to 26

The first cut-off marks and the related merit list of students for admission into various Plus II courses in Higher Secondary Schools in the State were published by the Directorate of Higher Secondary Education on Friday.

As per the merit list of Plus II Science, the cut-off marks in the Ravenshaw Higher Secondary School, Cuttack, in different categories stood at 89% (General), 66% (ST) and 80% (SC) followed by BJB HS School, Bhubaneswar, with 88.6% (General), 72.4% (ST) and 78.33% (SC) and the Saraswati Vidya Mandir HS School, Nilakantananagar, Brahmapur, with 86.67% (General), 51.5% (ST) and 37% (SC). The Ravenshaw HS

School has also the highest cut-off mark in Commerce stream. Its cut-off marks stood at 75.83% (General) 33% (ST) and 57% (SC) followed by Rourkela Government HS School with 75% (General), 63.67% (ST) and 57.67% (SC) and the BJB HS School, Bhubaneswar, with 74% (General), 33.33% (ST) and 47.33% (SC).

The Ravenshaw HS School too got highest cut-off marks for admission into Arts stream with 72.5% (General), 36.5% (ST) and 57.5% (SC) followed by BJB HS School with 71.83% (General), 44% (ST) and 58% (SC) and Rourkela Government HS School with 67.83% (General), 62.67% (ST)

and 52.83% (SC). Students can check their ranks on the website of Student Academic Management System (SAMS) <https://samsodisha.gov.in/juni-orw.aspx>.

The first phase will take selections in their respective allotted schools from September 21 to 26 till 6 pm.

According to the SAMS schedule, the second phase cut-off marks will be published at 11 am on October 3, 2020.

The admission of students selected in this phase would be conducted between October 5 to 7. The spot selection merit list would be published on October 13.

Russian couple adopts Hinduism



PNS ■ BALESWAR

A Russian couple, who was seen sitting under a banyan tree near the Baleswar district Collector's office on Friday, said they have adopted Hinduism and accepted Lord Krishna as their only god after coming in contact with ISKCON devotees.

Seashore scam: CBI raids MLA Mishra house



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The CBI on Friday conducted a raid on the residence of BJD MLA and former Minister Debi Prasad Mishra here over the Seashore chit fund scam. A five-member team conducted raid.

WhatsApp number for Covid queries

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government on Friday issued a WhatsApp number -99375 64066- for addressing Covid-related queries on this instant messaging platform, an official said at a Press conference here.

People can ask their questions between 3 pm and 3.30 pm and queries would be answered by doctors and experts. National Health Mission (NHM) Director Shalini Pandit informed at news conference that over 70 per cent of COVID-19 positive cases in State are currently under home isolation.

NOUL TO TRIGGER HEAVY RAIN IN STATE

IMD issues warning; SRC alerts DMs

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The remnant of the tropical storm Noul which developed over the South China Sea this week is likely to create a low pressure area over the north east Bay of Bengal on Sunday which could concentrate into a depression on land over West Bengal the next day, the Centre for Environment and Climate (CEC) at the SOA here said on Friday.

The system was likely to move into Gangetic West Bengal on Sunday night and

then move in a westerly direction into Jharkhand and then Chhattisgarh thereafter and have its impact till September 23. Under its influence, heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely to occur in the districts of north Odisha from September 20 to 21. Parts of western Odisha would also receive rainfall on September 22.

Rainfall may also be experienced in south Odisha and the coastal region from September 19 to 21 due to wind flow from central India as well as the Arabian Sea.

COVID MANAGEMENT

Niranjan writes to CM against BMC callousness

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a strongly worded letter, Patnaik observed. While stating that he stands with Government in fighting Covid-19, the concerns of Bhubaneswar citizens need urgent attention. Among issues raised Patnaik, who is also a former Health Minister, are: BMC officials are not approachable and are only interested in one-way communication.

It is difficult to speak to the Ward Officers, let alone the BMC Commissioner. The helpline number, though has started functioning, is often expressing helplessness. The BMC is relying too much on antigen test and number of RT-PCR tests is inadequate. Test is not available on demand as had

been advised by Government of India. People, who come to know that they had come in contact with virus, are not able to get tested and remain under stress.

Test reports take days to come and people often are under stress. Those in home isolation have not been provided pulse oximeter and are receiving poor support. There is an acute shortage of hospital beds. For one ICU bed being vacated, there are five persons waiting to get it. While expressing satisfaction at low death rate in Odisha like all over Asia, the PPC Chief asked Chief Minister to take an objective view and take action as deemed appropriate.

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	11,45,840	31,351	8,12,354
Andhra Pradesh	6,09,558	5,244	5,19,891
Tamil Nadu	5,30,908	8,685	4,75,717
Karnataka	5,02,982	7,808	3,94,026
Uttar Pradesh	3,42,788	4,869	2,70,094
Delhi	2,38,828	4,907	2,01,671
West Bengal	2,18,772	4,242	1,90,021
Odisha	1,71,341	735	1,33,466
Telangana	1,67,046	1,016	1,35,357
Bihar	1,65,371	859	1,51,400
Assam	1,52,858	540	1,21,610
Kerala	1,26,383	502	90,085
Gujarat	1,20,498	3,287	1,01,201
Rajasthan	1,11,290	1,308	92,265
Haryana	1,06,261	1,092	83,878
Madhya Pradesh	1,00,458	1,901	76,952

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Funds available, but spending remains dismal

Spending in MGNREGS, other Central schemes also very poor

Agri, Forest, Environ Depts record dull expenditure

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

While funds are available for undertaking normal developmental works, most of the departments have not achieved expected spending, posing a grave concern for the State Government.

Chief Minister Naveen Pattnaik seemed worried over poor spending by major departments during last five

months. It was pointed out at a review meeting that normal expenditure on programmes are needed to be taken up as funds are available.

Even as Rs 4,000 crore is available in the RIDF, infrastructure development has taken a back seat in rural areas as projects have not been taken up. As compared to last year till August, spending is less than 35 per cent during this fiscal till August 2020.

Major departments like Agriculture, Forest and Environment have spent much less. As compared to last year till August, spending is less than 35 per cent during this fiscal till August 2020. Major departments like Agriculture, Forest and Environment have spent much less. As compared to last year till August, spending is less than 35 per cent during this fiscal till August 2020.

What has created the situation more serious is that many departments and organisations have parked funds in banks and reported that spending has taken place in programmes. It was revealed at a review meeting held by the Chief Secretary recently.

Utilisation of funds in agriculture and allied sectors is poor, which is 70 per cent less than the corresponding period of the last year. While extending credit facilities in the agriculture sector has gone down, the Chief Minister has directed the authorities to scale up the credit facilities for the farm sector. The MSME sector has performed well in arranging credit for the entrepreneurs during the Covid-19 pandemic, said officials.

It has come to the notice of the State Government that the majority departments like Agriculture and Forest are purchasing planting materials from Andhra Pradesh and north east States.

Accordingly, the Chief Secretary has asked the horticulture department to set up mega nurseries for generating planting materials. Sources said that the Forest Department has decided not to purchase planting materials from outside the State from the next year.

Concast Steel workers stage demonstration

Demand jobs, arrears dues

PNS ■ JHARSUGUDA

Locals on Thursday launched a demonstration in front of the main gate of Concast Steel Company at Hirma village in Jharsuguda demanding jobs for the locals and pending arrears. The plant was shut 3 years ago and it was to open and start operation again. They alleged that the villagers have been neglected in getting jobs.

The people losing their homes for the industry were not given employment in the company by the management, they told, adding that outsiders from States like Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and UP were given preference.

Behera in BJP, may contest in Tirtol

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As speculated, a day after quitting the Congress, Rajkishore Behera along with his followers joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the party's State headquarters here on Friday.

Besides, former Jagatsinghpur Congress MLA Kailash Mallick also joined the saffron party.

Behera had resigned from primary membership of Congress and tendered his resignation to Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Niranjana Pattnaik. Speculations are also rife that Behera is likely to contest Tirtol Assembly by-election in



Jagatsinghpur district as a BJP candidate.

The BJP is yet to make any formal announcement in this regard.

Behera had unsuccessfully contested the 2009 and 2014 Assembly elections from Tirtol as a Congress candidate.

OJEE rescheduled from Oct 12 to 19

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE)-2020, which was scheduled in the first week of May but postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, would be held from October 12 and 19, according to sources.

The test would be conducted in Computer Based Test (CBT) mode for all the courses in three shifts on each day of the examination.

The shift-wise complete schedule of the examination as well as the mode of downloading of admit cards indicating Roll Number, shift and centre of examination would be displayed on the websites www.ojee.nic.in/ www.odisha-jeec.com by end of September.

Eco retreats planned at 5 locations this yr

Besides Konark, list has Satkosia, B'kanika, Daringbadi, Hirakud

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Tourism is going to meet tourists' dreams at five locations after months' break during the Covid-19 pandemic.

After success of the first-ever eco retreat festival at Konark, the Tourism Department has decided to organise such events this year at four new exotic locations, Satkosia, Bhitarkanika, Daringbadi and Hirakud apart from Konark again.

Inspired by annual Rann Utsav held at the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, a Marine Eco Retreat was organised at Konark in December last year to showcase Odisha's food and culture for high-end tourists. The festival was held for 49 days. This time, the eco retreat

would be organised for a period of three months starting from December 1 till February 28 next, an Odisha Tourism official said.

The department has invited bidders for development and promotion of the eco retreat project sites. A tender has been invited to develop, finance, operate, promote and market the project.

The Government will provide only basic amenities at the sites. As the Covid-19 situation still continues, the tourists will have to follow the Covid-19 guidelines during their stay at the sites, the official said.

The private operators would set up the tented cottages, restaurants, conference halls and receptions. The services provided at the eco retreat would be at par with any 3-star



category hotels. While the eco retreat at Konark would have 10 presidential cottages, 30 premium swiss cottages and 30 deluxe swiss cottages, the other destinations would have 25 normal tents.

The purpose behind the events is to attract a greater number of tourists so that they can experience Odisha's rich culture, handloom, handicrafts

and natural beauty. It would also help in development of the State's tourism sector, the official said.

Along with luxurious accommodation, the eco retreats would feature entertainment, adventure activities and water sports activities such as jet ski, speed boating, parasailing, archery, rifle shooting, cycling and beach volleyball.

Nandankanan loses 11 animals in a month

Over 30 zoo inmates dead during 6 months

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) near here has witnessed the death of at least 11 animal just in a month during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The sudden surge in the animals' mortality at the zoo raised concern among the authorities after a 27-year-old female Indian bear succumbed to a kind of infection just in 12 hours of the death of a same bear species, 'Debasish', aged about 7-and-half-year.

The female bear Arati died under treatment, informed NZP Deputy Director Bimal

Chandra Acharya. She was an inmate of the zoo since September 13, 2013 when she was 20 years old. Following her death, Professor Niranjana Sahoo from the OUAT conducted the autopsy that revealed that the animal's intestine was infected with a same virus detected in body of Debasish.

With these two deaths, a total of three bears have died in the zoo in the last 18 days. Meanwhile, another Indian bear 'Lila' (8) is now undergoing treatment in the ICU of Nandankanan veterinary after being infected with the same deadly virus. She had been brought to Nandankanan after being rescued from Khalikote in Ganjam district when she was only two years old. Besides, two more bears have shown similar symptoms at the zoo.

The veterinary doctors have begun their treatment.

As a precautionary measure, 15 Indian bears, including five females, have been vaccinated to protect them from infection.

Reports said that over 30 animals have died at the zoo in a span of six months during the pandemic. Such a situation had never occurred in the past at the zoo, which is closed for over 180 days since March 2020 due to the pandemic.

Though no bigger animal has died in the recent past, the death of a few rare species including an anaconda and a Himalayan bear have upset wildlife lovers.

On August 16, two baby marmosets were born, of which one died within two days. Presently, there are four marmosets at the zoo. Two days after the incident, on

August 18, a 25-year-old Brahmin died due to age-related ailments. With its death, only one Brahmin kid is left. In the past one month, one sambar and two deer have died at the zoo.

On August 25, a female golden pheasant died following an infection. Among the snake species, only two king cobras are now at the zoo after the death of one on August 31.

Notably, the NZP now has only five anacondas. Last year, two anacondas had died. A total of eight yellow anacondas were brought to Nandankanan from the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust and Centre for Herpetology in Chennai on October 22, 2019.

The first death of anaconda at the zoo was reported on November 28, 2019. The zoo lost its second anaconda in two days on November 30, 2019.

93-kg ganja seized in city

One arrested; Bolero vehicle during search seized

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Excise officials on Friday intercepted a Bolero vehicle and during search seized 93 kg of ganja near Bharatpur here and arrested a person in connection with the case.

The accused was identified as Debendra Rout, a resident of Jaipur. Acting on a tipoff, Excise officials inter-

cepted the Bolero near Khordha-Cuttack bypass and later recovered the contraband item, which was being transported to Bhubaneswar from Kandhamal district.

93 Kg ganja stacked in 92 packets was kept in a secret chamber of the vehicle. The vehicle had reportedly two to three such chambers. The excise team has also seized many registration number plates from the vehicle.

The registration plates were changed frequently to avoid any suspicion at the toll gates, police said.

Even as further investigation is underway the accused were forwarded to court later in the day.

Rally by murder accused: One booked under NSA

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Commissionate police which drew flak from various quarters following some murder accused took out a procession from the Jharpada jail to Sundarpada violating Covid-19 norms, swung into action on Friday and booked one of the accused Roshan Jena under the National Security Act (NSA).

Police said Jena was acting in the area prejudicial to public order. The cops action would also be taken against other accused. Roshan, an accused in Amresh Nayak's murder case, had taken out a rally with over a hundred of supporters following him and his

three associates were released from the Jharpada jail on September 13 night after they were granted bail by the Odisha High Court. He was seen sitting in an open jeep along with his supporters during the procession.

Police said Roshan has eight cases pending against him at various police stations. The procession that had started in front of the Jharpada jail continued for four kilometers flouting the social distancing norms. Most of the participants had not even worn face masks. The family and relatives of Amresh alleged that due to loopholes in the chargesheet filed by police, the High Court granted bail to four accused.

Fresh graduates invited for TULIP internship

BBSR Smart City to issue certificates

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Under the ambitious Urban Learning Internship Programme (TULIP) of the Union Government, fresh graduates would now get an opportunity to work with various projects of Bhubaneswar Smart City. Fresh graduates would be called for internship within 18 months from declaration of the programme.

The flagship internship programme was launched on June 4, 2020 under the theme 'Aspirational India'. Under the Bhubaneswar Smart City projects, interns are invited under the categories of Architecture, Engineering, Finance and Technology categories. Students can now apply for the TULIP internship by visiting the link https://internship.aicte-india.org/mod-ule_uib/Dashboard/TulipMain/index.php.

A student has to login and register and then apply through appropriate segment of TULIP. The Internship was designed keeping in mind individual needs of the participants. The programme intends to deliver training and mentorship to the capacity of urban ecosystem and youth engagement towards urban initiatives.

'Withdrawal University Amendment Ordinance' AIDSO stages demo; AICEC submits memo to Governor



PNS ■ CUTTACK/ BHUBANESWAR

The All India Democratic Students Organisation (AIDSO) and the All India Save Education Committee (AISEC) on Friday demanded withdrawal of the Odisha University Amendment Ordinance 2020 at the earliest.

AIDSO activists led by Cuttack committee president Bhagyarabi Das, VP Tarun Nayak and Secretary Binod Selhi staged a demonstration in front of the Ravenshaw University also demanded withdrawal of the decision of scrapping Ravenshaw University Act 2005 and sought allocation of adequate funds for the universities. The decision of making teacher recruitment through the OPSC, scrapping Senate system and sending a Government representative to

Vice-Chancellor Selection Committee in place of a Syndicate representative are all undemocratic and anti-teacher and anti-student moves, said the protesters.

In Bhubaneswar, the All India Save Education Committee submitted a memorandum, signed by over a hundred of intellectuals, to Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal, demanding withdrawal of the ordinance.

"The new system will pave way for political and bureaucratic interference in the management of universities and take away autonomy from them," alleged signatories.

Among others, Prof Swadhin Pattnaik, former Director of Institute of Mathematics, Surentra Mohan Pani, former Principal of Radhanath Institute of Advanced Studies in Education.

TOTAL NOW 17,925

305 new infection cases in BBSR

215 local contacts outnumber 90 quarantine cases; 517 recover; total recoveries 13,631

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Capital city Bhubaneswar on Friday reported 305 new Covid-19 cases, taking its total tally to 17,925, which included 4,212 active cases.

Out of the 305 new cases, 90 were detected in quarantine while 215 were local contact cases.

The local contacts included nine private hospital staffs, nine cases of IRC Village, eight cases of Nayapalli, five cases each of Patia, Hanspada, Patrapada and Chandaka and four cases each of Unit- 9, Bapuji Nagar and Jagamara.

The local contacts included six cases of Unit-6, three cases of Chhatisani, Jharpada and Unit-9. However, 517 patients recovered in city on day, taking total recoveries to 13,631.

NEP will keep Indians old-fashioned: FPI

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 and the call for "Indian ethos" is old fashioned and regressive and not going to help build a modern education system free from blind beliefs and superstition, opined Freethought Party of India (FPI). The FPI is quite clear that there is no such ver-

biage as "Indian ethos" in the entire text of the Constitution of India. The FPI is quite clear that all the concepts of Hindu Sanatan Dharma will come into play under the term of "Cultural Preservation"; the term that has figured in the first paragraph of the Introduction Chapter of the NEP and the rest will be formulated under the banner of "Indian ethos". In other words,

the BJP-led NDA Government wants that all Indians should carry on the heavy load of all the blind beliefs that have been there in India since time immemorial.

"It means that all educational institutions in the 'Hindu-Dominated' Republic of India will be modelled on the pattern of Utkal University that has already 22 Hindu temples in

its campus. The students will have no strength of individual mind to revolt against religious structures inside their academic institutions because they come to study to get a degree that would help them to get jobs and if they revolt at all they would be 'victimized' and their academic career will go to dogs," said FPI general secretary B Ramchandra CST Voltaire.

How to fight pandemic fatigue



ACHYUTA SAMANTA

Pandemic fatigue is as real as the pandemic itself. It is the cause of exhaustion in human beings. Physical and social dis-

tancing in addition to economic and financial hardships has caused a huge damage to many people's psychological wellbeing. Information influx, intensive theories and uncertainty, all this is tiring. It is important to note that people are both in under-stimulated and over-stimulated states and both can result in negative impacts on mood.

To add to the fatigue is the screen fatigue. Classes work, zoom meetings, presentations have now brought a realisation in people about the importance of ace-to-face laughter and camaraderie and community. Many people have started moving out, because staying indoors for long is not possible. In a long term, every work

becomes like an essential work. The masked world have left the virus and its play to destiny and adjusted to the new normal.

Pandemic fatigue has logically followed the Quarantine fatigue. It has come with adjustments and a find ways to adapt to current circumstances. Routines and schedules are helpful to chalk out the plans and days.

Making personal time while also connecting with friends and family is very important, more so during this period. Physical exercise and maintaining a diet while staying away from less healthy vices are also the need of the hour. This keeps the immunity stronger. It's important to remember that human race is

resilient and that we have the ability to get through hard times. Taken in a positive note, the pandemic and social distancing guidelines provide us with new opportunities to be creative, work differently and come together as family, friends, colleagues and community.

We also know by now that being kind and charitable to other people is therapeutic; so, reaching out and being that cheerful presence for somebody else is a great thing to do because kindness is contagious and has a shield to fight the fatigue.

(Dr Samanta is MP, Kandhamal, and founder, KIIT & KISS)

BBSR Judicial Complex containment zone

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Following detection of several Covid-19 cases in Civil Court, Khordha, here, the Bhubaneswar Judicial Complex and the DLSA have been declared as a containment zone to prevent the spread of the virus.

"The area coming within the boundary of Bhubaneswar Judicial Complex and DLSA, Lewis Road, Bhubaneswar, is hereby declared as a containment zone for the period from 19th September to 25th September.

This excludes the Office of the Sub Collector,



Bhubaneswar, Office of the Tahasildar, Bhubaneswar, District Sub-Registrar Offices, an official order of the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) said on Friday. No public shall be allowed to move into the containment zone; and the inhabitants within the containment zone shall not move out, the order stated.

Rly engineer succumbs to corona

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Senior member of the East Coast Railway Engineers' Association (ECorEA) and Senior Section Engineer (Works) of East Coast Railway (Kanduri Charan Pradhan) passed away on Thursday night at a private hospital here due to corona.

Pradhan had started his service in the Railways under the undivided South Eastern Railway in Daitari-Banspani project at Kojanhar. He died when he was looking after the Khurda Road-Bolangir project. For his sincerity and dedicated hard work, he was awarded and felicitated at different levels.

Now, 69% Covid cases in home isolation

Patients feel better at home, says study

PNM ■ BHUBANESWAR

The share of Covid-19 patients staying in home isolation has risen to whopping 69 per cent as the State Government is allowing asymptomatic and mildly symptomatic cases to opt for such facility now.

The Government is giving such an option because statistics have proved that more and more people feel better in home isolation, including in rural areas.

As many 34,418 active cases (69 per cent of total active case) were in home isolation as on September 16. The highest number of home iso-

lation cases is in Bargarh and Rayagada districts, where 88 per cent of the cases preferred the facility. Boudh came second with 86 per cent and Nabarangpur and Subarnapur third with 85% each.

According to official sources, home isolation of asymptomatic and mildly symptomatic cases is on the rise mostly in rural areas.

Nuapada and Angul districts are having 84 per cent of Covid cases in home isolation, while in Bolangir 83 per cent opted for the facility.

In Koraput and Baleswar, home isolation percentages were 79 and 78, respectively.

In Gajapati 76 per cent, Bhubaneswar 73 per cent, Kendrapada 70 per cent and Mayurbhanj 69 per cent have opted for the facility.

In Jajpur, Dhenkanal and Jharsuguda districts nearly 67 per cent opted for home isolation while nearly 66 per cent of

the cases opted for the facility in Puri, Nayagarh and Sundargarh districts followed by nearly 65 per cent in Cuttack and Kendrapada districts. The percentages in Kalahandi and Khordha are 63 and 62, respectively.

Home isolation in Khordha, which includes Bhubaneswar, was 32 per cent only as on September 1.

In Ganjam, at least 61 per cent active cases are in home isolation, while it is 55 per cent in Sambalpur, 51 per cent in Jagatsinghpur and Deogarh districts and 46 per cent in Malakangiri district.

Notably, Malkangiri district had topped the list with nearly 98 per cent of active cases staying in home isolation as on September 1.

The lowest 45 per cent of positive cases preferred home isolation in Kandhamal district where 484 active cases were reported by September 16.

Odisha universities ordinance opposed

PNM ■ BRAHMAPUR:

A webinar of senior university teachers and academicians on "Odisha Universities Amendment Ordinance-2020" was conducted by the Biswabidyalaya Banchao Abhiyaan on Wednesday.

Vice-Chancellors and intellectuals joined and gave their opinions. The key speakers included former Vice-Chancellor of Sambalpur University Prof. M.C. Das, former Vice-Chancellor of Birla Global University Prof. Sudhakar Panda, former Professor of Psychology of JNU Dr. Ajit Mohanty, former Professor of Political Science Prof. Surya Mishra, former Professor of Philosophy Prof. Niranjan Padhi and former DGP Odisha AB Tripathy. The speakers in one mind considered the recent university ordinance as 'retrogressive' and may result in transferring uni-



versities into an undergraduate college fully controlled by the State Government.

Most of the speakers were also of the opinion that such ordinance is contrary to the well established provisions of Indian Constitution, UGC Act and related components of legislation. Sources also said that intellectuals, academicians and retired Professors are contemplating to move the CM, University Chancellors, Prime Minister and President of India to counter the State Government's move to restore autonomy soon. Similarly, a well known physicist and former Professor of Physics of Sambalpur University is in favor of initiating a signature drive against the move.

The new ordinance is an attempt to reduce the space for functional autonomy of universities by shifting responsibility of recruitment of teachers to OPSC and a dangerous attempt to undermine benefits of unitary university systems, it was pointed out.

INBRIEF

ANOTHER DOCTOR DIES OF COVID

Cuttack: Another frontline Covid warrior in the State died due to the viral infection on Thursday. Dr. Nikun Bihari Das passed away due to Covid-19 while undergoing treatment at the Ashwini Hospital here. Das, who was working as an Assistant Professor at Department of Medicine of Hitachi Medical College Hospital, contracted the infection in the line of duty.

AIIMS DONATES LIVELIHOOD KITS TO PWDS



Bhubaneswar: AIIMS Bhubaneswar Director Dr. Gitanjali Batnagarbani donated livelihood tool kits to 21 persons with disabilities (Pwds), who have been trained by National Career Service Centre for Differently Aabled (NCSOA), Bhubaneswar. The livelihood kits include four multifunctional sewing machines, eight welding kits, three mobile repairing kits, three AC repairing kits, three electrical kits. Dr. Gitanjali distributed the kits on the occasion of the birthday of her granddaughter Advaita, who is in Canada. NCSOA Head Ram Kishor Sharma appreciated Dr. Gitanjali's initiative.

VEDANTA GIVES JOB TO FOOTBALLER TANUJA



Jharsuguda: Former National Women Football player Tanuja Baghe has been given a job as sports coordinator in the JMD Company, an associate of the Vedanta Aluminium Company Limited. In the chamber of district collector SK Samal, Vedant CEO Ghabhinath Sinha gave the appointment letter to Tanuja in the presence of ADM PK Sahoo, District Sports Officer SK Mishra and senior officers of Vedanta Company Chandrasekhar Sahoo, Sanjeeb Pattnaik, N Sundarra and Pranay Satpathy. Notably, Sports and Youth Services Minister Tusharkanti Behera had asked for assistance to Baghe, who was earning her livelihood by herding goats and also working as a housemaid.

INTER-STATE GANJA RACKET BUSTED IN MOHANA



Paralakhemundi: On the instruction of Gajapati SP Tapan Kumar Pattnaik, the Mohana police seized a truck that contained 688.420 kg of ganja valued at Rs 35 lakh on Friday. The contraband was being transported from Antaria to Jharkhand. Truck driver Indradev Yadav smid hejagaram Dholi both belong to Chhattr of Jharkhand. They were in the presence of Mohana Tahsildar Kamini Sanghamitra Devi and Mohana PS IIC Sujit Kumar Nayak.

14TH TWV BEING OBSERVED IN TSLPL



Chamrupa: The Tata Steel Long Product Ltd (TSLPL), a Tata group company situated at Bilaspada under Joda block of Keonjhar district, is observing voluntary week (TWV) from September 5 to October 7. The TSLPL employees are rendering voluntary services in the peripheral villages which include education, healthcare, Covid-19 awareness, stress management and sustainability. While maintaining social distancing, both online and offline methods of instructions are being followed. The programme is the 14th edition of TWV.

Corona robbed Odisha of many sons of soil

Thanks to spread of infection after migrants brought back to State

KRUSHNA KUMAR MISHRA ■ DHENKANAL

Many veteran artists like Bijay Mohanty, Ajit Dash, Sarada Prasanna Nayak, Nadia Bihari Mohanty have died, mostly due to Corona.

Besides, many Government officials, doctors, businessmen, senior citizens, teachers, ASHAs, health workers and Sarpanchs, those were working as the in-charge of TMCs, Covid care centres and COVID hospitals have faced untimely death.

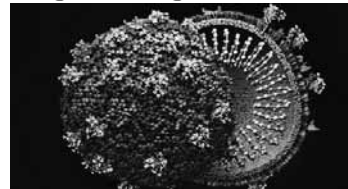
Many senior citizens are now told to remain in their houses like house arrest for no crime or fault. Small number of makeshift shops, salons, betel shops, gymnasiums, cinema hall owners were ordered to close their operations. The students are now passing through

uncertainty due to long day closure of schools and colleges. D evotees lost their mental peace as they were not allowed to enter any temple premises. It is known to all that, all these unpleasant situations emerged as the authorities failed to check the Corona infection.

Now many intellectuals are asking the State Government, why such a situation was allowed to emerge, when Odisha was one of the safest places till March.

However, everyone knows it that all the hell broke loose when the migrant workers were brought back to Odisha from highly infected States.

Many now question why these prodigal sons were allowed to enter Odisha instead of making arrangement of their treatment at their working



places. Why the State Government has not implemented the Ayushman yojana in the State, which could have proved beneficial for the migrants? Why Prime Minister did not order the BJP ruled State Governments to take care of the migrants labours? Where as 8 lakh migrant labourers came back to Odisha, there were no sincere plans to reha-

ilitate them and provide them jobs. Our State is still in short of agricultural labourers, construction workers, carpenters and domestic helps. These migrants prefer to work in other States while they hesitate to work in their own State. If they have no contribution in building Odisha, why we should sympathise them like our sons?

Open cinema halls, pleads shopping centres' assn

TATHYA ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Government has been requested to open cinema halls and multiplexes on immediate basis to support livelihoods and the economy.

Cinema halls are closed since March and despite four rounds of Unlock announced, cinema halls are not allowed to reopen.

The Shopping Centers Association (SCA) has requested the State Government to allow opening of multiplexes and cinema halls towards taking a positive step to support livelihoods and economy. One of the most important components of shopping centers and malls continues to be cinema halls.

The SCAI has developed protocols for the public at large while keeping social distancing and safety as top priority. While malls and shopping centres are allowed to open, multiplexes are not allowed to open. The SCAI has requested the State Government to allow opening of multiplexes in the State, which supports livelihood of hundreds of people and employs large numbers of them directly.

Earlier, the All Odisha Cinema Hall Owners Association (AOCHOA) had appealed the State Government for exemption of minimum demand charges on electricity as the cinema halls are closed since March 20.

"There is zero income and the cinema hall owners are not in a position to pay minimum demand charges on electricity bills," pointed out association president BK Mohanty in an appeal to the Chief Minister.

Oxygen therapy opened in 3 B'swar PHCs

PNM ■ BALESWAR

In a bid to provide relief to the patients with breathing difficulties three oxygen therapy centres were opened in three different PHCs in town on Thursday. These PHCs at Sovarampur, Sahadevkhunta and Sunhat began operational from day as oxygen therapy centres after their inauguration.

District Collector K Sudarshan Chakravarti informed that patients both Covid as well as non Covid diseases would be provided oxygen and other allied treatment facilities in these centres.

They would be discharged after conditions become normal; else they would be referred to DHH. Each PHC with this therapy facility has four beds and would be opened round clock. From September 20 three each ANMs would be deployed in these centres.

The district administration meanwhile has released phone numbers of in-charge doctors of these centres for any information, suggestion and treatment etc.

IN JAJPUR Petrol pumps fined for Covid violation



PNM ■ JAJPUR

In a special drive, three petrol pumps in Jajpur district were inspected by officials on Friday and a fine of Rs 15,000 was collected from them for not adhering to the Covid-19 guideline of social distancing. The drive would be continued and the outlets sealed if they continue to violate the norm, said Jajpur Tahsiladar Susant Kumar Pati. "The safety

of the customers and staffs is of paramount importance for the administration to check spread of Covid-19. We have directed all filling stations to take appropriate measures to ensure that the petrol pumps remain clean and safe, added the officer.

District Collector Chakravarti Singh Rathore has directed the civil and police officials to launch crackdown on the violators of the Covid protocols.

RESIDENTS WANT ILLEGAL SAND LIFTING STOPPED

Budhabalanga sand mafias taken to task
PNM ■ BALESWAR

A group of residents residing in the bank of river Budhabalanga, besides alleging that sand mafias were active despite administrative restrictions, demanded strong action against them.

The residents belonging to riverside villages including Kantabania, Dahadaha, Gambhar, Kasaba and Faland headed by local leader Ranjan Pradhan submitted a memorandum to Additional District Magistrate Sambit Nayak, demanding his urgent intervention.

In their petition, they said that rampant sand lifting from the river bed had been going on unabated despite restrictions under Section 144 CrPc.

They mentioned that mindless stealing of sand from the riverbeds had posed a serious threat to the environment. Besides bank erosion, due to sand lifting, several huge craters had formed posing a threat to their mud houses.

Maoists, police exchange fire in K'mal

Arms, uniform, literature seized

PNM ■ PHULBANI

Police based on reliable inputs about movement of Maoists launched a combing operation on September 13 by a joint team of the Special Operations Group (SOG) and the District Voluntary Force.

On September 15, the SOG and DVF personnel had a face-off with the ultras in the Pokharibund Reserve Forest under the Baliga police station.

Spotting the cops, the Maoists fired indiscriminately from sophisticated weapons. The police party retaliated in a controlled manner in self-defence. The Red rebels escaped from the spot taking advantage of the dense forest and hilly terrain. Police recovered three country made weapons with sling two plastic box, Maoist literature, uniforms and other articles said



Kandhamal S Vinit Agrawal. Ag on September 13, the Maoists fired at SOG and DVF in Burhanis south reserve forest under the Tumudibandh PS. After the exchange of fire police recovered syringes, ration, thermos flask from the spot left behind by the fleeing ultras.

Police suspect 10 to 12 rebels were present in camp including top leaders like Murali of the KKBN Division, Agrawal said.

Needed: Pragmatic studies of stratospheric ozone



MANAS RANJAN SENAPATI

As every year, September 16 was celebrated as the World Ozone Day as declared by United Nations General Assembly. The stratospheric ozone layer absorbs a portion of the radiation (UVB) from

the sun, preventing it from reaching the surface of the earth. The UVB is very harmful which can cause skin cancer, cataracts, genetic disorder and crop damage etc.

Experiments on fish suggest that 90 to 95 percent of malignant melanomas (a form of skin cancer) may be due to UVA and UVB radiations. Plants are sensitive to UV radiation below 300 nm.

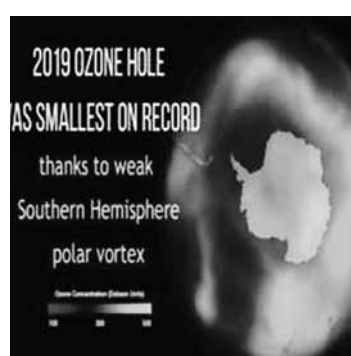
Ozone depletion may also affect the climate though not clearly understood. With its depletion, spectrum of incoming radiation will change and hence may produce new molecular species which may change the radiation emitting and absorbing properties of atmosphere. This may cause formation of more tropospheric ozone.

In the absence of ozone layer the radiations will directly flow to the earth surface and

hence change the vertical distribution of molecules in the troposphere and stratosphere which in turn change the rate of vertical circulation.

Extensive use of chemicals like chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), carbon tetrachloride, halons, methyl bromide etc. are responsible for depletion of ozone layer. These chemicals have atmospheric lifetimes long enough to allow them to be transported by wind to the stratosphere which catalytically destroy ozone.

Exposure to strong UV radiation breaks these molecules to release chlorine or bromine in atomic state. One chlorine atom can destroy over 100,000 ozone molecules. Atmospheric models indicate that the chlorine cycle plus the analogous bromine cycle account for more than 70 per cent of the ozone loss in the stratosphere. The remainder of



the catalytic cycle for chlorine and ozone depends on OH

radicals that exist throughout the atmosphere. OH reacts

with ozone to form the intermediate HO₂. More depletion than before (World Meteorological Organization).

Antarctica's exceptionally cold winter temperatures (-85 to -90°C) help break down

ozone. Almost every year since it was discovered, the Antarctic ozone hole has grown. In 2000 the region of ozone depletion covered 29.8 million km² (about the size of North America).

This phenomenon is now spreading to other parts of the world. Ozone depletion has been observed also over the North Pole.

In 1985, nations around the world in the Vienna Convention for the ozone layer developed a framework for cooperative activities to save the ozone layer.

As an international response in 1987 an international meeting in Montreal, Canada, produced the Montreal Protocol on phasing out most use of CFCs by 2000. CFC production in most developed countries has fallen sharply since 1989. The Montreal Protocol has been

successful in reducing ozone depleting substances and reactive chlorine and bromine in the stratosphere. CFCs are being substituted by HCFCs (hydro chlorofluorocarbons) which release much less chlorine per molecule.

The 1991 ozone hole is indeed the smallest since recording of its size began in 1982 but the ozone is also influenced by temperature shifts and dynamics in the atmosphere through climate change. In 50 years or so, stratospheric ozone levels are expected to be back to normal. However the final recovery is expected to require several lifetimes.

(Dr. Senapati is Dean Computer Application & Science, Biju Patnaik University of Technology and Professor of Chemistry, Trident Academy of Technology Bhubaneswar)

RS passes Bill to cut MPs' salaries by 30% for yr



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Parliament on Friday passed a Bill to reduce for one year the salaries of MPs by 30 per cent "to meet the exigencies arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic". The Bill was passed in Rajya Sabha with a voice vote while Lok Sabha had passed the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020 Bill earlier this week. The Rajya Sabha also approved two Bills, replacing ordinances related to the Central Council of Homoeopathy and the Indian Medicine Central Council.

While supporting the cuts in salaries, most Opposition members who participated in the discussion urged the government to review its decision to suspend the Members of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) scheme for two years saying it

was necessary to carry out development works in their respective constituencies. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi, however, said this was a temporary suspension.

Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy moved the Salaries and Allowances of Members (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and both bills were taken up simultaneously and passed by voice vote.

During the debate, Joshi said it did not matter how much money was being saved through salary cuts of members. "Charity should begin from home and that is the concept we have started. It is not ₹4 crore saving as said by DMK member but ₹53.9 crore per year for members' salary," he said. DMK member P Wilson had earlier during the discussion said the measure would entail savings of just ₹4

Indian genes helpful in battling coronavirus, reducing mortality rate: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian genes are helping battling coronavirus and reducing the mortality rate in comparison to the US and Europe, according to scientists including an expert from the Banaras Hindu University (BHU). The study is published in the PLOS ONE journal.



to some private trust from PM Relief Fund. These people raised similar issues in 2019 election and people have answered," Joshi further said.

A team comprising distinguished geneticists from six institutions, led by Prof Gyaneshwer Chaubey of the BHU, analysed complete DNA data of the Angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) gene of X chromosome from various continental populations and found that it is the Indian genes that have protected the population and helped battle the deadly virus.

This explains why the mor-

tality rate of COVID-19 has been much higher in European countries and in the US, as compared to India and Southeast Asian countries, they said.

The scientists have provided

ed in the current global distribution of reported COVID-19 cases per 1,00,000 inhabitants.

The international team analysed complete DNA data of the ACE2 gene from various continental populations and found that certain mutations in this gene are helping South Asian and East Asian populations in successfully battling the virus and reducing mortality rate in comparison to the US and Europe.

There have been a few initial studies on the ACE2 gene by other research groups, but all of them looked for the presence or absence of various mutations, and while the studies used more powerful haplotype-based analysis (the method in which experts break the whole length of DNA into several pieces and make com-

parisons).

The second important finding is about two major mutations which are responsible for strengthening the entry point of the Coronavirus among South Asians. "Thus, this paper adds important potential implications to understanding the transmission patterns of Coronavirus in various populations across the world," said Anshika Srivastava, one of the authors of the paper.

Rudra Pandey and Prajwal Singh from BHU, Avinash Rasalkar, Pankaj Srivastava from Sagar Central University, Rakesh Tamang from Calcutta University and Pranav Kumar from National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) were also involved in this research.

Pointing at the PM CARES fund, Congress MP Rajeev

Homoeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Bill passed

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Earlier in the day, the Homoeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Bill, 2020 seeking to further extend the time for the Central Council of Homoeopathy by a year and the Indian Medicine Central Council (Amendment) Bill, 2020 also seeking a year's time to reconstitute the central council and provide for a board of directors to exercise its powers in the interim period was passed in the Upper House after a debate.

Satav said "no one knows to whom it is caring". He also pointed out expenses by the government during the pandemic on projects such as Central Vista, Bullet train and a special ₹850 crore aircraft for the PM. The Union Congress member Dinesh Trivedi said the bill for reduction of members' salaries was decided only by some MPs on whatsapp.

Cong to launch nationwide stir against farms Bills

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday announced to launch a nationwide agitation against the Centre's three agriculture-related Bills. It is in talks with other Opposition parties to come on board to corner the Modi Government on the farmer related issue which has also led to the resignation of Union Minister Harshvardhan Kaur of Shiromani Akali Dal, BJP's oldest ally in the NDA.

With farmers protesting against the bills, Congress alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has misled the farmers and the country and Modi is a big liar.

"Person sitting on prime minister's post should not mislead farmers and country. The PM is lying at a time when the country is battling coronavirus and China is breathing down our neck," Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala said

at AICC Press conference near Parliament.

Congress said any move to "disturb" the present cooperative system may deepen "social unrest" amongst farmers of the state. "We urge upon the government to review and reconsider these measures as these are unlikely to deliver on the promises made to them. Agri-marketing should be left to the states as envisaged in the Constitution," the party said.

Congress again ques-

tioned as to why the Modi Government is trying to finish off MSP. "Both the Agriculture minister and the PM are saying that MSP will continue but when mandis will be finished, who will give MSP? Will FCI (Food Corporation of India) go to farmers' fields to give MSP?" Prime Minister Narendra Modi says now farmers can sell produce anywhere, 86.2 per cent farmers own less than six acres of land and 60

per cent own less than two acres of land. How can such poor farmers have access to far-off markets," Surjewala said. He was joined by his party colleagues and Parliamentarians Gaurav Gogoi, Rajeev Satav, Jasbir Singh Gill, Hibi Eden, and Amar Singh.

Surjewala further asked the Centre, "How will be farmers fight for rights against mega corporate?" "When APMC Act will no longer be there, how will small farmers, mandi workers and transporters earn their livelihood? The mandi fees helps development in villages," Surjewala said also announcing for the joint agitation against the decision.

Corps Commander-level talks between India, China likely in next 3 days

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Following the agreement between External affairs minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on September 10 to defuse tensions at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) at the earliest, the next round of military level talks will see India urging simultaneous disengagement and de-escalation. The Corps Commander-level talks between the two armies are likely to take place in the next two to three days.

The Indian stance during


the forthcoming military level talks was discussed at great length for more than 90 minutes in the China Study Group (CSG) meeting chaired by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval here on Friday, while supporting the reduction in tensions, sought restoration of the MPLAD scheme.

Pointing at the PM CARES fund, Congress MP Rajeev

was held on August 2 when it was agreed to disengage and de-escalate.

However, China did not honour the commitment and in fact tried to unilaterally alter the LAC in south bank of the Pangong Tso (lake) on August 29 and 30. The aggressive action was thwarted by the Indian army.

Moreover, both the sides in the last fortnight fired more than 200 rounds in the air on at least four occasions thereby increasing tension at the already volatile border.



Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)
5th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003
SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities is implementing the umbrella scheme "Scholarships for Students with Disabilities" for their empowerment through education w.e.f. 1st April, 2018. There are six components of this scheme i.e. Pre-matric, Post-matric, Top Class Education, National Overseas Scholarship, National Fellowship and Free Coaching. The brief details of the umbrella scheme are given below:

S. No.	Components	Courses covered	No. of Scholarships per year	Parental income ceiling per annum (Rs.)	Rate of scholarship	How to apply								
1.	Pre-matric Scholarship for Students with Disabilities	Class IX and X	25,000	2.50 lakh	Scholarship of Rs.500 per month for day scholars and Rs.800 per month for hostelers plus book grant and disability allowance ranging from Rs.2000/- to Rs.4000/- per annum.	These three scholarships scheme are being implemented through National Scholarship Portal (NSP). Apply on-line on National Scholarship Portal (www.scholarships.gov.in). The portal has been opened for registration from 16th August 2020.								
2.	Post-matric Scholarship for Students with Disabilities	Class XI to Master's Degree or Diploma level	17000	2.50 lakh	There are different rates maintenance allowance for Post-Graduate, Graduate, Diploma, professional courses leading to degree, diploma etc. in different disciplines. It ranges from Rs.900-1600 p.m. for hosteller and Rs.550-750 p.m. for day scholars plus tuition fee (maximum ceiling Rs.1.50 lakh per annum), book allowance and disability allowance ranging from Rs.2000/- to Rs.4000/- per annum.	Last date for submission and verification of applications on NSP is as under-								
3.	Scholarship for Top Class Education for Students with Disabilities	Graduate/ Post Graduate Degree or Diploma in 241 notified institutions of excellence	300	6.00 lakh	Monthly maintenance allowance of Rs.3000/- for hostellers, Rs.1500/- for day scholars, Rs.2000/- per month disability allowance, book grant Rs.5000/- per annum and tuition fee upto Rs.2.00 lakh per annum.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Levels</th> <th>Last Dates</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Students registration</td> <td>31.10.2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Institute Verification</td> <td>15.11.2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td>State Verification</td> <td>30.11.2020</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Levels	Last Dates	Students registration	31.10.2020	Institute Verification	15.11.2020	State Verification	30.11.2020
Levels	Last Dates													
Students registration	31.10.2020													
Institute Verification	15.11.2020													
State Verification	30.11.2020													
4.	National Overseas Scholarships for Students with Disabilities	Master's degree and Doctorate degree in foreign universities abroad	20	6.00 lakh	Maintenance allowance of 9,900 Pound (Great Britain) per annum for UK and for other countries US \$15,400, plus Tuition fees, Annual Contingency Allowance, cost of air passage, etc.	Receipt of application is open throughout the year. The proforma for submission of application is given on the website of the Department i.e. www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in. Application may be submitted in the prescribed proforma to Under Secretary (Scholarships), Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Room No.519, 5th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003								
5.	National Fellowship for Persons with Disabilities	M.Phil/Ph.D in Indian Universities	200	No income Ceiling	Monthly Rs.31,000/- for JRF (first two years) and Rs.38,000/- for SRF. And year onwards up to complete duration of the course) and Contingency Grant, Escort Allowance/Reader Allowance and House Rent Allowance (at applicable rates)	Selection is done by the University Grants Commission. The candidates may apply online as and when applications are invited by UGC. No application is required to be sent to Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities								
6.	Free Coaching	For appearing in competitive examinations for jobs in Government/ Public Sector and admission to technical and professional courses	2000	6.00 lakh	Coaching fee shall be payable to empanelled Institute by this Department. Stipend and Special allowance for Disability @ Rs.7,000/- per month for outstanding candidates and Rs.4,500/- per month for local candidates shall be payable.	The Coaching Institute may send their proposals in the prescribed application form with the recommendations of concerned State Govts./UTs and having registration certificate under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 for empanelment of the Coaching Institute.								

All the above scholarships are applicable to students with 40% & above disability and having a valid disability certificate to this effect issued by the competent medical authority. Disability is as defined in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

For further details, please visit: www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in

dasp 38117/1/0014/2021



Sudarshan TV requests SC for live telecast of hearing on 'Bindas Bol'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sudarshan TV, which is facing legal action for defaming the Supreme Court, has moved an application seeking a live telecast of the hearing of the plea, which has raised a grievance over its "Bindas Bol" programme, the promo of which would have the channel held air a "big episode" on the conspiracy to infiltrate Muslims in government service.

On September 15, the top court had restrained the channel from telecasting the episode titled "Bindas Bol" and further orders, saying that the "intent" of the episodes "prima facie" appeared to "vilify" the Muslim community.

The application filed by Sudarshan News through its director and editor Suresh Chavhanke said, "It is respectful

States bank on herbal immunity boosters to defeat corona

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the Covid-19 battered world continue to search for vaccine to combat the deadly virus, States in India are banking on herbal immunity boosters among other safety norms like masks and social distancing to keep the pathogen at bay which has so far infected 54 lakhs people and claimed 83,000 lives across the country.

While Tamil Nadu is distributing Siddha-based herbal immunity boosters like 'Aithimatharam' and 'Kabasura Kudineer', Karnataka is supplying ayurveda-based immunity enhancing tablets and decoction to the locals as part

of the fight against coronavirus. So is the case with Delhi and Punjab where cops are being armed with the formulation based on medicinal plants and essential oils to fight the virus from the front.

Punjab has recently announced doling out its health kits having medical gadgets like mask, oximeter besides medicines and an herbal immunity booster Amynity Plus to combat the virus. Nearly 3,800 police personnel have tested Covid positive in the State.

The herbal formulation is extract of around 51 herbs like harad, Neem, Amla, Sunthi, Ashwagandha, Gudduchi

besides eight essential oils to empower immunity of the body system.

Dr Sanchit Sharma, Executive Director of AAILM Pharmaceuticals which has developed the herbal brew, noted that not only a strong immune system but multi-systemic immune defence comes to the perfect solution to tackle the infection which has brought the world standstill.

Like in Punjab, police personnel in Delhi are being distributed Ayuraskha Kit comprising of 'Kudhi' concoction (herbal tea), 'Samsanam' tablet (made from Giloy), oil to be used as nasal drops and pack of Chyawanprash while Tamil Nadu is offering the concoction like 'Aithimatharam' and 'Kabasura Kudineer'.

Apex court hikes damages for victims of road accidents

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has enhanced the compensation to a victim of road accident saying that courts should be mindful that a serious injury not only imposes disabilities but also inflicts deep mental and emotional scars.


The apex court said it has emphasised time and again that "just compensation" should include all elements that would go to place the victim in as near a position as he or she was in, before the occurrence of the accident.

The top court said that no amount of money or other material compensation can erase the trauma, pain and suffering of the victims.

Palaniswami launched the scheme by distributing the immunity booster personnel.

Similarly, Karnataka Government is offering ayurveda-based immunity boosting tablets and decoction to lakhs of families in Shivamogga under an initiative to boost immunity. Karnataka Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister K S Eshwarappa as part of the fight against Covid-19. Likewise, Uttar Pradesh too is pushing herbal immunity boosters to fight the virus.

In fact, scientists from Government organisations too are doing their bit in this regard. For instance, Dr Sanjay Jakach, scientist from Researchers from National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) in Mohali, Punjab has developed an immunity booster herbal tea—a combination of six herbs such as Ashwagandha, Giloy, Mulethi, Tulsi and GreenTea to strengthen the body and build physical resistance to the virulent infections.



GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

Sl. No.	NAME OF BIDDING COMPANY	NAME OF WORK NOTIFIED TENDER	OPENING DATE	APPROX. VALUE	REGISTER TO THE BOARD	MOBILE OFFICE/CONTACT INFORMATION
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RD NO. 82888

Farmers' woes

The farm Bills may claim to open up the agricultural sector but the implied corporatisation may engulf farming communities



Corporatisation of agriculture in the US, where factory farming birthed an uninterrupted chain of "farm to fork," has wiped out rural communities, their organic methods, their unique produce, their relevance and independent existence. It all began in the 1970s to realise a dream of becoming big enough to command the world's food market with industrialised processes, merging of lands and shifting priorities to commodity crops. But in no time there was a glut due to over-production, farmers could never get the commensurate prices and were driven to debts. They had no option but to foreclose and sell out. Now farmers do not even make

up a quarter of the total US agricultural production. Buying into the promise of "making it big," they stretched their resources and were subsumed by food giants. This is exactly the scenario that our farmers fear following the passage of farm Bills, which began as ordinances during the lockdown, in the Lok Sabha. Yes, structurally, they may seem to streamline the agricultural processes but the farmer is not willing to give up his right to exist on his terms. Worse, he fears that these could ultimately reduce the current system of open-ended FCI procurement by the State. Little wonder then that farmers have taken to the streets across North India despite the Prime Minister's assurance that the new Bills would "empower" them by giving them direct linkages to the market and that their minimum support price (MSP) would still be guaranteed. Such has been the cascading effect of their anxieties that regional parties that sustain on the rural votebank, namely the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP), are under pressure to withdraw support to the ruling BJP as allies. The farmers have made it very clear that there would be no political future for parties and MPs that voted with the Government. So the lone SAD Minister, Harsimrat Singh Badal, resigned as Union Minister of Food Processing Industries while in Parliament Sukhbir Singh Badal warned that the proposed laws would "destroy" the 50 years of hard work done by successive Punjab governments to build the farm sector. While the Government insists that the new laws will help create "one nation, one market" and remove trader barriers so that farmers can sell their produce outside notified grain markets, the latter fear that in an open, competitive market, they would not get the minimum support price that the Government has promised to continue. Besides, they feel that entering into contracts with corporations would willy-nilly give the latter negotiating rights and greater control that would impinge on their autonomy and decision-making. And that although the older system would continue, as a weakened parallel mechanism, it would ultimately crumble before emerging monopolies. It is the implication behind the grandiloquence of a prosperous countryside and the devil in the detail that have our farming community up in arms. For example, the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill 2020, allows buys and sales outside the notified Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) mandis, thereby limiting their cartelisation tendencies. It also prohibits State Governments from collecting the fee, cess or levy for trade outside the APMC markets. A licence won't be required to trade in farm produce and anyone with a PAN card can now buy directly from growers. Hence they want clarity on what "outside" means and contrary to perception that they want middlemen out, they actually have a trusted bond with their existing commission agents, as their licence is proof of their credibility and delivery abilities, and would not want to experiment with an untested model. With most of them not literate enough about exercising their rights, dispute resolution could also end up being loaded against them. Besides, they would want direct payment as banks could deduct amounts as loan recovery. State Governments like Punjab are obviously upset that access to another market would dry up their own revenue from APMC mandis and are seeing this as an affront to federal controls. The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020, seeks to bring uniformity in contractual farming rules and State APMC acts. So the farmer can now enter into a contract with a corporate entity at a mutually agreed price. The problem here is that the mechanism for price fixation is not codified and farmers fear that corporations could use their institutional heft to manipulate or browbeat them into accepting their terms. Finally, the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020, aims to remove cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onion and potatoes from a regulated list, which is being seen as a major threat to the food security of the poor. The Government argues that as a food-surplus nation, we don't need it anymore but the pandemic-induced crisis has shown us how supply chain disruptions and local level hoarding can lead to a price spiral.

Farmers are not entirely without reason, battling as they are bad loans and non-payment of sugarcane debts in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. They do not want to be swamped. Many experts would argue that it is easy enough to push reforms in a sector that anyway makes a very small portion of our GDP. But farmers make up 60 per cent of the country's population, a voter base that no political party can ignore. Both the SAD and JJP owe their political legitimacy to farmers and have no option but to advocate their rights. Besides, both represent States that are heavily dependent on procurement at MSP. The Bills may well turn out to be the BJP's Achilles' heel provided the Opposition is quick enough to mount a united campaign.

Flight of fancy

Aerial sightseeing has become very popular as several nations still have travel restrictions on incoming arrivals



It began with some intrepid folks chartering planes to fly around. Then airlines such as Singapore Airlines and Australia's Qantas caught wind of the idea and ran with it. What are we talking about? The concept of "flights to nowhere in particular" seems to have taken off, literally. Qantas' recent trip, involving low-flying, aerial survey of the Great Barrier Reef, was sold out. Airlines are happy as this allows them to fly their aircraft relatively full, thus keeping some jobs safe and their expensive assets, the planes themselves, flying. Of course, scenic flights that operate in and out of the same airport are not a new concept. Qantas itself has run seasonal flights to Antarctica for several years every southern summer. But 2020, as we all know, is not like any other year, with several nations still putting travel restrictions on incoming arrivals, some not even allowing non-citizens to return and others instituting strict quarantine regulations, even for travel within a country.

As a result the global aviation business is hurting, thousands of pilots, cabin crew, ground crew and aircraft maintenance engineers have already lost jobs and unless things change dramatically, several thousand more will lose their jobs in the coming months. Many airlines have already shut for good and many more are in deep financial distress. It is not a good time to be an airline or be employed by one. So yes, while these flights of fancy might seem extravagant and a waste of money and resources, even adding pollution, their popularity means that airlines will probably survive as well as regain some overall confidence in flying. Let us not forget, these flights are being bought by people, who after six months of being grounded, want to get back in the air. They want to experience airport security and airline food for better or for worse. The very frequent flyer might have celebrated the first couple of months of no flying but almost every single person in that category misses that experience now and these flights, pointless as they might seem, allow these people to get a fix. There are many willing to take off in India as well and maybe a scenic flight to two around the Himalayas or the wonderful coastal areas may not be a bad idea here.

Presumption of innocence

The media overlooked the principles of ethical juridical coverage while tracking Sushant Singh Rajput's death and its sordid aftermath



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Media, particularly television, coverage of Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide — I will call the manner of his death so until established otherwise — and its aftermath has raised questions. Avoiding the mutually accusatory statements that have been doing the rounds, I would rather focus on some deeper issues involved. The first is whether the extent of coverage extended to it is justified.

The event, doubtless, was most tragic. A young man, who has given much to Indian cinema, and could have given more, has been snatched in his prime. The unnatural nature of his passing, the allegations and counter-allegations ranging over it, the controversy about who should investigate it, the Centre's decision to put the CBI in charge, the Supreme Court's verdict endorsing the transfer and the subsequent developments, certainly merited media coverage. But did it have to take up huge chunks of prime-time coverage on most channels since June 14 when the alleged suicide occurred?

The question is relevant when the country is facing a serious threat of Chinese aggression, a raging and escalating COVID-19 pandemic and an economy in crisis — to mention three of the most important challenges. The argument that there has been a loss of attention raises the question: Is the attention of the deserved quality and extent? The question can be countered by two arguments. First, any answer, in the negative or affirmative, will involve a large measure of subjective judgement and, hence, cannot be regarded as definitive. The second can be that viewers want the kind of coverage provided.

As to the first, all judgments on all issues are subjective in the nature of things. The quality of the evidence, a person or a group must assess it and come to a conclusion. The assessment is by individuals who have their own predilections and orientations, which they may or may not be able to overcome. But then, a society, would not have been able to function if it did not proceed by accepting as valid judgements that, under the normative criteria embedded in its underlying social contract, passed the tests of rationality and morality.



Here, rationality dictates the question: Whether Rajput's death and its sordid aftermath has greater relevance to the lives of the country and its people than the Chinese aggression, the COVID-19 pandemic and/or the economic crisis? One can argue that the aftermath's importance can hardly be understated because it is leading to the unravelling of the Bollywood drug network, which in turn may lead to the eradication of the drug trade's tentacles throughout the country. Against this, one has the Union Minister of State G. Kishan Reddy's written reply to a question by a Congress MP, K. Sudhakaran, in the Lok Sabha on September 15 stating, "Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) carries out search, seizure, arrest and investigation continuously throughout the year on the actionable inputs developed on its own and/or on receipt from other sources. During the period of COVID-19 lockdown, no such actionable inputs were received by the NCB revealing the nexus between people in the film industry and drug traffickers." He, however, added, "However, a case in this regard has been registered by NCB Mumbai zonal unit on August 28, 2020. Till date, in this case 10 persons have been arrested. Drugs such as Ganja, Hashish, Tetra Hydro Cannabinol and Lysergic acid Diethylamide have been seized in the operation."

Clearly, one has to see what the NCB produces. Until then it would be a bit too much to cite the possibility of its unearthing a pan-India drug racket to justify the massive coverage given to the train of events following Rajput's death. This leads to the second justification cited above: Viewers want it. This may be true given that the titillation and voyeuristic pleasure that a very large number of people get from watching the lives of celebrities unscramble or the aftermath of a shocking tragedy unfold.

The mere fact that people want to see something does not make it acceptable. Time was when nothing was considered wrong with masses assembled in Rome's Colosseum roaring in applause as a gladiator killed another or a lion. Even now, many in Spain are happy to witness bullfights in which matadors kill bulls in unequal combat, and thousands participate in jallikattu in South India in which bulls suffer horribly.

Clearly, popular participation or viewing does not by itself justify an event or its extensive and approbatory coverage — especially when it diverts attention from critical issues facing a country and trivialises discourse in what the German social philosopher, Jürgen Habermas, calls the "public sphere". The latter, he states in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962), is a virtual or imaginary community which does not necessarily exist in any identifiable space. In its ideal form, the public sphere is "made

up of private people gathered together as a public and articulating the needs of society with the state." It is a space where private individuals discuss public matters, which mediates between society and the state, leading to a critical consensus translating itself into a coherent public opinion, which makes the state accountable to citizens.

The media has a critical role in providing information for discussion in the public sphere. It, however, also has a responsibility to ensure that investigations proceed along right lines. Investigating and prosecuting agencies charged with delivering criminal justice are known to make mistakes and even frame innocent persons, often when under pressure to solve a crime. This writer's decision to become a journalist has been significantly influenced by his witnessing, as a school student in the early 1950s, the film *Call Northside 777*. Directed by Henry Hathaway, it was based on the real life efforts by a *Chicago Daily Times* reporter, James McGuire, undertaken at the behest of the city editor, Karin Walsh, that led to the release of Joseph Majczek, wrongly convicted of murdering a police officer and serving a 99-year prison term.

One, however, must proceed with extreme caution. Pressures on investigative agencies to produce results can make probes go horribly wrong, leading to prolonged, rough interrogation, arrest and prosecution of innocent people whose lives are dev-

asted in the process even if the judiciary exonerates them in the end. The matter reminds one of the title of Malcolm Feeley's much-discussed book, *The Process is the Punishment: Handling Cases in a Lower Criminal Court*, first published in 1979. Doubtless, the book deals with lower criminal courts in the US and not India. Also, we are talking here not just about lower criminal courts but the entire process. It can be a long haul, involving expenses in the form of lawyers' fees and transport, time spent in preparations, media pressure led to him/her being pronounced guilty? This does not mean that investigative journalism should not extend to cases under investigation. But it does mean scrupulous observation and fair play and integrity and two cardinal principles of democratic, libertarian jurisprudence, wedded to respect for human rights.

Should a person, eventually proved innocent, have been treated all this because media pressure led to him/her being pronounced guilty? This does not mean that investigative journalism should not extend to cases under investigation. But it does mean scrupulous observation and fair play and integrity and two cardinal principles of democratic, libertarian jurisprudence, wedded to respect for human rights.

The first is enshrined in Article 11(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948. It reads, "Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence."

It is also incorporated in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights, originally Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which came into force on 3 September 1953. It states in Article 6(2), "Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law."

The famous English jurist, William Blackstone, articulated the second principle when he wrote in *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, "all presumptive evidence of felony should be admitted cautiously, for the law holds that it is better that ten guilty persons escape than that one innocent suffer." Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the United States, went further and said, in a letter in March 1785, "That it is better 100 guilty Persons should escape than that one innocent Person should suffer, is a Maxim that has been long and generally approved."

Journalists should remember both, always. (The writer is Consultant Editor, The Pioneer, and author)

SOUNDBITE

I have always enjoyed watching Dhoni play because of the style he has. The aggression...I really like that. It has influenced me in my game, too, as football is a game where you need to be tough.

Footballer
—Anirudh Thapa



Farming is the soul of Punjab. Wounds on the body can heal but wounds of the soul will not be tolerated and condoned.

Congress leader
—Najot Singh Sidhu



Since the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic, Asian-Americans have been forced to endure demeaning and disgusting acts of bigotry and hate.

US Congresswoman
—Grace Meng



No matter how hard you work and what you do, the President is going to do something that is detrimental to keeping the Americans safe.

Ex-White House Aide
—Olivia Troye



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Question Hour matters

Sir — Question Hour is the liveliest hour in Parliament and lends a certain depth to proceedings. MPs ask questions to hold the Government and its Ministers accountable. It is a sacred parliamentary device meant for exercising legislative control over executive actions. Unfortunately, the ruling party has watered down the Question Hour for this monsoon session. This decision erodes the constitutional mandate of parliamentary oversight over executive actions as envisaged under Article 75 (3) of the Indian Constitution.

Noor Ahmad
Hyderabad

Tension continues to simmer at LAC

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's statement on "developments on the border in Ladakh" in Parliament hasn't made us any wiser. As was to be expected, the Minister was effusive in eulogising Prime Minister Narendra Modi, coincidentally on his birthday. Still, the fact remains that the PM denied Chinese incursions earlier on and still refuses to name China as an errant.

What Rajnath Singh left unsaid conveyed more than what he said on the floor of the Parliament. Former Defence Minister AK Antony succinctly remarked that protecting the territorial integrity of the nation entails the restoration of the status quo ante as in April which is not the same as maintaining the present status quo. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) should retreat from "inner areas" they occupied and allow patrolling by Indian troops up to the point they used to. Diplomatic efforts should continue to persuade China to see reason and agree for the restoration of the status quo. The situation along the LAC is now so volatile that



recurring frictions could escalate anytime. The Defence Minister underlined the state of preparedness of Indian troops for any eventuality. At the same time, he sounded statesman-like when he observed that there are many ways to start a war, not many to end it. Hence, it is axiomatic that cooperation is better than confrontation.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

be thorough, fair and transparent, and deemed as such.

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

China's digital theft

Sir — The collection of digital data on our President, Prime Minister, politicians, judges, military officers, industrialists and other dignitaries by China is a

matter of national security. An English newspaper report said that a company associated with the Chinese Government and the military is monitoring the Internet and social media activities of about 10,000 distinguished Indians and their close ones. It is clear from this that along with strategic and economic aggression, the digital breach is also a part of China's hybrid war against India. Along with the expansion of information technology and the Internet, the issue of data security is a matter of grave concern.

Bhupendra Singh
Haryana

Classes resume

Sir — The Telangana Government has announced that senior students of classes IX to XII should start attending school with 50 per cent teachers. However, with many parents unwilling to pay the fees for the month of June, the State Government must arrange the necessary amount from its Treasury to get the system rolling.

SM Arif Hussain
Hyderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

The expanding judicial remits

Over the years, the courts have changed the face of justice in India and focussed on issues where the executive has failed in its duty



VK BHAGUNA

In any system of governance, the judiciary is always an essential part of civilised life. In Indian history, too, kings played a very important part in dispensing justice. In the days of yore, population pressure was less, crimes were few as people were more law-abiding, resources were available in abundance and the system of justice was not stretched like it is today. By and large the judicial system followed the dictates of the rulers and it sufficed. However, with the advent of democracy, modern jurisprudence developed. Independent jurisprudence got a big boost after the Magna Carta was signed by the King of England in 1215. Now, people in most parts of the world recognise the judiciary as an independent pillar of Government. It is complementary to the executive and the legislature but independent from the other branches of Government, as judicial accountability enshrines the principle of neutrality.

The beginning of codified common law in India can be traced back to 1726 when a Mayor's Court in then Madras, Bombay and Calcutta was established by the East India Company. Needless to say, the courts changed the face of justice in India and focussed on issues where the executive failed in its duty. This judicial assertion started from the Kesavananda Bharati case when it ruled that basic features of the Constitution cannot be changed. The enunciation of the doctrine of Public Interest Litigation (a relaxation on the traditional rule of *locus standi*) by Justice PN Bhagwati opened the courts to socially-disadvantaged sections of society and course correction in the functioning of the executive.

In the recent past, many landmark judgments in the field of environment have endeared judges to the people of the country. Notable among them were Justice Kuldip Singh and Justice AN Verma. The 1996 Godavari case turned the trajectory of forest and wildlife management in India. Despite the enactment of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, the lackadaisical attitude of the Central and State Governments put forests and biodiversity at great risk. Interventions by courts in the last 24 years forced executive agencies to act for the smooth implementation of constitutional provisions for the conservation of forests and wildlife resources.

India was one of the earliest nations in the tropical world to implement working plan provisions for managing forests sustainably. However, the working plans were almost forgotten by it. The Supreme Court, through its interventions, streamlined forest management in the country and forced respective governments to prepare and regulate management of forests through working plans. Now the results are visible on the ground.

Similarly, rampant mining in forest areas is being closely monitored by the apex court. This positive action of the Supreme Court struck a balance in restoring the constitutional obligation of the executive. Yet another instance of excellent intervention relates to declaring Ganga River a life entity by the Uttarakhand High Court. Such decisions have touched the lives of millions of our citizens. What is most significant in this regard is the recognition of the rights of those who cannot speak for themselves like trees, animals and rivers which are crucial for sustaining life on Earth. The establishment of the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) in the country, which now has an impressive collection of nearly ₹50,000 crore in its kitty, was possible on the direction of the Supreme Court.

In yet another epoch-making intervention, the apex court came down heavily on the real estate-politician-bureaucrat nexus in Noida. A Supreme Court Bench, headed by Justice Arun Mishra, sent a stern message to those involved in the Annapali housing projects. The builder Anil Sharma, who was allegedly in league with politicians and officers of the Noida Authority, swindled more than ₹8,000 crore of homebuyers' hard-earned money. This crime was perpetrated under the noses of those who were supposed to protect the interest of the people. The problem with our governance system is such that it gleefully ignores the sufferings of the people at the hands of criminals and the corrupt. The Supreme Court has been relentlessly trying to restore faith in the rule of law among the 40,000 hapless homebuyers while the executive with all its power has failed miserably on all counts. The court had appointed a receiver for the case, tied up funds from banks and asked the National Building Corporation to complete the projects. The promoters of Annapali are cooling their heels in jail for the last six months and their properties are under auction.

The vital question is why does the executive fail in its duty and why does the judiciary have to step in? The answer lies in the lopsided democracy we follow, wherein only vote-fetching and Government formation are a priority of our political masters and public interest takes a back seat. Because of this the remits of the judiciary are being redefined. The judiciary, however, also needs to reinvent itself on certain issues concerning quick delivery of affordable justice so that it does not fall into the same rut like the executive. (The writer is a retired civil servant)

YOU LOOK AT COUNTRIES. IN AUSTRIA THEY LIVE IN THE FOREST. AND THEY DON'T HAVE FIRES LIKE THIS. AND THEY HAVE MORE EXPLOSIVE TREES.

—US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

POINT COUNTERPOINT



AUSTRIA IS A COUNTRY WHERE PEOPLE DO NOT LIVE IN THE FOREST, BUT RATHER WITH THE FOREST AND IN A CLOSE, SUSTAINABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE.

—AUSTRIAN AGRICULTURE MINISTER ELISABETH KOESTINGER

A matter of interest

If borrowers get interest relief during the moratorium period, bank investors and depositors would stand to lose unless compensated by the Govt, like it happens in farm loan waivers



SUBHASH CHANDRA PANDEY

Responding to the pandemic, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had 'permitted' banks to grant moratorium on payment of instalments of term loans due after March 1 up to August 31. A similar dispensation was "allowed" on recovery of interest on working capital. The moratorium was initially permitted up to the end of April and 55.1 per cent of customers of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs), accounting for 50 per cent of outstanding credit, had availed this facility. In Public Sector Banks (PSBs), 80.3 per cent of all individual customers, accounting for 80 per cent of total outstanding individual loans, opted for the moratorium. A whopping 74 per cent of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) borrowers and 28.8 per cent of corporate borrowers, covering 81.5 per cent and 58 per cent (by outstanding amount in category loans), availed the facility.

For private banks, 41.8 per cent of individual customers, accounting for 80 per cent of outstanding individual loans, and 20.9 per cent of all MSME customers opted for moratoriums, comprising 42.5 per cent of outstanding loans to MSMEs. About 21.6 per cent of corporate borrowers, covering 19.6 per cent of total outstanding corporate loans, had availed the facility.

The Supreme Court has extended the moratorium and the Central Government has appointed an expert panel to look into the issue. Exactly how many loans accounts and what loan amount is under moratorium are not known. Some borrowers may have decided against seeking the moratorium facility due to uncertainty about relief on interest. Had the interest relief been announced upfront, almost all borrowers would have instantly opted for the moratorium, except possibly for borrowers too proud of their financial standing to seek any relief.

Since the moratorium was extended only up to August 31, it was the borrowers' call to take a wager on the verdict and decide whether to opt for a moratorium or not. It is unclear if the relief, if and when granted, would be available only to those availing of the moratorium. Overall, the system lacks incentives for those remaining fully compliant while the non-compliant people may have to get some relief. Had the interest relief been a matter of legal right under the Banking Regulation or Disaster Management Acts, it would have been through by now. The Disaster Management Act (DMA), empowering the Government to take immediate relief and rescue measures, cannot be overruled by the non-compliance of the RBI. Legally binding orders regarding timely payment of salaries, non-recovery of rent and school fees and so on could not be issued for this reason. Appeals to good conscience is a different matter.

Likewise, the Banking Regulation Act (BRA) would by itself not confer any rights on the RBI to mandate any alteration in the 'POSHAN Abhiyaan' entered into by the banks unless supplemented with legal remedies under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest Act (SARFAESI Act) or the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). Appropriately, the RBI has 'permitted' grants of moratorium while extending regulatory forbearance on recognition of the non-performing assets (NPA). The BRA Act does not empower the RBI to mandate

“IN THE ABSENCE OF FULLY DISAGGREGATED DATA ON DIFFERENT TYPES OF LOANS UNDER MORATORIUM, A BACK-OF-THE-ENVELOPE QUANTIFICATION OF THE IMPACT OF INTEREST RELIEF CAN BE ₹1 LAKH CRORE PER MONTH ASSUMING INTEREST RELIEF TO BE ABOUT ONE PER CENT PER MONTH ON TOTAL PRE-PANDEMIC OUTSTANDING CREDIT OF ABOUT ₹100 LAKH CRORE. EVEN DIRECT FISCAL RELIEF TO THE GENERAL POPULATION IS NOT OF THIS MAGNITUDE



changing loan terms already contracted. Loan contracts can be changed only on the orders of insolvency courts. Mandatory moratorium requires more than the BRA Act.

There are no free lunches in economics except those paid for by others. If borrowers get interest relief during the moratorium period, bank investors and depositors would stand to lose unless compensated by the Government. Like it happens in farm loan waivers, Charity at others' expense is systemic. Relief to borrowers at the expense of depositors is akin to relief to consumers ending up suppressing remunerative market prices for farmers. The bank depositors are also adversely impacted by the pandemic-induced fall in interest rates that stand to benefit non-borrowers as well as the borrowers who are able to refinance high-cost old loans. The post-outbreak rate cuts and liquidity infusion by the RBI, aided by rising foreign exchange reserves, has caused a precipitous fall in interest rates. Some are offering record-low home loan interest rates under seven per cent per annum with new products of repo-linked home loans on offer. Low interest rates bring cheer to borrowers but gloom to depositors.

There are no fiscal guarantees to depositors on minimum interest rates and the IBC haircuts have been too costly in some cases. When corporate borrowers get a tax reduction bonanza, they don't share the booty with lenders as they are not obliged to. When farm loans are waived, Governments provide fiscal support to banks but at present the Centre does not seem able and willing to compensate the banks for interest relief.

In the absence of fully disaggregated data on different types of loans under moratorium, a back-of-the-envelope quantification of the impact of interest relief can be ₹1 lakh crore per month,

assuming interest relief to be about one per cent per month on total pre-pandemic outstanding credit of about ₹100 lakh crore. Even direct fiscal relief to the general population is not of this magnitude.

Financial stakes on the Supreme Court's verdict are very high. The interest relief has been sought from the highest court of justice precisely because it is not a legal right. The golden balance of justice is being watched by distressed borrowers and anxious depositors. All borrowers are not equally distressed by the pandemic. Some differentiating criterion based on quantum of liability outstanding on March 1 and purpose of loan (whether educational, for first home/car or second one, for the Economically Weaker Section or affordable housing, past credit history) and proven impact of the contagion on income can be evolved to give relief to a truly needy class of borrowers. The relief given to this subset should not be entirely a burden on bank depositors. Ideally such relief is best provided by governments under fiscal stimulus paid by taxpayers, current or future.

The need to maintain the health of banks can hardly be overemphasised. Deep-rooted socio-cultural beliefs stigmatising indebtedness (debted person embarrassed and lenders reviled) continue to change worldwide.

Post World War, the wheels of growth are lubricated by the continuous supply of credit. India joined the borrow/spend bandwagon in the 80s. Lending by Scheduled Commercial Banks rose from ₹8,64,300 crore (30 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)) at the end of March 2004 to ₹67,35,200 crore at the end of March 2014 (60 per cent of the GDP). At present, bank lending is only about 50 per cent of the GDP.

As on July 31, the total deposits of SCBs stood at ₹14,61,680 crore (₹12,44,583 crore a year ago); outstanding credit was

₹102,65,888 crore (₹97,29,002 crore a year ago) and investments were ₹42,78,294 crore (₹35,57,063 crore a year ago). The combined effect of risk aversion of banks to lend and predominantly domestic financing of fiscal deficit is that only about two-third of deposits get lent to non-Government entities.

We have made great strides in terms of expanding the reach of banking services and financialisation of savings but high-profile delinquencies by those who can afford to pay continue to eclipse these achievements.

The gross NPA of SCBs that had peaked to 11.2 per cent in 2017-18 has been brought down to 8.5 per cent by March. This achievement is a great cost to bank investors/depositors on account of hefty haircuts following not-so-competitive slump sales of distressed companies under the conventional, single round bidding system being followed under the IBC. The RBI has assessed that the gross NPA of all SCBs may increase from 8.5 per cent in March to 12.5 per cent by March 2021 and even to 14.7 per cent if the adverse economic impact of the pandemic is very severe. Seeing the plight of forecasting tools, the economic fallout of the contagion is hard to predict and measure.

Since bank lending is only about 50 per cent of the GDP and post-pandemic recovery would require a heavy dose of credit, it is imperative to maintain incentives for financial savings.

Erosion of bank profitability runs the risk of dire consequences of de-financialisation or informalisation of savings, derailing the hard-won recovery. The banking system needs calibrated support to prevent relapse into transmitted sickness.

(The writer is a retired IAS officer and former Special Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.)

Fight hunger with an inter-sectoral strategy

The 'POSHAN Abhiyaan' seems to have made some headway with an ambitious target of achieving a malnutrition-free India by 2022



SUNIL RAJPAL

It is disconcerting that every second child in India suffers some form of nutritional failure in India. Over the years, Government data have borne witness to how many people, especially women and children, do not get three square meals in a day. Worryingly, the potential disruptions caused by the lockdown may make the varied forms of malnutrition a lasting reality. However, the launch of the Government's flagship programme 'POSHAN Abhiyaan', seems to have made some headway, with an ambitious target of achieving a malnutrition-free India by 2022.

It also aims to reduce stunting in children aged between zero and five

years from 38.4 per cent to 25 per cent during the same period, along with reducing the level of anaemia and low birth weight in children.

With inter-sectoral convergence being the key strategy, the programme makes a shift from the existing approach of making planning and implementation the responsibility of one Ministry. Instead, it rightly notes the various critical components of success and makes 'POSHAN Abhiyaan' a multi-ministerial initiative. While the Ministry of Women and Child Development acts as the nodal office, the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation is responsible for the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) that ensures cleanliness and hygiene and the Ministry of Education is responsible for the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS).

Two other Ministries, that of Health and Family Welfare, and the one responsible for Rural Development, are looking after health programmes such as Mission

Indradhanush for immunisation coverage and rural income schemes such as MGNREGA, respectively. The LPG distribution scheme by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas enabled safe and hygienic cooking in underprivileged households.

But will India accept malnutrition as everyone's problem? The copious fund allocation for the 'POSHAN Abhiyaan' and its increase in the past three years have shown the Government's sincerity in taking the mission to its intended conclusion. From ₹950 crore in 2017-18, the current allocation for the 'POSHAN Abhiyaan' reached a sum of ₹3,400 crore for the financial year 2019-20. However, the potential challenge can be bringing social and behavioural change towards malnutrition at the community level. Ensuring equitable nutrition to build a healthier nation will require the following.

Eating local and seasonal food: This comprises a part of the trend known as 'sustainable eating' and has

been proven to be an economical solution to the food crisis globally. This saves time and the cost of transportation while promoting the use of fewer preservatives. Such food items are also suitable to fulfil the nutritional needs of the people in a way that is commensurate with the local environment.

The concept of introducing kitchen gardens in schools to fulfil some part of the requirements under the MDMS is an innovative step. In the coming days, introducing more steps, such as promotion of local, nutritious millet and crop diversification to promote traditional millet will be the right steps to complement this ongoing effort. Recent studies have observed that investing \$1 in nutrition-related interventions will have economic gains of about \$19 to \$22.

Addressing intrinsic social and cultural biases: In his paper 'POSHAN Abhiyaan: Making Nutrition a Jan Andolan', NITI Aayog member Vinod K Paul and co-

authors observe that despite the Pro-natalism in the Marriage Act, 2006 mandating the legal age of marriage at 18 for girls, 30 per cent of them are married before that age and eight per cent are already pregnant by the time they are 15-19 years of age. Facing intra-household deprivation due to their sex and age, poverty, these young girls often forego necessary nutrition, care, and rest even during their pregnancy, thus delivering low birth weight babies. For these babies, the cycle of malnutrition has already begun, they note.

This long-standing social bias deepens with socio-economic nuances. For example, in tribal households, the overall amount of food is anyway low and the men, by tradition, get the larger share of it, considering the physical labour they must undertake. A male child may get less to eat than his father, but is likely to get more than his mother, grandmother or sister. There is a need to free nutrition from the perceived requirement of the

receiver. Disseminating a scientifically-validated diet chart according to age and sex to the Panchayat level can help in spreading awareness and help households modify their practices.

Clear and visible measures for better accountability: Owing to the possible institutional leakages, Government initiatives should be monitored by some metric for accountability. For this, an enhanced information and process system is crucial. Monitoring, surveillance, and evaluation remain critical to all Government initiatives not only to firm up the people's trust but for better outcomes as well. Understanding ground-level realities will not only enrich policymakers' understanding, it may help in building a positive perspective among beneficiaries about public interventions. Public consultations, surveys among beneficiaries and social audits are some of the most effective ways to do this.

Building a case against hidden hunger: Few realise that malnutrition

is not exclusively a rural phenomenon. Many people, especially children, in the cities, too, suffer from malnutrition, albeit of a different kind. Since a good part of their diet is filled with refined and finished items, not to mention the large amounts of salt, sugar and trans-fat they consume, the children lack micronutrients such as iron and zinc. Traditional crops and millet, marked as anti-cereals that should have been part of our diet, are fast becoming a favourite of the educated and wealthier part of the society. However, as companies produce fast-moving, consumer goods look to the rural market to revive from the economic effect of the pandemic, it is important to ensure that rural consumers do not acquire the habits of cities. The onus is on the Government to ensure that the learnings from the cities reach the villages before it is too late.

(The writer is Associate Professor, Health Economics, IIMHR University, Jaipur)

128-W/269/OET/20-21/NRCH/NIT 07 Dated : 17.09.2020 2031/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

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NHM Help Line for Jammu Divisions: 1800180104, Kashmir Divisions: 18001800102

Notice Inviting On-line Proposals) from ICMR approved Labs for undertaking RT-PCR Testing, alongwith reporting as per ICMR Testing Protocols of Samples from J&K for COVID-19 on 'As & When Required Basis':

For and on behalf of the LT. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, online proposals are invited for on-line proposal(s) are invited from ICMR approved labs for undertaking RT-PCR testing, and reporting, of samples from J&K for COVID-19, in time-bound manner, on 'As & When Required Basis', as per the terms & conditions mentioned in the Notice Inviting Proposals available on the website(s) www.jktenders.gov.in and www.nikhnm.com.

S.No. 1. Date of Publishing SED :- 19.09.2020 at 1400 Hrs

2. Start Date of Downloading SED from Website :- 19.09.2020 from 1400 Hrs

3. Websites for Downloading SED :- www.jktenders.gov.in / www.nikhnm.com

4. Last Date of Downloading SED from Website :- 29.09.2020 upto 1400 Hrs

5. Seelification Start Date :- 19.09.2020 from 1400 Hrs

6. Seal Clarification End Date :- 28.09.2020 upto 1600 Hrs

7. Pre-Bid Meeting :- No

8. Website for Submission of Bids (Technical as well as Financial) :- www.jktenders.gov.in

9. Start Date for Submission of Online Bids :- 19.09.2020 from 1400 Hrs

10. Last Date for Submission of Online Bids :- 29.09.2020 upto 1400 Hrs

11. Date of Opening of Technical Bids :- 30.09.2020 at 1100 Hrs

12. Place of Opening of Technical Bids :- State Health Society, NHM, Regional Institute of Health & Family Welfare, Near Salnik School, Kandoli Nagrota, Jammu - 181221 (J&K)

13. Date of Opening of Financial Bids :- 30.09.2020 at 1400 Hrs

14. Place of Opening of Financial Bids :- State Health Society, NHM, Regional Institute of Health & Family Welfare, Near Salnik School, Kandoli Nagrota, Jammu - 181221 (J&K)

Sd/- Mission Director
National Institute of Health & Family Welfare, Jammu

No. DIP/K-NB-245120

SHORT CIRCUITS



NORA FATEHI

I feel lucky that I have been chosen to perform on Neha's (Kakkar) songs. Whenever I get a song, I get very excited knowing that it's hers as we know it will be a big hit. I will be performing on a beautiful voice, not all artists get a chance to do that. There are other singers with amazing voice but she has something which cannot be explained.



ANKUR BHATIA

Crackdown is a gallant project. I am playing the Pakistani Army Chief. It's a difficult character, totally contrary to what I am as a person. It is based on the secret services across borders. I think the level that web series are setting on OTT is commendable. It's important especially during the lockdown.



AKSHAY OBEROI

I've launched myself into the preparation and I'm going to be stationed in Dubai for 25 days. I'm super excited to be facing the camera after being quarantined for so long. I am glad to go back to the usual shooting drill in this beautiful city (Dubai)! We are all taking the required precautions and doing our best.



SONA MOHAPATRA

Calling others gold digger, mafia bimbo, *sasti copy*? Playing the messiah of the masses by using a tragic death is the worst act of opportunism. This doesn't make you the pillar of virtue, justice or the flag-bearer of Hindu Cultural values. It highlights the worst side.

PARIS HILTON

I see little girls nine and 10 years trying to get the perfect selfie, they're putting the filters on, they can't even look at themselves in the phone without putting a filter. I can't even imagine being a 13-year-old girl today.



VOGUE 45 MINUTES



The pandemic and then a series of lockdowns, that followed shortly after, gave us a moment to hit pause on our fast-paced lifestyles. There was enough time to reflect on our actions, relationships, beliefs, the power of art, fashion and creativity. We could discover a narrative that stirs the existing dialogue of love, where the boundaries are patched, corridors of division are narrow, cults and definitions are pushed far and wide to make space for love — the only thing that matters. This is what fashion designer Gaurav Gupta's muse turned out to be while he worked on his collection for the FDCI India Couture Week 2020, the digital version. He said, "Through our theme — *Name is Love* — we aim to put all the light on love; for self, all genders, all body shapes, all ethnicities, all sexualities, and most importantly, for inclusivity."

During the process of casting models for the show, which kickstarted online yesterday, he discovered "beautiful stories" where differences and sexualities were not just accepted but celebrated. Said Gaurav, "We were enamoured by every individual's sheer optimism. Their experiences felt familiar and bold. And I realised that their stories needed to be told."

A young, proud lesbian couple Anjali and Manauti living with their parents; Vee, an 18-year-old trans-male student; Anjali Lama, the first Indian trans-female supermodel, and many other models who earned a name in unconventional setups, became the designer's many ways to represent the varied forms of love. "I hope that this message resonates and connects with millions who are facing prejudice or feel inhibited to express themselves due to the pre-conceived societal norms," said Gaurav and emphasised, "We're celebrating uniqueness."

In these desperate times when humans have become more agile and vulnerable, the designer was glad that technology could make the Couture week happen. Said he, "It was the need of the hour to keep the show going, lighten up the mood and make things more celebrative. It has given me hope. It's so nice to see that millions of people around the world can view the show and our collections."

Well, the show is definitely different under the shadow of the novel Coronavirus but what's new this time? "We have presented 50 new women's wear, 20 men's wear and 50 jewellery pieces. I wanted my collection



THE SHOW MUST GO ON

As the India Couture Week kicks off digitally, designer GAURAV GUPTA's collection revolved around the themes of love and inclusivity and presented wedding fashion in sophisticated shades. By SAKSHI SHARMA

to reflect me and my choices. It had to be very 'Gaurav Gupta'. I also discovered new colours like Cerise, Bright Emerald, Berry Pink, Snow Pink, Shadow Pink and more. I wanted to give a new life to these sophisticated colours. I also wanted to do a whole Black-and-White line. It was very new and cool for me. I also played with a lot of organza giving rise to new forms," he said.

Another notable thing about his collection, he pointed out, was the indigenous technique of sculpting, which was reinvented in the form of structured wings, graphic spiralling ruffles and architected waves. "We have also incorporated dramatic shimmers, sheer fabrics, 3D floral applique, intricate hand embroideries along with pearls and metallic sequins," said Gaurav.

The designer's men's wear was refined with embroideries and mystical motifs. Said he, "We have introduced full Bordeaux velvet

suits with the house's signature sculpting techniques, punctuating the looks and creating perfect statement pieces for a cocktail or reception."

The garments, sharply tailored and accented with ornate hand embroideries, gave a meticulous and detailed look — coming all the way from the crisp 'Downtown Abbey' shirt in Egyptian cotton. The collection was further elevated with timeless accessories across all categories like pocket squares, bow-ties and loafers.

Gaurav's collection also found their way to the couture jewellery. The line was expressed through five distinct elements of infinity, classic, pearl, feather and forest and



featured pieces created with rare diamonds, rubies, emeralds, opals and tanzanite — sourced from Burma, Botswana, Colombia and Hyderabad.

The handmade collection was created with precious stones, crafted in shades of white and rose gold. It was rendered with details of a custom wedding gown. The jewellery was inspired by the Indian heritage integrated with the influences of the Victorian era. Said Gaurav, "We have taken this ideology to construct and reinvent these jewels."

What makes our jewellery couture unique is a distinct approach, where each diamond is individually cut according to the design." His latest collection included necklaces, bracelets, rings, earrings and ear-cuffs.

Talking about whether the festive market is trending more than the wedding one, the designer chose the latter. He said, "The wedding market is more in trend and will always be. Brides are looking for authentic sculptures and that 'wow' factor, something timeless that they can wear even after four to five



years. They can also mix and match a lot of things from my collection. They wear our lehenga blouses with saris because there's so much detail in each element that one is able to play it up as and when they want to."

When we talk of the Couture Week, it is imperative to know the consumer behaviour as the buying pattern internationally has undergone a drastic change. The gulf countries are purchasing more as they are comparatively less affected from COVID-19. Added Gaurav, "But slowly and gradually, the international markets are coming back into line. We have a big market in the gulf all across UAE and Middle East. Earlier, they used to fly down and have couture appointments but this time they're all purchasing our products online, even couture. They do video consultation with our stylists and get garments fitted virtually."

TRIBUTE

A woman who knew men

As fashion designer SHARBARI DUTTA breathed her last, netizens remember her immense contribution to ceremonial menswear

Fashion designer Sharbari Dutta was found dead inside the bathroom of her South Kolkata's Broad Street residence on the intervening night of Thursday and Friday.

As per police sources, Dutta was found dead inside her bathroom at around 12.15 am on Friday. Officials of local police station and the Kolkata Police headquarters' Lalbazar's homicide branch reached the spot at night.

Her family members said Dutta (63) was last seen during the dinner on Tuesday. After that she also went uncommunicated. Primary investigation suggests that she died of a sudden cardiac attack in the toilet. But Dutta's family members claim that she was otherwise keeping fine and had no such chronic ailment.

Kolkata Police's homicide branch will carry out the investigation to find out the actual reason of the designer's sudden demise.



Dutta's body was sent for the post-mortem examination.

Daughter of celebrated Bengali poet Ajit Dutta, Sharbari Dutta was a popular name in the costume designing industry for over past few decades, and was the only women designer to work on men's ethnic fashion wear. It was Dutta who had introduced coloured Bengali dhitis and designer Punjabi kurtas to the mainstream fashion world with her exclusive touch on bright colours along with embroidery works.

The fashion mogul has also styled present Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan and cricketer Sachin Tendulkar.

Dutta has shattered stereotypes defining men's ethnic fashion over the years. Well, through a flood of condolences from models, actors and people from the film industry for her family on social media, we can certainly see how significantly she contributed to the Indian fashion at large.

—With inputs from agencies

STUDIO CHAT 15 MINUTES

Farhan kickstarts IPL

Actor Farhan Akhtar will open Star Sports' Live Broadcast on 'Cricket Live', ahead of the opening match of Dream 11 IPL 2020. The nation has been going through tough times due to COVID-19, making this season even more special since it gives a reason for people to come together to watch our very own tournament.

Farhan will set the tone of the tournament by introducing 'Cricket Live', before the much-anticipated clash between Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings. He will be addressing today's testing times, and how we need to ride over this crisis.

Speaking on this, Farhan said, "These are trying times and our nation continues to persevere and move forward. With the world picking up pace in the new normal, the announcement of the IPL was a breath of fresh air. I have been looking forward to some sporting action, and Live Indian cricket is back after a long hiatus. There's much to learn from the journey of a team or an individual in it. To rise after you fall, to learn from one's mistakes and most importantly, to stay grounded and humble in victory. I resonate with this feeling even more after working on my forthcoming film *Toofaan* in which sport is the backdrop, made on sim-



ilar ethos. It is important to stay resilient, optimistic and ready to battle all odds for a better tomorrow. Personally, it also is an absolute pleasure to open the maiden show. Looking forward to a grand opening game."

(Watch the actor on Star Sports' pre-show Cricket Live from 6 pm onwards on September 19.)

CONVERSATION 60 MINUTES

Change the pace of change

Architect-author GOONMEET SINGH CHAUHAN tells AYUSHI SHARMA that his book, *Invertonomics: Eight Ideas to Transform India*, presents innovative yet pragmatic ideas for solving some of India's most fundamental and chronic problems. He has ways to deal with social inequity, cleanliness, safety of women, education and a sharply declining economy



India has made a remarkable progress in several areas over the seven decades since Independence. But at the same time, it has been beset by some fundamental and chronic problems. There is poverty and inequity, the air in many cities is unbreathable, the streets are littered with garbage, women feel unsafe, levels of basic education are low and the economy is sharply declining. The problems have lasted so long that they seem unsolvable in a lifetime.

Architect-author Goonmeet Singh Chauhan argues that they can actually be solved decisively. To achieve this, he presents a new methodology that he calls *Invertonomics* in his eponymous book, which inverts problems into economic opportunities. The book identifies eight persistent problem areas and proposes well-resolved and, in some cases, successfully-implemented models for tackling them. It presents innovative yet pragmatic ideas that will have a direct impact on our lives and help us realise the dream of an advanced India. We speak to him to find out how. Excerpts:

How did you conceptualise it?

I have always enjoyed solving problems, especially the stubborn ones. A three-pronged strategy typically works for me. It begins with analysing the problem and its key drivers in a manner where we can measure the critical root causes and their impact. Then, the process of solutioneering begins on how the 'whole relates to the parts', and simultaneously, how the 'parts relate to the whole'. It may seem abstract but the key to problem-identification typically lies in the parts, while the solution lies in the whole. Once the key stone and the king pin have been identified, the final step begins. The third leg of the exercise is imagining a new ecosystem approach, wherein all parts work synergistically to achieve a newer, brighter and beautiful possibility.

As architects, we have a free hand in creating newness within the limits of a land. Sometimes, we look at urban design and try to impact the quality of lives of people. But our interventions tend to be more physical in nature. This book is a response to my inner calling to go beyond the physicality so that true transformation can happen. It has ideas that use money, technology and common sense to solve some real, hard problems of our country.

What research went into it? And how long did it take you to complete?

I started thinking about it 10 years ago. I wanted to write 21 ideas but when I got to the research part and assessing the practicality of each solution, it turned out to be an exhaustive process and every idea took more than a year each to be accomplished. The book project relied on a team effort for research, which was based on



three methods — physical measurement and secondary data collection on ground, internet-based research to inform us of interventions that spread across geographies and time, interviews with informed persons in civil society and the bureaucracy to gauge the practicality of our solutions proposed. Every chapter starts with a general narrative of the problem — for this, we used internet-based research to find out about the history of the problem across geographies and time. For instance, we studied how honking was a public issue in post-World War I London and in Hitler's Germany. We studied the solutions that various governments and NGOs had attempted earlier; successful case studies that could be scaled up to be applied across a national scale; a lot more. It took seven years to complete the book including a year-long process of edits and updates.

Your book lists some successfully-implemented models that you've designed. Can you elaborate on them?

A few of the book's ideas have been or are being implemented with some initial success and a lot of promise.

The Wise foundation (World Initiative for Service and Education): This idea looks at establishing free residential schools for underprivileged children, who seek out a living foraging through garbage. These kids would now be housed in free residential hostels-cum-schools and receive love and care. They would grow up in campuses called Sanctuaries, which would be set in suburban fringes of the cities and would impart value based education based on *Sewa* and *Samridhi*.

These sanctuaries would be set up and run by educational trusts and the entire capital and operational expenditure would be paid by the trust. However, the government would step in as a regulator and funding agency. They would pay a fee for each child like a parent would pay for a residential school. This fee would enable the educational trust to receive a return on investment for the educational trust, thereby allowing this project to scale up. We are imagining a project of one million children across 500 centres in 30 states. The Delhi Government has also expressed its eagerness to adopt this model and are looking to establish the first such school in Delhi soon.

Clean and dry toilets: Six months before the Commonwealth games, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi took on the challenge of building public toilets of international quality in the city. They were in need of ₹100 crore for the project and struggled to get provision for the funds.

At this point, we suggested a model wherein new toilet complexes would be created on a PPP model and sited adjacent to existing MCD governed marketplaces. These would be flanked by two kiosks for ice-cream/flower/ATMs and on top of this structure would be a coffee shop of 2,000 square feet. The janitors and operations of the entire complex would be managed by the concessionaire. The revenues from pay and use toilets would far exceed the operational expenses and we recommended the

concessionaire would pay an annuity to the market association in addition to paying a upfront bid money to acquire the rights to build to the municipality.

The proposal was implemented and 28 new international-quality toilet complexes were constructed and the Municipality earned significant sums in revenue. The project has been hugely successful and can be easily replicated across India.

How can invertonomics be used widely in India, including the remote and underprivileged areas?

Invertonomics imagines a rejuvenated Bharat and proposes three mega interventions in India's rural hinterland.

Office of Bharat: The office of Bharat would be like a central business-cum-administrative district centre, one each for India's 650 districts. This 100-acre development would have within it a new administrative set up including civil administration, police, district courts, disaster management centre. Social infrastructure such as educational facilities, health facilities, cultural complex, sports centre, vocational training centre and business centres including an international logistics oriented agricultural *mandi*, ware housing, cold storage, food processing plants, commercial office centre, rural hotels, hostels, rural shopping centre etc. A new centralised powerhouse like this will spur the dormant administrative, commercial and socio-economic energies of our hinterland into action. This nucleus would infuse capital into the district economy and act like a catalyst of commerce and social change.

Cocoons: The Cocoon Corporation of India shall provide post-paid containers (called cocoons) to the farmers to store their produce and support with facilities for digital trade of their agri-commodities. This facility would help the farmers and allow them to fetch a better price for their produce and significantly empower them financially both in terms of revenue as well as the ability to raise capital at lower interest rates. The corporation shall also run a proper logistics centre to ship these cocoons (containers), which are rodent, dust and weather-proof, and even refrigerated in case needed for their trade destinations. The platform would radically empower farmers, making agriculture the engine of rural economy once again, not remittances from rural folk living in cities.

Residential development around the office of Bharat: A true socio-economic revival shall happen around these offices of Bharat as new residential developments, schools, hospitals, cultural complexes, etc, will enable jobs, livelihood and quality life for the rural folk. It will decongest our cities too as villages would become preferable places to live, learn and work.

Long-term solutions such as sensitising the public through education and awareness campaigns have always been there. Do you think this approach would lead to faster and more effective means of modifying citizen behaviour?

The book promises to change the pace of change. So far, we have been cutting butter with a chainsaw, while all we need is a butter knife called *invertonomics*! I feel citizen behaviour can be altered using a three-pronged approach, including creating an inspired citizenship wherein individuals act in the interest of collective good.

Money and technology: *Invertonomics* uses a carrot and stick approach by offering each individual monetary incentives or disincentives for expected citizen behaviour. For assessing individual behaviour, it uses non-invasive technology to gauge behaviour to the public domain. For example, to manage the incidence of honking on our roads, the book proposes an auditory charge of ₹1 for every instance of honking beyond a threshold of say 30 free honks a month. It further levies a charge of ₹10,

say for honking near a hospital or a night within a colony. It also incentivises the least honkers by measuring their relative performance to peers in the same city. Such positive citizens may receive recognition or rewards or corporate discounts, while non-compliant citizens would pay hefty fee. They would also receive surrogate tutorship on how to improve their citing behaviour by adjusting to acceptable behaviour.

Measurement, transparency and connectivity: More complex issues like safety in cities and equity would require an ecosystem level shift, which shall be achieved using measurement of some key parameters, tabling them in a transparent, technology-driven manner and then publishing the data real-time on public platforms so that all the stakeholders are connected with that data. Such awareness and collective intelligence of the ecosystem shall raise the median performance of all systems and accelerate the transformation to higher ground.

In a country as diverse as ours, how difficult do you think it is to catalyse change?

When demographics are diverse, one has to work out simple and binary solutions where expected behaviour by citizens is understood by all. Like the Odd-Even scheme of the Delhi Government was easily understood by an auto driver as well as a financial analyst because the expectation was binary. The compliance was high.

In India, we tend to obfuscate the law and the poor citizen often finds himself on the wrong side of it, forcing him to use unfair means to extricate himself out of the situation. This phenomenon has led to the incremental lowering of the median of citizenship, with citizens adopting a sort of flexible morality that suits their convenience. Inverting the use of very simple laws and the new ecosystem would lay down binary expectations. Also incentives in terms of money are easily understood by all. Money is like a universal language that possibly rivals music in its universal appeal! Money-based systems shall ensure that any change is demography-agnostic manner, successfully.

You've mentioned in the book, "In India, we are in a negative cycle as far as citizen participation for common good is concerned. This shift can only come from policy change and legislation aligned towards the creation of definitive goals." How do you think this can be acted upon in India, where it might take years to change policies and laws or create a new one?

Change is always bottom up. While it's always been the case, the instruments like new legislations, new institutions and a new ecosystem, the demand for it is always propelled by the need for it. It takes civil society and thought leaders to articulate a vision that gradually alters the popular narrative. Thereafter, the course of transformation can be taken through a series of small, incremental route, depending upon the willingness of the political dispensation and the strength of the advocacy to take a hard look at issues and seek convenient and strong resolutions.

We need conversations around inspired citizenship, and local-level leadership to demonstrate action in areas, which can be handled locally like segregation of garbage, pedestrian safety and much more. For this, we have also set up the *Invertonomics Foundation for India*, which promises to take up issues from the book and pursue them to make sure that they get implemented and how.

GALLERIA 15 MINUTES

PAPER TOWN

Jharkhand artist VIVEK DAS uses the traditional papier-mâché process to create sculptures that leave more than a floating memory. By UMA NAIR

Last month, I discovered the power of paper in the hands of an artist sculptor. I was looking at a lantern. One that was sliced vertically and had a surreal flavour. Suddenly, the object had become subject through an interplay colours and the contours. Master sculptor Vivek Das from Jharkhand is expanding the paper's potential through the time worn art of papier mache.

POWER OF PAPER

Paper oscillates through time and tide. Paper has been the greatest invention for an artist, it has been a symbol of possibility and an abacus for writers, researchers architects, designers, artists and sculptors ever since its invention in China around 105 A.D. We think of Leonardo da Vinci's drawings, we think of Rembrandt, Raphael, Rembrandt, Van Gogh and the ultimate Picasso. Paper is more than a medium, more than a material, it is the most humble of tools in an artist's hands.

Vivek Das's lantern tells us that paper has a vast potential as a material for sculpture. Not only is it versatile: it can be featherweight and translucent while being heavy and rigid like papier-mâché. But most importantly, it's non-toxic, it's not so expensive and is accessible to everyone. Vivek says, "I try to create sculptures all the time in the hope that I can convert these into bronze."

Curves, curls, convex and concave surfaces all come into play as he creates sculptural wonders that celebrate the malleable magic of paper mache. Vivek brings back the words of the great French writer and poet Rainer Maria Rilke who in his Book of Hours said: "Go to the limits of your longing... Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror."

In that universal cadence, Rilke assures us to "just keep going" for "nearby is the country they call life." Das exemplifies this and more in his brilliant works. Says he, "Whenever I try to pick out a subject to create, I find there is a



co-existence of life with things that connect — for instance, the lantern connects with life and light. I didn't want to create a portrait of the lantern as it is. That would be too common, I wanted a unique portrayal."

The lantern born of Vivek's many moorings and thoughts is a metaphor for the existence of man through thick and thin, for his spirit of being that lives through the times rendered both within and without. "Beauty has no other origin than the singular world, different in every case, hidden or visible, which each man bears within himself," said the French writer Jean Genet. Vivek's sculptures are about solidity and an inner life-force, their undulating forms conveying "tension, force and vitality."

UNTOLD HISTORIES

Vivek says, "I'm touching upon untold histories, as well as highlighting its parallel to my own identity." He appreciates the paper mache for its accessibility and explores the medium in various ways. "It's a practice that's very practical to follow," he says. "No kiln, foundry, or harsh

chemicals are necessary." He approaches the medium with empathy. "It's about assessing the composition I want to make, responding to it, and giving it what it needs," he explains. "My approach is to treat papier mache like a complex yet beautiful contextual composition with a dynamic, hidden life."

PAPER'S TACTILE FERVOUR

Using the traditional papier-mâché process to shape his sculptures, he models and occasionally carves the paper to achieve the desired shape, creating a sort of hybrid of sculpture and drawing. His admiration for paper's tactile qualities, the subtlety of its colour and the softness of its shadows evokes a sense of physical space.

The lantern seems to speak of a psychological space and time through the layering of paper. Looking at Vivek's works we realise that papier mache is innovative and inventive, there are endless ways that paper can be drawn on, cut, embossed and manipulated, both two-dimensionally and sculpturally to create masterpieces.

LET THE SHOW BEGIN

Glitzy IPL marks start of Indian sporting events in Covid times



PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's poker face, Virat Kohli's raw emotions and Rohit Sharma's effortless handling of his Galatians will be back to charm cricket fans across the globe with the Indian Premier League starting on Saturday, promising to be a happy distraction in a world scarred by Covid-19.

Rohit's defending champions Mumbai Indians will be locking horns with Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings in what is likely to be a fittingly exciting opening showdown here. The tournament, which has been shifted to the UAE due to five million plus Covid cases in India, is a "TV-only event," expected to be lapped up by all and sundry who crave for cricket and Bollywood in equal measure during prime time. Bollywood had its share of prime time in the past few months but rest assured, the next 53 days would belong to Dhoni's CSK, Kohli's RCB and Rohit's Mumbai Indians challenged by young pretenders comprising KL Rahul's KXIP and Shreyas Iyer's Delhi Capitals among others.

IPL happening in foreign shores is not a new phenomenon, not even the shift to the Emirates but as Indian sports hits the restart button with the billion dollar cricketing extravaganza, the hugely popular event to be



held closed doors in a bio-secure environment will be a new experience.

David Warner or Chris Gayle's towering sixes welcomed by artificial crowd cheer will be the new normal and the deafening roars during Super Overs will be missing but no one can complain as at least the show will go on in amid a devastating health crisis.

A look at the teams would indicate that Mumbai Indians by a distance is the most formidable with Rohit, Pandya brothers — Hardik and Krunal, the indomitable Kieron Pollard and the 'King of Death' bowling Jasprit Bumrah giving it a menacing look.

The perennial Dad's Army Chennai Super Kings can never be counted out till that man with 'Hawk Eyes' uses his peripheral vision behind the stumps.

Experience can't be bought and the likes of Shane Watson, Dwayne Bravo, Faf du Plessis and Ravindra

Jadeja have given their blood and sweat for the 'Yellows' and it would be no different this time.

For Kohli, winning a tournament as a captain would reaffirm his status even as naysayers question his style of leadership. The team is a shade better with presence of Aaron Finch, Chris Morris and the wonderfully gifted Devdutt Padikkal, who if all goes well, is destined to become a big name in years to come.

Delhi Capitals, with their new found vigour and more pragmatic new owners, found their mojo last year and would like to go one better under an enormously talented skipper in Shreyas Iyer, who can be matched in skills by a Prithvi Shaw or a Rishabh Pant.

Seasoned brains like Ravichandran Ashwin would be ideal foil for the team's youthful exuberance.

KXIP's KL Rahul is a class act and how he shapes as a leader could also create a narrative for the future

MSD is fresh, engaged & determined after break: Fleming

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

He is sabbatical from the game has done Mahendra Singh Dhoni a world of good, Chennai Super Kings coach Stephen Fleming said on Friday, asserting that the enigmatic skipper is "mentally engaged and determined" to encounter the challenges of a "tactically different" IPL.

Dhoni's CSK will take on Rohit Sharma's Mumbai Indians in the tournament opener on Saturday. Fleming, a former New Zealand captain, stressed that his team's experience of winning big matches will come in handy during the next 53 days.

Dhoni retired from international cricket last month after being on a break for over one year and when asked about the 39-year-old's preparedness for the IPL, Fleming said, "It has been no different. He's very fit and mentally, he's been very engaged and determined."

In some ways the break can work for the experienced and older



players that we have. MS is fresh and ready to go," Fleming said in a pre-tournament interview to CSK's official website.

The three-time champions are banking heavily on their 35-plus players, including Dhoni himself, Shane Watson, Dwayne Bravo, Kedar

Jadhav, and Imran Tahir to name a few.

"...Experienced players identify key times and that's why they've done so well in their careers. They can turn games, absorb pressure or just sum out the situation. That's what experience is about and that's why we value it so highly," said Fleming.

"And that's why we've been able to get over the line in so many close games because the key players has been one with a lot of experience. And you also mix that with skill. You are conscious of having a skilful side and adding youth when we can and with that get the balance pretty right."

Starting against a quality side like MI certainly exciting for Fleming, who wants his men to have a crack at the defending champions after their agonising last-ball loss in the previous edition.

"The first game is always full of anxiety, nerves and excitement, and CSK is certainly an extra exciting team to play against. We'll have to be on our toes, pressure and we enjoy that. We've earned the right to play the

eventual champions.

If Ben Stokes is the world's best all-rounder across formats, Andre Russell probably is the bit more destructive in this format as he hit 52 sixes during their horrendous last edition.

The 2018 U-19 World Cup stars — Shubman Gill, Shivam Mavi and Kamlesh Nagarkoti — add a dash of youth to the squad. Among leadership skills that might prove to be handy in case of a normally inconsistent Dinesh Karthik misfires.

Rajasthan Royals is the weakest team lacking quality in the Indian line-up but expect Jos Buttler, Steve Smith and Jofra Archer to do the heavy lifting in Stokes' absence. Stokes is currently in New Zealand to be with his ailing father.

quota of foreigners.

For CSK, the core has remained the same save for Suresh Raina, who was a regular performer last season and has pulled out citing personal reasons this year. His replacement Ruturaj Gaikwad remains in quarantine having tested Covid-19 positive at least five times.

But there is Watson, Ambati Rayar, and Jasprit Bumrah. Jadeja, and Bravo, who have all won matches from hopeless situations.

Lynn banking on T10 form in UAE to fire in for MI

Abu Dhabi: Going through a poor run of form, Australian top-order batsman Chris Lynn is banking on his exploits at last year's T10 tournament in UAE to turn things around and contribute to his IPL team Mumbai Indians.

Lynn, a hard-hitting opener, had a poor run at the recently-concluded Caribbean Premier League having scored less than 150 runs in nine games for St Kitts and Nevis Patriots.

However, the 30-year-old was the highest run-getter at last year's T10 league in UAE. He amassed 371 runs for Maratha Arrians and also smashed the highest individual score of 91 off 30 balls.

"I have got some really good memories from the T10 tournament last year here in Abu Dhabi, so hopefully just reconnect with what worked for me there and hopefully put some performances on the board," he said.

However, Lynn will find it difficult to break into the MI's playing XI with coach Jaywardene already making it clear that he will not tinker with the opening combination of Rohit Sharma and Quinton de Kock.

The Australian said he is ready to bat at any position that Mumbai Indians coach Mahela Jaywardene deems fit. Rohit "what a world class player, he's been outstanding on the board, on and off the field what he's contributed to Mumbai is something really really special. And Quincy (de Kock) has been outstanding with the gloves and bat in hand," Lynn said in a video posted on Mumbai Indians' official Twitter handle.

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E-mail: oghmehelp@ohpcid.com

ADDENDUM TO TENDER CALL NOTICE NO. OHPC: SGM (EL): UKHEP: No. 18/2020-21 Dated: 27.08.2020

Name of the Work: Hiring of 01 No Commercial Registered Light Vehicle (BS-IV/VI Version, Pollution Free, Make-TUV300/ Bolero/ Sino Gold/ Ertiga) for deployment for Divisional Head Duty and Poll Vehicle for Executives under Maintenance Division, UKHEP, Barinput)

Sl. No.	Description	As per Tender Notice	As per Addendum
1	Receipt of Sealed Tender Specification	Only at the Office of Sr. General Manager (Elec.), Upper Kolab HE Project, Barinput	At the office of (1) Sr. General Manager (Elec), Upper Kolab HE Project, Barinput and (2) Office of Sr. General Manager (Elec.), Corporate Office, Vanivihar, Bhubaneswar
2	The date & time of receipt of tender	Up to 16:00 Hrs of 24.09.2020	Up to 16:00 Hrs of 24.09.2020 for both the locations
3	The Place, Date & Time of opening of tender	At office of SGM (Elec), UKHEP, Barinput at 16:30 Hrs of 24.09.2020	At office of SGM (Elec), UKHEP, Barinput at 16:30 Hrs of 06.10.2020

All other terms and conditions of Tender Specification shall remain unaltered.

For details of tender documents and Terms & Conditions downloading please visit our website www.ohpcid.com
OIPR-04002/11/0027/2021

C & P Head, Uter Kolab HE, OHPC Limited, Barinput

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF DISTRICT MEDICAL & PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER, BARGARH
No. 3492
ADVERTISEMENT FOR CONTRACTUAL ENGAGEMENT
Date: 18.09.2020

The following contractual positions under Zilla Swasthya Saniti, National Health Mission, Bargarh will be filled through walk-in interview. These positions are purely contractual in nature and for a period of 11 months subject to renewal as per ZSS terms & conditions based on performance and subject to continuance of the programme.

Sl. No.	Name of the post	Vacancy	Remuneration & Performance Incentive	Qualification	Dates of Walk-in-Interview
1	District Data Manager, ZSS	1 No.	Rs.24,311 + Performance Incentive	The candidate must have passed in any of the following subject from a recognised University / Institution with minimum 55% marks. • M.Sc in Computer Science or IT • Master in Computer Application / B.E in Computer Science or IT • Electronics / & Tech in Computer Science or IT or Electronics	01-25/09/2020 By 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM, Office of COMA/PHO, Bargarh
2	Block Programme Manager	1 No.	Rs.22,970 + Performance Incentive	The Candidate should be a Post Graduate with minimum 55% marks. S/he should have completed one year Diploma Course in Computer application from recognised / registered institute.	01-25/09/2020 By 1:00 PM to 05:00 PM, Office of COMA/PHO, Bargarh

The interested eligible candidates for the above position may attend WALK-IN-INTERVIEW at District Training Unit, Office of COMA/PHO, NHM, Bargarh as per the date and time mentioned against each. No candidature shall be entertained after the scheduled timing as mentioned against the position. The candidates must bring their original certificates along with prescribed bio-data format and a set of self-attested photocopies of required testimonials for verification. All such communication with respect to status of application shall be communicated through web hosting only.

Other details, terms & conditions can be downloaded from the official website of Bargarh District at www.bargarh.nhm.org. The undersigned reserves the right to cancel any or all applications without assigning any reason therefor.

Sd/-
Chief District Medical & PHO cum District Mission Director, NHM, Bargarh

Sindhu pulls out of Denmark Open

New Delhi: Olympic Silver medalist PV Sindhu on Thursday pulled out of the Denmark Open tournament scheduled to be held in Odense from variety to 18.

Sindhu is not playing in Denmark, she has pulled out," a source in the Gopichand Academy told PTI.

The BAI had on Tuesday written to the players who have sent their entries for the Denmark Open, stating that they would be "travelling or participating at their own responsibility due to the current pandemic" and "have to send their consent within September 17".

Though Sindhu decided against travelling to Denmark, she plans to participate in the Asia Open-I and Asia Open-II scheduled to be held in November.

Kidambi Srikanth, Lakshya Sen and Subhankar Dey were among those players who have sent their consent letters and will be participating in the super 750 event.

Saina Nehwal and Parupalli Kashyap have also sent their consent letters but will take a final call nearer to the date of the tournament.

Variety in spin, will give CSK edge in UAE conditions: Lee



New Delhi: Former Australian speedster Brett Lee has tipped three-time champions Chennai Super Kings to win the 13th IPL, saying the variety in their spin department gives them an advantage in the UAE conditions.

"They (CSK) are up there. I have picked them to win and I think CSK have a good chance because of their spin attack," Lee said on Star Sports show Game Plan.

"With Santner, Jadeja needs to step up and be the No 1 spinner and CSK have got great variety in the spinners. It's the same, so they are at an advantage for the conditions in the UAE as the tournament progresses."

Four-time winners Mumbai Indians will miss the services of their bowling spearhead Lasith Malinga who opted out of the tournament citing personal reasons.

However, the 43-year-old Lee said he has no doubts that Jasprit Bumrah will be able to fill in the shoes of the experienced seamer.

"I am always Bumrah's fan since he burst onto the scene some years ago. He has got a decent bowling action, he pushes the ball in, and can swing the ball both ways. He is good with the new ball but I like him with the old ball and that's why he can fill the shoes of Malinga and can bowl at death overs," he said.

"He can bowl at 140kmph and zoom the ball at the batsman's feet. He is bowling the yorker consistently and there are very less bowlers like that, so he can fill those shoes."

Lee, who has 310 wickets in 76 Tests and 380 scalps in 221 ODIs, said he considers Mumbai Indians in his top four.

Spurs avoid embarrassing exit Liverpool finally signs Thiago

AFP ■ LONDON

Tottenham scored twice in the final 10 minutes to avoid a humiliating Europa League exit to Lokomotiv Plovdiv as Jose Mourinho's men came from behind to beat the nine-man Bulgarians 2-1 on Thursday.

Harry Kane's penalty and Tanguy Ndombele's winner five minutes from time ensured the 2019 Champions League finalists did not fall at the first hurdle of their Europa League campaign to a side that have never progressed beyond the qualifying stages of European competition.

"I think it was a helluva experience for the players. Sometimes in football miracles happen and when you play a knockout, one leg it is the perfect scenario for a miracle to happen," said Mourinho.

"Everyone on their side had the moment where they dream and we had the



moment where we believed a nightmare could arrive."

Mourinho named a strong side featuring Kane, Hugo Lloris and Son Heung-min with just four changes from Sunday's 1-0 defeat to Everton to start their Premier League campaign.

But there was more evidence why Spurs are

desperate to secure Gareth Bale's return on loan from Real Madrid as they struggled to break Plovdiv down and went behind to Georgi Minchev's header 19 minutes from time.

The tie swung back in Spurs' favour nine minutes later when Momchil Tsvetanov punched clear off his own line and the referee had no option but to point to the spot and send Tsvetanov off.

A trip to Macedonia was then also shown a second yellow card before Kane dispatched the spot-kick into the top corner.

Ndombele has struggled for game time under Mourinho despite being the club's record signing.

But the Frenchman, who was introduced on the hour mark, proved the match winner by bundling home from close range.

A trip to Macedonia next week to face KF Shkëndija faces Mourinho's men in the third qualifying round.

AP ■ LIVERPOOL

Liverpool completed the signing of Thiago Alcantara from Bayern Munich on Friday, bringing in one of the world's most technically gifted players to add another dimension to the English champions' midfield.

The 29-year-old Thiago ended his seven-year spell at Bayern by moving for an initial fee of 20 million pounds (\$26 million), with a potential additional 5 million pounds (\$6.5 million) later.

"My decision is purely of a sporting nature," the Spain international said in a video announcing his departure from Bayern.

"As a football player, I seek new challenges to develop myself further. Bavaria will always be my home."

Thiago, whose father is former Brazil midfielder Marinho, leaves Bayern as a European Cup winner, his last match being the 1-0 victory over Paris Saint-

Germain in the Champions League final in August. He also won seven straight Bundesliga titles with Bayern.

"When the years are passing, you are trying to win as much as you can — and when you win, you want to win more," Thiago said.

"I think this club describes what I am as well. I want to achieve all of the goals, win as many trophies as possible."

At Liverpool, he will add a more creative edge — nurtured at Barcelona — to Jurgen Klopp's team — to a midfield that currently is more notable for its energy and intensity through hard-running players like Jordan Henderson, Georginio Wijnaldum and James Milner.

Thiago — with his technique, touch and vision — will provide Liverpool with more control in midfield, too, allowing manager Jurgen Klopp to adopt a different approach in certain games.

