

OPINION 8
RESCUE
PACKAGE**WORLD 11**
TRUMP WILL ACCEPT POLL
RESULTS: WHITE HOUSE**SPORT 14**
BAYERN MUNICH WIN
UEFA SUPER CUP

LUCKNOW, SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26, 2020; PAGES 14 ₹3



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TABU'S WORK:
TAMANNAH
12 VIVACITY

Protest against farm laws rages on

Normal life affected in Punjab, Haryana, UP, Bengaluru, TN, Bihar, Karnataka, Telangana

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Thousands of protesting farmers spilled on the streets in several parts of the country hitting normal life and rail and road traffic in a big way as part of their "Bharat bandh" protest against the farm bills.

Massive protests were seen in parts of Punjab, Haryana, Bengaluru, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Telangana, etc.

After holding separate protests, farmers under the banners Bharti Kisan Union, Krantikari, Kirti Kisan Union, Bharatiya Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan), Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee and BKU (Lakhnowal) with support of political parties, including the Congress, the RJD and the Trinamool Congress, as well as 10 central trade unions blocked highways, railway tracks, disrupted traffic and brought life to a standstill in several parts of the country.

According to reports, farmers blocked highways which include Chandigarh-Delhi, Amritsar Delhi, Delhi-Dehradun, Ayodhya Lucknow, B a g h p a t - B a d a y u n , Bommanahalli on Karnataka-Tamil Nadu highway. Meanwhile, farmers from Punjab have extended the rail roko agitation till September 29.

In Punjab, agitating farmers blocked roads, including highways. Road blockades caused hardships to commuters in both States and life to a standstill in Bathinda, Jalandhar, Patiala, Moga, Ferozepur, Fazilka, Barnala, Faridkot, Muktsar, Mansa, Bathinda and other districts of Malwa belt.

Farmers accompanied by their family members, including mothers, wives and daughters converged in large numbers at various places in Amritsar, Ferozepur, Barnala and staged sit-in and held demonstrations at all the entry points. Shops, commercial establishments and vegetable markets at many places remained shut. Shopkeepers have been appealed to keep their shops shut in support of farmers. Buses of the State-owned Pepsu Road Transport Corporation (PRTC) remained off-road. The supply of essential commodities was hit badly across Punjab. The supply of milk was also partially affected in many areas.

In Muktsar, SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal led a tractor march from his Badal village residence. While he drove the tractor, wife and former Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal sat beside him. Sukhbir led a tractor march from his residence in Badal village to Lambi. Prominent



Members of various farmers' organisations gather in protest at Shambhu Punjab-Haryana border near Ambala on Friday

Punjabi singers, including Harbhajan Mann and Ranjit Bawa, took part in a farmers' protest in Nabha. Farmers at several places in the State started gathering on roads to stop the movement of traffic. Women protesters under the banner of the Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee took out a protest march in Amritsar.

A 33-second video shot on the Amritsar-Pathankot highway shows some protesters making way for an ambulance. A group of protesters, holding placards, clear up the road as the ambulance followed by a car move ahead. Some of the farmers are seen sitting on a tractor, while some trucks are blocking the road. In Barnala, a tractor was set on fire by pro-

testers against the farm Bills. Punjab farmers blocked the Sangrur-Patiala, Chandigarh-Bathinda and Ambala-Rajpura-Ludhiana and Moga-Ferozepur roads. In Patiala, essential supplies, including milk and poultry supply, were hit as farmers held blockades on roads leading to the city. Hundreds of farmers held a protest and blocked the Sangrur-Patiala highway. In Moga, farmers blocked the rail and road traffic on the national highway at Dargu village on the border of Moga and Ferozepur districts.

Meanwhile, Haryana farmers blocked the Rohtak-Jhajjar road. Farmers held protests at several places, including Rewari and Yamunanagar.

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Antibodies that lead to passive Covid-19 vaccine identified

PTI ■ BERLIN

Scientists have identified highly effective antibodies against the novel coronavirus, which they say can lead to the development of a passive vaccination for Covid-19.

Unlike in active vaccination, passive vaccination involves the administration of ready-made antibodies, which are degraded after some time.

However, the effect of a passive vaccination is almost immediate, whereas with an active vaccination it has to build up first, the researchers said. The research, published in the journal Cell, also shows that some SARS-CoV-2 antibodies bind to tissue samples from various organs, which could potentially trigger undesired side effects.

The scientists at the German Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases (DZNE) and Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin isolated almost 600 different antibodies from the blood of individuals who had overcome Covid-19, the disease triggered by SARS-CoV-2. By means of



laboratory tests, they were able to narrow this number down to a few antibodies that were particularly effective at binding to the virus.

The researchers then produced these antibodies artificially using cell cultures. The so-called neutralising antibodies bind to the virus, as crystallographic analysis reveals, and thus prevent the pathogen from entering cells and reproducing, they said.

In addition, virus recognition by antibodies helps immune cells to eliminate the pathogen. Studies in hamsters — which, like humans, are susceptible to infection by SARS-CoV-2 — confirmed the high efficacy of the selected antibodies.

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Celebrated playback singer Balasubramaniam passes away after fighting Covid

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

SP Balasubramaniam, a legendary playback singer, music director, actor, dubbing artist, and film producer, is no more. The 74-year-old maestro breathed his last at a corporate hospital in Chennai at 1.04 pm on Friday.

SPB, as he was known among friends and fans, was admitted to the city's MGM Hospital on August 5 when he was diagnosed with Covid-19. He was later put on ventilator and ECMO. After days, SPB's condition became stable and he

was looking forward to getting discharged from the hospital to watch the IPL matches.

But by Thursday evening his condition deteriorated and after a 12-hour fight with the pandemic, the singer, who rendered more than 40,000 songs in 16 languages, succumbed to the condition.

Balasubramaniam is survived by his wife, son, and daughter. "Humility personified" that was how the film world and music lovers described SPB who was a recipient of Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan awards.

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SP BALASUBRAHMANYAM

June 4, 1946 — September 25, 2020

NCB grills Rakul, Deepika's manager

Deepika to be questioned today, her manager once again summoned

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A day ahead of its much-discussed questioning of actress Deepika Padkone, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) grilled actress Rakul Preet Singh and Deepika's manager Karishma Prakash in connection with the Sushant death-related drug case and expanded Bollywood-drug nexus case.

A day after she had sought time to appear before the NCB for questioning, Rakul recorded her statement under the Section 67 in the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985.

Karishma, whose deposition will have a bearing on the involvement or otherwise of

Deepika in matters relating to procurement and usage of drugs, has been summoned once again by the NCB on Saturday for questioning.

"Today Rakul Preet and Karishma joined the investigation. Karishma has been called again tomorrow," NCB's Deputy Director (Operations)



KPS Malhotra said.

Given that the NCB has already confirmed that she will join the investigations, it is certain Deepika would be questioned by the investigating agency on Saturday.

Over the past couple of days, there has been a considerable build-up in the electronic media for Deepika's questioning scheduled for Saturday. On her part, the "Padmavat" actress has maintained stoic silence over the intense speculation in the media about her alleged link to the drugs.

However, notwithstanding the eagerness of a section of the electronic media to see them in the dock, it was not clear till the evening as to when two other

actresses Sara Ali Khan and Shraddha Kapoor would join the investigations on Saturday.

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AIIMS DOCTOR SAID SUSHANT'S PHOTOS INDICATED MURDER, CLAIMS LAWYER

New Delhi: Sushant Singh Rajput's family lawyer Vikas Singh claimed on Friday that a doctor, who is part of AIIMS team, had told him "long back" that Rajput's photos sent by the lawyer indicated that it was allegedly death by strangulation, not suicide.

Modi urges BJP cadre to create awareness on new laws for kisan, labourers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On day the farmers called for a Bharat bandh to protest the Modi Government's farm sector legislations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday exhorted the BJP workers to create awareness about the Government's enactments of the new laws and "authentic efforts" made by it for the betterment of the lives of farmers and labourers.

The Prime Minister said the BJP has fulfilled its "major promises" including that on Article 370 and construction of "Ram temple" at Ayodhya.

Addressing BJP workers and leaders through video conference on the day of the birth anniversary of the party ideologue Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, the Prime Minister listed progressive laws passed

by the Government to improve the lives of farmers, labourers and those in the footpath market "Rehri-patri wale". They have been aligned with the banking system, "receiving loan, salary or pension", he said.

He drew the attention of the BJP workers and leaders to the New Education Policy (NEP) which has been brought out after 30 years and asked them to organise meets of five to seven days to analyse NEP and the benefits which could be drawn from it with educated people.

Remembering Upadhyaya, Modi said post-Independence when the country was trying to adopt foreign model of development, the late leader stressed on the indigenous way of economic, social, and cultural development.

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Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 58,97,117

DEATHS: 93,374

RECOVERED:

48,34,591

ACTIVE: 9,68,318



ED attaches Rana Kapoor's ₹127-cr London house

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached assets worth ₹127 crore in the ₹3,700 crore Yes Bank fraud case.

The attached property is a residential flat of Rana Kapoor at Apartment 1, 77 South Audley Street, London, UK. The market value of the flat is 13.5 million pound (£127 crore). The property was purchased by Kapoor in 2017 for 9.9 million pound (£93 Crore) in the name of DOIT Creations Jersey Limited and Kapoor is its beneficial owner.

"Information from a reliable source revealed that Rana Kapoor is trying to alienate this property in London and that he has hired a reputed property consultant. Enquiries from open sources confirmed that this property has been listed for sale on several websites," the ED said in a statement.

The initiated investigation under PMLA against Rana Kapoor and others on the basis of FIR registered by CBI under various IPC Sections like cheating and criminal conspiracy and relevant provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Continued on Page 11

| STATES | TOTAL CASES | DEATHS | RECOVERED |
|----------------|-------------|--------|-----------|
| Maharashtra | 13,00,757 | 34,761 | 9,92,806 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 6,61,458 | 5,606 | 5,88,169 |
| Tamil Nadu | 5,69,370 | 9,148 | 5,13,836 |
| Karnataka | 5,57,212 | 8,417 | 4,50,302 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 3,78,533 | 5,450 | 3,13,686 |
| Delhi | 2,64,450 | 5,147 | 2,28,436 |
| West Bengal | 2,41,059 | 4,665 | 2,11,020 |
| Odisha | 2,01,096 | 820 | 1,65,432 |
| Telangana | 1,81,627 | 1,080 | 1,50,160 |
| Bihar | 1,75,898 | 881 | 1,61,510 |
| Assam | 1,67,374 | 625 | 1,35,141 |
| Kerala | 1,60,935 | 636 | 1,11,327 |
| Gujarat | 1,30,391 | 3,394 | 1,10,590 |
| Rajasthan | 1,24,730 | 1,412 | 1,04,288 |
| Haryana | 1,20,578 | 1,273 | 1,01,273 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 1,17,588 | 2,152 | 93,238 |

CM: Media a powerful tool, needs digital innovation

Announces health insurance for scribes

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Advocating the importance of media in a strong democracy, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that dialogue could solve many problems and media was the medium to communicate and take one's views across the world.

"The media is a powerful medium of communication and the need of the hour is to strengthen it by introducing new digital innovation," Yogi said while inaugurating a new Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Information Complex in Lucknow on Friday.

In his address, the chief minister announced Rs 5 lakh health insurance for all accredited journalists and Rs 10 lakh for those media persons who died of COVID-19 in the recent past.

"The Information and Publicity Department is instrumental in giving information to the masses about government schemes. This department acts as a bridge between the government and the people and it



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the new Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Information Complex in Lucknow on Friday.

is the responsibility of the Information department to ensure that the schemes reach people and benefit them," Yogi said.

The chief minister said that One District, One Product stall should be displayed in the new building.

"In fact, such stalls should be in all government buildings, including Lok Bhawan, so that people visiting them could know about the ODOP scheme and local products. Even Prime Minister Narendra Modi has suggested branding of local

products and coined the slogan Vocal for Local," he said.

Yogi said that the common man was happy with the performance of the Modi government as it was able to provide houses, power and toilets.

"The PM is sensitive towards people and therefore he introduced such schemes which would benefit all sections of society," he said.

"The Uttar Pradesh government is working hard to fulfil the dream of the prime minister and is implementing

Continued on Page 11

Bihar polls in 3 phases from October 28

Counting on Nov 10

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India on Friday announced that elections for 243 Assembly seats in Bihar will take place in three phases — first on October 28, second on November 3 and the third on November 7 — while counting of all votes will take place on November 10.

The EC announced the poll schedule rejecting the demand for postponement of the polls by political parties due to coronavirus pandemic and flood in the State.

The Assembly polls in Bihar will be the biggest voting exercise in the world to be held in the time of coronavirus. There will be an extra voting hour, separate voting for Covid patients, suspects and those in quarantine, and no physical contact during the campaign.

With this announcement, the Model Code of Conduct comes into force in the State. Bihar's 243-member Assembly is set to expire on November 29, 2020.

However, the dates for by-polls to 64 Assembly constituencies and one parliamentary seat will be announced next week on Tuesday (September 29), after the EC reviews the objections of some States to the timing of the polls.

The Bihar Assembly elections are crucial for the BJP as it has suffered electoral setbacks after retaining power at the Centre with a bigger majority in 2019. It was unable to form the Government in Maharashtra despite emerging as the single largest party following disagreements with its oldest ally, Shiv Sena, over power-sharing.

Continued on Page 11

| Assembly Elections 2020 SCHEDULE | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| BIHAR | | | |
| Constituencies | Phase-I 71 | Phase-II 94 | Phase-III 78 |
| Issue of notification | 1/10 Thurs | 9/10 Fri | 13/10 Tues |
| Last date for making nominations | 8/10 Thurs | 16/10 Fri | 20/10 Tues |
| Date for scrutiny of nominations | 9/10 Fri | 17/10 Sat | 21/10 Wed |
| Last date for withdrawal of candidature | 12/10 Mon | 19/10 Mon | 23/10 Fri |
| Date of poll | 28/10 Wed | 3/11 Tues | 7/11 Sat |
| Counting of Votes | 10/11 Tues | 10/11 Tues | 10/11 Tues |
| Date of completion | 12/11 Thurs | 12/11 Thurs | 12/11 Thurs |

Source: Election Commission

PTI GRAPHICS

Vodafone wins retro tax fight against India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

British telecom giant Vodafone Group plc on Friday won an arbitration against the Indian Government over a demand for ₹22,100 crore in taxes using retrospective legislation. An international arbitration tribunal ruled that India's demand in past taxes was in breach of fair treatment under a bilateral investment protection pact.

Continued on Page 11

BJP committed to farmers' welfare: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath dedicated and laid the foundation stones of around 250 projects worth Rs 593 crore in Jaunpur and Deoria districts on Friday. Besides, he also dedicated a Krishi Vigyan Kendra in Hapur, saying that the Bharatiya Janata Party regime was committed to the development of the state.

Inaugurating the Krishi Vigyan Bhawan through the click of a mouse, Yogi said that Indian farmers were progressive and wanted new inventions to increase farm production.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi assured that farmers' income would be doubled by 2022 and they should get remunerative price of their produce. The BJP government is committed to ensuring all help to the farmers," he said.

The chief minister said it was the era of "One Nation, One Market" where farmers

CM seeks report from Covid nodal officers

Lucknow (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that nodal officers appointed in districts where more than 100 COVID-19 cases had been reported in the last one week should visit their districts and submit their reports by September 27.

"The nodal officers should reach the districts and make chalk out effective plan to contain the spread of COVID-19. They should submit their report about their districts by September 27," the chief minister said here on Friday.

There are 16 districts where over 100 coronavirus positive cases have been reported in the last one week.

The chief minister said contract tracing was important for controlling the spread of coronavirus. He said the three Ts - Tracking, Testing and Treatment - were important to contain coronavirus infection. He said 10-15 people who come



in contact with a coronavirus positive person should be tested within 48 hours. The chief minister also stressed on door-to-door surveys.

Meanwhile, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad said that there were 59,397 active cases in the state while the number of recovered COVID-19 patients was 13,16,86 which included 6,075 people discharged from hospitals on Friday.

The additional chief secretary said on Thursday, 1,64,742 sample were tested. He said there were 30,371 asymptomatic patients in home isolation, 3,697 patients in private hospitals and 144 in semi-paid hospitals while the rest were in government-run Covid hospitals.

Prasad said that people should not be complacent about decline in the number of active cases.

"We have seen how after a decrease in the number of active cases in some states, the cases again surged due to negligence of the people. Besides, there is always a threat of a second wave of the virus," he said while appealing to the people to maintain strict prevention.

However, Friday was the eighth day when the number of fresh coronavirus positive cases was less than the number of recovered patients. The Covid recovery rate has also gone up to 82.86 per cent.

had the freedom to sell products anywhere for getting good prices.

"Besides, the government has assured minimum support price (MSP) for the farm sector. This is the time to go for healthy competition and if we want our farmers to grow, they should be given free market. The farm bills passed by Parliament are to benefit the country and farmers and people should support that," Yogi said.

At another function, the chief minister

dedicated or laid the foundation stones of development projects in Jaunpur and Deoria. In Jaunpur, 36 completed projects worth Rs 36.47 crore were dedicated to people while foundation stones were laid for 47 projects worth Rs 91.70 crore.

In the neighbouring Deoria district, 28 completed projects worth Rs 82.33 crore were dedicated to people while foundation stones of 131 projects worth Rs 382.84 crore were laid.

Congress protest against farm bills, demand changes

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Desperately seeking to attain political relevance, the Congress started a protest against the recent farm legislations passed by Parliament and staged demonstration in support of Bharat Bandh call given by various farmers' outfits on Friday.

In Lucknow, City Congress chief Mukesh Chauhan and district chief Ved Prakash Tripathi led party workers at Haiderganj crossing and other parts of the city.

Demonstrations were also staged by other city and district units of the party across the state and party workers raised anti-BJP and anti-Narendra Modi slogans, demanding immediate rollback of the bills.

Speaking about the Congress' reservation to the bills, City Congress chief Mukesh Singh Chauhan said, "We have three specific demands. First, the government should insert clauses in the bills, stating that minimum support price (MSP) system will continue. Second, maximum stockholding limit for traders will not be done away with and third, mandi fee will be abolished for all agriculture products sold and purchased within mandi yards."

Punjab govt to challenge farm Bills in SC: Badal

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Punjab Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal here on Friday targeted the Centre over the farm Bills and said his government will challenge the legislations in the Supreme Court.

The Congress leader told reporters that the Punjab government is "preparing to challenge the Bills in the apex court on two counts".

First, it is a state subject and the Union government has no right to enact a legislation on it. Besides, the federal government cannot destroy the economy of states. Due to the Bills, losses will be too much for a small state like Punjab, he said.

Badal said the legislations will not only result in revenue loss for states but also cause unemployment.

He added that the minimum support price (MSP) was the main reason for opposing the Bills.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union agriculture minister have tweeted that the MSP will not be abolished, then why are they not getting this point incorporated in the Bills, he asked.

The reality is that the government wants to get out of the MSP," he claimed, adding that the legislations



will be opposed till the last breath.

When reminded that Uttar Pradesh farmers are not protesting against the Bills, he said perhaps they are not as aware but their losses will not be any different. UP farmers may be simple but not so simple that they will not understand their loss and gain; the difference between a 'chor and chaukidar' or sharab and sharbat', he said, adding that the Bills have exposed the anti-farmer face of the Union government.

Badal also lashed out at the Union government over the promise of doubling farmers' income and said it has failed in every respect in the past six years of its rule.

The agriculture growth during the BJP rule is 3.1 per cent. It was 4.3 per cent during the UPA government. Agriculture income is at its lowest in 14 years. Prime Minister had said that the Swaminathan Commission report will be implemented but nothing happened, he told reporters.

Parliament recently passed the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill; Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill; and Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill.

The legislations are yet to get the nod of the president.

More trouble for Abdullah Azam ...may be debarred from contesting polls

Lucknow (PNS): Samajwadi Party parliamentary member Mohammad Azam Khan's son and former SP legislator Abdullah Azam Khan could be debarred from contesting polls for six years for indulging in corrupt practices for his election to UP Assembly in 2017.

The UP Assembly secretariat has written to the President of India in this regard under provisions of Section 8-A of Representation of People's Act, 1951.

As per procedure laid down in the Constitution, the President will seek the opinion of the Election Commission of India and its opinion will be binding on the President.

The Assemble secretariat letter is learnt to have cited a Allahabad High Court order of December 2019, which set aside the election of Abdullah Azam to UP Assembly on the ground of being under age and filing forged birth certificates.

cate claiming attainment of 25 years of age. In December 2019, the Allahabad High Court had set aside Abdullah Azam's entry to the Assembly.

As per the provisions of Representation of People's Act, 1951, a candidate has to be of a minimum age of 25 to contest Assembly polls. The Allahabad High Court had ruled that Azam was not qualified to contest the poll as he was below 25 years of age when he filed his nomination as a SP candidate from Swar constituency in 2017.

Abdullah Azam challenged the court order in the Supreme Court on January 17 this year but the apex court refused to stay the High Court order or any other order to protect him from legal action.

Earlier in February this year, the UP Assembly Speaker had disqualified Abdullah Azam from the membership of the House and the seat he represented was declared vacant.

A BJP leader from Rampur, Akash Saxena, had lodged an FIR at Ganj police station in Rampur on January 3, 2019, alleging fraud related to Abdullah's forged birth certificates, claiming that he had two birth certificates.

In April 2019, the police had filed a chargesheet in the court, alleging that Abdullah also had two passports and two PAN cards. A case was also registered against Azam Khan and his wife Tazeen Fatma for an submitting affidavit testifying to the authenticity of their son's second birth certificate.

Azam Khan represents Rampur in the Lok Sabha and his wife is an MLA from the Rampur assembly seat.

In February this year, Azam Khan, his wife and son were sent to judicial custody and are presently lodged in Sitapur jail for the last seven months.

VHP chief: Love-jihad a calculated agenda to change demographics

Lucknow (PNS): Vishwa Hindu Parishad working president Alok Kumar said that 'love-jihad' was a calculated agenda of invasion on the demographics and suggested that the police, the government and the public would have to come together for timely action to deactivate and neutralise it.


Releasing 'Love-Jihad' special issue of national re-awakening fortnightly magazine 'Hindu Vishwa' on Friday, Kumar said, "Love-jihad is a conspiracy that is by design being run by some people through money power, where-withal / resources and religious superstitions. It is necessary to stop it. The list of 147 love-jihad case studies given in the magazine will open the eyes of

the society."

The VHP leader reminded that the chief minister of Kerala had said in 2012 that 2,667 Hindu girls converted to Islam in the last three years and in the same period, 79 girls returned to their Hindu faith and two to Christianity.

"This imbalance is indeed disturbing," he said.

Releasing the magazine from his office in the company of editor Vijay Shankar Tiwari and VHP spokesperson Vinod Bansal, the VHP chief in a video message said the VHP had exposed a pan-Bharat love-jihad conspiracy through its researched data of 147 case studies which would help the authorities take on the problem and lone wolves head-on.



RESERVE BANK OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF SUPERVISION
8-9, Vipin Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226010

U. P. Civil Secretariat Primary Co-operative Bank Ltd., Lucknow
Directions under Section 35A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (AACS) - U. P. Civil Secretariat Primary Co-operative Bank Ltd., Lucknow
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended the Directions issued to the U. P. Civil Secretariat Primary Co-operative Bank Ltd., Lucknow for a further period of three months from September 26, 2020 to December 25, 2020, subject to review. The bank has been under directions since September 25, 2018 vide directive DCBS.CO.BSD-IV/D-11/28.029/2018-19 dated September 19, 2018 issued under Sub-section (1) of Section 35A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (AACS).
The validity of the directive, which was last extended up to September 25, 2020 has further been extended for a period of three months from September 26, 2020 to December 25, 2020 vide directive No.DoR.CO.AID/D-22/12.28.029/2020-21 dated September 18, 2020, subject to review. A copy of the directive dated September 18, 2020 is displayed at the bank's premises for the perusal of public.
The modification of the directive by the Reserve Bank should per se not be construed as improvement or deterioration in the financial position of the bank. The Reserve Bank may consider modifications of the directive depending upon circumstances.
Lucknow September 26, 2020 Regional Director

FORM NO. INC-26
[Pursuant to rule 30 the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014]
Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of registered office of the company from one state to another
Before the Central Government Northern Region
(Regional Director)-B-2Wing, II Floor, Deen Dayal Antodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-110003.
In the matter of the Companies Act, 2013, Section 13(4) of Companies Act, 2013 and Rule 30(6) (a) of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014 AND
In the matter of ANKUSH MOTOR AND GENERAL FINANCE COMPANY PRIVATE LIMITED a Company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 and carrying on business at H-187, Sector 63, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301.
...APPLICANT
Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra ordinary general meeting held on 19/11/2018 to enable the company to change its Registered office from "State of Uttar Pradesh to State of Gujarat".
Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the Registered Office of the company may deliver either on the MCA 21 Port (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint form or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the concerned Regional Director, Northern Region, New Delhi at the address B-2 Wing, 2nd Floor, Dayal Antodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi 110003, within fourteen days from the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company at its registered office at H-187, Sector 63, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301.
CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
For and behalf of the Company
For ANKUSH MOTOR AND GENERAL FINANCE COMPANY PRIVATE LIMITED
Sd/-
(BHARATBHAI RAVAL)
DIRECTOR
DIN: 03572579



the pioneer
CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE
Mai No. 15515652A Sep Ajay Kumar Maurya S/o Jugnarayan Maurya records 27RR may karyarat hu ,maray service record Book may maray bhai ka naaam Brijendra ankit hai jo ke galat hai. maray bhai ka saha naaam Bjendra Maurya hai jo uskay high / intermediate kay school marksheet,aadhar card aur pan card may ankit hai.
सूचना
मै. राजकुमार रस्तोमी पुत्र रामवररूप रस्तोमी, पता-डी-3187, इन्दिरा नगर, लखनऊ, मेरा रजिस्ट्रार (पीओ) बुक सेल नं० 3487 दि० 22.11.1996 एवं प्रदेश-नगर बं० 4213 दि० 13.03.81, मर्यादित डी-3187 कही पुनः हो गया है। यदि कोई व्यक्ति इसका प्रयोग करे तो इसे अमान्य माना जाए।
मो 8299658072

Som again in news, for the wrong reason

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the chief minister upping the ante against corruption in administration and even suspending two IPS officers and setting up a vigilance probe against them, a BJP leader from west UP has been accused of throwing his weight to grab civil contracts for his aides in Sardhana Municipal Council (SMC).

Executive Officer of Sardhana Municipal Council Amita Varun had earlier lodged a complaint, accusing local BJP MLA Sangeet Som in this connection and the matter was being probed by the district administration.

The recent controversy started after a SMC employee, Ajay Chhabra, died in a hospital during treatment last Tuesday. The next day, his wife,


Aastha Chhabra, lodged an FIR against Amita Varun, accusing her of harassing her husband causing mental stress and demanding her immediate arrest. The aggrieved family refused to perform the last rites but after assurance from Superintendent of Police Avinash Pandey, the family cremated the body.

In turn, Varun filed an FIR accusing the local BJP MLA of trying to 'deliberately' frame her. Varun alleged that Som "wanted to run his writ in the Council to grab most civil works contracts either in his favour or for his cronies".

"The BJP legislator is responsible for the death of the SMC employee and I am being framed at Som's behest. The police are not taking any action in connection with the FIR lodged by me against him. There

are a number of cases lodged against Som at Sardhana police station. Police should have taken action against him on pending FIRs instead of conspiring to frame me in a false case," Varun wrote in the FIR. The Sardhana Municipal Council executive officer also met Meerut's District Magistrate K Balaji and demanded personal security.

Reacting to the charges, Som told local reporters that he had "nothing to do" with the affairs of the SMC. "I have been told that the executive officer has a tainted record when it comes to dealing with the employees and hence she was transferred 17 times in the last two years," he said. Meanwhile the Meerut district magistrate said, "Both sides have lodged FIRs and the cases are being investigated. We will take suitable action once our inquiry is completed."




UCO BANK
Pansari Tola, Dankangunj, Mirzapur-231001

NOTICE
Whenever lockers are break opened on default of rent, the expenses connected with break opening should be paid to the debit of Sundry Debtors-Locker Break Opening Charges. Branch has to square off the Sundry Debtors items by debiting the break opening charges to Profit & Loss Account - Locker Break Opening Charges after getting written permission from the controlling office on case to case basis. If any amount is recovered subsequently from the default hirer, can be credited to Profit & Loss Account - Break Opening Charges.

| S No | Locker Number | Rent due as on | Name of the Customer | Joint Holder Name | Address |
|------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------------|---|
| 1 | AA003 | 4004/- | Sabhaajet Mishra | Suresh K Mishra | Vill - Bhati, PO - Mahrajganj, SRN Bhadohi - 221401 |
| 2 | AA046 | 21523/- | Ramesh Kumar | Poonam Devi | Vill-Shahganj, PO-Rajpur, Distt-Sonebhadra-231216 |
| 3 | BA142 | 19539/- | Meena Pandey | Shakti Raj Pandey | Bundelkhandi, Madhwa Jee, Mirzapur - 231001 |
| 4 | BA154 | 14973/- | Vikash Jaiswal | Meera Jaiswal | Dankeenganj, Above IDBI Bank, Mirzapur - 231001 |
| 5 | BA171 | 18648/- | Santosh K Singh | Sandhya Singh | Vadsagar Colony, Danghar, Mirzapur - 231001 |

Branch Manager - UCO Bank
Date : 25-09-2020 Place : Mirzapur




बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया

आंचलिक कार्यालय: 78-ए, राजभवन कॉम्प्लेक्स, कैनाल रोड,कानपुर-208004
दूरभाष: 0512-2985004

अधिपत्य नोटिस (चल/अचल संपत्ति)
अओहस्ताक्षरकर्ता, बैंक ऑफ इंडिया के प्रधिकृत अधिकारी होते हुए वित्तीय आस्तियों का प्रतिभूतिकरण एवं पुनर्गठन तथा प्रतिभूति हित प्रवलन अधिनियम, 2002 की धारा 13 (12) और प्रतिभूतिलिह (प्रवलन) नियम 2002 का संपत्ति नियम 3 के तहत प्रदत्त शक्तियों का प्रयोग का करते हुए निम्नलिखित ऋणधारियों को ब्याज सहित राशि नोटिस के प्राप्त दिनांक से 60 दिन की समयवाधि में भुगतान करने हेतु निर्देशित किया गया था। ऋणग्रहिता राशि का भुगतान करने में असफल रहा है अतः ऋण ग्रहिताओं और सर्वसाधारण को एतद द्वारा सूचना पत्र दिया जाता है कि अओहस्ताक्षरकर्ता ने उक्त अधिनियम धारा 13 (4) संपत्ति उक्त नियम (6) के अन्तर्गत नीचे वर्णित संपत्ति का अधिपत्य उनके सामने वर्णित दिनांक को अधिग्रहण कर लिया है। ऋणग्रहिता को विनिश्चयता और सर्वसाधारण को सामान्यतः एतद द्वारा निम्न वर्णित राशि और उस पर पर ब्याज के लिए बैंक ऑफ इंडिया की निम्न वर्णित शाखाओं के प्रभार के अधीन होगा। अधिनियम की धारा 13 की उपधारा (6) के प्रावधानों के अंतर्गत ऋणी / जमानतकर्ता का ध्यान, उपलब्ध समय में बैंक सम्पत्ति को छुड़ाने के लिए आमंत्रित किया जाता है।

| क्रम संख्या | ऋणी/जमानतकर्ता का नाम | मौग नोटिस दिनांक अतिरिक्त दिनांक | नोटिस के अनुसार राशि | चल/अचल संपत्ति का विवरण |
|---|---|----------------------------------|---|--|
| शाखा - सी.पी. मिशन कम्पाउंड, झौंसी (उ.प्र.) - 0510-2446886 | | | | |
| 1. | ऋणी- वीरेन्द्र कुमार सिंह पुत्र वीरेन्द्र सिंह व सुनीता सिंह पत्नी वीरेन्द्र कुमार सिंह जमानतकर्ता- अखिल ओरोड़ा पुत्र सत्य नाथयन ओरोड़ा | 28-01-2020 21-09-2020 | ₹ 12,54,717.12 (बारह लाख चौवन हजार सात सौ सत्रह रुपये बारह पैसे) + एन.पी.ए. की दिनांक से देय ब्याज एवं अन्य खर्च | सम्पत्ति : समस्त धुमि एवं भवन, शेड्स व सम्पूर्ण स्ट्रक्चर जो भी बना हुआ है। अराजी संख्या-225 व 231 मौजा घादरई, तहसील एवं जिला - झौंसी (उ.प्र.) क्षेत्रफल: 1000 वर्ग फीट सम्पत्ति मालिक : वीरेन्द्र कुमार सिंह पुत्र वीरेन्द्र सिंह चतुर्सीमाएं : पूर्व- श्री भारद्वाज का घर, पश्चिम- 7.62 मीटर चौड़ा रास्ता, उत्तर- 6.10 मीटर चौड़ा रास्ता, दक्षिण- विक्रेता का प्लाट। |

दिनांक: 25.09.2020 स्थान: झौंसी प्राधिकृत अधिकारी : बैंक ऑफ इंडिया



IDBI BANK

Corporate Office: IDBI Towers WTC Complex, Cuffe Parade Colaba, Mumbai-400005
Regional Office (Central U.P.), 2nd Floor, Virendra Smriti Building 15/54-B, Civil Lines, Kanpur-208001

POSSESSION NOTICE
Notice is hereby given under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule-3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The Bank issued demand notice to the following borrower/Co-borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor on the date mentioned against their name calling upon them to repay the amount within **sixty days** from the date of receipt of said notice. Since, they failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to them and to the public in general that the undersigned has taken the possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on the dates mentioned against the name of the borrower.
The borrower/Co-borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor, in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of IDBI Bank Limited for the amount given against their names with future interest and charges thereon.

| Sl. No. | Name of Borrower/ Co-borrower/Guarantor and owner of the property | Date of Demand Notice | Date of Symbolic Possession | Description of the Property | Amount O/s (as mentioned in the notice w.e.f. 13/2) |
|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Branch : Virendra Smriti, Ground Floor, 15/54 - B, Civil Lines Kanpur-208001 | | | | | |
| 1. | M/s Divyanshi Enterprises, Proprietor- Shubha Gupta Mortgagor- Pradeep Gupta | 21.01.2020 | 21.09.2020 | 1. All that piece and parcel of land comprised in and forming part of Shop No. 10 (First floor) situated at Super Bazar constructed over Plot No. 01 having arazi number 161 Min Village Madiyav Mazra, Sultanpur Pargana Mohana Bakshi Ka Talab, Ward : Jankipuram, Distt: Lucknow, admeasuring area 8.92 square meter. Boundaries: East: Corridor, West: Open Place, North: Shop Purchaser, South: Corridor 2. All that piece and parcel of land comprised in and forming part of Shop No.11 (First floor) situated at Super Bazar constructed over Plot No. 01 having arazi number 161 Min Village Madiyav Mazra, Sultanpur Pargana Mohana Bakshi Ka Talab, Ward : Jankipuram, Dist Lucknow, admeasuring area 21.60 square meter. Boundaries: East: Road 60 feet, West: Open Land, North: Shop, South: Shop 3. All that piece and parcel of land comprised in and forming part of Shop No.12 (First floor) situated at Super Bazar constructed over Plot No. 01 having arazi number 161 Min Village Madiyav Mazra, Sultanpur Pargana Mohana Bakshi Ka Talab, Ward : Jankipuram, Dist Lucknow, admeasuring area 22.02 square meter. Boundaries: East: Road 60 feet, West: Kharanja Road 20 Ft., North: Open Land, South: Shop No.11 | Rs. 48,27,699.13 +Future Interest & Other Charges/ Expenses w.e.f. 21.01.2020 till realisation of the loan |
| Branch Office: Chawlia Niwas, Near ITI Chauraha, Thandi Sarak, Farrukhabad Pin-209625 (UP) | | | | | |
| 2. | M/s Zunaira Zari Art (Prop- Shaziya Mohd Zeehan Mortgagor (Mohd Zeehan S/o Mohd Naeim) | 10.01.2020 | 19.09.2020 | All that piece and parcel of the property comprised in and forming part of 47 A Ghoda Nakhsh Street Farrukhabad 209625 and situated on Farrukhabad, Boundaries: East: Plot of Aleem Ansari, West: House of Chanda Bhai, North: House of Akidat Ansair, South: 15 Feet Cemented Road | Rs. 20,66,000.00 +Future Interest & Other Charges/ Expenses w.e.f. 10.01.2020 till realisation of the loan |
| Branch Office: 417, Behra Saudagar (East), Near Cinema Chauraha, Lucknow Road, Hardoi- 241001 | | | | | |
| 3. | M/s Kamlesh Kumar & Brothers, Partner Borrower Shri Vinohesh Kumar S/o Late Surendra Kumar Mortgagor Smt. Rani W/o Late Surendra Kumar | 24.02.2020 | 19.09.2020 | All that part and parcel of the property consisting of in Survey No. 1501 A & 1501 B Situated at Maholiya Shivpur Out of Nagar Palika Infront of Sports Stadium, Hardoi within the Registration Sub-District (Tehsil Hardoi) and District Hardoi. Boundaries: East: House of Godhan, West: Plot of Baburam, North: Sitapur Road, South: Land of Puttu Singh & others | Rs. 17,50,125.90 +Future Interest & Other Charges/ Expenses w.e.f. 26.02.2020 till realisation of the loan |

Date: 26.09.2020 Place : Kanpur Authorized Officer, IDBI Bank Ltd

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Lucknow only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

Positivity rate goes down, but health officials cautious

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the positivity rate showing a slight dip in the district in the past five days, health officials are keeping their fingers crossed as they wait and watch. CMO Dr Rajendra Prasad Singh, while admitting that there has been a decrease in the cases which is an encouraging sign, said there would be no let-up in containment activities which will be carried out in the same vigorous manner.

“Even though the positivity rate has declined, there will be no relaxation in the containment activities that we have been carrying out. We cannot relax looking at these figures. We will make efforts to ensure there are better results,” he said.

A senior official from the Health department said that there was a dip in the positivity but it was too early to say anything. “Around 7,500 to

8,500 tests are being conducted daily for the last one month and sometimes the figures touches the 9,000-mark. For the last one month, we had been getting 1,000 cases per day but with the same number of tests, the number of positive cases has decreased in the past few days,” he said. However, he said they were not jumping to any conclusions and just observing the trend.

“The trend is never uniform and sometimes the number of cases increases but it appears that the numbers are on a decline. However, five days is a very short period to make any comments,” he said.

SGPGI director Dr RK Dhiman, while commenting on the course of Covid in the coming months, said he felt that the district was approaching the peak. “Once you reach the peak, the cases start declining. This is going to happen,” he said. He said that clinical trials of all the vaccines being made

in India and abroad were taking place and the results were likely to come in two or three months.

“I think we would have a vaccine by November or December,” he added.

Talking about the phase-3 clinical trials of the Bharat Biotech vaccine, he said the company officials would be meeting him on Saturday.

“We will have a meeting and only then we will be apprised of the protocol to be followed for clinical trials,” he said. He added that the trials would take place in October.

In first phase, the trial will be carried out on a small number of patients while in phase two, effectiveness of the vaccine and prevention from infection is seen and volunteers of high-risk category are taken. In third phase, the clinical trial will be carried out on a large number of volunteers.

Meanwhile, KGMU spokesperson Dr Sudhir Singh

said that a set of 33 training videos on precautions against coronavirus, prepared by Dr Vinod Jain, were handed over to Vice-Chancellor Dr Bipin Puri. These videos have a running time of six minutes and were prepared in 20 days. The VC said it was important for the health workers to protect themselves and the videos which have been prepared shed light on several topics. He said the videos were handed over to the National Institute of Smart Governance for Chikitsa Setu App which was being developed.

Meanwhile Head of the Microbiology department SGPGI Ujjwala Ghosal pained by the incidents of violence against the doctors across the country said that the message should go to the people that doctors are doing so much for the corona patients and what they get in return is violence.

“So many doctors are risking their lives in times when

relatives are not ready to touch you at the time of your death but still doctors who are not your blood relative are taking care of the patients during this time and they are dying with more than 600 doctors who have died” she said. She said that doctors are risking their lives while carrying out the treatment of the patients and this is not being noticed. “A pregnant elephant died a couple of days back and it was highlighted in a big manner while a 27 year old young doctor who was also pregnant died while doing a corona duty but there was no mention of this young girl who must have spent her entire life studying medical” she added.

In the meantime, Lucknow University registrar Vinod Kumar Singh donated plasma at SGPGI. He was admitted to the hospital after he tested positive for coronavirus in July. He, along with ADM, Trans-Gomti, Vishwa Bhushan

580 more test positive for coronavirus, 853 recover

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The declining trend continued on Friday with 580 persons testing positive for coronavirus across the city, even as 853 patients recovered, taking the total number of recoveries to 40,433. The death toll in the state capital stands at 653 while the number of active cases is 8,954.

A senior official at the CMO office said those who tested positive across the city included 49 in Gomtinagar, 48 in Indiranagar, 30 from Rae Bareilly road, 29 in Ashiyana, 26 each in Aliganj & Chowk, 23 in Alambagh, 22 in Jankipuram, 21 in Madaion, 20 in Hazratganj, 18 each in

Hasanganj & Mahanagar, 15 in Naka, 14 in Talkatora & Chinhat, 12 in Vrindavan Yojana, 11 each in Thakurganj & Gomtinagar Extension, and 10 each in Sushant Golf City and Vikasnagar. Besides, as many as 10,626 samples were collected under contact surveillance.

There were 17 deaths in the city and 11 of the deceased belonged to Lucknow while six others included two from Barabanki and one each from Pilibhit, Sitapur, Pratapgarh and Mau.

Meanwhile, 4,519 persons tested Covid positive across the state, including 219 in Kanpur, 291 in Prayagraj, 239 in Ghaziabad and 207 in Meerut,

taking the total number of cases to 3,78,533.

There were 84 deaths in the state, including eight each in Kanpur & Barabanki, four each in Varanasi, Gorakhpur & Prayagraj, three each in Moradabad, Shahjahanpur, Jaunpur, Basti & Pilibhit, two each in Ghaziabad, Meerut, Jhansi, Pratapgarh, Sitapur, Rae Bareilly, Kannauj & Shamli, and one each in Gautam Buddh nagar, Bareilly, Aligarh, Saharanpur, Ballia, Agra, Lakhimpur Kheri, Maharajganj, Hardoi, Mathura, Etawah, Sultanpur, Bijnore, Amroha, Hapur, Auraiyya, Kanpur Dehat, Balrampur and Chitrakoot, taking the death toll to 5,450.

Drug abuse linked to pressure of remaining thin

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) probe into drug abuse in the Hindi film industry has opened a Pandora's box with some of the big names doing the rounds. It all started when the CBI found drug angle while conducting a probe into Sushant Singh Rajput's mysterious death. The NCB then arrested Sushant's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty, who is said to have split the beans during interrogation.

The names that came out not only rocked the Bollywood but took the entire country by storm. The NCB has summoned actors such as Deepika Padukone, Sara Ali Khan, Shraddha Kapoor, Rakulpreet Singh and Namrata Shirodkar apart from designer Simone Khambata to record their statements. But, what led these big stars to do drugs? Is it common for Bollywood biggies?

All the actresses whose names are doing the rounds have

one thing in common —they all are fitness freaks and superfit. They inspire youngsters through their fitness videos which they post on their respective social media accounts. This reporter reached out to a renowned fitness and sports medicine expert, Dr Saranjeet Singh, to give an insight into what might have prompted these actors to do drugs, if at all they did so.

“There is enormous pressure among those in film, fashion and modeling industries to stay thin and it may well lead them to use some substance known for suppressing appetite as a side-effect. In this way, the harmful medical side-effects of a recreational drug are seen as benefits. This change of focus results in a new phenomenon, that is eating disorder as a result of drug addiction,” Dr Singh pointed out.

“They are using narcotics substances to compete with their peers just like a truck driver might do in order to stay up all night, thereby making more deliveries. Worse yet, the usage parallels even the performance-enhancing drug usage aspect of professional athletes in different sports,” he elaborated.

Dr Singh, who also wrote a book titled ‘Don't Pay to Get Killed’, said that taking cocaine



Dr Saranjeet Singh


was a shortcut to being thin without having to put in any effort. It's been assumed for years that cocaine leads to weight loss because it functions as an appetite suppressant.

“Cocaine users consume higher-than-usual amounts of carbohydrates and fats, and also experience periods of uncontrolled eating. However, they lose weight and their percentage of body fat is significantly reduced in spite of high consumption of fat and calories. Once a person begins to use cocaine as an answer to overeating or obesity, it's necessary to keep using the drug in order to maintain the weight loss. However, once they stop using cocaine, most find it difficult to give up the high-fat and high-carb diet, and the weight comes back quickly,” Dr Singh said.

While weight loss is one of the side-effects of cocaine abuse, it's a dangerous health issue and only adds to a list of side-effects

that severely damage the body over a period of time. It's not healthy and leads to weight loss that weakens the body. If anyone is contemplating using cocaine as a weight-loss tool, they are playing with fire,” he added. Dr Singh, who is also fighting to eradicate use of drugs from sports, explained that cannabis is referred to as a group of three plants with psychoactive properties—cannabis sativa, cannabis indica and cannabis ruderalis. When the flowers of these plants are harvested and dried, what will be left is one of the most common drugs in the world. Some call it weed while others call it pot or marijuana. Cannabis sativa contains more than 400 chemicals, of which about 60 are referred to as cannabinoids. The primary euphoric or psychoactive cannabinoids are cannabidiol (CBD) and delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). CBD is non-intoxicating and non-euphoric, meaning it won't get you 'high'. THC is responsible for the 'high' that most people associate with cannabis. The concentration of THC varies greatly between the three main preparations of the cannabis plant: marijuana (comparable to the preparation referred to by Indian names bhang & ganja), hashish and hash oil.

Corrigendum
(With reference to advertisement of Demand notice published by Indian Bank, Panvari Branch, Mahoba under SARFAESI Act-2002 in The Pioneer Kanpur edition dated 22.09.2020, in this connection kindly read in M/s Suman Enterprises Amount Demanded in the Rs. 11,25,000/- & Date 27.08.2020 instead of Amount Demanded in Rs. 10,72,030/- & Date 07.02.2020 Sorry for inconvenience
Authorised Officer, Indian Bank



बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ोदा
Bank of Baroda


ROSARB, KANPUR
Branch Address : 2nd Floor, 118/330, Gumti No. 5, Kaushalpur, Kanpur-208 012 • Ph. : 0512-2215173
e-mail : sarkan@bankofbaroda.co.in

Sale Notice For Immovable Properties "APPENDIX-IV-A [See Proviso to rule 6(2) & 8 (6)]
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable assets under the securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 Read with Proviso to Rule 6(2) & Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor, possession of which has been taken by the authorised officer of **Bank of Baroda** as Secured Creditor, will be sold on **"As is Where is," "As is What is," and "Whatever there is"** basis for recovery of below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Secured assets/dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date and time. EMD and Bid increase are mentioned below.
Date of e-Auction : 03-11-2020 Last Date of EMD Submission : 02-11-2020 upto 4.00 PM

| Sl. No. | Name & Address of th Borrowers / Guarantors | Description of Immovable Property with known encumbrances, if any | Total Dues | Date & Time of e-Auction | Reserve Price/EMD/ Bid increase Amount | Status of Possession (Constructive/ Physical) | Property Inspection Date & Time |
|---------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 1. | Borrower : M/s Jai Durga Oil Mill, Proprietor : Shri Ajay Kumar Gautam S/o Late Om Prakash Gautam, Address : House No. 365 EWS, Awas Vikas-3, Panki Road, Kalyanpur, Kanpur Nagar | House No. 365 EWS, Awas Vikas-3, Panki Road, Kalyanpur, Kanpur Nagar in the name of Ajay Kumar Gautam S/o Late Om Prakash Gautam. Area : 36.175 Sq. Mtr., Bounded : North : 4 Mtr. Road , South : House No. 370, East : House No. 364, West : House No.366 | Rs. 5,42,258.00 +Intt. and other charges (Minus amount if any paid after the demand notice or possession notice) | 03-11-2020 between 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm | ₹ 16,73,000/- (RP) ₹ 1,68,000/- (EMD) ₹ 25,000/- (Bid increase Amount) | Constructive | 29-10-2020 between 10:00 am to 4:00 pm |
| 2. | Borrower : M/s Radha Mini Rice Udyog, Proprietor : Shri Soney Lal Rathore S/o Shri Shiv Charan Rathore, Address : Nadiha Road, Uttaripura, Bilhaur, Kanpur Nagar | Land & Building Situated at Gata No. (Plot No.) 1172, Village Pura, Tehsil Bilhaur, Distt. Kanpur Nagar in the name of Shri Soney Lal Rathore S/o Shri Shiv Charan Rathore. Area : 304.64 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North : House of Soney Lal, South : 15 Feet Path, East : Plot of Rameshwar, West :Plot of Kalu. | Rs. 36,70,253.95 +Intt. and other charges (Minus amount if any paid after the demand notice or possession notice) | 03-11-2020 between 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm | ₹ 20,00,000/- (RP) ₹ 2,00,000/- (EMD) ₹ 25,000/- (Bid increase Amount) | Constructive | 29-10-2020 between 10:00 am to 4:00 pm |
| 3. | Borrower : M/s Maurya Enterprises, Partners : Shri Sushil Kumar and Shri Suraj Singh Kushwaha, Address : Village Dubiyana, Tehsil -Bilhaur, Kanpur Nagar. Guarantor : Shri Heera Lal S/o Shri Janki Prasad, R/o : Village Dubiyana, Tehsil -Bilhaur, Kanpur Nagar. | Land & Building Plot No. 20 (Old Gata No. 32, 41, 42 & 43) situated at Village Dubiyana, Tehsil-Bilhaur, Kanpur Nagar. in the name of Shri Heera Lal S/o Shri Janki Prasad. Area : 0.0916 Hectare., Bounded-North : Part of Gata No. 20 (Narayan etc.), South : Part of Gata No. 20 (Rakesh etc.) East : Kaccha Road, West: Gata No.21 (Bhikari etc.) | Rs. 32,03,000.00 +Intt. and other charges (Minus amount if any paid after the demand notice or possession notice) | 03-11-2020 between 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm | ₹ 36,37,000/- (RP) ₹ 3,64,000/- (EMD) ₹ 25,000/- (Bid increase Amount) | Constructive | 29-10-2020 between 10:00 am to 4:00 pm |
| 4. | Borrower : M/s XPO Services, Regd. Officer : Flat No. 2C, Navsheel Niketan, 395-D, Shyam Nagar, Kanpur. Proprietor : Shri Deepak Kapoor S/o Shri R.D.P. Kapoor. R/o : 11-12, Triveni Nagar, Kanpur. Guarantor : Smt. Satinder Kapoor W/o Shri Deepak Kapoor R/o : 11-12, Triveni Nagar, Kanpur & Also at Flat No. 2C, Navsheel Niketan, 395-D, Shyam Nagar, Kanpur. | Flat No. 2C, Navsheel Niketan, 1st Floor of Plot No. 395-D, Scheme No. 2, Sujatganj, Shyam Nagar, Kanpur in the name of Shri Deepak Kapoor S/o Shri R.D.P. Kapoor and Smt. Satinder Kapoor W/o Shri Deepak Kapoor. Area: Builtup Area 51.58 Sq. Mtr. & Undivided Share in Land 38.64 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North: Open to Sky, South: Corridor thereafter Privately Marked Portion 2-D, East : Privately Marked Portion 2-B, West: Open to Sky. | Rs.32,91,400.64 +Intt. and other charges (Minus amount if any paid after the demand notice or possession notice) | 03-11-2020 between 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm | ₹ 25,00,000/- (RP) ₹ 2,50,000/- (EMD) ₹ 25,000/- (Bid increase Amount) | Constructive | 29-10-2020 between 10:00 am to 4:00 pm |

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Bank of Baroda secured website i.e. www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm, & e-bikray, <https://ibapi.in>. Also, prospective bidders may contact the authorised officer on Mobile No. 8601875614

Date : 26-09-2020 Place : Kanpur Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda



Tripathi Sadan, 10th Park Road, Gorakhpur, U.P. - 273001

NOTICE
Whenever lockers are break opened on default of rent, the expenses connected with break opening should be paid to the debit of Sundry Debtors-Locker Break Opening Charges. Branch has to square off the Sundry Debtors items by debiting the break opening charges to Profit & Loss Account - Locker Break Opening Charges after getting written permission from the controlling office on case to case basis. If any amount is recovered subsequently from the default hirer, can be credited to Profit & Loss Account - Break Opening Charges.

| S No | Locker Number | Name of the Customer | Address |
|------|---------------|--|--|
| 1 | AA007 | Raj Kumar Gupta | C/o Jagdamba Engineering, Buxipur, Gorakhpur - 273001 |
| 2 | AA073 | Vidya Devi | Sharda Janta Hotel, Gorakhpur-273001 |
| 3 | AC064 | Janki Devi & Bal Krishna Das | C/o Ashok Auto Service, Park Road, Gorakhpur - 273001 |
| 4 | BA093 | Savitri Devi & Anoop Kumar Agrahari | 204 Moongpal Gola, Sahabganj, Gorakhpur - 273005 |
| 5 | CA159 | Parth Ojha | Shivpur Shahbaiganj, Padri Bazar, Gorakhpur - 273014 |
| 6 | CA165 | Premavati Pandey, Narsingh Pandey & Bindu Pandey | Vindhyavasi Nagar, Gorakhpur - 273001 |
| 7 | CA173 | Jeewan Kumar | Near Jatashankar, Pokhara, Kailash Nagar, Gorakhpur - 273001 |
| 8 | CA175 | Shashibala Srivastava & Raghunath Srivastava | Gorakhpur - 273001 |
| 9 | CA196 | Ravindra Sehgal | 180 Vikas Nagar, Bargadwa, Gorakhpur - 273015 |
| 10 | CA219 | Ashok Kumar & Ram Bilash Bharati | H.No.4, Sincher Colony, Indra Nagar, Gorakhpur - 273211 |
| 11 | CA223 | Shyam Bihari Agrawal | C/o Bharat Medical Stores, Townhall, Gorakhpur - 273001 |
| 12 | CB188 | Annu Agrawal & Kailash Chandra | C/o Ms Hari Krishna Ram Prasad Urdu Bazar Gorakhpur - 273005 |
| 13 | DA232 | Motilal Khetan & Chand Devi | Captainganj, Kushinagar - 274301 |
| 14 | DA271 | Shakuntala Devi & Purushottam Das | C/o Mukhram Ram Awatar, Hindu Bazar, Gorakhpur - 273001 |
| 15 | DA296 | Jagdish Chandra & Savita | 43, Vindrasini Nagar, Gorakhpur - 273007 |

Date : 25-09-2020 Place : Gorakhpur Branch Manager - UCO Bank



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197 more test positive in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 197 new Covid-19 patients have been detected in the district here on Friday, increasing the total number of cases to 12,541. Besides, the district also saw three more deaths, increasing the toll to 203. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 209 patients and out of them, 171 recovered from home isolation, increasing the number to 8,113 and 38 patients have been discharged from the hospitals and the number of cured patients from the hospitals reached 2,653.

The total number of cured patients is now 10,766, leaving 1,572 active patients. The recovery rate has improved slightly to 85.84 per cent and mortality rate to 1.61 per cent.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh has informed that in the first report of the day by 11 am, 141 positive patients were detected out of 2,830 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 1,84,586 and the results of 6,084 are awaited. Out of them, 1,72,099 were negative while 12,485 positive.

The total number of sam-

ples collected was 2,00,933. Earlier, two males aged 50 and 52 and a female (50) from Ledhupur, Tilmapur and Police Lines respectively succumbed to COVID-19. Besides, with the addition of 14 new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 1,964 including 343 red zones. Four green zones have been converted into red zones again. There are 1,621 green zones with 22 new ones.

Earlier, this belt of Purvanchal (eastern UP) comprising 10 districts of three divisions saw 537 new cases a day ago and with this, the

total number of patients has increased to 42,145. Out of these, maximum number of cases (23,806) was in Varanasi division followed by Azamgarh (11,815) and Vindhyachal (6,524).

The best mortality rate was of Vindychal (1.11%) while the same was 1.34% in Azamgarh and 1.40% in Varanasi while the best recovery rate (91.88%) was in Azamgarh followed by Vindhyachal (87.03%) and Varanasi (86.12%). The overall recovery rate in the region was 87.88% while mortality rate 1.34%.

BJP recalls Pt Upadhyaya's teachings

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers organised several programmes on the 104th birth anniversary of party's ideal Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya at trans-Ganga Parao located Pt. Deendayal Smriti Sthal here on Friday. The programme was attended by senior party leaders, ministers, MLAs and others and the chief guest was state co-incharge of the party Sunil Ojha. The main attraction of the day was planting of 104 saplings by an equal number of party workers near the 60-feet high statue of Pt. Upadhyaya, which was inaugurated some-time ago by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking on the occasion, Sunil Ojha highlighted Ekatma Manavvaad of Pt Upadhyaya



BJP workers planting samples on Pt Deendayal Jayanti in Varanasi on Friday

Pioneer

and said that Panditji was a great organiser of the party and philosopher who had command on his effective writing. He said that Panditji always highlighted the richness of

Indian culture and appealed to the people to follow our tradition and culture. In the beginning, district president Hansraj Vishwakarma, city chief Vidya Sagar Rai and president of

Chandauli Abhimanyu Singh jointly lighted the lamp. The function was conducted by regional general secretary Ashok Chaurasia.

Later, the party workers also watched the address of the prime minister given on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Pt Upadhyaya on a big LED screen installed there. The function was also attended by ministers Dr Neelkanth Tiwari and Ravindra Jaiswal, MLAs of Varanasi and Chandauli districts Dr Awadesh Singh, Saurabh Srivastava, Sushil Singh, Surendra Narayan, Sadhana Singh, MLC Ashok Dhawan, Sharda Prasad, Manish Kapoor, Meena Choubey, Daya Shankar Mishra 'Dayalu', Anil Singh, Dharmendra Singh, Ram Prakash Dubey and Navratna Rathi.

DLW produces 100th electric loco

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The 100th electric locomotive 'WAP-7' was dedicated to the nation by officers and staff at the Loco Test Shop in Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW) here on Friday. The production activities at the DLW were stalled for a long period due to nationwide lockdown implemented to prevent the spread of worldwide coronavirus pandemic and the production was only restarted from May 9 last following necessary COVID-19 guidelines. The work was started in workshops adopting the formula of engaging maximum 33 per cent employees, especially those residing in the DLW premises.

The first electric locomotive 'WAP-7' for the financial year 2020-21 manufactured by DLW was flagged off during lockdown from its Loco Test



DLW dedicates 100th electric loco of this financial year to the nation in Varanasi on Friday

Pioneer

Shop on May 16 last. The construction of this electric locomotive was truly a historic moment for DLW as with the relentless efforts of the workers the locomotive was flagged off

in just one week. It is also a matter of pride for DLW to set a new record by dedicating the 100th electric locomotive in the service of the nation in 122 days interval (98 working days)

since then. This 6,000 horsepower electric locomotive number 37450 for the passenger service is being sent to Ghaziabad Electrical Loco Shed (GZB Electric Loco Shed) of Northern Railway.

Meanwhile, under the ongoing cleanliness fortnight being observed on the directives of the Ministry of Railways, various programmes were organised under 'Clean Food Day' at DLW.

During the day, the employees were mobilised for quality meals along with cleanliness of various restrooms, central hospitals and Railway Protection Force (RPF) barracks / kitchens. In order to improve food quality further, feedback was also taken apart from ensuring hygienic food, all the kitchens were extensively inspected by the officials, informed CPRO Vaibhav Sohane.

Opposition raises voices against farm bills

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Various political parties including Congress and Samajwadi Party (SP) came on the roads in response to the call of nationwide protests against three farm bills here on Friday. However, the call of Bharat Bandh evoked only a partial response in the city. Extending their support to the Bandh when the Congress workers were taking out a protest procession from Hathuwa market they were stopped by the police. Later, they sat on dharna there and due to this, the area witnessed traffic jam like situation. Due to Congress protest, the markets in Hathuwa Market, Lahurabir and adjoining areas remained closed.

Led by city chief Raghvendra Choubey and district president Rajeshwar Patel, the Congress leaders flayed the BJP-led Government for foiling all the prosperities brought by Congress through Green Revolution in the rural areas as it is willing to abolish the system of minimum support price (MSP). Among others who were also present were Maqsood Khan, Jitendra Seth, Sunil Kapoor, Shiv Ji Singh, Om Prakash Ojha, Mayank Choubey and Pramoj Verma.

Samajwadi Party (SP) workers also staged a demonstration at the district headquarters in support of their three-point charter of

demands. Some other groups also staged protests at BHU Gate and other places. In their memorandum to the Governor they said that due to these farm bills, the farmers would become labourers in their own land and with the abolition of Krishi Mandis, the farmers will not get MSP of their crops. They also said that the farmers would be exploited by the corporate houses. They also said that the bills would also hit the interests of the farmers. They were led by district president Sujit Yadav, while city president Vishnu Sharma and general secretaries Anand Maurya and Jitendra Yadav were also present.

The activists of Kisan Nyay Morcha, UP led by its convenor Mahendra Prasad staged a demonstration at Shastri Ghat and then submitted their memorandum, expressing their protest against the bills. They termed the bills as black laws and flayed the Central Government for adopting dictatorial attitude against the farmers. They alleged that the bills were passed in unconstitutional ways and protest was also participated by principal general secretary Ashok Singh, Ram Bali Patel, Toofani Yadav and Satyabhama Devi.

The workers of Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) observed 'Buddhi Suddhi' Yagya at Shastri Ghat. They said that they observed the programme praying the Almighty

to teach a lesson to Central and state governments as instead of their promises to give jobs to two crore youths, they had made four crore people jobless. Through their protest they also raised the increasing impacts of drugs in Bollywood. State vice-president Shashi Pratap Singh criticised the government for its total failure. The meeting was conducted by principal general secretary (Youth Wing) Jagdishwar Rajbhar and attended by divisional chief Ramesh Rajhar and district president Ganesh Chauhan.

DURGA MANDIR REOPENS AFTER 188 DAYS: Famous Durga Mandir at Durgakund has also been reopened after closure of 188 days here on Friday. Recently, two leading temples including Sankatmochan temple and Vishwanath temple in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) were reopened and all these three leading temples remained closed for nearly six months due to lockdown imposed in the country to prevent coronavirus pandemic.

In connection with opening, the temple management had taken a decision a day ago and decided that the temple will remain open for the darshan of Maa Kushmanda after aarti at 6 am to 12 noon. Later, it will also remain open from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Though several places of worship including one of the Dwadas Jyotilingas Kashi Vishwanath

temple were reopened on June 10 last, immediately after the government and district administration allowed them for the same, many leading temples remained closed as the management of the same could not seek permissions as they felt it difficult to follow the COVID-19 guidelines. Famous Kaal Bhairav temple took almost 141 days to be reopened, while Sankatmochan temple 183 days.

With the opening of Durga Mandir, happiness returned on the faces of many devotees who regularly offer prayer there during Navratra. During both the Sardiya and Vasantik navratras, the temple sees heavy rush and it is expected that despite all restrictions good rush would be seen there during forthcoming Navratra next month.

Recently, Kashi Vishwanath temple had maintained a rush of devotees despite COVID-19 restrictions during the auspicious month of Shravan. Durg Vinayak Mandir, also located in the Durga Mandir premises, has also been reopened during the day and it will remain open daily from 6 am to 11 am and from 4 pm. to 8 pm. During the opening hours both the temples will follow all the COVID-19 guidelines and no devotee would be allowed to enter there without wearing a mask. Besides, physical distance would also be maintained.

313 new COVID-19 patients found Nandi tests positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The spread of corona infection continued to increase on Thursday. So far 17,882 patients have been Covid positive in the district with 313 new infected persons reported late on Thursday night. According to CMO Dr. GS Bajpai, in the testing of about 3,500 people in the district, 313 people have been found infected. Reports of 189 patients in the antigen test, 105 in the RTPCR test and 19 in the truenat test were positive. Among the RTPCR test, 39 suspects have conducted a Covid test in private centres.

According to the CMO, 357 patients were admitted to various Covid Care Centres on Thursday. Most of these 155 patients are admitted to SRN, 13 in Kalindipuram Covid Care Centre, 16 in Unani Medical College, 68 in Beli Hospital, 42 in Railway Hospital, 33 in United Medicity and 30 in Sainath Vatsalya AMA Hospital are getting treatment for Covid infection.

At the same time, 275 people defeated corona on Thursday. In these, 44 patients were discharged from various Covid hospitals. At the same time, home isolation of 231 people was completed. According to the CMO, 10,126 patients have applied for home isolation so far. Three patients from Kalindipuram, six from Unani Medical College, seven from Railway Hospital, two from Beli, six from United Medicity, five from Sainath

In the wake of corona infection, Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi', the Cabinet Minister tested positive. The infection was confirmed in the Rapid and subsequent RTPCR testing on Tuesday. The minister tweeted that after being found positive, he is in home isolation on the advice of doctors. Minister Nand Gopal Gupta wrote in a tweet that due to the surgery after the bomb attack in 2010, he is currently considering his condition a complication after the corona infection.

Mayor Abhilasha Gupta and wife of Nandi said that husband Nandi is highly diabetic, this is the concern. On Tuesday, he complained of headache and watery nose, so he got the corona test done. However, his condition is normal on Thursday. He has no problem, yet the anxiety has increased due to diseases. Mayor said that he had undergone 16 surgeries after the July 2010 bomb attack. According to the Mayor, even if the symptoms are normal, he will be taken to the Higher Centre. She herself left for Lucknow on Friday morning.

It may be pointed out here that Nandi is the 17th Minister of State Government to be corona positive. Apart from this, two ministers Chetan Chauhan and Kamala Rani Varun have died due to corona. Earlier Jail Minister Jai Kumar Singh Jackie, Health Minister Jai Pratap Singh, Water Power Minister Mahendra Singh, Rural Development Minister Rajendra Pratap Singh alias Moti Singh, Law and Justice Minister Brajesh Pathak, AYUSH Minister of State Dharam Singh Saini, Minister of State for Sports and Youth Welfare Upendra Tiwari, MSME Minister of State Chaudhary Udaybhan Singh, Minister of State for Health Atul Garg, Panchayati Raj Minister Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary, MSME Minister Siddharthnath Singh, Waqf Minister Mohsin Raza, Baldev Singh Aulakh, Industrial Development Minister Satish Mahana have also become corona positive.

and 15 from SRN were discharged on Thursday.

Coronavirus has also disturbed the people of the district. The number of new patients is increasing with each passing day. In such a situation, people associated with the Health department are also

getting infected. In the same sequence, four more doctors have been found infected with coronavirus infection in Swaroop Rani Nehru Covid Hospital. It consists of one senior and three junior doctors. Two employees of the gynecology, one employee each of gas-

Police lathicharge AU students

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Majority of the students of Allahabad Central University who were going to support the farmers' movement from students' union building to Balsan Crossing on Friday afternoon were cane charged when they refused to budge even after persuasion made by the cops.

During this, a stampede-like situation erupted on the road. Many students were injured in lathicharge. Majority of them have been taken into custody by the police. They have been sent to the Police Lines by the police.

It is noteworthy that on Friday, farmers' organisations and SP workers are protesting against the Agriculture Bill. In the same sequence, hundreds of students belonging to the



National Students Union of India (NSUI) reached the students' union building in the afternoon. A strategy was made to reach here in support of the

movement. After this, the students arrived at the gate of the students' union in the procession. Meanwhile, when the police came to know about the

tro and pathology department.

Apart from this, steno of DIG Railway and Police Head Quarters have also tested positive. Among the others infected are the Audit Officer of AG Office, Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna College Naini's teacher, two advocates and others. From Thursday morning to late night, 313 new infected cases of coronavirus were found. The number of corona patients has risen to 17882. At the same time, the number of active patients has increased to 3,324.

Similarly, 44 patients were discharged from Covid hospitals who were fully recovered. Similarly, 231 patients have been kept in home quarantine for 14 days after completion of home isolation period. Now the total number of patients recovering from corona has increased to 14,307. That is, the number of patients recovering from corona is good.

Four corona virus-infected patients have also died in Prayagraj. All of them were admitted to Level 3 Covid Hospital SRN. These patients were undergoing treatment but the condition was not improving. These patients were infected with diseases other than corona. One patient of Chitrakoot, admitted to SRN Covid Hospital, died. He was Corona positive but the grandson's report was negative, yet his condition is critical. He has been admitted to the Emergency Department of the Medicine Department.

NCR utilises lockdown period to complete pending works

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The corona crisis was converted into an opportunity by the North Central Railway which completed many important works pending due to heavy traffic movement on its busy routes, said the NCR GM Rajiv Chaudhry while addressing a virtual press conference on Friday.

The General Manager added that NCR utilised the lockdown to complete the pending works including raising the speed of trains up to 160 kmph on Delhi-Howrah and Delhi-Mumbai routes.

The Palwal-Mathura section on Delhi-Mumbai route, and Ghaziabad-Deendayal Upadhyay (Mughalsara) junction comes under NCR.

Through power point presentation Chaudhry laid emphasis on a good number of infrastructural achievements during the lockdown period when only goods trains were on run.

At the onset tributes were paid to the late Suresh Angadi, Minister of State for Railways on his sudden demise on September 23, 2020 owing to corona and a one-minute silence was observed by all participants of press conference as a mark of respect to the noble soul. GM said that Angadi was very approachable, positive and able minister and great leader who throughout guided and helped NCR in all important matters.

The GM informed that on the front of freight loading, NCR has maintained positive loading trend since June-20 and average speed of goods trains have also increased by 88

per cent over last year. On trunk routes of NCR from Ghaziabad to Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn. and Palwal to Bina NCR has already achieved average speed of more than 50 Kmph and overall average speed of 50 kmph plus is expected by October 2020. With efforts of Business development units, NCR has tapped many new traffic streams which resulted in additional freight revenue of more than ₹ 7 crore. With rigorous marketing efforts, North Central Railway has finalised six station to station (STS) concessional rate proposals for new and incremental traffic and expected to operationalise total 12 STSs within October 2020 which is highest among all zonal railways. Steps taken towards ease of doing business were also covered and GM informed that NCR is ready to receive, analyse and work upon all new business proposals and on similar lines EOI for development of 17 goods sheds through PPP have already been called. Railway efforts in transport of parcel through special and time tabled parcel trains, Kisan rail and facilities for ease of contact and booking were also covered.

In Passenger segment, the GM informed the media that NCR as one of the most important passing through Railway handled more than 53 per cent of total Shramik Special trains operated by Indian Railways besides catering to more than 5 lakhs migrant and other stranded persons through 173 originating and 203 terminating Shramik specials. He also informed that about 27 lakh meals were served in about

1843 Shramik Specials over NCR and timely medical aid provided in safe deliveries of 20 babies. To meet essential travel need, 101 pairs of special trains are serving to different stations of North Central Railway including eight pairs of originating specials and close watch on occupancy of each train is being kept to assess additional requirement.

HC ISSUES MANDAMUS FOR WHOLE UP: The Allahabad High Court has issued a mandamus for the whole of the Uttar Pradesh directing that no person should be seen outside his/her house without a mask on his/her face and he or she should check that the mask covers both the nose and the mouth.

Further, the court directed the police in all the districts of the state and in all police stations of all the districts deploy task forces to implement this mandamus.

Hearing a PIL seeking better conditions at quarantine centres, a division bench comprising Justice Siddhartha Varma and Justice Ajit Kumar further directed that each task force should consist of many more police personnel than presently have been deployed.

'Needless to say that violation of this mandamus would entail rigorous punishments. The police and the administration cannot get away by saying that people are to be blamed for not wearing the masks. They cannot say that despite their best efforts, masks are not being worn. The people and the administration should realise that today wearing of masks is not only for the protection of the person who is wearing it

but it is now also important for protecting the whole society and if a person commits a crime against society, he has to be punished', the court added.

The court further directed that the police of the entire state has to necessarily take appropriate action under relevant provisions of the various penal laws, the moment it finds a person without a mask in the public.

The court further directed that the advocate commissioners, whom the court have appointed, shall report to the zonal officers and the municipal commissioners. Further, they shall also mail their report regarding the exercise of the task forces on a daily basis to the Registrar, Legal Cell, High Court Allahabad on his email Id and shall also forward the same to the Additional Advocate General. In addition to it, the court further directed that the medical facilities should be made available to one and all. 'The task forces which have been constituted for rendering medical help should have empathy towards the ill, the court added.

While directing to put up this matter again on September 28, 2020 for the next hearing, the court directed that a copy of this order be sent to the Additional Chief Secretary (Home), Uttar Pradesh, Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow and all the District Magistrates, Senior Superintendents of Police and Superintendents of Police of all the districts of the state within 48 hours for necessary action and compliance of this order at their end.

Anaesthetist absent from duty; hospital warned by DM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

District Magistrate Alok Tiwari and DIG Parminder Singh carried out a surprise inspection of Guru Tegh Bahadur Hospital during which they found the anaesthetist absent from duty. The district magistrate sought details of the patient who died in the hospital and cross-checked bills to see if the patients had been overcharged. He then interacted with the relatives of the patient and sought details of the treatment.

Tiwari directed the additional city magistrate (ACM) to interact with the patients admitted in the hospital and also with those who had been discharged in the last one week. He sought the case histories of the deceased patients and the diagnosis and treatment details of the patients undergoing treatment. He also sought details about the number of days a patient was made to stay in the hospital, especially COVID-19 patient. The general feedback

of the relatives was that they remained in the hospital for 15 days. The district magistrate told the hospital authorities that if they did not make arrangement for an anaesthetist, the administration would be forced to take action against the hospital. Tiwari said no hospital would be allowed to run a Level-2 Covid facility if it did not have an anaesthetist on duty round the clock. Later, the district magistrate held a meeting on com-

municable diseases. He said apart from communicable diseases, another cause of concern was vector-borne diseases and said a campaign had to be launched simultaneously to prevent death due to dengue and malaria. He said there was need for creating awareness among the masses about these diseases and their preventive measures. Tiwari said anganwadi workers, teachers and gram pradhans should extend help in the awareness campaign,

‘CM for comprehensive development of Kanpur’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar said the focus of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was on comprehensive development of Kanpur Nagar. He said while reviewing the development projects of Kanpur division comprising Kanpur Nagar, Kanpur Dehat, Kannauj, Farrukhabad, Auraiya and Etawah, the chief minister had laid emphasis on developing a magnificent waterfront along the river Ganga in the city and had

stressed on giving further momentum to the Namami Gange project. Shekhar said the chief minister had stressed on consultations with people's representatives regarding development projects and on complementing the work within stipulated time while maintaining qualitative. He said physical verification of the projects by officials had been made mandatory and the priority area was to build hostels and classrooms in the medical college before constructing an auditorium.

Shekhar said the chief minister also stressed on giving further momentum to the Smart City and Metro projects in Kanpur Nagar. He said it had been decided in principle that the under construction Bundelkhand Expressway would pass through Etawah and Auraiya districts and this would give fillip to the economic growth of the state. He said the green signal had also been given for the construction of Kanpur Dehat Medical College. Shekhar said the chief minister expressed concern

over the high COVID-19 death rate in Kanpur Nagar and stressed on following social distancing in letter and spirit. The divisional commissioner said the emphasis was on effective surveillance and contact tracing as they alone could save many lives from the deadly novel coronavirus. He said as per the chief minister's directives, all the public toilets constructed under the Swachh Bharat Mission to make the country open defecation-free would be geo-tagged.

KDA to refund registration fees

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kanpur Development Authority will refund the registration fees of the applicants who could not be allotted house under its Mahavir Nagar Scheme. This was stated by KDA Vice Chairman Rakesh Kumar Singh during the Janata Darshan programme organised on Thursday. As many as 45 applications were received for redressal by the KDA on Thursday. Among the applicants, Sharad Kumar Trivedi demanded possession on his plot in Jarauli Phase-II. Kamal Narain Yadav, Satyendra Kumar and Ravi Prakash Gupta also complained that they were not given possession of their plots in the Highway City Scheme. Brij Kumar Sachan complained that his registration fee was not refunded after he could not get a house in the Mahavir Nagar Scheme. Singh directed the officials



'Janata Darshan' programme being organised in KDA.

Pioneer.

to redress people's grievances within prescribed time. The next Janata Darshan programme will be organised on Saturday.

Plea to promote BEd 1st year students without exams

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur University Self-Financed Teachers' Association president Dr Kamlesh Yadav has demanded that the BEd first year students be promoted without conducting their examinations. Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University Vice Chancellor Prof Neelima Gupta has assured Yadav that a decision on this issue would be taken in the meeting of the examination committee to be held on September 28. In his memorandum to the vice chancellor on Friday, Yadav urged her to conduct practical examinations of undergraduate students of first and second years as was done by other universities. On this, the VC assured him of taking a positive decision. He also urged her to direct the management of degree colleges to disburse salaries to their teachers for the COVID-19 lockdown period and start calling them to attend the college. On this, the VC said she would soon send a letter to the registrar in this regard.

General secretary of the Association, Dr Akhand Pratap Singh, was also present during the meeting. **NEW LLOYD SEG-**



KUSFTA President Dr Kamlesh Yadav hands over memorandum to VC, CSJM University, Prof Neelima Gupta on Friday.

Pioneer.

MENT: Havells India Limited has announced its entry into the refrigerator segment under its consumer durable brand Lloyd. The company will also double the range with additional 25 models by Diwali this year.

Lloyd chief executive officer said the refrigerators would be available in capacities ranging from 190 litres to 587 litres, and at an introductory offer price range from Rs 10,000 to Rs 84,990. The newly-launched

refrigerators will come with a one year comprehensive warranty along with 10 years compressor warranty. The range will be available at Lloyd brand shops across India, offline dealers and Lloyd online e store, he added.

War of words over testing discrepancy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The war of words is once again intensifying in the Lala Lajpat Rai Hospital and this time at the centre of the controversy are Covid laboratory's nodal officer and the chief medical officer. The former has raised an accusing finger at the Covid testing at the LLRH laboratory. He said when the Flu OPD of LLRH was catering to the city patients and samples were taken in thousands every day, the wide chasm between the positive cases was mind boggling. He said it appeared that the sampling was not being done as per the Covid protocol.

The nodal officer pointed out that while two to three per cent of the samples collected by the health workers in the city for Covid testing were turning positive, it was shocking that 15-16 per cent of the samples collected at LLRH Flu OPD were testing positive and this raised a needle of suspicion at the sampling. He said as the state was witnessing a steep decline in positivity, this discrepancy needed an explanation. Chief Medical Officer Dr AK Mishra denying the charges raised on testing and sampling said every case was being taken. He said stricter surveillance would be carried out on sampling and monitoring. Skirting around the charge levelled by Nodal Officer Dr Prashant Tripathi, the CMO said earlier the percentage was high and was around 14 to 15 per cent but it had come down to eight per cent and now it had reached between three and four per cent. He said the reduction of the positive cases was a clear indication that the infection was declining. He, however, added that the two issues raised would certainly be probed again.

227 MORE TEST POSITIVE Kanpur Nagar reported 227 fresh cases of coronavirus infection till Friday evening.

Chief Medical Officer Dr AK Mishra said 227 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Thursday evening and Friday evening, taking the count of confirmed cases to 24,164. He said a total of 39 cases were recovered and at present 4171 active coronavirus cases were undergoing treatment. The CMO said two COVID-19 deaths were reported in the city till Friday evening taking the toll to 630.

PKK provides platform to stage artistes

KANPUR (PNS): Secretary of Pracheen Kala Kendra, Chandigarh, Sajal Koser, while addressing a virtual web 'baithak' on Friday said the Kendra wanted to continue holding web meets for artistes especially in the times of COVID-19 as the artistes were missing stage and thus PKK had decided to support them. He said the endeavour was to provide a platform to every stage artiste and also promote dance and music in the times of pandemic. He said the objective was to keep fine arts alive and thus every effort would be made to ensure this continued in the times to come. Coordinator Shilpa Mitra said COVID-19 pandemic had thoroughly exposed classical music's existential vulnerability arising out of a limited socio-cultural infrastructure that sustained it. She said the moment this infrastructure faced some vulnerability, both the art and the artistes take a massive hit. She said classical music was one of the worst-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic in India. She said performing arts activity could not exist without crowds, close contacts and closed spaces. She said since several months concerts had been cancelled and said as the artists thrive only on concert gains this pandemic had hit them dangerously. She said the PKK had always been in the forefront to help artistes and this move to make it digital was one such effort made by it to give oxygen to this art form. She said it was a matter of great pride that in its 16th web meet it had introduced a young artist, a Dhrupad singer from Kanpur, Ayush Dwivedi.

Rlys to run three pairs of spl trains

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration has decided to operate three pairs of special trains for the convenience of passengers. Their movement will be done in addition to the special and clone trains already being run. All coaches of these trains will be of reserved category, CPRO PK Singh said. The 05063 Gorakhpur-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus weekly special train will be run from Gorakhpur from September 28 until further notice. This special train will be run on the days and timing of No 15063 Gorakhpur-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus Express with same stoppages. The 05063 Gorakhpur-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus special train will on every Monday depart from Gorakhpur at 05:30 hrs, from Anandnagar at 06:25 hrs, from Naugarh at 07:02 hrs, from Shohratgarh at 07:32 hrs, from Barhni at 08:05 hrs, from Tulsipur at 08:35 hrs, from Jharkhandi at 09:04 hrs, from Gonda at 09:18 hrs, from Balmampur at 09:18 hrs, from Gonda at 09:40 hrs, from Barabanki at 13:05 hrs, from Lucknow at 14:20 hrs, and after stopping at Kanpur Central, Orai and Jhansi and the next day at Vidisha, Habibganj, Itarsi, Harda, Khandwa, Bhusaval, Kalyan and Thane stations will arrive at Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 16:00 hrs. The 05064 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Gorakhpur weekly special train from September 29 until further notice on every Tuesday will run from Lokmanya Tilak Terminus. This special train will be run on the days and timings of regular train No. 15064 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Gorakhpur Express with same stoppages. The 05064 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Gorakhpur weekly special train will leave Lokmanya Tilak Terminus every Tuesday at 17:50 hrs and after stopping at Thane and Kalyan and on the second day at Bhusaval, Khandwa, Harda, Itarsi, Habibganj, Vidisha, Jhansi, Orai, Kanpur Central stations, from Lucknow at 19:55 hrs, from Barabanki at 20:38 hrs, from Gonda at 22:25 hrs, from Balmampur at 23:10 hrs, from Jharkhandi at 23:19 hrs, from Tulsipur at 23:47 hrs, on the third day from Badhni at 00:44 hrs, from Shohratgarh at 01:11 hrs, from Naugarh at 01:40

at 19:55 hours, from Barabanki at 20:38 hours, from Gonda at 22:25 hours, from Balmampur at 23:10 hours, from Jharkhandi at 23:19 hours, from Tulsipur at 23:45 hours, the third day from Barhani at 00:44 hours, from Shohratganj at 01:11 hours, from Naugarh at 01:40 hours, from Anandnagar at 02:40 hours and will arrive at Gorakhpur at 04:30 hours. The 05065 Gorakhpur-Panvel special train will from September 29 till further notice be run every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday. This special train will run on the days and timing of regular train No 15065 Gorakhpur-Panvel Express with same stoppages. The 05065 Gorakhpur-Panvel special train will on every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday leave Gorakhpur at 05:30 hrs, from Anandnagar at 06:25 hrs, from Naugarh at 07:04 hrs, from Shohratgarh at 07:32 hrs, from Barhni at 08:05 hrs, from Tulsipur at 08:35 hrs, from Jharkhandi at 09:04 hrs, from Balmampur at 09:18 hrs, from Gonda at 10:40 hrs, from Barabanki at 13:07 hours, from Lucknow at 14:20 hours, and after stopping at Kanpur Central, Orai, Jhansi, the second day at Vidisha, Habibganj, Itarsi, Harda, Khandwa, Bhusaval, Nashik Road and Kalyan stations and reach Panvel at 16:20 hours. The 05066 Panvel-Gorakhpur special train from September 30 until further notice will be run on every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. This special train will run on the days and timings of regular train No 15066 Panvel-Gorakhpur Express with same stoppages. The 05066 Panvel-Gorakhpur special train on every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday will leave Panvel at 17:50 hours, and after stopping at Kalyan and Nashik Road and on the second day at Bhusaval, Khandwa, Harda, Itarsi, Habibganj, Vidisha, Jhansi, Orai, Kanpur Central stations, from Lucknow at 19:55 hrs, from Barabanki at 20:38 hrs, from Gonda at 22:25 hrs, from Balmampur at 23:10 hrs, from Jharkhandi at 23:19 hrs, from Tulsipur at 23:47 hrs, on the third day from Badhni at 00:44 hrs, from Shohratganj at 01:11 hrs, from Naugarh at 01:40

hours and Anandnagar at 02:40 hours reach Gorakhpur at 04:30 hrs. The 05067 Gorakhpur-Bandra Terminus weekly special train will be run from September 30 until further notice will be run from Gorakhpur on every Wednesday. This special train will be run on the days and timings of regular train no. 15067 Gorakhpur-Bandra Terminus Express with same stoppages. The 05067 Gorakhpur-Bandra Terminus weekly special will every Wednesday leave Gorakhpur at 05:30 hrs, from Anandnagar at 06:25 hrs, from Naugarh at 07:02 hrs, from Shohratgarh at 07:32 hrs, from Barhni at 08:05 hrs, from Tulsipur at 08:35 hrs, from Jharkhandi at 09:04 hrs, from Balmampur at 09:18 hrs, from Gonda at 10:40 hours, Barabanki at 13:07 hrs, Lucknow at 14:20 hrs, and after stopping at Kanpur Central, Orai and Jhansi and on the second day at Agasod, Vidisha, Habibganj, Itarsi Jn, Harda, Khandwa, Bhusaval, Jalgaon, Nandurwar, Udhna, Vapi and Borivali stations reach Banda terminus at 19:10 hours. The 05068 Banda Terminus-Gorakhpur Weekly Special from October 2 will be run every Friday from Banda Terminus. This special train will run on the days and timing of regular train No. 15068 Banda Terminus-Gorakhpur Express with same stoppages. The 05068 Banda Terminus-Gorakhpur special will depart from Banda Terminus every Friday at 00:20 hours and after stopping at Borivali, Vapi, Udhna, Nandurbar, Jalgaon, Bhusaval, Khandwa, Harda, Itarsi, Vidisha, on the second day at Jhansi, Orai, Kanpur Central stations, leave from Lucknow at 09:35 hrs, from Barabanki at 10:23 hrs, from Gonda at 12:20 hrs, from Balmampur at 13:05 hrs, from Jharkhandi at 13:15 hrs, from Tulsipur at 13:42 hrs, from Barhni at 14:32 hrs, from Shohratganj at 14:57 hrs, from Naugarh at 15:18 hrs and Anandnagar at 15:55 pm will arrive at Gorakhpur at 17:35 hrs. In these special trains a total of 23 coaches, including two of SLRD, eight of general second class, nine of sleeper class, three of AC third class and one of AC second class.

Rich tributes paid

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

Under the presidency of Additional General Manager (AGM) of North Eastern Railway (NER) Amit Kumar Agarwal principal heads of departments and senior Railway officers at a virtual condolence meeting on Thursday mourned the demise of Minister of State for Railways Suresh C Angadi paid emotional tributes to him. On the occasion AGM Amit Kumar Agarwal said that Suresh C Angadi Angadi who was popular, soft-spoken and an educationist was elected for the fourth consecutive time from Belgaum parliamentary constituency in Karnataka. He took charge as Minister of State for Railways on May 31, 2029 and had a strong attachment to the NER. On August 28, 2019, at a function held in Lakhimpur he had

inaugurated the Lakhimpur-Sitapur gauge conversion train section and flagged off the broad gauge rail service on this section. On August 15 this year he inaugurated the 100-feet-high national flag in the Izzatnagar railway station complex via video link from New Delhi. During the review of the working of the Zonal Railways, Angadi appreciated the work being done on the NER. Angadi always thought about the progress of railway passengers and railwaymen. Meanwhile in Varanasi Division of NER, DRM VK Panjar, ADRM (Infra) Praveen Kumar, ADRM (Operations) SPS Yadav and other divisional officers paid rich tributes to MOSR Suresh Angadi. The employees and office-bearers of various unions also observed a two minute silence to mourn the death of the minister.

Illicit liquor seized

CORRESPONDENT ■ JALAU

On the directive of Superintendent of Police (SP) Yashveer Singh and Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Dr Awadhesh Singh police apprehended six accused and recovered illicit liquor from their possession recently. Inspector Kamlesh Kumar, incharge Ait police station, said that Ait police arrested Niraj, Ghanaram and Akhilesh, residents of Jhansi, Krishnagopal, a resident of Bilayan village under Ait police station in Jalaun, Jitendra of Nari village under Kaliya police station and Pradyuman Parihar, a resident of Sami village under Kaliya police station in Jalaun from different locations. He said that 50 litres of illicit liquor and 180 quarter bottles of country liquor had been confiscated and a case had been registered against them under Section 60 of Excise Act.

Cleanliness programmes

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

Under the Swachhta Pakhwada being observed on the entire Indian Railways from September 16 to 30 various cleanliness programmes were run under the supervision of nominated officers in Izzatnagar, Lucknow and Varanasi divisions, CPRO PK Singh said. On Thursday in Varanasi Division under 'Swachh Neer' (clean water), in Lucknow Division under 'Swachh Yard' (clean yard) and in Izzatnagar division under 'Clean carriage and wagon depot' cleanliness programmes were held during which social distancing was maintained and Covid-19 norms were followed. In Varanasi division filtration plants installed for clean water at various places and taps for drinking water at stations were cleaned. In addition, clean water supply was ensured at railway colony, offices, hospitals and stations. Under Lucknow division's 'clean yard' programme under the supervision of the designated officers cleanliness was carried out in the yards of Lucknow Junction, Gonda, Gorakhpur, Badshahnagar, Khalilabad, Basti and Mankapur stations. Under Izzatnagar division's 'Clean carriage and wagon depot' an intensive cleaning campaign was carried out under the supervision of designated officers at Clutterbuckganj's Demu shed besides in Kathgodam, Lalkuan, Tanakpur, Ramnagar and Kasganj stations' carriage depot.

Two apprehended

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The Gida police arrested two accused from Bagaha Bir Baba temple near Gida Sector 9 on Thursday. Gida SHO Devendra Singh said that both of them had looted goods from a resident of Khalilabad. Police produced both the accused, Manager Nishad and Bablu Nishad, residents of Januar village under the Chiluat police station in the court from where they were sent to jail.

Man's body found

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

The body of an unidentified man was found in Lusa village under Madihan police station on Thursday. On being informed the police reached the spot and took the body of the deceased into custody for completing legal formalities. The villagers said that the deceased was mentally retarded and was roaming in the area for the past few days. **EIGHT INJURED:** As many as eight persons sustained burns due to lightning on Thursday. Reports said that two persons of Belkhara village under Ahraura police station had gone to jungle to collect wood when lightning struck them. They were brought home with the help of locals and then admitted to a hospital. In Bheeti village under Madihan police station due to the lightning four persons were burnt along with a buffalo and electrical equipment in several houses got damaged. Two others were seriously burnt due to it in Saiyakala village under Halia police station. The revenue department officials were assessing the losses.

CONFISCATED: Lalganj police confiscated the movable property worth ₹30 lakh of an accused involved in smuggling intoxicating materials. A case under the Gangster Act was registered in 2017 against Arun Kumar Singh, son of Ramlagan Singh, a resident of Chibila village under Mehnajpur police station in Azamgarh, a member of a gang involved in smuggling intoxicating materials. During the proceedings the accused failed to prove that his assets were accumulated through the legal way. Using the power under Gangster Act the DM ordered to confiscate the property of the accused at the report of the SHO and recommendation of the SP. Under the compliance of the order of the DM, SHO Lalganj Harishchandra Saroj confiscated a Fortuner worth ₹30 lakh.

BIHAR ELECTIONS

EC OK's poll rallies with social distancing norms



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Political parties and candidates can hold rallies as part of their campaigning for the Bihar Assembly polls and the grounds where such meetings will be held will have white circles to ensure distancing norms. These are among the slew of measures the Election Commission is taking in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Addressing a Press conference to announce the schedule for Bihar assembly elections, Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora said he wants to dispel doubts that there will only be virtual campaigning in the State. The “propaganda” that only virtual meets will take place during campaigning is way off the mark, he said.

Arora said the district election officers have already identified places where gatherings can take place. The exercise of putting markers to ensure distancing norms is on. District election officers and district superintendents of police should ensure that the number of attendees does not exceed the limit prescribed by the

State Disaster Management Authority for public gatherings, an EC statement later said. Political parties and candidates concerned should ensure that all COVID-related requirements such as face masks, sanitisers and thermal scanning are fulfilled during each of these election activities, the commission said.

Anyone violating the norms will face action under relevant sections of the Disaster Management Act and the Indian Penal Code, the EC warned. As part of restrictions put in place to check the spread of the virus, the EC has reduced the number of people who can undertake door-to-door campaigning. A group of five people, including candidates, but excluding security personnel, is allowed to campaign from door to door.

For road shows, the convoy of vehicles should be broken after every five vehicles instead of 10 vehicles. The interval between two sets of convoy of vehicles should be half an hour instead of a gap of 100 metres. The EC has revised the norms of the number of people

accompanying the candidate and number of vehicles at the time of nomination.

It has also created an optional facility to fill the nomination form and the affidavit online and submission of the same, after taking a print, before the returning officer concerned.

For the first time, the candidates will have the option to deposit the security amount for contesting the elections online. For the first time, the EC has made special arrangements to protect its employees from contracting coronavirus during their election duty in Bihar.

It will provide a small kit containing N95 mask, sanitizer and gloves to protect the employees on poll duty in the state. The packet will also contain one safety keychain to avoid use of hands while pressing buttons.

According to Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora, EC has arranged about 46 lakh masks, 6 lakh PPE kits, 6.7 lakh units of faces-shields, 23 lakh (pairs of) hand gloves arranged. For voters specifically, 7.2 crore single-use hand gloves for Bihar polls. Besides, postal ballot facility will be provided wherever required and requested.

Social distancing norms will need to be followed at public gatherings during the poll campaign. He said the world has changed significantly since the last elections which were held for Delhi assembly and the COVID-19 pandemic has forced a new normal in every aspect of our life.

75% of new Covid-19 cases from 10 States/UTs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At least, 75 per cent of new cases of coronavirus in the country are concentrated in 10 States and Union Territories (UTs). But then, there is 74 per cent of new recoveries as well.

A senior health official said if there were 86,052 new cases in the past 24 hours in Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and a few others, then the number of recoveries stood at 81,177.

Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Kerala, Delhi are some of the states that continue to be worst-hit from the pandemic.

On Friday, the country registered 86,052 fresh Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours, as India moves towards the 60-lakh mark. The active cases have climbed to 9,70,116 whereas over 4.75 million have recovered so far, said a statement from the Union Health Ministry.

For the past six days, the numbers of recoveries logged per day in the country have been exceeding the number of fresh cases. But in the last 24 hours, the number of recoveries stood at 81,177, said the Ministry.

It also pointed out that a minimum of 14 States demonstrated better Covid-19 response on the basis of higher tests per million population and corresponding lower positivity rate than the national average.

A total of 68,928,440 samples have been tested for Covid-19 so far out of which nearly 1.5 million samples were tested on Thursday, as per data released by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Severe cases among healthy due to faulty genes, misguided antibodies, say scientists

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 10 per cent of young and healthy people who develop severe Covid-19 have misguided antibodies that attack not the virus, but the immune system itself, according to a study published in journal ‘Science’. Another 3.5 per cent, at least, carry a specific kind of genetic mutation, causing early death of the Covid afflicted patients, as per the study.

In both groups, the upshot is basically the same: The patients lack type I interferon, a set of 17 proteins crucial for protecting cells and the body from viruses. “Whether the proteins have been neutralized by so-called auto-antibodies, or were not produced in sufficient amounts in the first place due to a faulty gene, their missing-in-action appears to be a common theme among a subgroup of Covid19 sufferers whose disease has thus far been a mystery,” said the researchers.

The findings help explain why some people develop a disease much more severe than others in their age group—including, for example, individuals who required admission to the ICU despite being in their 20s and free of underlying conditions. They may also provide the first molecular explanation for why more men than women die from the disease.

“These findings provide compelling evidence that the

disruption of type I interferon is often the cause of life-threatening Covid-19,” said Jean-Laurent Casanova, head of the St. Giles Laboratory of Human Genetics of Infectious Diseases at The Rockefeller University and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator.

The study participants included various nationalities from Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East. “Covid-19 may now be the best understood acute infectious disease in terms of having a molecular and genetic explanation for nearly 15% of critical cases across diverse ancestries,” Casanova said.

In one study, the researchers genetically analyzed blood samples from more than 650 patients who had been hospitalized for life-threatening pneumonia due to SARS-CoV-2, 14 percent of whom had died. They also included samples from another group of over 530 people with asymptomatic or benign infection. They initially searched for differences between the two groups across 13 genes known to be critical for the body's defense against the influenza virus. These genes govern type I interferons.

It soon became obvious that a significant number of people with severe disease carried rare variants in these 13 genes, and more than 3 percent of them were in fact missing a functioning gene.

Ultras cashing in on Covid crisis: India at UNHRC meet



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Highlighting the scourge of terrorism, India on Friday said terrorists are trying to exploit financial and emotional distress caused by the ongoing corona pandemic and Covid-19 lockdowns. Moreover, the terrorists are trying to collect funds under the garb of charitable activities but it is feared this money will be used to finance terror activities, India said.

Making these assertions at the ongoing 45th UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva, First Secretary Pawan Badhe, Permanent Mission of India to UN in Geneva, said due to widespread COVID-19, terrorists are making malevolent attempts to exploit the financial and emotional distress caused by lockdowns to disturb the cohesiveness of societies.

In his statement, he said “Terror groups have also exhorted supporters to target security forces and health workers. Another disturbing trend has been the collection of funds by proscribed terrorist outfits ostensibly for undertaking charitable activities, but which, in reality, would be used to finance terror.”

Speaking on the topic

“Human rights situations that require the Council's attention,” the Indian envoy said “The increased presence of people online and on social media has been targeted by terrorists to disseminate misinformation through hate speeches, fake news and doctored videos. The intent has been to entice and establish links with vulnerable individuals and recruit them in their cadres.”

He also said “We underscore the need to foster a society in which individuals and communities are able to counter the spread of terrorist ideologies and challenge those who espouse them.” Underlining the challenge posed by terrorism, India also urged the Council to play a major role in preventing radicalization of impressionable minds.

India stressed that the Council cannot remain immune to the devastating human rights impacts caused by terrorism. The Council has to spread awareness about the protection of the rights of the most vulnerable groups, particularly children and young persons, in order to prevent their indoctrination by terrorist ideologies.

SC to consider about Govt's suggestion of making refund vouchers transferable

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday said it will consider the Centre's suggestion of making transferable the refund vouchers to be given to the passengers in lieu of the tickets booked for the flights which were cancelled due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

The top court reserved its verdict on a batch of petitions including by NGOs and passengers associations seeking refund of ticket fare for the flights which were cancelled due to the Pandemic. A

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R Subhash Reddy and M R Shah was told by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Centre



and Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), that transferable refund vouchers can be issued to the passengers, which can be used by the travel agents who had booked their tickets for the flights which were cancelled later.

SC rubbishes plea seeking postponement of upcoming Bihar Assembly elections

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a plea seeking to postpone the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A three-judge bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R. Subhash Reddy and M R Shah also refused to grant liberty to the petitioner to give representation to the Election Commission in this regard.

“We can't permit everybody to go to the Election Commission. We can only permit you to withdraw the petition,” the bench said. The matter was then dismissed as withdrawn.

The EC announced the schedule for Bihar assembly elections later on Friday. The top court was hearing the plea filed by one Ajay Kumar who contended that the general assembly elections cannot be held smoothly due to the pandemic.

The plea sought to hold the Bihar Assembly elections till the situation becomes normal.

MPs duty bound to respect democratic values: Speaker

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of the unruly behaviour of MPs with the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Friday emphasised that the dignity of the House and its Chair is an important aspect of the

parliamentary system and it is the duty of all members to respect the highest values that our democracy represents.

Birla was talking to media on the aspects of conclusion of the Monsoon Session of the Parliament where he referred to various historic achievements of the Session at the Parliament conducted amidst the Corona pandemic.

Birla added that with the help of all political parties and Members, the productivity of Lok Sabha was at a historic

The Speaker said that despite the threat of COVID-19, the average attendance of MPs during this Session was very high, which sends a very positive message and strengthens peoples' faith in the democratic institutions.

167 percent. He also informed that despite the threat of COVID-19, the average attendance of MPs during this Session was very high, which sends a very positive message and strengthens peoples' faith in the democratic institutions. Referring to recent reports on Question Hour, Birla said that members were given regular opportunities to raise matters concerning peoples' welfare. He highlighted the enhanced participation of members in Zero Hour and other legislative business.

On a query on the demands of members for the restoration of the MPLAD Scheme, Birla said that the matter was raised by Members across the political spectrum and hoped that the Government and other stakeholders would examine the issue as per merit.

CBI books engineer under POCSO Act

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a case against a private person on the allegations of sharing child sexual abuse material.

The agency has registered the case under Section 14 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and provisions of Information Technology Act, 2000.

“It was alleged that the accused was advertising over Instagram Account for sale of objectionable material including child pornographic material,” the agency said in a statement.

The accused Neeraj Yadav is a B. Tech. degree holder. He was working as a professional in a private firm in Delhi before the lockdown.

It was further alleged that the accused opened different accounts over cloud storage and file hosting service by using different email IDs and storing such objectionable material including child pornographic material, the agency said.

It was also alleged that on receipt of payments from the customer (s), the accused shared the said objectionable material with them through Whatsapp, Telegram, Instagram and other social media platforms.

The agency conducted searches at the premises of the accused in Anpara, District Sonbhadra, (Uttar Pradesh) which led to the recovery of a mobile phone. The mobile phone is being analysed and further investigation is continuing, the agency added.

Huge arms haul in erstwhile Maoist region

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In a sensational breakthrough the Bengal Police on Friday unearthed arms from an erstwhile Maoist-hit region of Goaltore in West Midnapore, district administration sources said.

About 30 muskets, electric wire and tin containers were found after the police acting on definite sources dug out a 40 feet area inside dense forests of Okhla in the Goaltore region.

The guns rapped in rags and plastic could have been buried about ten years ago and had rusted and become dysfunctional, senior officials said adding the finds would be sent for forensic testing. The police had to use JCB machines to excavate the area after some “specific information,” sources said.

Political gunfight resumed soon after the arms were unearthed even as senior Trinamool Congress MP Saugato Roy alleged “gong by the age of the arms it seems that they could have been buried by the CPI(M) harms or maybe the Maoists ... but the most likelihood is that the CPI(M)

cadres might have buried them after their government went out of power,” reminding how “skeletons were dug out from the village of then CPI(M) minister Sushanto Ghosh.

Reacting vehemently to his suggestions CPI(M) Legislature Party Leader Sujana Chakrabarty said, it was high time the Trinamool Congress stopped spreading lies. “Talking about skeletons which had been planted by one of their leaders who is now in a BJP general secretary... and why could not they prove a single charge against the Left Government... so Sougato Roy being such a senior politician should stop peddling lies... The Left has suffered the maximum at the hands of the TMC-Maoist clique ... they murdered hundreds of our cadres in cold blood.”

The BJP on the other hand said the guns might belong to the Maoists given the history of ultra-Left movement in Bengal however he would not rule out Trinamool Congress hand in the incident. “All angles must be probed to get to the truth,” he said.

2 LeT terrorists killed in Anantnag

PNS ■ JAMMU

A foreign terrorist from Pakistan along with his local associate, belonging to the proscribed terror outfit Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) were neutralised by the joint teams of security forces in Sirhama area of Anantnag on Friday.

The operation in the area was launched late on Thursday evening after receiving inputs about the presence of these terrorists in the area.

According to a police spokesman, “Due to darkness the operation was suspended in the area while a tight cordon was maintained to plug the escape routes.” He said, “In the wee hours, the operation was resumed and in the ensuing encounter two terrorists were

Operation in the area was launched late on Thursday evening after receiving inputs about the presence of these terrorists in the area

killed and their bodies were retrieved from the site of the encounter.”

The police spokesman said the killed terrorists have been identified as Adil Ahmad Bhat resident of Pulwama and Abu Rehan @Towheed a Pakistani national. Both the killed terrorists were commanders and affiliated with proscribed terror outfit LeT.

According to police records, Adil was involved in case FIR No. 117/2020 of PS

Nowgam pertaining to the killing of two JKP personnel and weapon snatching at Nowgam Srinagar on 14-08-2020. An Insas rifle snatched in Nowgam attack was also recovered from the encounter site.

According to a police spokesman, Pakistani terrorist Abu Rehan was an important motivator and influenced young minds for joining terror ranks in the areas of South Kashmir. He was involved in motivating local youth to carry out ‘fidayeen’ attacks on Police/SFs. He was also involved in providing logistic support to the newly infiltrated terrorists and strengthening the LeT outfit throughout the valley by distributing newly joined/infiltrated terrorists to various areas.

Sena slams move to hold Bihar polls amid Covid-19 crisis

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Questioning the very decision to hold the Assembly elections in Bihar in the midst of Coronavirus crisis, Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut on Friday charged that the ruling JD(U) and BJP would make Sushant Singh Rajput as the main issue in the elections.

Talking to media persons here, Raut took serious exception to holding the Bihar Assembly elections at a time

when the country was still to tide over the Coronavirus crisis.

“Such has been the gravity of the situation that the Assembly and Parliament sessions have had to be curtailed. So far a minister and three MPs have died so far. That being the case, why is the state Assembly poll being held in Bihar?,” Raut asked.

“I have no objection whatsoever for the conduct of elections. But, is this right to hold elections?,” Raut said.

Raut charged that the rul-

ing JD(U)-BJP alliance would go whole hog to cash in on the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, who hails from Bihar. “I am told that JD(U) has printed posters of Sushant Singh Rajput in a big way for the elections. The JD(U) has made Sushant death probe an issue with a clear eye on the elections,” Raut said.

“It was a long-planned drama. The Bihar government does not have any developmental or governance issues to

talk about in the elections. No wonder, the JF(U) has started campaigning with posters of Sushant. Hence, Sushant and the drugs matters relating to the incident are blown out of proportion,” Raut said.

Wondering as to what had happened to the CBI probe into Sushant's death, Raut said: “The NCB is handling the drugs case. I would like to know as to what has happened to the CBI probe in the Sushant case, now that the former Bihar

DPG Gupteshwar Pandey quit IPS to contest the state polls”.

When his attention was drawn to the proposed film city in Uttar Pradesh, Raut said: “It's a welcome development and the entertainment industry can create huge employment opportunities”. He, however, dismissed speculation that a film city in UP would reduce the importance of the Bollywood capital of Mumbai.

Replying to a question, Raut said: “Nobody is going

to leave Maharashtra and go to UP.. People will all remain here. Mumbai's film industry has been set up with blood, sweat and tears and it can never lose its importance... Merely by shifting the film city or a few government departments cannot impact the significance of Mumbai”.

Raut had a dig at the Centre for its failure to set up a film city in Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370.

Pandemic powerplay

Nitish Kumar's stock is low without the BJP's heft. Can Lalu's RJD still make a difference as leader of the Opp bloc?



The Bihar Assembly elections, right in the middle of the pandemic, will be the greatest logistical and public health challenge and if successful, could become a template of how a mass participatory process could be initiated without risking the virus. So yes, the new election code has new rules, including virtual campaigning, spread out schedule, longer voting hours, more polling booths, quarantined centres so that even the COVID-positive can vote and an unprecedented stock of preventive gear. The biggest challenge will be to ensure that the electoral process doesn't become a super-spreader event. For the Election Commission, it is a big test, considering more State elections are to follow in rapid succession under the shadow of the pandemic. For Chief Minister and Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar, it is time to convince his people that he is still good enough to deliver, his personal stock having taken a beating. For the Opposition and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav, it is a chance to prove that his sons have it in them to continue his political movement robustly and more importantly, that he is still a leader who matters in reshaping discourse. Let's take Nitish, who is under attack for his patchy response to the pandemic, poor flood management and mishandling of returnee migrants, a new constituency that is being courted by all parties. He may coast to victory in alliance with the BJP but the latter, while acknowledging him as the chief ministerial candidate, is still as ambitious about becoming the voters' first choice and having its own man in the future. It hasn't helped that Nitish has lost out in ratings to his Uttar Pradesh counterpart Yogi Adityanath in crisis management, the appreciation damagingly coming from his own people. The labourers, students and teachers are most peeved with him. Besides, unlike his initial years, he has stagnated and has nothing to show as a deliverer. The row over farm Bills may not have that much of an economic resonance in Bihar as the Government procurement here is low. Besides, it was the first State in India to have scrapped the Agriculture Produce Market Committee Act in 2006 and pave the way for the private sector to get involved in procurement of agricultural produce. But he cannot ignore the political consequences simply because Bihar's farmers haven't benefitted after the APMC was dismantled. The markets suffered a loss of fee revenue, there was no major private investment in the State's agricultural sector and the smaller farmers continue to depend on trader cartels for buys as there is no guaranteed price mechanism. If anything, Bihar shows how taking down a regulatory framework hastily without necessary checks and balances can hurt the small and marginal farmers even more. The Opposition could use this for its campaign pitch. Politically though, Nitish has already neutralised the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP), whose leader Chirag Paswan was attacking him almost every day, by inducting Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) founder and his protégé Jitan Ram Manjhi, into his fold. The Dalit vote is now consolidated under the NDA umbrella. According to the 2011 census, the Scheduled Castes are 15 per cent of Bihar's population. The Mahadalits constitute nearly 16 per cent and though cultivated by Nitish, were beginning to swerve towards the RJD, which has the core traditional votes of the Muslims and Yadavs. Manjhi could return the Dalit swing in his favour. This would bring Nitish the numbers he needs to stay relevant.

Where does it leave Lalu then? The Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party (SP) announced that it will not contest and support all RJD candidates instead. Lalu still has the drawing power but he is not on the ground to smoothen wrinkles in the grand alliance of like-minded parties. And that could work to the RJD's detriment. The problem with the Opposition bloc members is that they would only end up dividing the non-NDA vote if they do not form a strategic partnership. At the same time, they become aggressive about bargaining for seats in return for staying together and that reduces the seat quota for the RJD. A reduced number of seats for the RJD only helps the BJP to manipulate numbers in its favour and keep the former in check. The Lok Sabha election results are proof of this under-cutting. The RJD could go it alone but that would be self-defeatist considering some of its allies are already questioning the leadership of Tejashwi Yadav in public. The youth are particularly not taken in by the dynastic entitlement of Lalu's sons, who wage their own ego battles in the public sphere than inspire confidence. Tejashwi and Tej Pratap need to be on the same page. Or at least use their father's wisdom. Tejashwi, so far, has appeared more interested in pursuing his individual ambition, grooming his yes men and running down senior leaders of the caste movement as deadwood. The arrogance cost the RJD its dependable associations with the Left and the Congress. Besides, with the BJP waiting to splinter unhappy parties, the Opposition bloc is caught in a cleft stick at the moment. The Left parties may look down and out but they are holding on to their traditional pockets. Perhaps if they had effectively used former Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) president Kanhaiya Kumar as the change-making candidate, they could have become a key fringe player. The Congress is gasping for breath and though it won't harm the RJD, another poor performance could see it losing more members to the BJP. The tide of discontent is there against Nitish but without Lalu at the helm, can the Opposition ride it?

Environmental damage

Without plastics and polymers, we might not have been able to face COVID. But it is time to start worrying about the environment



As Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora announced the dates for the Bihar Assembly elections, he also detailed the precautions being taken to conduct them. The fact is that the entire electoral process is a crowded one, and in a densely populated State like Bihar, almost guaranteed to be so, no matter what rules and regulations are put in place. So the Election Commission is deploying millions of masks and gloves and thousands of litres of hand sanitiser across booths to protect voters, booth officials and security personnel. Given that thousands of voters will touch every voting machine, each will be provided with a single disposable glove. But while the health and safety of our voters is paramount, there is another concern. That is the mountains of trash that will be generated as a result of these precautions. Given that several State Governments had declared a war on single-use plastics over the past few years, it is especially ironic that single-use plastic gloves will be needed to keep democracy alive. In fact, it is one of the side effects of the pandemic that huge volumes of non-recyclable, non-biodegradable trash have been generated.

There is little doubt that COVID warriors in intensive care wards need plastic personal protective equipment. Even surgical masks worn by millions are for the large part non-biodegradable. As more cities get back to work across the world and humanity learns to live with the virus and new protocols, both the Government and citizens must ponder over medical waste management and disposal. One immediate change that millions can adopt is to move to using washable cloth masks instead of polymer-based masks. While such polymer masks will be essential in hospital wards, in regular daily use cloth masks are quite effective at protecting others and more comfortable as well. Protocols for the reuse of protective kits and other plastic equipment should also be put in place, whether that involves washing or ultraviolet sanitisation. We must look at newer incineration technologies. We might be coming to terms with the pandemic, even if we have paid a terrible price in deaths and with the economy. However, we should not make the environmental costs so dramatic as well. We will be undoing all that we have attempted to reset so far.

opinion

Rescue package

We need a supportive policy regime so that banks can lend more and there is a rigorous monitoring of end-use of credit



SC PANDEY

It sounds pretty heartless to worry about the economy and livelihoods and appear less concerned with peoples' lives. It is difficult to weigh in golden balance whether lives or livelihoods are more important. On December 31, 2019, China first told the World Health Organisation (WHO) that 41 patients in Wuhan had contracted a mysterious pneumonia not amenable to conventional treatment. Beginning January 23, first the city of Wuhan, then the entire Hubei province and then some other cities were locked down. The unprecedented quarantine was imposed on 50 million people across 15 cities.

After a 6.8 per cent contraction in January-March 2020 quarter, China's economy recorded 3.2 per cent growth in April-June 2020. China is the first major economy to return to growth after the pandemic.

For us, the pandemic is an imported calamity. The main gateways to India have been worst affected. Major democracies, including India, have failed to emulate the ruthless measures taken by China (and could be taken by China alone) to contain the damage. Maybe there is more than what meets the eye here.

With confirmed infections of over 50 lakh, albeit with a somewhat modest case fatality ratio of 1.64 per cent and a significantly high 78 per cent recovery rate, the first peak is not in sight at the national level although there is significant disruption of economic activity. Individual estimates vary widely with observers' biases as expected because the pandemic has fooled all forecasting tools. A general sense is that we face stagnation if not outright contraction in economic growth in the current year.

The GDP at current market prices was ₹45.51 lakh crore, ₹49.18 lakh crore and ₹38.08 lakh crore during April-June 2018, April-June 2019 and April-June 2020, respectively. The GDP at 2011-12 prices was ₹26.89 lakh crore during April-June 2020, compared to ₹35.35 lakh crore during April-June 2019. This is the direct effect of the lockdown that was in force for almost two out of three months in the first quarter. Experts are divided as to how the GDP is going to behave in the ensuing quarters due to the impact



of the pandemic on jobs and incomes.

Another way to analyse the economic impact of the pandemic is to look at GST collections which indicate the quantum of documented sales of goods and services. Monthly GST collections during April-August have been ₹32,172 crore, ₹62,151 crore, ₹90,917 crore, ₹87,422 crore and ₹86,449 crore. In August 2019, GST collection was ₹98,202 crore, so, obviously we are far away from reaching pre-lockdown levels of spending and registering a decent growth on that level. The shortfall from August 2019 GST collection is 12 per cent in August 2020. Obviously, GST collections would not measure the impact of the pandemic on the informal economy where undocumented sales take place on *kutchha* bills.

The first quarter GDP contraction affected almost all sectors. The only sector that posted positive growth (3.4 per cent) was agriculture, with bumper Rabi crops. High-contact sectors like tourism and hospitality are very badly affected.

Past years' trends show that the GDP is almost equally divided in the four quarters with some increase in the last quarter. In 2017-18, the contribution of the four quarters was 23.4, 24.4, 25.3 and 26.9 per cent for quarters one, two, three and four. In 2018-19, it was 24.24.5, 25.4 and 26.1 per cent. In 2019-20, it was 24.2, 24.2, 25.4 and 26.2 per cent. This year's quarterly GDP trends are going to be abnormal.

“MAJOR ECONOMIES ARE SURVIVING ON PEOPLE BUYING THINGS THAT THEY DON'T REALLY NEED AND LIVING ON BORROWED FUNDS. IT IS A PARADOX THAT THE RICHEST COUNTRIES ARE ALSO THE MOST INDEBTED COUNTRIES. NEW ASPIRATIONAL NEEDS ARE FELT OR CREATED AND FINANCE IS ARRANGED BY BORROWING



SOUND BITE

We will review progress on the economic recovery in each Budget update, but I expect phase one to remain in place until the unemployment rate is comfortably back under six per cent.

Australian Treasurer
—Josh Frydenberg



While the economy has been doing better than expected, I think there's a downside risk to that if there is no further fiscal support.

Federal Reserve Chairman
—Jerome Powell



The malafide intent that drives the Pakistani deep state is in total contradiction to the objectives and principles that we all have gathered to promote in this temple of human rights.

First Secretary, MEA
—Vimash Aryan



Russia will in no way build its policy on the basis of taking into account these aggressive demands that have no legal force.

Foreign Minister
—Sergei Lavrov



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

China plays Nepal

Sir — The local authorities of Lapcha-Limi region in Humla have alleged that China has constructed nine buildings one kilometre inside the territory of Nepal. Lapcha-Limi is of great strategic importance to Nepal as Kailash Mansarovar can be clearly seen from this point. This sort of expansionist move isn't the first by China. Earlier in June this year, the Nepal Government had complained that China was using road construction in Tibet to occupy its land. While Nepal is protesting against the encroachment, maybe it should also ponder on its move of releasing a new political map that claimed Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh of Uttarakhand as part of its sovereign territory, ostensibly at China's behest.

Rahul Chouhan
Ujjain

Lost game

Sir — The Minister of State for External Affairs, V Muraleedharan, provided details of the Prime Minister's visits abroad since 2015, including their outcome. According to the details furnished, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has visited 58

countries since 2015 and a total expenditure of ₹517 crore was incurred on them. He visited US, Russia and China five times each and made multiple trips to other countries like Singapore, Germany, France, Sri Lanka and the United Arab Emirates.

To what extent did these visits help India with its bilateral, regional and global issues? Today, India is facing multiple terror-

ial challenges from three of its neighbouring countries — China, Nepal and Pakistan. The finding by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG) that French aerospace major Dassault Aviation and European missile maker MBDA have defaulted on offset clauses of the Rafale deal puts a question mark on the Government's negotiation capabilities. The same amount

should have been put to better use elsewhere.

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

Honour offset clause

Sir — The Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG) has slammed French firms Dassault Aviation and MBDA — the main companies in the



Bollywood to "name and shame" selective actresses who might have consumed drugs in little quantities. The way NCB is handling the case casts serious doubts on its independence and integrity. And never before has a death been so repugnantly used as a weapon to fight political battles.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

₹59,000 crore contract for 36 Rafale fighter jets — for their failure to transfer advanced technology to India. As per the deal, the French firms are required to plough back 50 per cent of the contract value to India as offsets or re-investments.

India, being the world's second-largest arms importer, suffers from shortages of critical weapon platforms. The Government should ensure that foreign vendors aren't allowed to view Indian contracts as easy cash cows.

N Sadhasiva Reddy
Bengaluru

Disturbing numbers

Sir — According to the 2018 annual report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), 33,356 rape cases were reported across the country, or an average of 91 rapes a day. The numbers are disturbing and the legislative reforms haven't been of much help. Our society needs to re-awaken and more serious reforms should be undertaken.

Urvi Jain
Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Save Bollywood from ‘gutterisation’

The entire process of turning actors into marketing agents for selling certain political ideologies must stop after Kangana Ranaut



ANURAG TIWARY ABHINAV JHA

The Government’s recent decision to set up the country’s “most beautiful” and “biggest” film city in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, has to be read in its wider socio-political context. An attempt to decentralise Bollywood, negate Mumbai as the entertainment capital of this country and control the dissemination of art and creativity is under way. The timing couldn’t be any better. The debate over nepotism, drug use and the proliferation of the so-called “mafia” of film-makers in Mumbai, amid the controversy surrounding Sushant Singh Rajput’s (SSR’s) untimely death, has changed the way we, as an audience, look at Bollywood today. The Hindi film industry is allegedly ruled by a bunch of oligarchs and dynasts who are extremely arrogant, egotistical and self-absorbed in their attitude towards “outsiders.”

Globally, the entertainment industry runs on a nonpareil image that it builds for itself. The insider-outsider debate in Bollywood has tainted the larger than life image of actors and film-makers and has brought the good, bad, and ugly side of the industry out in the open. How much of it is true remains to be seen. However, interestingly, Kangana Ranaut has emerged as the unflinching face of the rebellion against power, albeit in a highly uncouth manner. Resultantly, it has so happened that much of this controversy has led to a debate between the far-Right and the Left-of-Centre political ideologies. In their attempts at winning the hearts of the urban middle-class, political parties have paved the way for a radical overhauling of cinema, art, and artists. This will be done by creating parallel power structures within the entertainment industry that will be backed by the State. We see that happening almost ostentatiously in the SSR-Rhea-Kangana drama. We have also seen that as a gradual development since the NDA Government came to power.

The likes of Anupam Kher, Paresh Rawal and Madhur Bhandarkar, among many others, have been used to lend their voice to debates on nationalism and religion. However, the nexus between Bollywood and politicians isn’t a new phenomenon. Great politicians understand that politics alone will not get their messages to the masses. So, both the groups have, historically, looked after each other. Film personalities help politicians in their campaigns and similarly, politicians help failed actors become administrators in the name of “cultural diplomacy.” It is almost like a rule. However, what the Kangana saga has revealed is that there is an attempt to forge a parallel entertainment industry which will act as the mouthpiece of Right-wing political parties and the Government. This group will help in disseminating what is known as “fringe cultural nationalism.” The mechanism is simple, involving shifting of power structures and bringing the industry within the control of the State. For the services of such actors, the Government will either provide them with security sponsored from public money or citizenship in case you are Akshay Kumar.

What is ignored during this entire debate is that the democratisation of cinema originally meant the production and promotion of diverse ideas previously not permitted within the industry. It also meant that for an “outsider”, there would be “lower barriers to entry” without any particular pedigree. It meant experimentation with alternative modes of artistic expression and creativity. It meant due recognition for films and works of expression that display counter-culture. Diversified cinema and artistic creativity were the major goals behind the demands for democratising the industry.

The present developments pose a threat to all stakeholders, including the audience, who are the primary and the majority stakeholders in artistic expression. The emergence of newbie politicians, who are regarded as pariah actors, will serve the purposes of disseminating Right-wing nationalism and will do no good to creativity and art. Actors, on the other hand, will lose creative autonomy and will be burdened with social responsibility. Films that challenge majoritarianism or films that are against an idea imposed by the State will not be permitted to go on the floors. Existing norms on censorship will change and become worse than what they already are. Discretion will be exercised almost freely. Turning artists into marketing agents for selling a certain political ideology must stop after motormouth Kangana Ranaut. Jaya Bachchan’s “save the industry” from “gutterisation” remark in Rajya Sabha last week should act as a clarion call and must force prospective cine-goers and film-makers to do some introspection.

(Anurag is from the National Law University and Abhinav is a student of law, Amity University)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

INHONE LOCKDOWN MEIN BAS ANUSHKA KI BOWLING KI PRACTICE KI HAIN (VIRAT HAS ONLY TRAINED AGAINST ANUSHKA’S BOWLING DURING THE LOCKDOWN). —FORMER CRICKETER SUNIL GAVASKAR





OVER THE YEARS YOU HAVE RESPECTED THE PRIVATE LIVES OF EVERY CRICKETER. SHOULDN’T YOU HAVE AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF RESPECT FOR ME AND US? —ACTOR ANUSHKA SHARMA

Pacifier in the Indo-Pacific

Germany’s return to realpolitik augurs well for India as it emerges as a pivot of the aggressive counter-balancing act in the region together with the US, Japan and Australia



SANDEEP KUMAR DUBEY

Even as the world is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitics is undergoing a seismic shift. The Indo-Pacific region, which accounts for almost 40 per cent of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), has emerged as the epicentre of the “New Great Game,” especially between the US and China, for influence. The rule-based international order is being contested in the Indo-Pacific reportedly by none other than a UN Security Council (UNSC) member, the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Speaking at the Munich Security Conference on February 14, the German Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said, “...(China) is selective in accepting international law only where it does not run counter to its own interests. Its actions in the South China Sea are unsettling the neighbours in the region.”

Beijing’s constant hammering on the existing global order has caused alarm in the US and among its allies. Compared to China, India has been endorsing the prevalence of a rule-based world order in the Indo-Pacific region. Delineating New Delhi’s vision for the region, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue on June 1, 2018, said, “India stands for an open and stable international trade regime. We will also support a rule-based, open, balanced and stable trade environment in the Indo-Pacific Region...”

Re-ordering the world: After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, what emerged was a unipolar world order dominated by the US. It was believed that post-1991, the emergence of the US as the sole world power would expedite the restoration of global peace, security and stability and strengthen Pax Americana.

That is, the post-World War-II international order shaped and maintained by the US employing its overwhelming might. However, instead of growing in strength, Pax Americana has been fraying since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The strategic space ceded in the Indo-Pacific by the US, thanks to its “America First” policy, has been occupied by regional powers, thus turning it into a multi-polar region and the centre of a major geopolitical tussle for dominance. The fear among the world powers is that if the rules of the international order are disobeyed and disowned, the already fragile global form might collapse. What would happen next? A chaos resulting out of world disorder? Or a global re-order leading to resuscitation of peace and security?

Wary of the consequences that might ensue, India has been championing for a world based on a new global security architecture supported by multi-lateralism and mutual cooperation. During his recent visit to Russia, in a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation on September 4, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh declared New Delhi is committed to this as it will “be open, transparent, inclusive, rules-based and anchored in international laws.” Earlier in May, in his address to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries, Modi had appealed, “In the post-Corona world, we need a new template of globalisation, based on fairness, equality, and humanity. We need international institutions that are more representative of today’s world.”

GIVEN THE EXPANSIONIST AGENDA OF CHINA IN THE INDO-PACIFIC AND BEYOND, COUNTRIES IN THE REGION ARE FORMING A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TO CONTAIN IT. THE SUCCESS OF THE ALLIANCE, HOWEVER, DEPENDS ON HOW INDIA RESPONDS TO THE EMERGING GEOPOLITICS IN THE REGION. CAN NEW DELHI PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN ARRESTING BEIJING’S GROWING INFLUENCE IN THE REGION? DOES ITS GEOGRAPHIC POSITION ALLOW FOR THAT?



Indo-US partnership: In recent years, India has come strategically closer to the US and its allies to contain China through diplomatic and military means. The Indian Navy’s participation in the Malabar naval exercise led by the US Navy is one such example of the growing partnership between the two nations.

But it has not come to terms with the “America First” policy. Unlike Washington DC, New Delhi has been a proponent of multi-lateralism to promote peace and security in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. And that is why it is treading a fine line in the region by not squarely aligning with the US in its balancing act, making no explicit reference to China and opposing Australia’s entry into the Malabar naval exercise.

However, amid the growing border tension with China, India may “aggressively” pursue the Indo-Pacific balancing act together with the US, Japan and Australia. Though so far New Delhi has opposed Australia’s entry into the Malabar exercise, it might consider inviting it to the next one. This would strengthen the Quad (the US, India, Australia and Japan strategic partnership) further and probably make it anti-China. In 2015, Japan had already been elevated as a permanent member of the Malabar exercise group.

China as a sea power: In his book *Prisoners of Geography*, Tim Marshall notes, “Until now China has never been a naval power...and it was rarely ideologically expansive...It was always a land power with a lot of land and a lot of people.” However, Beijing now harbours ambitions of becoming a global power and setting the international rules on its own terms. To fulfil its ambitions, it simply follows in the US’ footsteps to gain control over the seas.

It has already taken measures to dominate the South China Sea (SCS)

and the Indian Ocean. Beijing is already making efforts to set up an Air Defence Identification Zone in the SCS and develop a Blue Water navy to defend its sea controls. Tim Marshall further adds, “China...intends to become a two ocean power (Pacific and Indian). To achieve this, China is investing in deep-water ports in Myanmar, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka...”

The great American naval strategist of the 19th century, Alfred Mahan, once said, “Whoever rules the waves, rules the world.” His naval strategy finds supreme place in China pursuing its strategic ends. Just like other global powers, Beijing, too is Mahanian, probably with Maoist tactics. China is expanding its sea controls in a piecemeal manner, mouthful by mouthful, a typical Maoist strategy to wipe out enemy forces one by one. Mao asserted, “In war, battles can only be fought one by one and the enemy forces can only be destroyed one by one.” Tacticalisation of strategy is doomed to fail against China’s well-designed strategy of piecemeal expansion in the Indo-Pacific region. Only a coherent grand containment strategy can counter Beijing’s expansionism in the region.

India as the pivot State: Given the expansionist agenda of China in the Indo-Pacific and beyond, countries in the region are forming a strategic partnership to contain it. The success of the alliance, however, depends on how India responds to the emerging geopolitics in the region. Can New Delhi play a pivotal role in arresting Beijing’s growing influence? Does its geographic position allow for that?

Quoting naval strategist Alfred Mahan, Robert Kaplan writes in his book *The Revenge of Geography*, “Mahan thought that instead of the Heartland of Eurasia being the geographical pivot of empires, it was conversely the Indian and Pacific oceans

that constituted the hinges of geopolitical destiny.” Mahan sees India’s location in the centre of the Indian Ocean littoral, with the Himalayas protecting its rear flanks, as critical for the seaward penetration of China, adds Kaplan. This explains precisely the strategic significance of India’s geography in regional geopolitics, making it a pivot of the Indo-Pacific. Kaplan has rightly predicted, “As the US and China become great power rivals, the direction in which India tilts could determine the course of geopolitics in Eurasia in the 21st century. India, in other words, looms as the ultimate pivot State.”

Germany’s return to realpolitik: On July 1, Germany took charge of the presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU). In September it articulated its strategy on the region through a document titled “Policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific region.” In his statement, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas declared: “We are sending a clear message today, the Indo-Pacific region is a priority of German foreign policy...We want to help shape that order, so that it is based on rules and international cooperation, not on the law of the strong. That is why we have intensified cooperation with those countries that share our democratic and liberal values.” In fact, this is indicative of Germany’s return to a realpolitik approach towards its foreign and security policies from its so-called “moral politics” and “political escapism.”

This augurs well for India, as both nations believe in a multi-lateralist approach to foreign policy and international politics. Just like Germany, multi-lateralism is key to transforming India into a global power. Their beliefs in democratic and liberal values make them natural allies and together they can play a vital role in ensuring peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region. (The writer is a policy commentator)

India needs another Vidyasagar now

Just two years ago, a tribal boy was killed in Karmatar because he wished to marry a widow. Has anything really changed in modern India?



GOVIND BHATTACHARJEE

On September 26, 200 years ago, an extraordinary personality was born in a village in south West Bengal. By the standards of his time, why, even by today’s standards, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was unique in every respect. As Rabindranath Tagore once said, “One wonders how God, in the process of producing 40 million Bengalis, produced a man.”

The 19th century Bengali society was in an advanced state of decay brought about by a lethal cocktail of superstition, depravity and exploitation, being trapped inside a complex hierarchy of castes and sub-castes embedded within each other. One half of the society — women — was excluded from education and economic activities, being confined to homes where they had no voice. They were treated as intellectually and morally inferior, and hence unworthy of education. Superstition proclaimed that a girl’s education would inevitably beget her widowhood. Her best contribution to society was to become one of the countless wives of Kulin Brahmins, whose

main aim was collecting handsome dowries from multiple marriages — one had as many as 156 wives as per records. She would be lucky to enjoy her absentee husband’s company a few nights a year. She would attain salvation by burning on the same funeral pyre with her husband, who was 50-60 years older than her. Through the efforts of Raja Rammohan Roy (1772-1838), the horrendous practice of Sati was abolished in 1829, nine years after Vidyasagar’s birth.

Child marriage was the order of the day. Girls were married before attaining puberty in a custom called *gouridan*. Born into a Kulin Brahmin family, Vidyasagar himself was married at the age of 14 to a girl eight years old. Bankimchandra, who was born 18 years after Vidyasagar, was married at 11 to a girl only five years old. Female infanticide was also the order of the day. Female foetuses would be destroyed brutally through what was called “*ghat murder*.” These monstrosities still exist in many pockets in rural India despite all the laws we have in our books.

Women had no right to property or inheritance. Once they became widows, a lifetime of misery awaited them. They were forced to a single stringent vegetarian meal a day to rob them of their sexuality, youth and beauty. Sexual exploitation by relatives and termination of unwanted pregnancies leading to death were not only common but met with society’s tacit approval. Legal abolition of sati did not end women’s miseries. The daily privations,

insults and misery of existence forced many to join the brothels that were there to sustain the perverted *Babu* culture of Bengal. In 1853, the population of sex workers in Kolkata was 12,419 and by 1867 it touched over 30,000. And 90 per cent of them, according to the *Amritabazar Patrika*, were widows. By a crude estimate, the sex worker population increased from about five to nearly 10 per cent of Kolkata’s population over this period.

This, then, was the society Vidyasagar was born into, and this was the society he had sought to reform. He did so with a gusto and a fearlessness we have not seen in any other personality ever since. To fight the orthodox society steeped in deep superstition and ruled by the semi-literate Brahmins, Vidyasagar knew he would have to beat his adversaries at their own game. So, in January and October 1855, he wrote his two famous treatises on the *Marriage of Hindu Widows*, drawing upon the *Sutras* (literary compositions) and the *Sastras* (scriptures) to establish his logical argument that there was no prohibition on remarriage of widows in the *Sastras*.

Rather the *Parashara Samhita* sanctioned widow remarriage: “Women are at liberty to marry again if their husbands are insane, dead, have renounced the family or are impotent or outcasts.” About 2,000 copies of the first book were sold in the first week itself, followed by 3,000 and then a third reprint of 10,000 copies got sold out too. But the sales figures did not indicate society’s response. He

was heaped with criticism, insults, motives, ridicule and even threatened with death.

The Hindu Widows’ Remarriage Act was finally passed on July 26, 1856 and the reform did not remain limited to Bengal alone. In 1864, Jyotiba Phule succeeded in persuading a Saraswat Brahmin widow to remarry. In 1866, Vishnu Shastri Pandit translated Vidyasagar’s book on widow remarriage into Marathi. But passing of the statute was only the first of the many obstacles. Vidyasagar personally presided over the first remarriage of a widow, Kalimati, with Srishchandra Vidyaratna, and then many others at his own expense, in the process gathering significant personal debt.

He even got his only son, Narayanchandra, married to a widow, Bhavasundari. Not many have the courage to practise what they preach. As he wrote to his brother: “Remarriage of widows is the noblest deed of my life. I don’t think I shall be able to accomplish a greater one, ever. I have sacrificed everything for this cause and won’t mind even laying down my life for it.”

He was also propagating women’s education. In 1849, he set up the Calcutta Female School along with Drinkwater Bethune for educating the girl child. In 1856, appointed Special Inspector of Schools, he established 30 schools exclusively for girls. Between 1857 and 1858, when the Mutiny was ravaging the country, he was fighting a different kind of battle, opening 35 girls’ schools all over Bengal.

After widow remarriage, it was the turn of polygamy. In 1857, he orchestrated a petition to the Government with 25,000 signatures for the prohibition of polygamy among Kulin Brahmins. The Mutiny postponed any action on this petition but in 1866, he inspired another petition, this time with 21,000 signatures. The Government, reluctant to interfere in Indian customs, refused to take any legislative measure, instead allowing time and education to bring an end to the practice.

In 1871 and 1873, he wrote two brilliant critiques on polygamy, arguing that it was not sanctioned by the sacred texts, but was opposed by five eminent scholars, led by his friend Taranath Tarkavachaspati of Calcutta Sanskrit College. Outlawing polygamy among Hindus, however, had to wait till 1955, eight years after Independence, through the Hindu Marriage Act. As regards child marriage, the Indian Penal Code, 1860, had fixed the age of consent to 10 years for girls, which was raised successively to 12 (1891), 14 (1925), 16 (1940) and 18 (2013). The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, also known as the Sarda Act, fixed the age of marriage at 14 for girls and 18 for boys, that was later raised to 18 and 21 respectively in 1978. This has since been repealed and replaced by the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.

In 1873, disgusted with the so-called *bhadralok* society, Vidyasagar went to live with the Santhals at Karmatar, a sleepy hamlet about 20 km from the district headquarters

of Jamtara now in Jharkhand, where he would spend the last 18 years of his life till his death in 1891. There he set up a girls’ school and a night school for adults on the premises of his house, which he called Nandan Kanan. The house today lies in shambles.

The irony is that though in this village 24 tribal child widows were remarried by Vidyasagar, just two years ago, a tribal boy was killed in Karmatar because he wished to marry a widow. Has anything really changed in modern India?

Sati was abolished only in name. Countless satis continue to get burnt in 21st century India, though not on pyres. Countless brides get burnt to death in their nuptial homes for dowries, the faces and minds of countless more are scarred forever by acid attacks inflicted by spurned lovers and others. Scores of girls are murdered in “honour-killings” in rural India for marrying into another caste or community, by defying their families’ dictates.

Sati has actually metamorphosed into another form that is equally brutal and vicious. It is not about burning a woman. It is about denying her the choice to decide the course of her life. She is continued to be treated as morally and intellectually inferior to men, as she was 200 years ago. We need another Ram Mohan Roy and a Vidyasagar now, more than ever.

(The author is a retired Director-General from the Office of the CAG)

Markets snap 6-day falling streak; IT, banks lead charge

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex rallied 835 points on Friday after six days of declines as investors returned to buying mode amid a modest recovery in global markets. A strengthening rupee -- which spurted 28 paise against the US dollar - added to the momentum, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex opened higher following Thursday's selloff and stayed in the positive territory throughout the session. It finally closed at 37,388.66, up 835.06 points or 2.28 per cent. Similarly, the NSE Nifty vaulted 244.70 points or 2.26 per cent to finish at 11,050.25.

All Sensex components ended in the green, with Bajaj Finserv, HCL Tech, Bharti Airtel, IndusInd Bank, L&T,

Gold rises by ₹324, silver jumps by ₹2,124

New Delhi:Gold prices rose by ₹324 to ₹50,824 per 10 gram in the national capital on Friday, halting its four-day decline on recovery in international price of the precious metal, according to HDFC Securities. The precious metal closed at ₹50,500 per 10 gram in the previous trade. Silver prices also bounced back and gained ₹2,124 to ₹60,536 per kilogram from previous close of ₹58,412 per kilogram. Spot gold prices for 24 carat in Delhi halted decline by rising Rs 324, in line with recovery in international prices," HDFC Securities Senior Analyst Tapan Patel said.

TCS, ICICI Bank, ONGC, Infosys and Bajaj Finance gaining up to 6.64 per cent.

On a weekly basis, the Sensex lost 1,457.16 points or 3.83 per cent, while the Nifty tumbled 454.70 points or 4.04

per cent. Global markets stabilised following an overnight pullback on Wall Street after reports said US lawmakers were working on a stimulus deal that could be voted on as early as next week.

Chinese goods worth ₹20K Cr lying at ports

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Inflow of Chinese goods could see a rise in the October-December quarter as items worth about ₹20,000 crore - primarily comprising electronics and electrical items, gifts, toys, footwear, home and kitchen appliances - still lie at the Indian ports waiting for clearance. The traders and importers who had placed their orders in November and December last year are yet to

receive a chunk of their consignments. The unprecedented delay in delivery is due to the shutting down of Chinese borders in January and February, followed by the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent lockdown in India.

Official data reveal India's imports from China during the April-August period of the current financial year stood at \$21.58 billion-a drop of 27.63 per cent, compared to the corresponding

period in the previous year. "Chunks of orders placed by our traders in December last year are still to arrive. The goods have not yet reached as China was initially closed due to coronavirus and subsequently from March 25, India went into a stringent lockdown for about two months. So, a great deal of Chinese goods -- essentially electronics and electrical items, gifts, toys, footwear, home and kitchen appliances -- still lying at the ports.

India's first RRTS train design unveiled

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) unveiled the first look of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut regional rapid transit system (RRTS) on Friday. The 82 km-long RRTS corridor will be the first of its kind in India with a design speed of 180 kmph.

According to the ministry, with a stainless steel outer body, these aerodynamic RRTS trains will be lightweight and fully air-conditioned. Each car will have six automatic plug-in type wide doors, three on each side (Business Class will have four such doors, two on each side) for ease of access and exit. The RRTS trains will have transverse 2x2 seating with adequate legroom, optimized aisle width with grab handles, and grab poles for a comfortable journey for standing passengers, overhead luggage rack, mobile/laptop charging sockets and onboard Wi-Fi among other computer-centric features.

"New Delhi's iconic Lotus Temple is an epitome of sustainability as its design allows flow of natural sources of light and air circulation.

On similar lines, RRTS rolling stock will have lighting and temperature control systems to enhance the passenger experience with less energy consumption.

Centre used GST compensation cess elsewhere, violated law: CAG

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The CAG has found that the Union Government in the very first two years of the GST implementation wrongly retained ₹47,272 crore of GST compensation cess that was meant to be used specifically to compensate states for loss of revenue.

In its audit report of Government accounts, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) flagged that the amount was to be credited to the non-lapsable GST Compensation Cess collection fund for payment to states for loss of revenue due to implementation of GST since 2017, but the Government did not do so, and thus violated the GST law.

"The GST Compensation Cess Act, 2017 provides for levy of cess for the purpose of providing compensation to the states for loss of revenue arising due to implementation of GST for a period specified in the Act," CAG said. As per the Act and the accounting procedure, the entire cess collected during the year is required to be credited to a non-lapsable Fund (the GST Compensation Cess Fund) which shall form part of the Public Account and shall be used for the purpose mentioned i.e., for providing com-



pensation to states for loss of revenue.

CAG said out of the Rs 62,612 crore GST Compensation Cess collected in 2017-18, ₹56,146 crore was transferred to the non-lapsable fund. In the following year (2018-19), ₹54,275 crore out of ₹95,081 crore collected was transferred to the fund.

The short transfer in 2017-18 was ₹6,466 crore and in 2018-19 it was ₹40,806 crore, CAG said adding the Centre used this money for "other purposes" which "led to an overstatement of revenue receipts and understatement of fiscal deficit for the year".

The short-crediting was a violation of the GST Compensation Cess Act, 2017.

The issue of compensation cess is driving a wedge between the Centre and states at the GST Council - the highest decision making body of the

GST regime that had assumed 17 different central and state taxes such as excise duty and VAT.

States have not been paid their promised compensation for letting go their powers to levy taxes on goods and services since last fiscal.

The Centre says a slowdown in the economy has meant that not enough money is being collected by way of cess that is levied on luxury and sin goods. The Centre has asked states to borrow for meeting the revenue shortfall. States ruled by Congress, Left, TMC and AAP have opposed the move completely arguing that the Centre should borrow and provide to states, since states have given majority of their taxation powers to the Centre under GST regime introduced in July 2017. The CAG findings run contrary to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's submis-

sions in Parliament last week that states could not be compensated for revenue shortfall from the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI) relying on an opinion from the Attorney General of India which stated that there was no such provision in the law. "Audit examination of information in Statements 8, 9 and 13 with regard to the collection of the cess and its transfer to the GST Compensation Cess Fund, shows that there was short crediting to the Fund of the GST Compensation Cess collections totalling to ₹47,272 crore during 2017-18 and 2018-19," CAG said in the audit report.

The short-crediting, CAG said, was a violation of the GST Compensation Cess Act, 2017. "The amount by which the cess was short credited was also retained in the CFI and became available for use for purposes other than what was provided in the Act," it said. According to CAG, the Finance Ministry accepted the audit observation and stated in February 2020 that the proceeds of cess collected and not transferred to Public Account would be transferred in the subsequent year.

"Short crediting of cess collected during the year led to an overstatement of revenue receipts and understatement of fiscal deficit for the year," CAG said.

| NIFTY 50 | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|--|
| SCRIP | OPEN | High | LOW | LTP | CHANGE | |
| NIFTY 50 | 10910.40 | 11072.60 | 10854.85 | 11050.25 | 244.7 | |
| BAJAJFINSV | 5500.00 | 5906.15 | 5430.15 | 5783.60 | 357.9 | |
| HCLTECH | 795.25 | 836 | 792.6 | 830.1 | 41.8 | |
| CIPLA | 752 | 777 | 740.4 | 771 | 37.55 | |
| BHARTIARTL | 425 | 444.95 | 422.15 | 440 | 20.7 | |
| INDUSINDBK | 499.9 | 521.3 | 491.2 | 512 | 21.75 | |
| IT | 860.1 | 895.4 | 852 | 888.5 | 37.8 | |
| GRASIM | 683 | 712.2 | 683 | 706.95 | 27.25 | |
| ADANI PORTS | 319 | 329.7 | 315.6 | 326.3 | 12.55 | |
| EICHERMOT | 2063.90 | 2135.00 | 2050.00 | 2113.80 | 79.35 | |
| TCS | 2368.00 | 2440.00 | 2352.10 | 2417.75 | 85.5 | |
| ICICIBANK | 339.05 | 350.5 | 336.6 | 347.5 | 11.8 | |
| TATAMOTORS | 123.7 | 128.35 | 123.1 | 127 | 4.2 | |
| BAFINANCE | 3080.00 | 3167.15 | 3028.80 | 3132.00 | 103.1 | |
| SBIN | 179 | 182.75 | 176.15 | 182.25 | 5.9 | |
| JSWSTEEL | 261.1 | 270.45 | 258.8 | 267 | 8.45 | |
| ONGC | 68 | 69.25 | 66.15 | 68.8 | 2.5 | |
| INFY | 975.8 | 1014.90 | 975 | 1006.60 | 31.2 | |
| NESTLEIND | 15,495.00 | 15,830.00 | 15,301.00 | 15,735.00 | 476.15 | |
| SHREECEM | 18,391.50 | 19,150.00 | 18,364.55 | 18,902.00 | 560.05 | |
| WIPRO | 306.3 | 315.25 | 304.2 | 313.9 | 9.2 | |
| MARUTI | 6,395.00 | 6,518.55 | 6,331.00 | 6,488.00 | 190.3 | |
| TECHM | 755.05 | 777.35 | 748.65 | 774.45 | 22.6 | |
| M&M | 583.9 | 595.45 | 576.6 | 592.1 | 17 | |
| GAIL | 83.7 | 85.6 | 83.1 | 85.4 | 2.4 | |
| HEROMOTOCO | 2,934.55 | 3,015.15 | 2,925.10 | 2,999.90 | 81.6 | |
| ITC | 168.9 | 171.2 | 167 | 171.15 | 4.6 | |
| AXISBANK | 407.5 | 416.7 | 400.15 | 413.25 | 10.8 | |
| IOC | 72.35 | 74.4 | 71.85 | 73.9 | 1.9 | |
| BRITANNIA | 3,640.00 | 3,716.95 | 3,615.00 | 3,703.75 | 9.1 | |
| NTPC | 83.35 | 85.15 | 82.35 | 84.6 | 1.95 | |
| ULTRACEMCO | 3,790.00 | 3,879.90 | 3,760.05 | 3,865.00 | 87.2 | |
| TATASTEEL | 348 | 355.6 | 344.2 | 350.75 | 6.85 | |
| DREDDYD | 5,120.00 | 5,153.00 | 5,044.00 | 5,118.00 | 90.6 | |
| HINDALCO | 161.95 | 164.85 | 157.65 | 161.6 | 2.5 | |
| COALINDIA | 116 | 117.6 | 113.9 | 117.4 | 1.7 | |
| TITAN | 1,097.55 | 1,115.00 | 1,081.25 | 1,109.90 | 13.75 | |
| HDFCBANK | 1,050.00 | 1,051.95 | 1,025.65 | 1,042.55 | 12.15 | |
| DIVISLAB | 3,060.00 | 3,108.00 | 3,004.65 | 3,051.00 | 30.55 | |
| BAJAJ-AUTO | 2,954.95 | 2,998.50 | 2,926.05 | 2,961.00 | 29.15 | |
| HDFC | 1,651.95 | 1,657.80 | 1,628.10 | 1,652.75 | 15.9 | |
| POWERGRID | 161 | 162.5 | 159.7 | 160.7 | 1.35 | |
| RELIANCE | 2,189.00 | 2,212.80 | 2,167.30 | 2,198.85 | 17.65 | |
| SUNPHARMA | 496 | 496 | 483.85 | 489.3 | 3.5 | |
| HINDUNILVR | 2,082.00 | 2,111.00 | 2,070.85 | 2,072.00 | 11.1 | |
| KOTAKBANK | 1,255.05 | 1,258.40 | 1,230.60 | 1,252.00 | 5.9 | |
| ASIANPAINT | 1,925.25 | 1,955.00 | 1,908.00 | 1,924.70 | 6.35 | |
| HDFCLIFE | 577.3 | 580.5 | 571.25 | 578 | 0.35 | |
| UPL | 508.95 | 513.8 | 500.75 | 502.2 | -2.95 | |
| BPCL | 379 | 381.5 | 365.3 | 374 | -3.25 | |
| SBILIFE | 796 | 815.5 | 780 | 795.45 | -8.95 | |

| NIFTY NEXT 50 | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|--|
| SCRIP | OPEN | High | LOW | LTP | CHANGE | |
| NIFTY NEXT 50 | 25,968.60 | 26,438.75 | 25,860.90 | 26,397.70 | 701.1 | |
| INFRATEL | 175.55 | 184.8 | 171 | 182.1 | 13 | |
| MUTHOOTFIN | 1,023.00 | 1,095.00 | 1,023.00 | 1,082.65 | 63.85 | |
| ADANTIRANS | 238.9 | 249.6 | 236 | 248.75 | 13.95 | |
| MOTHERSUNI | 106 | 110.65 | 104.9 | 110 | 6.05 | |
| ADANIGREEN | 647.75 | 647.75 | 620.9 | 647.75 | 30.8 | |
| BIOCON | 414.65 | 430.55 | 410.5 | 428.05 | 19.8 | |
| NMDC | 76.8 | 79.7 | 75.9 | 79.5 | 3.65 | |
| PANKARBODA | 40.2 | 41.85 | 39.5 | 41.75 | 1.9 | |
| BEL | 1,200.00 | 1,253.85 | 1,183.25 | 1,248.00 | 54.25 | |
| BOSCHULT | 12,580.00 | 13,000.00 | 12,440.00 | 12,930.00 | 59.45 | |
| TATACONSUM | 498.8 | 512 | 495.3 | 509.8 | 21.15 | |
| PETRONET | 212 | 222 | 212 | 219.6 | 8.9 | |
| AMBUJACEM | 201.7 | 206.7 | 199 | 206.25 | 8 | |
| BANDHANBNK | 259.9 | 266.7 | 251.4 | 265 | 10.2 | |
| AUROPHARMA | 754 | 783.7 | 746.25 | 771.9 | 28.15 | |
| PNB | 28.25 | 29.25 | 27.65 | 29.05 | 1 | |
| UBL | 921 | 960.9 | 920.5 | 935.2 | 32.7 | |
| HINDPETRO | 173.75 | 179.7 | 172.3 | 178.4 | 6.1 | |
| INDIGO | 1,217.95 | 1,251.00 | 1,196.55 | 1,238.00 | 40.7 | |
| PEC | 83.25 | 85.75 | 82.8 | 85.3 | 2.75 | |
| DLF | 149.65 | 151.35 | 148.2 | 151 | 4.75 | |
| MARICO | 345 | 361.95 | 343.1 | 353.5 | 10.9 | |
| MCDOWELL-N | 501.9 | 515.55 | 496.55 | 511 | 15.45 | |
| DMAT | 2,042.10 | 2,120.00 | 2,042.10 | 2,110.90 | 63.55 | |
| COLPAL | 1,380.10 | 1,420.00 | 1,370.00 | 1,415.00 | 41.05 | |
| IGL | 399.4 | 407.35 | 397.85 | 403.85 | 10.6 | |
| GICRE | 121.55 | 124.29 | 121.05 | 124.45 | 3.25 | |
| TORNTPHARM | 2,673.90 | 2,729.00 | 2,630.00 | 2,721.05 | 70.8 | |
| ACC | 1,306.00 | 1,339.75 | 1,295.85 | 1,336.20 | 32.55 | |
| CADILAH | 379 | 389.1 | 375.5 | 385.5 | 9.2 | |
| NAUKRI | 3,400.00 | 3,492.40 | 3,400.00 | 3,449.20 | 73.45 | |
| LTI | 2,389.00 | 2,494.90 | 2,370.00 | 2,460.00 | 45.6 | |
| HINDZINC | 206.8 | 210.85 | 205.65 | 209.1 | 3.85 | |
| LUPIN | 987 | 1,022.85 | 978 | 996.3 | 16.7 | |
| ICICI | 1,260.00 | 1,278.00 | 1,235.60 | 1,270.05 | 18.75 | |
| DABUR | 471.4 | 496 | 488.25 | 492.8 | 6.5 | |
| CONCOR | 372.2 | 380 | 368.05 | 376 | 4.9 | |
| ABBOTINDIA | 15,950.00 | 16,441.00 | 15,950.00 | 16,180.00 | 197.1 | |
| PIDILITIND | 1,407.70 | 1,421.50 | 1,390.00 | 1,416.05 | 16.55 | |
| GODREJPCP | 700 | 715 | 697.1 | 699.5 | 8 | |
| BERGEPAINT | 578 | 585.8 | 573.55 | 580.1 | 5.05 | |
| OFSS | 3,013.10 | 3,013.10 | 2,956.20 | 2,987.50 | 26 | |
| BAJAHLDNG | 2,459.95 | 2,499.00 | 2,390.45 | 2,440.00 | 12.9 | |
| ALKEM | 2,762.00 | 2,825.00 | 2,762.00 | 2,800.00 | 11.55 | |
| HDFCAMC | 2,125.00 | 2,131.00 | 2,070.05 | 2,111.00 | 7.75 | |
| PGHH | 9,856.30 | 9,970.00 | 9,761.00 | 9,880.00 | 25.3 | |
| ICICIPRULI | 417 | 417.45 | 397.55 | 415 | 0.75 | |
| SIEMENS | 1,217.40 | 1,226.75 | 1,185.95 | 1,207.00 | -4.45 | |
| SBICARD | 813.1 | 824.25 | 806.9 | 812.45 | -6.65 | |
| HAVELLS | 667.1 | 669.9 | 650.7 | 657.5 | -6.7 | |

BSE 500

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Trump will accept poll results: White House

Washington: President Donald Trump will accept the results of a “free and fair” election, his press secretary has said, allaying fears triggered after he yet again sowed doubts about the legitimacy of mail-in ballots and refused to commit to a peaceful transfer of power if he lost the November 3 presidential polls.



Asked whether he will leave the White House peacefully if he loses the election, Trump responded: “Well, we’re going to have to see what happens.”

“We are going to have to see what happens, you know that. I have been complaining very strongly about the ballots, and the ballots are a disaster...” Trump told reporters at a White House news conference on Wednesday.

Trump’s remarks caused an uproar, with lawmakers from the Democratic Party as well as from the president’s own Republican Party rejecting his comments, insisting the winner of November’s election will be sworn in next January.

Responding to a question from a reporter on Trump’s refusal to commit to a peaceful transfer of power, White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said on Thursday: “The president will accept the results of a free and fair election. But I think that your question is more fitting to be asked of Democrats, who have already been on the record saying they will not accept the results of an election.”

“I am referring to the president being asked if there would be a peaceful transfer of power and he did not say yes. So I am asking, will there be a peaceful transfer of power if he loses this election?” the reporter asked.

“I believe that question asked by the Playboy reporter - in fact, I think, have it right here - he (Trump) was asked win, lose or draw, whether he would accept the transfer of power. I am not entirely sure if he won, why would he accept a transfer of power. That is maybe the deranged wish of that reporter, but that is not how governing works,” McEnany said.

Trump has questioned the legitimacy of voting by mail-in ballot in the past, claimed that it is susceptible to massive fraud.

During an interview with Fox News earlier this year, Trump didn’t commit to accepting the election results either, saying “I have to see.”

Trump’s attacks on the balloting have led to concerns that he is undermining the trust in the election process and will contest the results if he loses.

McEnany referred to several comments made by the Democrats in the past, apparently questioning the validity of an election. **PTI**

Aus think tank finds 380 detention camps in Xinjiang

AP ■ CANBERRA

China appears to be expanding its network of secret detention centres in Xinjiang, where predominantly Muslim minorities are targeted in a forced assimilation campaign, and more of the facilities resemble prisons, an Australian think tank has found.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute used satellite images and official construction tender documents to map more than 380 suspected detention facilities in the far northwestern region, highlighting internment camps, detention centers and prisons that have been newly built or expanded since 2017.

The report builds on evidence that China has made a policy shift from detaining Uighurs and other largely Muslim minorities in makeshift public buildings to constructing permanent mass detention facilities.

This is despite Chinese

state news agency Xinhua reporting late last year that “trainees” attending “vocational education and training centers” meant to deradicalize them had “all graduated.”

Regional government chairman Shohrat Zakir was quoted as saying that foreign media reports of 1 million or 2 million people attending these centers were fabricated, though he would not provide any figures.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin on Friday dismissed the report as “pure disinformation and slander,” saying the Australian institute had “no academic credibility.”

China does not operate “so-called detention camps” in Xinjiang, Wang told reporters at a daily briefing.

Citing media reports and investigations by internet users, Wang said one of the sites in the report had been identified as an electronics manufacturing park and another as a five-star residential complex.

Kim apologises over shooting death of South Korean official

Seoul: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un apologized Friday over the killing of a South Korea official near the rivals’ disputed sea boundary, saying he’s “very sorry” about the incident he called unexpected and unfortunate, South Korean officials said.

It’s extremely unusual for a North Korean leader to apologize to South Korea on any issue. Kim’s move will likely escalate tensions between the Koreas as it’s expected to ease anti-North sentiments in South Korea over the man’s death as well as mounting criticism of its liberal President Moon Jae-in.

“Comrade Kim Jong Un, the State Affairs Commission chairman, feels very sorry to give big disappointment to President Moon Jae-in and South Korean citizens because an unexpected, unfortunate incident happened” at a time when South Korea grapples with the coronavirus pandemic, Moon adviser Suh Hoon cited the North Korean message as saying.

On Thursday, South Korea accused North Korea of fatally shooting one of its public servants who was likely trying to defect and burning his body after finding him on a floating object in North Korean waters on Tuesday. South Korean officials condemned North Korea for what they called an “atrocious act” and pressed it punish those responsible.

According to the North Korean message, North Korean troops first fired blanks after the man found in the North’s waters refused to answer other than saying he’s from South Korea a couple of times. Then, as he made moves to flee, the North Korean troops fired 10 rounds. When they came near the floating object, they only found lots of blood but no sign of him.

The troops determined he was dead and burned the floating object in line with anti-coronavirus rules, according to the North Korean message read by Suh. **AP**

chairman, feels very sorry to give big disappointment to President Moon Jae-in and South Korean citizens because an unexpected, unfortunate incident happened” at a time when South Korea grapples with the coronavirus pandemic, Moon adviser Suh Hoon cited the North Korean message as saying.

On Thursday, South Korea accused North Korea of fatally shooting one of its public servants who was likely trying to defect and burning his body after finding him on a floating object in North Korean waters on Tuesday. South Korean officials condemned North Korea for what they called an “atrocious act” and pressed it punish those responsible.

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Justice Dept seeks immediate ban on WeChat in US

New York: The Justice Department is seeking an immediate ban on downloads of WeChat in Apple and Google app stores, saying the Chinese-owned messaging service is a threat to the security of the United States.

Last week the U.S. Commerce Department moved to ban WeChat from U.S. App stores but on Saturday, Magistrate Judge Laurel Beeler in California agreed to delay U.S. Restrictions, saying they would affect users’ First Amendment rights.

In a filing Friday, the Justice Department asked Beeler to allow for an immediate ban while the case works its way through court.

WeChat is a messaging-focused app popular with many Chinese-speaking Americans that serves as a lifeline to friends, family, customers and

business contacts in China. It’s owned by Chinese tech giant Tencent.

The Justice Department says WeChat allows the Chinese government to collect and use personal data on Americans to advance its own interests. The filing states WeChat has approximately 19 million active daily users in the U.S. In a range of formats, including text, images, video, and audio.

The Justice Department argues that the U.S. will suffer irreparable harm, both substantive and procedural, if the court does not stay its decision.

The Trump administration has targeted WeChat and another Chinese-owned app, TikTok, for national security and data privacy concerns, in the latest flashpoint amid rising tensions between Washington and Beijing. **AP**

‘Hotel Rwanda’ hero admits backing rebels, denies violence

AP ■ KIGALI (RWANDA)

The man portrayed as a hero in the movie ‘Hotel Rwanda’ has admitted in court that he backed a rebel group, but denied that he supported any violence or killings.

Paul Rusesabagina, in a pink prison uniform for his bail hearing on Friday, told the court in Kigali, the capital, that he helped to form the National Liberation Front in order to help Rwandan refugees, but he never supported violence.

The judge has postponed ruling on his application for bail until October 2.

Rusesabagina, a Belgian citizen and U.S. Permanent resident who has been a critic of President Paul Kagame, is charged with 13 offenses that also include financing terrorism, complicity in murder, recruiting child soldiers, and forming a rebel group.

Trump victory in Nov will be worse for Assange: Lawyer

London: A lawyer for Julian Assange said on Friday that the WikiLeaks founder’s situation will be worse if President Donald Trump is re-elected in November than if Democrat rival Joe Biden wins.

Edward Fitzgerald said at Assange’s extradition hearing in London that Assange will suffer if he is sent to the US to face spying charges regardless of who wins the November 3 election. “Much of what we say about the fate which awaits Mr Assange remains good because it’s about systemic faults in the prisons and his underlying

conditions,” he said. But, he added, “it will be all the worse” if Trump is re-elected. US prosecutors have indicted Assange on 17 espionage charges and one charge of computer misuse over WikiLeaks’ publication of secret American military documents a decade ago. The charges carry a maximum sentence of 175 years in prison.

Assange’s defense team argues that he is a journalist and entitled to First Amendment protections for publishing leaked documents that exposed US military wrongdoing in Iraq and Afghanistan. **AP**

2 wounded in Paris knife attack outside Charlie Hebdo ex-offices

Paris: French terrorism authorities are investigating a knife attack that wounded at least two people on Friday near the former offices of the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris, authorities said. A suspect has been arrested.

The area in eastern Paris remained cordoned off by police two hours after the attack. Children were being sequestered in nine schools while police worked to determine no other suspects were on the run, according to education

and police officials.

It is unclear what motivated the attack or whether it was linked to Charlie Hebdo, which moved after its offices were targeted in a 2015 Islamic extremist attack that left 12 people dead.

Police cordoned off the area, including the former Charlie Hebdo offices, after a suspect package was noticed nearby, but the package was found to be harmless and no explosives were found, according to a police official. An investigation was

FROM PAGE 1

PROTEST AGAINST FARM LAWS RAGES ON

But, the protesting farmers got a mixed response in cities as most of the shops in cities like Karnal, Kurukshetra, Panipat and Kaithal remained open even as the farmers took out protest marches and requested the shopkeepers to support their agitation.

Farmers from NCR area blocked the Delhi-Noida expressway for over three hours. About hundreds of farmers gathered on a key road in Noida prompting deployment of police in riot gear that kept them from proceeding towards Delhi. In parts of Uttar Pradesh, farmers blocked the Ayodhya-Lucknow highway for several hours.

Farmers also blocked the Delhi-Meerut highway in Modinagar near Ghaziabad. Farmers from the State’s Kheri district have also gathered in protest. BKU leaders have blocked the Baghpat’s Badayun road. Another clip from UP’s Hapur shows a large number of farmers helping an ambulance find its way through the crowd.

In the poll bound State Bihar, Tejashwi Yadav drove a tractor while his brother - Tej Pratap Yadav - sat atop it in Patna. The video is now doing the rounds on social media. The “tractor march” started from Tejashwi’s official residence located behind Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar’s residence on Anne Marg in Patna. In violation of coronavirus-related guidelines like social distancing, a huge number of protesters then proceeded towards the Governor’s House. They were stopped by the Bihar Police briefly for security reasons. However, permission was later granted to them to move towards Bailey Road.

The “tractor march” was scheduled to take a round of the Income Tax roundabout, Dak Bungalow Chowk and end at the RJD office on Veerchand Patel Road. In the wake of the march, normal traffic was badly hit in Patna, especially on Bailey Road. RJD workers Darbhanga took out protest while riding buffaloes.

In the south, members of the Karnataka State Farmers’ Association held a protest near Bommanahalli on the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu highway. Around 250 farmers have been taken into preventive custody at Mysore Bank Circle in Bengaluru. In Tamil Nadu, farmers from the National South Indian River Interlinking Farmers’ Association protested in Trichy with human skulls, chained hands and nooses tied around their necks.

MODI URGES BJP CADRE TO CREATE AWARENESS ON NEW LAWS...

He said the far-sighted vision of “Deendayal is guiding us in all spheres and would continue to inspire generations”.

Speaking on the farmers’ issue, Modi said the NDA Government made “prmanik” (authentic) attempts to change conditions of farmers by first increasing

Minimum Support Price (MSP) by one and half times more, linking ten crores “kisans” with the banks and issuing “Kisan credit cards” which also helped those engaged in animal husbandry and fishing.

On the farmers Bills passed this week, he said, “After decades farmer will get right value for his produce.. small farmers constituting 85 per cent first time got an alternative ...if he benefits by selling his produce in Mandi, he can, otherwise can sell it outside.”

“We gave the right to farmers to sell wherever he wants..,” Modi said seeking BJP workers to explain to farmers the benefits in the most simple ways by sitting with them in their dwellings and dispel rumours spread by those who had “trapped farmers in a complex web of legalities”.

The Prime Minister accused vested interests of telling lies to the farmers and “firing from their shoulders”.

Modi also spoke about the Government ensuring salaries and pension to labourers saying the right to minimum salary has been made mandatory.

He pointed out that there were 10,000 kinds of laws on minimum salaries which have been brought down to 200 now.

BIHAR POLLS ...

In Haryana, it could form the Government only after the Jannayak Janata Party’s support. The BJP was voted out of power in Jharkhand in December 2019. The Opposition in Bihar, including the RJD and the Congress, wanted to defer the polls in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and floods in several districts in the State while the ruling Janata Dal (United) and the BJP was in favour of elections on time.

Defending the decision to hold the polls during the pandemic, CEC Arora said, “There was no end to the battle against coronavirus, thus some way had to be found a way to balance the democratic rights of people to elect a public representative and also keep public health in place.”

Arora called it a “leap of faith” and said it was not a leap in the dark, pointing out that medical and engineering exams JEE and NEET also took place recently. “Life has to go on,” he said, adding over 70 countries initially postponed their elections.

He announced several measures have been taken for campaigning and polling to ensure safety of leaders and voters including elaborate sanitisation and social distancing protocols have been put in place.

Among the steps taken, polling time will be increased by one hour and will now be from 7 am to 6 pm, except in areas affected by Maoist extremism. Covid infected persons and virus suspects will vote separately. Those in quarantine can cast their votes at the end of voting time. All physical contact has been prohibited during the campaign.

In the first phase of the Bihar election, 71 Assembly constituencies in 16 districts will vote. The second phase will involve 94

Assembly constituencies in 17 districts, and, the final phase, 78 seats in 15 districts. Compared to 2015 where there were 65,337 polling booths, there are more than a lakh polling booth this time around, and not more than 1,000 voters per booth will be allowed compared to 1,500 earlier.

The notification for the first phase of Bihar Assembly elections would be issued on October 1, while the last date of nominations would be October 8 and withdrawal of candidature can be done till October 12. For the second phase, notification would be issued on October 9, nominations can be filed till October 16 and candidature can be withdrawn till October 19. The third-phase notification would be issued on October 13, the last date of nominations would be October 20 and the last date for candidature withdrawal has been fixed on October 23.

Bihar has recorded an electorate count of 7.29 crore for these polls. CEC Arora informed that about 46 lakh masks, 6 lakh PPE kits, 6.7 lakh units of faces-shields, 23 lakh (pairs of) hand gloves arranged. For voters specifically, 7.2 crore single-use hand gloves are arranged.

Arora said 230,000 migrant workers, who have returned to Bihar after losing their jobs because of the Covid-19 pandemic, have been added to the updated voters’ list in the State.

Arora said the EC will take stringent measures to enforce the code, especially related to the declaration of the criminal antecedents of the candidates.

Political parties and candidates can hold rallies as part of their campaigning for the Bihar Assembly polls and the grounds where such meetings will be held will have white circles to ensure distancing norms.

Arora said he wants to dispel doubts that there will only be virtual campaigning in the State. The “propaganda” that only virtual meets will take place during campaigning is way off the mark, he said.

Arora said the district election officers have already identified places where gatherings can take place. The exercise of putting markers to ensure distancing norms is on. District election officers and district superintendents of police should ensure that the number of attendees does not exceed the limit prescribed by the State Disaster Management Authority for public gatherings, an EC statement later said.

NCB GRILLS RAKUL, DEEPIKA’S MANAGER

For, there was no confirmation from the NCB till the evening as to whether the two actresses would also be questioned on Saturday.

The names of Karishma, Rakul, Sara, Deepika and fashion designer Simone Khambata had figured in the NCB’s questioning of actress Rhea Chakraborty and late Sushant’s ex-manager Jaya Saha.

Deepika will be questioned in the context of the information that surfaced during the questioning of actress-accused Rhea Chakraborty, Jaya Saha and her own

manager Karishma in the expanded Bollywood-drug nexus case.

Karishma works with Jaya Saha, with whom Rhea Chakraborty had chatted about CBD oil, as a manager in Kwan talent management agency. During the questioning, the NCB had reportedly grilled Jaya if she had any knowledge about Karishma procuring drugs for Deepika Padukone.

The NCB had earlier retrieved Deepika’s WhatsApp chats with Karishma in which the two were seen discussing drugs. Earlier, Jaya’s chats with Rhea Chakraborty about CBD oil were also retrieved by NCB.

The NCB investigations have thrown up a WhatsApp chat of 2017 between D (Deepika Padukone) and K (Karishma). In the chat, Deepika reportedly asks Karishma: “You have Maal?, Karishma responds saying: “Yes, but at home. I am at Bandra. Later Karishma tells Deepika that one Amit is bringing it to a high-end restaurant “koko” at Lower Parel. Deepika seeks to confirm if it is hash not weed.

The NCB has registered two drugs cases in the wake of the investigations launched by the CBI into the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput in June this year upon the directive issued by the Supreme Court.

Seventeen persons -including Rhea and her brother Showik --- are under arrest in connection with a case registered by the NCB on August 28, two days after it registered a case suo moto. It registered a second case after it told the Mumbai court that it wants to “to uproot the drug citadel in Mumbai especially in Bollywood”.

The Bollywood-drug nexus should be seen in the context of what the NCB had said on September 5, while seeking the remand of Rhea, her brother and late Sushant’s house manager Samuel Miranda.

In a remand application filed before the court on September 5, NCB’s Intelligence officer K Kiran Babu had said: “The NCB is investigating the drug angle in the late Sushant Singh Rajput case and therefore it is highly substantive and needs to be investigated thoroughly so as to uproot the drug citadel in Mumbai especially in Bollywood”.

ED ATTACHES RANA KAPOOR’S HOUSE

The CBI FIR disclosed that during April to June, 2018, Yes Bank Limited had invested Rs 3,700 crore in the short term debentures of DHFL. Simultaneously, Kapil Wadhawan of DHFL paid kickback of Rs. 600 crore to Rana Kapoor and his family members in the garb of loan of Rs 600 crore (given by DHFL) to DOIT Urban Ventures (India) Pvt. Ltd (Rana Kapoor Group Company).

In addition, Yes Bank had also sanctioned a loan of Rs 750 crore to RKKW Developers, a Group company of DHFL beneficially owned by Kapil Wadhawan, Dheeraj Wadhawan and their family

members. The said loan of Rs 750 crore had been sanctioned to them for their Bandra Reclamation Project, Mumbai, but the whole amount was siphoned off by Kapil Wadhawan and Dheeraj Wadhawan through their shell companies.

Rana Kapoor, Kapil Wadhawan and Dheeraj Wadhawan were arrested by ED for their role in money laundering and are currently undergoing judicial custody.

Including the latest attachment of assets worth Rs 127 crore, the total seizures under PMLA in this case stands at Rs 2,011 crore. Among these attachments proceeds of crime amounting to Rs 600 crore belong to Rana Kapoor and the remaining attached assets worth Rs 1,411 crore are related to Wadhawan brothers.

Prosecution complaints (charge-sheets) have been filed against Rana Kapoor, Kapil Wadhawan, Dheeraj Wadhawan and others. In another separate PMLA case, the ED has also attached an asset amounting to Rs 307 crore of Rana Kapoor. Further investigation is under progress, the agency added.

CM: MEDIA A POWERFUL TOOL, NEEDS DIGITAL INNOVATION

schemes for the poor and the marginalised,” he said.

Elaborating on the success of his government, the chief minister said that they were able to control encephalitis in 38 districts of eastern UP and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan launched by the prime minister played a decisive role in eradicating the disease.

“The Swachh Bharat mission had a target to make five crore toilets but in the first two-and-half years, 43 lakh toilets were constructed. In the first 18 months of our government, we were able to achieve the target,” he said.

Yogi further said that construction of toilets brought the mortality rate of encephalitis down as it stopped the infection spread.

“In 2014, at least 641 children died of encephalitis in BRD Medical College hospital in Gorakhpur while in 2020, only seven people died. The number has shown a steady decline since 2017,” he said.

“Encephalitis is on the wane and the media should highlight it. The government has used its experience in tackling the dreaded disease during the spread of coronavirus,” he said.

Since COVID-19 spread in the last six months, the UP government distributed free ration 12 times while pension beneficiaries were paid money without delay. Under Atmanirbhar package, 7.5 lakh MSME units were provided loans while under Garib Kalyan package, 95 lakh people were provided employment,” he said.

Yogi also released a booklet highlighting the achievements of the BJP government.

Deputy Chief Ministers Dinesh Sharma and Keshav Prasad Maurya and BJP state president Swatantra Dev Singh also addressed the gathering.

ANTIBODIES...

“If the antibodies were given after an infection, the hamsters developed mild disease symptoms at most. If the antibodies were applied preventively — before infection — the animals did not get sick,” said Jakob Kreys, coordinator of the research project.

The researchers noted that treating infectious diseases with antibodies has a long history.

For Covid-19, this approach is also being investigated through the administration of plasma derived from the blood of recovered patients. With the plasma, antibodies of donors are transferred, they said.

“Ideally, the most effective antibody is produced in a controlled manner on an industrial scale and in constant quality. This is the goal we are pursuing,” said Mommens Reincke, first author of the research.

“Three of our antibodies are particularly promising for clinical development,” explained Harald Pruss, a research group leader at the DZNE and also a senior physician at Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin.

“Using these antibodies, we have started to develop a passive vaccination against SARS-CoV-2,” Pruss said.

VODAFONE WINS RETRO TAX FIGHT AGAINST INDIA

“Vodafone confirms that the investment treaty tribunal found in Vodafone’s favour,” the British firm said in a statement. “This was a unanimous decision, including India’s appointed arbitrator Rodrigo Oreumuno. The tribunal held that any attempt by India to enforce the tax demand would be a violation of India’s international law obligations.”

Reacting to it, the Government on Friday said it will consider all options, including legal remedies, with regard to Vodafone arbitration case.

The Government of India’s liability will be restricted to about ₹75 crore — ₹30 crore in cost and another ₹45 crore in tax refund, sources with direct knowledge of the matter said.

As per the award, the government has to reimburse Vodafone 60 per cent of its legal costs and half of the 6,000 Euros cost borne by Vodafone for appointing an arbitrator on the panel.

The arbitration tribunal said India’s “conduct in respect of the imposition” of tax demand on Vodafone “notwithstanding the Supreme Court judgment is in breach of the guarantee of fair and equitable treatment” in the bilateral investment protection treaty.

Vodafone had before the arbitration tribunal challenged India’s usage of a 2012 legislation that gave it powers to retrospectively tax deals like Vodafone’s USD 11 billion acquisition of 67 per cent stake in the mobile phone business owned by Hutchison Whampoa in 2007.

SHORT CIRCUITS

ANUSHKA SHARMA

Mr Gavaskar, your message is distasteful and I would love if you could explain why you thought of making such a sweeping statement on a wife accusing her for her husband's game? I'm sure over the years you have respected the private lives of every cricketer while commenting on the game. Don't you think you should have equal amount of respect for me and us?



JAVED AKHTAR

If Karan Johar (producer-director) had invited some farmers too for his party, life would have been easier for our TV channels. They would not have had to choose between farmers protest and Karan's party! It seems that Karan's is the second most favourite 'party' of our channels.



RAVEENA TANDON

Half-baked truths about the film industry catch TRP ratings. The crisis in the world is being forgotten by abusive judgements/vilification, people guilty before probe is plain right a public lynching. If proved wrong, will media ever able to restore their reputations, credibility?



TAMANNAH BHATIA

I've always been an ardent fan of Tabu's work and it is such an honour to reprise a role played by her. The original film, *Anhadhun*, has this psychological influence on people and succeeded in inducing a sense of curiosity. What I loved about the film was the brilliance of the script and the screenplay. It had no hero or no villain.

TAAPSEE PANNU

Moments before I went on stage to do try my hand at stand-up comedy for the first time ever, bundles of nerves is an understatement of what I looked like. I'm glad the frequency of my humour matched the audience's expectations so we could create a moment of resonance that still gives me giggles to cherish.



FLASHBACK 60 MINUTES



Delhi's permanent rulers, Rhesus monkeys, recaptured North Avenue mocking the virus and the residents who covered inside their government flats



I still wake up on most dawns in sweat, shattered with the horror and sadness, and sheer aloneness of bodies that came, day in, day out, to the Nigambodh Electric Crematorium, the Muslim Burial Ground and the Christian Cemetery



A solitary vintage Fiat in Connaught Place's Outer Circle, facing the shut stores on the side of Minto Bridge



A doctor ready to enter the critical zone ward at AIIMS

A PICTURE SPEAKS A THOUSAND WORDS

Author and photographer PARUL SHARMA's book of black-and-white photographs, *Dialects of Silence: Delhi Under Lockdown*, presents a visual narrative of a locked-down capital, chronicling how lives were paused, lost and regained. By CHAHAK MITTAL



'Surely we belong to Allah, and to Him shall we return'

At an empty Rajpath, there was stillness, one that the city had never breathed. At the Anand Vihar Bus Station, there were crowds of migrant labourers, unprotected and unsanitised, betrayed by people's apathy and denial of their plight. At the Nigambodh Crematorium, Kashmir Gate, there were COVID dead bodies arriving in crowded ambulances. At the Muslim Burial Ground, Dilli Gate, a young widow read the *fatiah* for her dead husband. At the Christian Cemetery, an infant waited for an unknown gravedigger to perform his last rites as he was abandoned by his parents when they learned he was COVID-positive. Outside the Trauma Centre of AIIMS, there were doctors full of courage preparing to enter the Covid Care Unit, wearing PPE, just to witness another day of victory and loss at the same time.

Amid all these unusual sights, there was author-photographer Parul Sharma capturing this horror show by a deadly pathogen and the frozen reality of life that the world had left behind while hiding from the Coronavirus during the lockdown. The photographs, now published into a book, *Dialects of Silence: Delhi Under Lockdown*, present a visual narrative of a locked-down capital and a chronicle of lives paused, lives lost and lives regained.

When asked, "Were you afraid?" Parul said, "Of course, I was... Of missing that one shot that I would never find again!" For her, the rush was to cover the city before its stillness shattered and the struggles for being alive turned graver.

Excerpts:

What made you go for it? Was it pre-decided that you would publish these photographs into a book?

No, when I took to the streets, there was no thought of getting a book published in my mind. It was just my obsession with photography and my passion. It was very frightening because there was nobody on the streets. Everything was shut, and not a single soul was seen in miles. I began with capturing the architecture and the deserted roads but



Dialects of Silence (Cover)



Not all have home in a village to go back to — life goes on in makeshift homes under the Dwarka flyover

then the narrative changed when the COVID death rate started rising. There was one thing — either I stopped there or I continue shooting. And so it happened. I continued capturing the migrants, doctors in the COVID wards and the burial grounds and crematoriums.

In June, we decided to turn this all into a book.

Why did you call it Dialects of Silence?

There is a conversation right from the beginning of the book, which is more architectural. I went out in pursuit of having a conversation with my city. I have been born and brought up here. My parents have grown up in this city. And I just went out there to cap-



ture the undisturbed view of the architecture of my city, the stillness which had crept in due to the lockdown, and above all, the beauty of Delhi. The city actually looked very beautiful during that time.

I just did not know that I'll be turning it into a book. I became a news photographer over night when the migrant story broke and when I started capturing the deaths.

It kind of highlights how even silence has its own language and speaks volumes...

Yes, that's how it actually came — the idea of having a conversation with silence. There was absence everywhere and when I interpret dialects of silence,

it also means its different kinds — some conversations were joyous and some were completely opposite, some had sorrows, some had hope, some had anxiety, some were full of fear while some had courage.

When I was shooting the doctors, it was not that I was having some long-drawn conversations with them. I was documenting them doing their job. Even though there was silence in the wards, but there was courage in the air which was speaking to me. They did not have to tell me that now they are heading towards the COVID wing to check on the patients. They didn't tell me that they had courage, it was written on their faces, in their demeanour and in their body language. I'd say, even their PPE

couldn't conceal it. And therefore, the 'dialects'.

What were the on-ground challenges?

There were many challenges, of course. But I didn't allow them to come my way. I kept trying to absorb them as they came. I don't like anything to come in between my determination. So I didn't focus much on that part.

Do you think witnessing such a phenomenon would have been possible without a lockdown ever?

I don't think so. It's Delhi we are talking about. Walking down those empty lanes, I saw police guards on duty; monkeys taking over the empty streets, having the whole road to themselves; crows and birds, in flight, unperturbed. Once some guards also asked me if I could feed the stray dogs as people have stopped stepping out and feeding them. Such gestures proved how nobody was there for each other and at the same time, everyone was. They were concerned for each other. It's both the ways and it began a dialogue between me and those dogs I fed, and the guards who were the only humans I came across. I have never seen or captured Delhi in such a frame.

You've captured the COVID burial grounds, and bodies being cremated in electric crematoriums. Witnessing such a saddening sight so closely, did it impact you personally?

Oh my god, yes! It had psychological implications. I think that's the first thing that gets hit in such scenarios — psychological health. There are people who may capture a great tragedy but at the same time, they won't be personally moved by it as that varies from person to person. But for someone like me, it affects psychologically. I could not sleep for those nights.

There are also other factors hitting you — how did the people contract the virus? What if you also contract it? And end up the same way? How active is the virus even now? Should you be near these bodies? What if it's more potent right now? How long before it dies completely? There's a constant conflict. And with this virus, you can never know. People are contracting the virus even while sitting inside their homes. You do feel scared.

Then come the sensory aspects — sight, sound, smell. Especially, when you visit a place like a crematorium, smell plays a huge role because the air is so putrid, nobody wants to be inside. Capturing such a place is not like shooting architecture or a beautiful landscape. You can leave it there and come back with a relaxed mind. You have enjoyed that moment and it lingers on with you. But after returning home from a place like this, it's difficult to switch off. You don't forget it as easily. Your coping mechanism has to be strong.

Reconciling something tragic is difficult...

Indeed. I don't know whether I would ever be able to forget those images in my head. Especially, those episodes where I saw a young widow reading the *fatiah* of her husband being buried and how the last rites of a COVID-dead child were being performed by a stranger. I remember I was inside an electric cremation centre and after a point of time, I was all alone and there were two COVID dead bodies lying three feet away from me. They were wrapped in plastic sheet. When I

turned back, I saw another ambulance arriving, which had five more dead bodies. Similar to a war-like scenario, after one round of disposal, quickly, there were more of them coming and more...

It was tough to navigate things. At times you're also fearful that something might happen to you or your family. A lot of composure was required to also capture the dead bodies with an aesthetic and giving them the due respect. You can't make it look bizarre or dramatic.

In the book, there's a caption — "June was the cruelest month..."

There were many deaths in June. The migrant crisis had broke out, the Shramik Special started, a lot of migrants died in road accidents and on tracks, and the COVID death rate in India started rising and people were dying. And it's still continuing.

You have captured how the pandemic gave birth to a migrant labour crisis in India. How do you think photographs create a history of their own?

Photographs create history. I got one of the biggest compliments recently when I was told that my photographs remind them, especially the migrant mother-and-child series, of the famous American photographer Dorothea Lange, who had shot a lot of migrants in America during the Great Depression. Lange said that 'if you're taking a picture, take it as if you were to become blind tomorrow. Don't shoot for the sake of it'.

Not that I was governed by her aesthetics but I looked for hope and beauty. The migrants that I have shot were not in motion. I didn't shoot them during movement. I saw some sitting waiting at bus stands, railways junctions or under a flyover. It was very heartbreaking to see a family of six who had a disabled, malnourished child. They could not travel with her back to their village because it was difficult to carry the child. That image has now been picked by Getty images.

What's your take on the migrant crisis?

As a Delhiite, I feel, we should have done something for those people. Buses and food supplies were organised later but as a society, there is a collective apathy we have for situations like these. We love to play the blame game — the government doesn't do its job — and just present a drawing room view of the crisis. I think the migrants were not betrayed by the government, they were betrayed by their employers. The people just washed their hands off them when the lockdown began. And no government could be prepared for a crisis like this!

Was there a specific reason of keeping the photographs black and white?

It's raw. First section of the book — architecture — reminds me of Delhi of the '40s, devoid of people, cars, and pollution, which is why I tried to give them a retro touch. I didn't want to give colour to the deaths I've captured. The doctors, whose courage gave hope to millions, and the scenario they are in, it's devoid of colours.

There is also a special photograph, the last one, the only one which has been composed. It shows how the virus took a toll on even romance and love. I had to make a couple pose to make that frame I imagined come alive. It makes the book end on a hopeful and a positive note.

Photos: Parul Sharma (in *Dialects of Silence*, published by Roli Books)

CONVERSATION 45 MINUTES

FEEL THE PULSE

Director MAQBOOL KHAN talks to SAKSHI SHARMA about the newness of the characters in his forthcoming film *Khaali Peeli*, commercial entertainers and the importance of youth-centric films in today's time

Be it Dev Anand in *Taxi Driver* (1954), Amitabh Bachchan in *Khuddaar* (1982) or Aamir Khan in *Raja Hindustani* (1996), there have been various films impressing their generations with the portrayals of a taxi driver. Maqbool Khan-directorial *Khaali Peeli* seems to be the next in line. The entire film has been designed keeping this Gen Z in mind as the director feels that the generation after 90s haven't watched many masala films like he did in the 80s and 90s.

It is a romantic comedy flick revolving around the lives of two childhood friends, who separate due to inevitable circumstances. Actor Ishaan Khatter plays the role of Blackie, a taxi driver and actor Ananya Panday (as Pooja Gujjar) is a girl who comes from a conservative family and wants to be on her own. Excerpts of our conversation with the filmmaker.

◆How did you conceptualise the film with the 90s vibe in a contemporary setup?

I shifted to Mumbai in early 90s and have been living here for 25 to 30 years. Based out of Rajasthan, earlier, I used to go to Mumbai during summer vacations. It has always been a fascinating city and has attracted me since it was known as Bombay. The *Kali Peeli* taxi is the city's most iconic thing. So when we were toying up the idea of creating this entire story, we intentionally decided to create something around Mumbai and the taxi. That's how it was incorporated in the story. The guy (Ishaan) who drives the taxi is the hero of the film. He's a very street-smart kind of person. The story gradually becomes interesting when you see the colourful life of Mumbai as well as its dark sides through his point of view.

◆There have been many Bollywood characters based on drivers of a *Kaali Peeli* taxi in Mumbai in the past. How do you think Ishaan's character is different? Has it been inspired from any real-life instances?

Yes. There have been instances and films where heroes have portrayed taxi *wallas* earlier but I haven't seen a young actor in his mid-20s attempting something like this as far as recent films are concerned. This is the newness of this character. Also, Ishaan has a huge fan following among the youngsters which will help us establish a good connect with them.

The look, style and various dialogues are inspired from real instances. In Mumbai, out of 10 taxi



drivers you will find at least two to three the way Ishaan's character is portrayed in the film. You will find too many heroes in real life when you travel in a taxi or an auto rickshaw there. If you observe them closely, you realise that their personality, body language and the way they interact with passengers is not less than a hero because they see and worship Bollywood heroes every day. They are so quirky, colourful and the kind of one liner they use is outstanding. That's how the whole idea of creating a character like this came about.

◆How does the film attempt to take us back to the retro times? What are some of the nuances?

From the trailer itself you can make out various nuances — the sounds, background score and dialect — is very retro yet contemporary, keeping today's generation in mind. It will remind you of one of the finest music directors, RD Burman, who was way ahead of his time. The dialogues in the film are used in everyday language of Mumbai. When you go on the streets or in an auto Rickshaw, you will find them. The entire first teaser that we released has the cricket reference in it as it is worshiped like a religion here. It's not a sport merely, it's an emotion. We live for cricket. That was exciting for the young generation, probably the reason they connected with the trailer and song. This film has been made keeping the youngsters in mind. They are the pulse of it. I wondered if I had to cater a typical Bollywood masala film how do I do that? So, the entire film has been designed keeping this generation in mind as I feel they haven't watched many masala films which I have in my 80s and 90s.

◆How easy or challenging was it to work with Ishaan and Ananya? How did you manage to get them into the skin of the character,

especially in terms of the dialect?

Honestly, it was a very difficult task for me. They both are such a bundle of energy that I had to match the pace of my energy with them. As a filmmaker, I had to take control and channel their energy in the right direction. If we talk about the dialect, it was important for their characters to speak the colloquial language of Mumbai in order to be relatable. Hence, they were trained for two months to get it on point. They are young but still very sorted in their heads. They exactly know what they want from life. When I was their age, I didn't know what I had to do in life. They both are very well read, sensible enough, aware and informed about what's going around the world in terms of cinema. I have learned a lot from these kids.

◆Ananya's character seems to be of a girl from a conservative background, who just wants to break free and be on her own. Women have been portrayed in that scenario before in many films. How is this one different?

It was intentional. We wanted to create a character of a girl, who is from a conservative and underprivileged background yet who's progressive in her thoughts and aspires of living a life of her dreams. Today's girls are very smart and independent. Ananya's character is exactly similar to that. If she's put in a situation where it's difficult to sustain and survive, she will make sure she gets out of that smartly. She is basically *Nehle Pe Dehla*. It's a pure commercial entertainer, full of action, romance, drama, humour and thriller. The film will take one back in the 90s when Mumbai was known as Bombay.

◆If we look at content these days, it has changed drastically, especially with OTT taking over...

How do you think such commercial entertainers will survive amid the flood of unconventional and innovative content? How do you see its future?

I believe there has always been a future to all kinds of cinema. There are some people who still crave for commercial masala films. For instance, *Simmba* is a commercial out and out film and it did quite well. I feel everything co-exist in our society. As humans, we adapt to the situation like we are adapting to the current chaotic and unprecedented times. I can recall the time when commercial cinema was dominating but at the same time, you also had films like *Saaransh*, *Daddy*, *Sadak* and *Dharavi*. Different kinds of films survived it all together that too very beautifully. So I feel there will always be a room and space for every kind of cinema and every kind of genre.

◆The song, initially titled *Beyonce Sharma Jayegi*, has now been changed to *Duniya Sharma Jayegi*. It has been perceived in a very racist manner and disapproved by the audience around the world, including Beyonce herself. Do you think such item numbers in Bollywood have long lost their popularity among the Indian audience given that how the lyrics sometimes turn out to be hurtful of people's sentiments?

It was picked out of context. A certain section of audience brought this to our notice which none had thought including the music director and the lyrics writer. If at all we knew that it can taken into this direction, we would have never used such words. The word *Goriya* has been used so often in Indian songs to address a girl that it didn't occur to any of us to interpret it in the literal manner. I can recall a few songs that has the word *Goriya* — *Chura Ke Dil Mera Goriya Chali* from the film *Main Khiladi Tu Anari*, *Gori Tera Gaon Bada Pyara* from *Chitchor* and *Goriya Re Goriya* from *Aaina*. The word has always been used to refer a girl. You don't dance on lyrics, you dance on the beats of the song as music connects you to the soul.

(The film releases on October 2.)



TRIBUTE 15 MINUTES

A lost battle

Music connoisseurs along with singer Asha Bhosle mourn the loss of playback legend SP BALASUBRAHMANYAM. She recalls how he sang songs for RD Burman and helped her with Tamil pronunciation for her song with Ilayaraja

Famed playback singer and Padma awardee SP Balasubrahmanyam, popular as SPB or Balu in the film world, passed away on Friday afternoon.

In a statement issued on Friday the hospital said, "In a further setback this morning, despite maximal life support measures and the best efforts of the clinical team, his condition deteriorated further and he suffered a cardio-respiratory arrest. With profound grief, we regret to inform that he has passed away on September 25 at 13.04 hours."

Balasubrahmanyam was a great achiever. He recorded over 40,000 songs in 16 languages and bagged six National Awards over a period of five decades. He is a recipient of civilian awards such as Padma Shri (2001) and Padma Bhushan (2011) from the Government of India. He intended to be an engineer but had a fall-out due to a bout of typhoid. SPB made his playback debut in 1966 Telugu film *Sri Sri Maryada Ramanna*.

Famed director Bharathiraja, after visiting the iconic singer at the hospital, told the media at this time of

grief he was not able to speak anything. "Even now there is some ray of hope. There is one power above us all," Bharathiraja said.

SPB and veteran actor Kamal Haasan have been a popular combination of the audience for long. Stating that Balasubrahmanyam is a national voice, Kamal Haasan noted how the departed icon was an artiste who celebrated talent. Kamal said, "When the bond gets really close, you actually forget the first meeting. He had been part of my romance, first love, melancholy." "He was a national voice. You can't restrict him to just Tamil language. He was a huge fan of Mohammed Rafi and Kishore Kumar. I think it's the duty of the younger generation to learn from the older generation and excel. SPB was able to do that," added he.

Tamil superstar Rajinikanth also expressed his grief. He shared a video speaking in Tamil, where he said, "Today is a very sad day for everybody. SPB struggled till the last minute. I am in deep pain. Today, all music lovers, people who knew him and everyone, are in deep sorrow.



His voice and songs are loved by people across the country. He always tried to help people seeking new opportunities. That's why he was loved by all. Indian cinema has created many great singers but SPB is special. His songs will continue to win hearts for more than 100 years. He was a great soul and a great singer. May his soul rest in peace. I offer my condolences to his family."

Lata Mangeshkar tweeted, "Pratibhashaali gayak, madhurbhashi, bahut nek insaan SP Balasubrahmanyam ji ke swarg-was ki khabar sunke main bahut

vyathit hun. Humne kai gaane saath gaaye, kai shows kiye. Sab baatein yaad aarahi hain. Ishwar unki aatma ko shanti de. Meri samvedanaayein unke pariwar ke saath hain (I am heartbroken to learn about the demise of gifted singer, soft-spoken person and a very good human being SP Balasubrahmanyam. We have recorded so many songs and performed several shows together. I am reminded of those beautiful memories of the olden days. May god rest his soul in peace. My condolences with his family.)"

Asha Bhosle said, "This year has seen a lot of unfortunate events. And the news of SPB's demise makes me even sadder. He was a versatile artist. His duet with Lata *didi* was very memorable. Balu sang a lot of songs for RD Burman and was his great friend. He had helped me a lot with my Tamil pronunciation in my song for Ilayaraja. The loss of such a great artist has left a huge void in the music world. I wish his soul to rest in peace in this musical journey to be one with the almighty. RIP Balu."

Celebrated singer Balasubrahmaniam passes away after fighting Covid

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It was the songs he rendered for Sankarabharanam which made him a household name in the country. In a career spanning five decades, SPB was honoured with six national awards for some of the best songs in Telugu, Hindi, Kannada and Tamil. SPB's song *Tere Mere Beech Mein* in Ek Duuje Ke Liye remained a chartbuster for years. In addition to being a singer 'Baal', was also a music director, actor and a dubbing artist.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his grief over the demise of the singer. "With the unfortunate demise of Shri SP Balasubrahmanyam our cultural world is a lot poorer. A household name across India, his melodious voice and music enthralled audiences for decades. In this hour of grief, my thoughts are with his family and admirers. Om Shanti", the Prime Minister said in his message.

Kolahala Srenivaas, author and journalist, remembered how M G Ramachandran who wanted SPB to sing for him in the movie *Adimai Pen* pushed the recording for 15 days as the singer was down with typhoid on the day the song was to be recorded.

"It was SPB's first song in Tamil. When others suggested to MGR to change the singer, he then superstar was unwillingly citing that he was an aspiring youngster who would have informed his family and friends about the opportunity

"With the unfortunate demise of Shri SP Balasubrahmanyam our cultural world is a lot poorer. A household name across India, his melodious voice and music enthralled audiences for decades. In this hour of grief, my thoughts are with his family and admirers. Om Shanti"

PRIME MINISTER MODI

and would feel humiliated if his name doesn't feature in the credits. He went on to recover and sang Aayiram Nilave Vaa, his very first song in Tamil, which become a massive hit, reminisced Srenivaas.

What stands out in the story of SPB is that he was from Nellore in Andhra Pradesh who spoke Telugu, but he made it big in Tamil too.

R Rangaraj, MD, Music Durbar, and president, Chennai 2000 Plus Trust, remembers SP Balasubramaniam as unique in many respects.

Rangraj told The Pioneer that initially M S Viswanathan asked him to improve his pronunciation in Tamil, which he did. After two years, MSV gave him his first song in Santhi Nilaiyam called *Iyarkkai Enum*.


But it was MGR who gave him the first break in Adimai

Pen, Aayiram Nilave Vaa, composed by KV Mahadevan. He went on to sing over 40,000 songs in 16 languages, with his combination with maestro Ilayaraja taking Tamil, Telugu and Kannada film music to great heights.

Though initially, he had not formally learned Carnatic music, he did undergo intensive Carnatic lessons under Pugazhendhi, a Malayalee, assistant of KV Mahadevan. Though he hailed from AP, he made Chennai his home. He bought a house and built a studio in Chennai and brought up his family in Chennai.

"Popular in the south India as well as in the north and west, SPB was quick to grasp tunes, sing without wavering from shruthi, and could sing all types of songs, whether western, classical, or folk. His affable temperament ensured that all music directors and co-singers liked him. His songs will live on" says Rangraj.

Very few people know that SPB was keen chess lover and was first to sponsor former world chess champion V Anand. "Really sad to hear about the passing away of such a great yet simple person. He was my first sponsor! He sponsored our team Chennai Colts (then Madras Colts) in the national team championship in 1983. One of the nicest persons I have met. His music gave us such joy #RIPSPB," Anand said in a tweet expressing grief on the demise of the famed singer.



Once I am in the middle and during the toss is the only time I feel like a captain and otherwise I try to balance being a player and the captain

Jose Mourinho's men then host Chelsea on Tuesday, host Maccabi Haifa in Europa League qualifying on Thursday and travel to Manchester United a week on Sunday.