SUNRISERS TO FACE KKR IN IPL TODAY

VIJAYWADA



Violence mars Bengal polls

hour after a meeting addressed by Chief Minister Mamata

Banerjee where she asked the

people, particularly the women to enforce their voting

rights by gheraoing the Central Forces.

Politicians' entry

in Cooch Behar

banned for 72 hr

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Saturday barred

the entry of politicians in Cooch

Behar district for the next 72

hours to prevent any possible law and order flare-up. The decision

came after four people were killed in the district as Central

Forces opened fire allegedly

when they were attacked by locals who "attempted to snatch

their rifles" during voting on

4 dead as police open fire on mob attacking booth in Cooch Behar; TMC man kills voter

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Violence peaked in the fourth round of 8-phase Bengal elections claiming five lives in a blood-splattered polling, but a resolute electorate fought off terror in their own way with more than 76 per cent of them casting their votes when reports last came in at 5.30 pm.
While polling percentage

for Hooghly was 76.02, it was 75.03 for Howrah. In South 24 Parganas 75.49 per cent of voters cast their votes whereas in Alipurduar the rate was 73.65 per cent. In Cooch Behar thatsaw maximum violence the polling rate was 79.73 per cent.

Five people on Saturday lost their lives to Central Forces firing and violence perpetrated by alleged hooligans of the Trinamool Congress, police said. While violence was recorded too in other parts of the 44 seats in five districts that went to polls on Saturday all the incidents of death took place in Sitalkuchi block of Cooch Behar district of North Bengal bordering Bangladesh, Bhutan and

As the ruling Trinamool Congress struggling hard to retain power in the face of rampant corruption and criminalisation blamed the Central Forces and the BJP for the Satruday's loss of lives, the official reports coming from the Election Commission said the Central Forces opened fire in

self-defence. Four persons Hamidul,



ordered of stopping the voting exercise at polling station number 126 in Sitalkuchi, where clashes erupted between locals and Central Forces, at Sitalkuchi in Cooch

Manirul and Samilul (three of the same family) died when the Central Forces opened fire to disperse a crowd of 300-400 villagers that had attacked booth number 126, following rumours that a child had been beaten to death by the CISF personnel. Five others too were injured in the firing and had been admitted to the local hospital, sources said.

A fifth person, a firsttime voter Ānanda Barman was shot dead outside a neighbouring booth also at Sitalkuchi by an alleged Trinamool Congress man a panchayat member, sources

Incidentally this is the same block where the convoy of Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh was attacked with bombs, brickbats and rods a couple of days ago barely an

71 companies of Central paramilitary forces to be deployed in West Bengal

After a request from the Election Commission of India (ECI), the Union Home Ministry on Saturday decided to deploy additional 71 companies (7,100) personnel) of the Central paramilitary forces for the conduct of the Assembly polls in West Bengal, with immediate effect. As many as 1,000 companies of the Central paramilitary forces are already deployed there for the conduct of the elections in the State.

"The ECI has requested to deploy additional 71 companies of CAPFs (Central Armed Police Forces)/SAPs (State Armed Police)/IRs (India Reserve) Bns (Battalions in West Bengal for AE-2021 related duties. In pursuance of the recommendations of the ECI vide order dated April 10, it has been decided to deploy additional 71 coys (companies) of CAPFs....immediately in the State of West Bengal for Assembly Election-2021 related duties," reads a Union Home Ministry letter faxed on Saturday to the Chief Secretary, Home Secretary and Director General of Police of the State.

The composition of the



TMC candidate Rabindra Nath Ghosh, wearing a helmet for safety, interacts with security personnel during 4th phase of West Bengal polls in Cooch Behar on Saturday

additional deployments of the Central paramilitary forces will include 12 companies of the Central Reserve Police (CRPF), 33 companies of the Border Security Force (BSF), 13 companies of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), four companies of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and nine companies of Sashastra Seema

With the deployment of the 71 companies of CAPFs, a total of 1,071 companies CAPFs, SAPs and IR Battalions will be available in West Bengal for election-related duties.

Daily Covid cases cross 1.5L mark, and counting

Maha plans severe curbs; UP, Delhi, TN, Karnataka hit newer peaks

PNS NEW DELHI

 $F^{\text{or the first time on Saturday,}}_{\text{India recorded more than}}_{1.5 \text{ lakh Covid-19 cases as the}}$ pandemic marched unchecked across the country. While Maharashtra seemed to stabilise in the range of below 60,000 Covid-19 cases per day, several other States, particularly Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Delhi are recording newer peaks every day.

Índia on Saturday logged 1,52,383 cases Maharashtra registering 55,000 plus cases and 309 deaths. Chhattisgarh 14,098 cases and 81 deaths, and Uttar Pradesh 12,748 cases and 46 deaths. Kerala (6,194 new cases), Karnataka (6,955) Tamil Nadu

(5,989) and poll-bound west Bengal reported 4,043 new cases during the last 24 hours.

Meanwhile, stopping short of announcing a full-fledged lockdown in worst Covid 19hit Maharashtra, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said the State Government would have no alternative but to resort to stern restrictions to break the chain of transmission of the virus in the State.



A medic administers the Covid-19 vaccine dose to a Japanese woman at IM7 Industrial Association office, at Manesar in Gurugram district on Saturday

Speaking at an all-party meeting called to evolve a strategy to tide over the Covid-19 crisis in the State, the CM said, "Our first priority is to save lives. In a health emergency like the one we are passing through, our priorities are the health and lives of the citizens.

"We may continue our war against Covid-19, but the immediate task is to arrest the rapid spread of the pandemic. During last year's lockdown, people were confined to their homes and it was easy for us to trace the patients and their contacts. Now when everything is open and we are facing practical difficulties, a fact that the Union Government should take note of," he said.

From 9,695 cases a day ear lier, India's most populous State Uttar Pradesh on Saturday reported huge jump in infections to touch 12,787 mark, its highest single-day spike of coronavirus infections since the outbreak.

Though the Union Ministry has remained evasive on the query if Mahakumbh can be a "super spreader", health experts have not ruled out further spike in the virus in the State.

Meanwhile, with the total number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country crossing 10 crore, the Union Health Ministry on Saturday said India is the fastest nation to administer 100 million doses in

171 new Covid cases in

apital city Bhubaneswar Con Saturday registered as many as 171 new Covid-19 cases, with which its total positives' tally surged to 33,364.

Out of the new cases, 126

were local contacts and 45 were from quarantine.Out of the new cases, 16 were from Khandagiri, 11 from Delta, six each from Tankapani and Old Town, five each from Chandrasekharpur Patrapada and four from Niladri Vihar.Currently, the active cases in the city stood at 883. Till now, 250 patients have succumbed to the virus and 32,210 have recovered in

2 more die of **Covid in State**

1,374 +ve cases reported Maximum 355 cases in Sundargarh

Total reaches 3,48,182 403 more recover

PNS BHUBANESWAR

Two more patients suc-cumbed to Covid-19 on Saturday, increasing the total death toll to 1,926 in the State. The two deaths were reported from Kendrapada and Balangir And on the day, as many as

1,374 more people tested positive for the virus in 28 districts and the State pool, the highest single-day rise in 2021. With this, the total positive tally rose to 34,8,182 in the State.

Of the new cases, 812 were reported from quarantine and 562 were local contact cases.

Sundargarh district reported the highest 355 cases folthe city.Notably, the city had registered 150 cases on Friday. | lowed by Khorda with 193, Nuapada 135, Sambalpur 77,



Bargarh 59, Jharsuguda 52, Cuttack 51, Rayagada 47 and Kalahandi 45.

Besides, 45 cases were eported from the State pool. Currently, the active cases in the State stood at 7,003 and the cumulative samples tested were 93,38,708 samples, includ-

ing 33,996 on Thursday. However, 403 patients recovered on the day, taking the total recoveries to 33,9,603 in

Stick to Covid behaviour or face campaign ban: EC

A fter polls in four of the five States are over, the Election Commission has woken up to the threat of coronavirus. Taking a serious political leaders in maintaining Covid-19 safety norms, partic ularly not wearing face masks, saying candidates and star campaigners can be banned from holding campaign rallies if Covid guidelines issued by it last year are breached.

The Commission has advised political leaders to set an example by maintaining social distancing, wearing masks, etc., and exhorting all the local formations who attend their campaign programmes to follow Covid-19 protocol.

In a letter to leaders of all recognised political parties, the EC said, "It is widely known that in recent weeks, Covid cases are being reported in larger numbers. However, instances of election meetings/campaigns have come to the notice of the commission, where norms of social distancing, wearing of masks have been flouted in disregard to the commission's guidelines."



Pointing to the recent rise in Covid-19 cases, the EC said instances had come to its notice where norms of social distancing, wearing of masks, etc., have been flouted in disregard to the Commission's guidelines dated August 21, 2020, on Covid-19 safe poll campaigning.

"Instances of star campaigners/political leaders/candidates not observing Covid protocols including non-wearing of masks themselves at the stage or while campaigning have come to notice. By doing so, the political parties and candidates are exposing themselves as well as the public attending such election meetings to the grave danger of infection," noted EC.

The poll panel sought the fullest cooperation from the political parties and candidates in strictest observance of example.

the protocols so that all the Covid guidelines are adhered to by all the participants including organisers in the election-In cases of breach, the EC said it will "not hesitate in ban-

ning public meetings, rallies of defaulting candidates, star campaigners or political leaders without any further reference". The poll panel said it has taken "serious view of the laxity" in following norms, particularly not wearing masks and not maintaining social distancing by political leaders on the dais

It asked parties to follow its guidelines with all seriousness. The two-page letter said it is advisable that political leaders and candidates, who have the incumbent duty to control the spread of Covid-19, lead by

2.5 lakh Covishield doses reach State ahead of Tika Utsav



PNS BHUBANESWAR

With the State going to observe Tika (vaccine) Utsav on Sunday, around 2.5 lakh doses of Covishield arrived in Bhubaneswar on Saturday.

The Covishield vaccine is administered to people across the State, except Bhubaneswar

where Covaxin is given.
"We are expecting to receive 2.5 lakh doses of Covishield which will be sent to all districts. Vans from all districts have reached Bhubaneswar to take their

share of the vaccine doses," Health and Family Welfare Director Bijay Panigrahi had said earlier in the day.

"Tika Utsav will be observed tomorrow. Vaccine doses will be given at all centres throughout the State

tomorrow," he added. On Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called upon all States to observe 'Vaccine Festival' or 'Tika Utsav' between April 11 and 14 to inoculate the maximum number of eligible beneficiaries against Covid-19.

Naveen to review depts' progress cards from May 15

From May 15 Ministers to appraise CM about achievements

PNS BHUBANESWAR

A head of completion of the Second year of his Government's fifth term on May 29, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Saturday told his Council of Ministers about his decision to review the progress of works of different departments from May 15 to 25.

During the review meetings, the Ministers in the presence of the concerned department Secretaries would apprise the Chief Minister about the achievements of their five major programmes. The CM wrote to



the Ministers in this regard. Also, the Ministers would inform the CM on how the 5T initiative and 'Mo Sarkar' programme were carried out by their departments. In what way the 5T and 'Mo Sarkar' have improved the functioning of the departments would also be discussed during the review meeting, a statement issued by

the Chief Minister's Office mentioned. The CM said, "People are added.

We have to tell the 4.5 crores people of Odisha how far we have succeeded to keep the promises given to them. This will strengthen the faith of people in democracy." The Council of Ministers

on May 29 would discuss the success of each department so that the progress card would be subsequently presented before the people, the CMO statement

Gangster Haider flees from SCB



PNS CUTTACK

Notorious gangster Sleiman Haider of Kendrapada district on Saturday evening escaped from police custody while he was undergoing treat-ment at the SCB Medical College Hospital here. While it could not be

immediately ascertained, the-

gangster reportedly fled after

atthe surgery ward of the hospital, where he was admitted a week ago fortreatment. "All exit points of the city

have been sealed to nab thecul-prit," said Cuttack city DCP Prateek Singh.

Haider was lodged in the Iharpada jail of Bhubaneswar after he was convicted in a murder case.

Rape victim undergoes MTP in 23rd week of pregnancy

 Γ from the Orissa High Court and the subsequent opinion from a medical board, doctors at the SCB Medical College Hospital here on Saturday medically terminated thepregnancy of a 14-year-old rape victim, who was pregnant for 23 weeks.
The High Court had on

Friday directed Superintendent of thereferral hospital to constitute a board of three medical expertsand examine the minor girl and go for medical termination of pregnancy"at the very earliest" if the board suggests so without waiting for any court orders. "The process of MTP has already begun as per the suggestion of athree-member

Medical Board," informed

ProfLucy Das on Saturday after-

On being urgently mentioned, a Division Bench comprisingChief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice BP Routray had taken up a writpetition filed by a native of Puri who had prayed for medicaltermination of pregnancy of his daughter as per the MTP (Amendment) Act of 2021.

The Puri District Headquarters Hospital had referred the girl for abortion to the SCB Hospital on March 26 noting in the referral sheet that her pregnancy was 21 weeks old. The referral hospital on March 30 wrote a letter to the Director of Medical Education and Training (DMET) stating that since the pregnancy was more than 20 weeks old, the

Hospital Superintendent MTP could only be done with permission from a court. But since the MTP Act has

been amended recently allowingtermination of pregnancy by medical experts where the length ofpregnancy has exceeded 20 weeks but has not exceeded 24 weeks and if two registered medical practitioners formed an opinion that such-pregnancy shall constitute a grave injury to the mental health of thepregnant woman and where the pregnancy is alleged to have been caused by rape. Considering the amend-

ment and a recent judgment of the Supreme Court in the Chandrakant Jayantilal Suthar case, the High Court directed the SCB Hospital to form an opinion by Saturday noon and proceed to arrange for the MTP at the very earliest.

HOMETHEATRE

BEAR HUG OF FICTIONALISING A TRUE STORY

Disney+Hotstar *ing: Abhishek Bachchan, Illeana Rated: 6/10

Tf authenticity was not an issue with this fictionalised account of a real person with a fictional name, *The Big Bull* is quite full of moments in a journey that kept the stocks high, the middle class happy with new earnings and the economy in a constant state of perilous

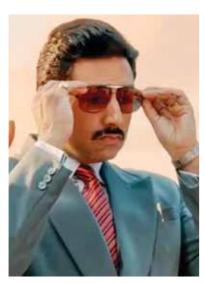
We all know the Harshad Mehta story, have heard and understood insider trading as a term and concept and are now even somewhat repentant about accusing him of being the sole conspirator of a ₹5,000-crore securities scam, a first in Indian history.

He died in custody and courted controversy both in life and death with allegations of induced heart attack never really settling down. He raised the bar of corruption all the way to the Prime Minister and his office and yet paid the price of oiling the loopholes in the banking system, alone.

The film on his amazing journey comes with both bull and bear runs. Some moments would go right through the roof in tickling your emotional quotient and others would make you question why did such an amazing life story need fictionalisation?

Abhishek Bachchan as Hemant Shah, aka Big Bull aka Harshad Mehta, is authentic and seasoned with his performance just as he was while portraying Dhirubhai Ambani in Guru which was directed to near perfection by Mani Ratnam. Hemant Shah did not look at all like the real Harshad Mehta played by Abhishek, but then authenticity was never the aim of director Kookie Gulati, playing to the gallery was. This one by Gulati is, thus, a green horn in parts and that's where you feel it is as flabby as Abhishek's pillowed paunch which he sports as unapologetically as he does his beliefs and actions.

Gulati can be faulted for raising compassion for his prime character break at Hemant Shah without lending adequate growth.



evidence of his singular non-guilt. The system, the corruption in high places and the personal betrayal are all placed on the stock market to prop up this man's innocence, or should we say his personal

All other characters are also real people with fake names, including the journalist who unearthed the scam -Sucheta Dalal being called Meera Rao, his lawyer Ram Jethmalani being renamed Ashok Mirchandani and Harshad Mehta himself being called Hemant Shah. The Prime Minister involved in the allegations made by Mehta was P V Narasimha Rao whose visage is shown for a few seconds without any names, perhaps in the spirit of garbing a true story with deliberate ifs

All said, what's true is that when this biggest bull of the stock market died in jail in 2001, too much time had passed to make it a lead story. But as he had tipped off the nation in the 1980s, India could never fully recover from the bear hug that was given to the stock market in the face of a crescendo that shifted public money investment from real estate and gold to the stock market. His contribution in that can't be denied, as it can't be contested that he made use of loopholes which the system accorded him and never did break any law, except the law of vertical

Where was the comedy?

Amazon Prime Video *ing: Jackie Shroff, Rajpal Yadav, Aadar Jain, Shhloka Pandit, Elnaaz Norouzi

ollywood should stop making comedies. Given that the makers only know how to either make that the makers only know now to child making slapstick or double meaning films that translate into comedy, it is time that they give up making anything under the genre. But if our filmmakers really want to continue to make rib-tickling movies, it is time that they sit down and watch some Hollywood films just to get an idea on what comedy really is.

And it is definitely not stuffing a man into a gorilla suit and putting him in a cage at the back of a truck to only have another real gorilla let loose that was flying all the way from Uganda. Not only this, director Pankaj

Saraswat then loses a set of incompetent people on the

You have Adar Jain aka Charlie who makes blunders in every job. Who in their senses chases a fire truck and insists that they take the delivery of pizzas? It is not funny. It is downright sad. If this is not enough, you have a billionaire trying to escape the long arm of justice in a motorboat all the way to Dubai.

What was Jackie Shroff thinking when he chose to take up this role? One is sure that he is not that hard up that he would want to end up playing a role where a majority of the time he is in a gorilla suit. His Mona baby is no way as good as Ajit's Mona darling. Adar Jain as the bumbling Charlie is too painful to watch as he destroys everything in his path. But he is the hero, so he has to come out looking like one however incredulously brainless the entire 102 minutes of the incredulously brainless the entire 102 minutes of the

Stay away from this one.



The genius is on show

SonyLiv Drama Series Episodes 8 Rated: 7/10

magine an artist par excellence who was an expert in Nature, mechanics, anatomy, physics, architecture and weaponry, to name a few, not to mention an even better designer for machines like the bicycle, helicopter, submarine and military

tanks much before they were even concepts!

A series on such a clothed genius can be nothing but enervating and Leonardo in that context is a thriller, tugger and a puller all rolled into one, well, canvas — a stunning canvas of an artist's life which was full of colours that his brush stroked with eternal brilliance. Illegitimate, unschooled, rebellious and yet one of the foremost Rennaisance artists, Leornado's life and times were interesting and so is his story, art and nefarious activities which put him under scrutiny and persecution back in the 15th century.

The series on him, simply called, Leornado captures those times with finesse and keeps up the viewer's longing to continue watching the eight episodes without a break. Sepia shades and smoky environs despicting an underground band of activists and their lives is no mean achievement but Leonardo is simply tasteful

The series takes you through the life of an impossible artist by showing you the stories behind his paintings, his continuous search for perfection and his turbulent relationship with his art as much as his life. Aidan Turner as Leonardo Da Vinci is a natural copy of the real man and he lives his moments with authenticity and elan all through the drama that is well put together by director for six episodes Daneil Percival and rest by Alexis Cahill.

The drama, however, is as close to authenticity as it is to replicating Tuscany, Italy, of those syrupy times when existence was being questioned as were norms. In fact, it looks so real that it could be mistaken for a documentary.

> IT IS TOO EARLY FOR ME TO SAY THAT I WILL BRING

Slice of resilient life

Amazon VOD *ing: Steven Yeun, Han Ye-ri, Alan Kim, Noel Kate Cho, Youn Yuh-jung, Will Patton **Rated: 7/10**

inari may be a Korean plant in real meaning but the movie by this name is Larger than life, a slice of life replete with dreams, aspirations, struggles, resilience and sunshine even in its deepest darkest moments.

It is surprising that the film got its Golden Globe nomination (it won the best foreign language film award eventually) in the foreign film category despite being directed by an American and unfolding in America, actually deep into rural America. That it did not meet the Globe guideline of at least 50 per cent of it being in English language explains it, even though it would stand tall in the Best Feature film, Best direction, Best musical score and many more categories.

A family of Korean immigrants moves from California to the rural pocket of Arkansas to "live once again", as the main protagonist puts it. The couple Jacob and Monica and their son and his maternal grandmother move to a makeshift house in a trawler to get used to a new life full of firsts and struggles in rugged terrain far removed from the bright lights of California, only to find leaking roofs, a barren land to till and a farming community that is new and alien to them.

The story is as much about resilience as it is about hope with an underlying sense of gratitude to life itself, life despite all its challenges. The film is engaging though slow but when has life unfolded so beautifully and in such real terms on the big



Pathos is aplenty, but lining it up well is humour, be it around the chubby child who is forced to sleep with his snoring granny or their conversations which depict the absolute contrast in local American and immigrant Korean cultures. For one, as the impudent child puts it, American grandmothers do not use cuss words or wear men's underwear — as his granny does.

The film is a must-watch not because of its reality bytes but because it is laid out so simply that it tugs at your heart from all quarters, it grows on you, it immerses you and it makes you laugh and cry at the same time.

The music is haunting as much as the story this award-winning director Lee Isaac Chung brings to you from the depth of his heart and craft.

TELLYTALE

MIKA PROPOSES BHOOMI

While the competition will heat up during the upcoming episode of Zee TV's Indian Pro Music League with all the



teams putting their best foot forward, it seems like Punjab Lions captain Mika Singh will steal the show. Last time around, young comedian Divyansh Trivedi had suggested that Mika Singh get married to Gujarat Rockers' captain Bhoomi Trivedi. While they both had laughed it off, this time around, Mika actually proposed Bhoomi for marriage!

During the shoot of the upcoming episode, the Puniab Lions trio of Mika Singh, Asees Kaur and Rupali Jagga performed on Sajid-Wajid's composition Mujhse Shaadi Karoge. During the act, Mika surprised one and all when he went up to Bhoomi, brought her on stage and continued his performance, while asking her Mujhse Shaadi Karoge? After the act, host Karan Wahi also made Bhoomi and Mika dance together and that's when Mika went down on his knees and asked her once again

After the act, Mika expressed: "Bhoomi, ab toh bata do, mujhse shaadi karogi? Sab log Bhoomi se jude hai, maine socha main bhi Bhoomi se jud *jau*n. What do you guys think about Bhoomi Singh?" Bhoomi replied: "What do you think about Mika Trivedi? But to be honest, I have come here to find a bride for you, it would be injustice to them." Javed Ali also joked: "This wedding will happen only if Mika leaves Punjab and comes to Gujarat," to which Asees replied: "No, no, bhabhi will come to Punjab.'

While Mika, Bhoomi and everyone were obviously playing around, viewers will surely like watching the chemistry of these rival captains. You also cannot miss the musical battle between Gujarat Rockers, Bengal Tigers, Delhi Jammers, Mumbai Warriors, UP Dabbangs and Punjab Lions

as they go all out to win the fourth super

74TH BAFTA AWARDS ON SONYLIV

Lights! Camera! and a lot of Action is about to unfold as we gear up to watch one of the biggest award nights of the year. Celebrating excellence in filmmaking across the globe and bringing an enriching experience for movie lovers, SonyLIV will exclusively stream the British Academy of (BAFTA). The prestigious awards night will live stream today at 11:30 pm directly from the Royal Albert Hall in London. BAFTA 2021 will be hosted by Edith Bowman and

The much-coveted ceremony will see seventeen BAFTA winners being announced along with screening of nominated films and behind-the-scenes footage, which will highlight the creative process that went behind curating these masterpieces. Drumming up the buzz further, BAFTA will also honour Ang Lee with the Fellowship this year. The awards night will witness presenters like Asim Chaudhry, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Sophie Cookson, Phoebe Dynevor, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Cynthia Erivo, Hugh Grant, Richard E. Grant, Tom Hiddleston, Felicity Jones, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, James McAvoy, David Oyelowo, Pedro Pascal, Jonathan Pryce, Rose Byrne, Andra Day, Anna Kendrick and Renée Zellweger from London and Los Angeles. respectively

With praises pouring in from world over for his incredible performance, young Indian talent Adarsh Gourav has been nominated in the Best Actor in a Leading Role category at BAFTA. Gourav will compete against veteran British actor Anthony Hopkins for The Father, French actor Tahar Rahim for The Mauritanian, Riz Ahmed for Sound of Metal, late Chadwick Boseman for Ma Rainey's Black Bottom and Mads Mikkelsen for the Danish language film Another Round.

MANASI LEARNS A NEW CRAF

Hindmata recently released on Eros Now and Actor Manasi Rachh is glad with the response her character has garnered. The series is set in a fictitious women's prison called Hindmata where Manasi plays the character of Sudha Nath, who is in prison on charges of sedition.

Manasi has portrayed various shades of a woman from being a straightforward girl in Mujhse Fraandship Karoge, to a tomboy for student of the year, to a fearless hacker for 24 Season 2 and then a lesbian girl who musters courage to come out of the closet for Its Not That Simple



Season 2. She performs each character with passion and tries to give it her best. She never shies away from honing her talent and learning new things for the character; be it learning to cycle and swim for SOTY or learning to sew for Hindmata

Ask Manasi and she quips: "Yes, I learnt to use the sewing machine for the series as we had a few scenes where we needed to stitch garments or at least act so. As you can see in the video, I am not a pro but at the same time I like to learn and have fun while doing the same"

She adds: "Also, for the part where I stand for elections in the prison, I did a lot of referencing. A few scenes needed me to be very driven and vocal about certain issues. So, I saw videos of a lot of women politicians in the parliament and even social activists. I studied their body language during rallies and also how these women expressed themselves in public. This helped me etch out my character with a lot more precision.

CEZANNE KHAN TO PLAY HARMAN COLORS' popular show

Shakti...Astitva Ke Ehsaas Kii has been enjoying soaring popularity owing to its engaging and interesting storyline. Harman and Saumya's chemistry was something that the audience always enjoyed and rooted for the couple to come together. While they parted ways, destiny has once again brought them together and after Saumya, re-entering the show will be Harman. Essaying the character of Harman will be the popular actor Cezanne Khan.

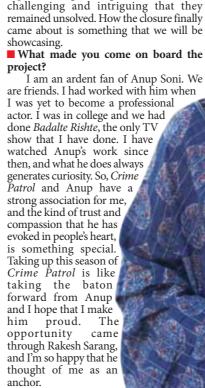
Harman's entry in Saumya's life will mark the beginning of an extremely passionate love story that the viewers have been yearning for. Talking about playing Harman, Khan said, "Harman's character is extremely interesting. He wears his heart on his sleeves and loves Saumva unconditionally. I am excited to be back on screen and to once again breathe life into it with my style. A lot is set to unfold with Harman's return.

'The script left me in tears'

SONALI KULKARNI, who is all set to host SET's Crime Patrol Satark: Justice Reloaded, tells MUSBA HASHMI what made her come on board the project and her experience

■ What does Justice Reloaded have on This is a chapter where we are reopening

experience to go through cases that were so



■ What difference do you aim to make?

It is too early for me to say that I will bring some change, but for now, I can say, I will bring some change visually as a female anchor. I will take some time to even touch the excellence that the team has achieved with Anup. I don't even dream to beat that, but I would love to take inspiration from Anup's seasons and to, at least, create some awareness amongst people by connecting with them the way he

SOME CHANGE, BUT FOR NOW, I CAN SAY, I WILL **BRING SOME CHANGE** VISUALLY AS A **WOMAN ANCHOR** ■ There have been many crime-based shows on TV, but only a few managed to leave a mark. Crime Patrol is one of them. Why? The show always tries to tell people to be responsible citizens, and they always fight against blind faith. I have been one of the strongest activists of Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmulan Samiti. I have worked for around 16 years with Dr Narendra Dabulkar, who has tried to appeal to people that have faith in God and religion, but do not let anyone exploit you emotionally, mentally, economically,

> Does it, in any way, bother you to host a crime show?

the reasons behind its success.

physically and sexually. And let no child get

abused because we have blind faith. Crime

Patrol is like a torchlight, which is trying

to make us aware and that can be one of

I am overwhelmed while shooting crime patrol. The stories are so intense and while reading the script at times I got tears in my eyes. What we see on news channels or social media platforms is just a glimpse, while in the real world there are a lot more crimes happening which we are not even aware of. The stories are so painful that I wish they were fiction and not reality. When I am back home from the shoot it takes time for me to compose. Not to mention that my respect for the police and judiciary is only growing day by day.

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47 silver bricks recovered from Emar Mutt 16 new positives

Lawyer: Mahant to file contempt plea against excavation

SAROJ KUMAR MISHRA ■ PURI

As many as 47 silver bricks were recovered from the famous Emar Mutt of Puri on Saturday. The recovered materials also included ornaments. utensils and swords which had been kept beneath the floors of

Excavations were still going

Sunday with officials starting inventory of the recovered materials and their valuations. Each silver brick weighed 30 kg with logo of the East India Company printed

The excavation was conducted by officials of the Endowment Department, a newly-formed trust board of the mutt and police. During the excavations, Emar Mutt chief Mahant Ramanuja Das was present though he has been discharged of all powers within the mutt by the Endowment



ment of the trust board mem-

The trust consists of heads of various mutts and monasteries in Puri. They would look after the mutt onwards.

Notably, as many as 522 silver bricks of same weight each had already been recovered from the Emar Mutt in 2011 and are now in the locker of district administration.

Except the endowment officials, new trustees and police, nobody wasallowed inside the mutt. Even the lawyer of Mahant Ramanuja

entry into the mutt during excavation. At about 11 am, the endowment officials entered the premises and opened four rooms one after the other. The silver bricks were found kept with the bags under the ground.

However, Mahant Ramanuja's lawyer Biswajit Senapati contended that the excavation was illegal and said they would move court for criminalcontempt against the officials engaged in works as they have allegedly breached an order of the High Court.

in Brahmapur

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

At least 16 more corona positive cases have been identified in Brahmapur city.

Among them, one is a male from Dharmanagar, one female from Gajapatinagar III Line, two males from Gajapatinagar 7th Line, two females and one male from the MKCG Medical College Hospital, one female from Sidharthanagar 1st Lane; one female from Police Colony,



from Jyotinagar. An official said that a total of 1,441 persons were administrated Covid vaccine in the

and one female and two males

city on Friday.

Plainclothes cops to enforce Covid norms

deployed in BBSR

PNS BHUBANESWAR

Aday after Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the 14-day 'Mask Abhiyaan', the Commissionerate Police (CP) on Saturday formed special teams for strict enforcement of Covid appropriate behaviour in the twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar.

Bhubaneswar (Security) Nirmal Satpathy said that 20 teams have been formed by police to strictly enforce the mask-wearing norm in Bhubaneswar. The teams would be engaged for surveilplaces, including Market Building and other busy mar-

"Plainclothes police personnel will conduct raids to nab violators of the norm and stringent action will be taken against them," he warned.

Notably, on Friday, the State Government doubled the penalty for not wearing mask. Violators would have to pay Rs 2,000 for first two violations and Rs 5,000 for subsequent offences. Earlier, the fine amount was Rs 1,000 for first two violations and

Rs 5,000 for subsequent offences. In the last 24 hours, Odisha police acted against 12,145 violators and collected fine of Rs 38,98,250 for flouting masking and physical distancing

Migrants' return: 'State can tackle situation'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

With migrants returning to the State amidst the Covid resurgence throughout the country, the Odisha Government on Saturday asserted that it is all prepared to tackle the situation.

Speaking to mediapersons, Labour Minister Susanta Singh said migrants are returning to Odisha from some highly-infected States and they are being tested.

All district administrations have been asked to keep Temporary Medical Camps (TMCs) ready to meet the eventuality. A detailed guideline for migrants returning to the State would be issued

He further said checking at border checkpoints has also been intensified. People with negative RT-PCR test report (not more than 72 hours old) are being allowed to enter the State. Those not producing the negative report are being sent to home isolation.

"Fear for the virus has reduced among the people as compared to last year. The number of cases Chhattisgarh has increased manifold, leading to rise in infections in western Odisha districts.

However, bus services to and from Chhattisgarh have been completely suspended,"

Pipili Cong candidate Covid +ve



With less than 10 days left for the by-election in the Pipili Assembly constituency in Puri district scheduled on April 17 and when the campaigning for it has reached feverish pitch, Congress candidate Aiit Mangaraj has tested positive for Covid-19.

Mangaraj took to his social media handle to share the

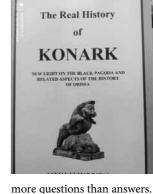
Moreover, he urged Congress workers not to create any rumour and focus on how the party would perform well in the by-election

'THE REAL HISTORY OF KONARK' Book throws new light on the origin of Sun Temple

ANIL DHIR ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Sun Temple at Konark has an intriguing history which has left many awed and curious. While the beauty and grandeur of the edifice is spellbinding even in its ruins, the missing links in its life cycle have remained a jigsaw puzzle which very few have been able to decipher. Shrouded in mystery, the Sun Temple is unique with many legends and theories on its construction, consecration and subsequent collapse.

Historians have been debating on the origins of the temples since the last two centuries, but there is no unanimity yet on whether the temple was ever completed or how it was reduced to ruins. The sheer quantum of research has raised



Sanjay Baral's book "The Real History of Konark" attempts to answer many unresolved questions which have puzzled scholars and archaeologists. Whether the temple is actually a 13th-Century edifice as believed or had the con-

struction begun much earlier in has analysed the sociopolitical conditions of Odisha during the 13th Century and questioned the probability of it being made during that period. The Buddhist relevance and influence prevalent in the area too has been studied by the author. The Konark region was originally a well-known centre of Tantrayana Buddhism, particularly of the Kalachakrayana and Sahajayana sects. Quite a few scholars have opined that the temple has imprints of Buddhism iconology. The book explores new avenues for objective fact-finding.

The author, who stays near the temple, spent three years in researching its unknown

SCB Nursing College closed

In view of the surge in Covid-19 cases across the State, the SCB College of Nursing in Cuttack was closed on Saturday until further orders. As per the order of Health and Family Welfare Department Secretary, the College of Nursing, SCB Medical College and Hospital, is hereby closed until further college Principal stated.

All the students were directed to vacate the hostels by 5.00 pm of the day, failing which they would be evacuated with help of the district administration, the notice stat-

1,032 Ganjam villages child marriage-free' All-out efforts

on to prevent underage marriage: DM

KRUSHNA CHANDRA PANDA

The district level task torce committee meeting of "Nirbhaya Kadhee" and "Mo Gelha Jheea" was held in virtual the district level task force mode through video conferencing here on Friday afternoon in which the Ganjam district Collector Vijaya Amruta Kulange presided.

gerous entity nor a liability to the family, but she is the most valuable asse. The birth list of all the female children are already available with the Anganwadi collected from them through the District Social Welfare Officer for induction in the list for future use, he added.

The district administration has decided to focus on far flung remote and rural areas first in order to check and prevent the child marriage menace. In the process, the administration has also decided to observe "Oath Child Marriage Week," he added.

All information about the female child between the age group of 14 years and 18 years who leave education midway will be maintained in a database. As of now, 1,032 villages of Ganjam district have already been that, daughter is neither a dan- village" which is quite encouraging, Kulange pointed out.

The district administration would give more emphasis on the good health of the female children and will sensiworkers. Information will be tize them that in event any of

marry before 18 years against their will, they can immediately inform the district administration for prompt and appropriate action to prevent the marriage, he said.

Notably, the district administration has clearly stated that each family or parent having a girl child will have to give a declaration or an undertaking in writing to the effect that they will not marry off their daughter below the age of 18 years. Similarly, the priests who perform wedding ceremony also will have to give an undertaking or declaration to the effect that they will not cooperate underage marriage.

The Ganjam Collector has urged the Anganwadi Workers and ASHAs to sensitize the parents of female child to celebrate the birth day of their daughters as a token of their love and good will towards them.

Thakuran Ghata Jatra held amid Covid protocol in Brahmapur

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

¬he famous Maa Budhi The famous Maa buum Thakurani Ghata Jatra was conducted on Friday night amidst strict Covid safety protocols as the entire area was under Section 144 CrPC from 6 pm of Friday to 6 am of Saturdav. The traditional ritual of the

Devi's journey from Maa Budhi Thakurani Temple to the temporary pandal at her parental house in Deshi Behera Sahi was conducted in the midnight along the way, which traditionally used to draw Strict prohibitory orders

come between the routes. As per the decision, a maximum of 25 priests, servitors and authorised persons of the Jatra management committee participated in the procession. The goddess will stay in

parental house at temporary



Strict prohibitory orders were in force in six streets that come between the routes

SDMO HECKLING CASE

pandal for seven days. were deployed for smooth con- dinated the smooth conduct of duct of the procession. the Ghata Jatra.

Thakurani Jatra host P Adequate police personnel Durgaprasad Desibehera coor-

'AIIMS BBSR OPD not closed'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A midst a buzz doing the rounds on social media platforms that the outpatient department (OPD) services at the AIIMS Bhubaneswar were suspended from Saturday, the Director of the premier medical institution Dr Gitanjali Batmanabane has cleared the air.She said that some messages in this regard being circulated on many WhatsApp groups are not true. "This is false news. The circular which is supposed to have been sent by the Joint Medical Superintendent is a hoax. He has never signed anything like this,"

There are some reports in with photograph of the AIIMS Bhubaneswar that the institution has suspended its OPD services till further orders.

Dr Batmanabane said, "I want all public to know that we have not closed our OPD ser-

Bodies of lovebirds seized from Kendrapada beach



Murder suspected

The Rajnagar police on Friday seized bodies of two juveniles, including a girl and a boy in Chinchiri-Jaudia mouth near Pentha sea

While the deceased boy's family earlier had lodged a missing report at Nayapalli police station at Bhubaneswar, the deceased girl's family had lodged a missing complaint at

Rajnagar police station. According to police sources, the deceased boy, Prasant Patra is the son of

village under Rajnagar police limit. Pabitra is working in PHED at Bhubaneswar and staying at Nayapalli. Prasant was a student of plus two first year arts at Rajdĥani College. The deceased girl Purnima Mahanty was the daughter of Nirmala Mohanty of Chandan Nagar in Pattamundai police station. The deceased girl was studying at Pattamundai Women's College.
Prasant on last Wednesday

Pabitra Mohan Patra of Ostia on that evening.

had left his house by informing his family that he was going to attend a marriage function of his friend at Puri and did not return. Purnima also had left her house by informing her parent that she was going to attend practical examination to the college and did not return

However, two days later, the bodies were found lying at the sea coast of Chinchiri-Jaudia mouth by the forest personnel on Friday afternoon.

It seems the deceased who were distant relatives were in love with each other and they might have been killed, said police. Injury marks were found on the bodies. While cut marks were found on the throat of the Prasant and blood was oozing from his mouth, ear, eye and nose, Purnima's right hand had been amputed from her

Notably, some youths of Rajnagar earlier had threatened Prasant to kill him and in this regard a case earlier had been lodged at the Nayapalli police

4 cinema halls sealed in Peralakhemundi

PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

 $E^{\text{ven though the coronavirus}}_{\text{graph has shown an upward trend in the State, many peo-}$ ple are flouting the norms of the Government, forcing the authorities to act.

On Saturday, police sealed two cinema halls in Paralakhemundi of Gajapati district for volating the Covid rules and two for not renewing The Jai Maa and Laxmi

cinema halls have been sealed

until further orders by the

administration. The enforce-

ment team found a huge crowd

thronged the cinema halls violating the social distancing rules. Police also resorted to a lathicharge to disperse the huge crowd which had thronged the cinema hall to watch a Telugu

Later, two more cinema halls AJ Cinema and Natraj Cinema hall in the town for not renewing the licences to exhibit films, said Paralakhemundi Tehsildar Achyutananda

Besides the four cinema halls in Paralakhemundi, one cinema hall in Rayagada was also sealed for violating Covid-19 norms on Friday.

OMSA threatens stir in Baleswar If culprits not arrested in

72hrs

PNS ■ BALESWAR

The doctors under the ban-ner of Orissa Medical Services Association (OMSA) have threatened to embark on agitation if the people involved in heckling the Nilgiri Sub-Divisional Medical Officer (SDMO) are not brought to

book within 72 hours.

The decision has been taken by the doctors following a meeting held on Friday. According to reports, the situation erupted after a group of people abused and heckled SDMO Ajay Samal asking why Union Minister Pratap Sarangi was not invited to the inauguration function and

The inauguration func-tion was held on Wednesday as the local truck association donated two cabins to Rogi Kalyan Samiti in the SDM.

why there was no name of the

Minister on the plaque.

After the inaugural meeting a group barging into the chamber of SDMO Samal besides abusing the latter in slangs also heckled Samal in

the presence of CDMO and other medical staffs.

Later, they broke the plaque in public glare. SDMO Samal, however, maintained that in the earlier meeting it was decided by all attendees who would be invited and it was decided the local MLA and the district collector would be guest .Under the circumstances, what was his

However, following his hackling in abusive languages, Samal went on leave since then where the medical staff began protest demanding arrest of all culprits by wearing black

Project, the State Prison

Administration has issued one

laptop to each jail to take care

of eMulakat, video conferenc-

ing with courts and other pro-

the Prison Administration has

issued organic compost

Under modernizing jails,

jects under ePrisons.

Jail Adalat in State prisons from **Apr 24**

Plea bargaining cases, petty offences to be taken up

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Special Jail Adalats will be organised for first time in Odisha in coordination with the State Legal Service Authority (SLSA) and State Prisons and Correctional Services Administration. Accordingly, the first

Special Jail Adalats will be

organised on April 24 in all the

prisons across the State, said

Thanks to proactive initiative of DG Prisons, Santosh Upadhyay, such efforts are being taken up for the benefit of inmates.DG Prisons Upadhyay has directed all the Jail Superintendents in this regard and directed to hold the same in their respective prisons. States like Tamil Nadu,

Jharkhand have followed the practice of holding Jail Adalats inside prisons on plea bargaining cases, petty offences which are compoundable as per CrPC.

This will help prisoners to get due court orders in petty cases, inside jails.

Beginning from April 24, the Jail Adalats will be organised every month and it will be

like Lok Adalat inside prisons. Around 381 prisoners are in jails due to want of bail conditions /surety, though granted bails by courts.

All the details will be

shared to the SLSA for issuing advisory to the District Legal Service Authority(DLSA) for appropriate revision orders by the higher courts. The Jail Superintendents will coordinate with the Secretary DLSA for facilitating identification of suitable cases for consider-

ation by the Special Jail Adalats. In the Jail Adalats, cases of petty criminal offences or criminal compundable offences and also Under Trial Prisoners (UTP)s, who want to avail the benefit of plea bargaining will

States like Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand have followed the practice of holding Jail Adalats

be taken up, said sources. Keeping in view the Covid-19 pandemic, video conferencing can be organised for this purpose, if situation warrants, said sources. The panel lawyers as well as private lawyers may be allowed to meet with concerned UTPs for the purpose while following Covid guidelines, said an official.Several proactive measures are being taken up by the State Prisons

and Correctional Services.

In fact under ePrisons

machines, vacuum cleaners, power sprayers, eKiosks and washing machines in 20-21. In the meantime, extra 870 capacity of wards sanctioned by

the State Government in 2020-21 for various jails and 135 new staff quarters have been sanctioned. Steps are being taken for introduction of eCustody certificates to be issued to courts, after training by the NIC, said

RAJESH BEHERA ■

OHRC to probe in K'pada whistleblower murder

¬he Odisha Human Rights The Odisha riuman Again (OHRC) handed over Dalit rights activist Ranjan Kumar Das's alleged death case to the Additional DG of Police -cum-Director Investigation, OHRC to personally inquire into the matter and submit report within six weeks, in view of the seriousness of the allegations in the

The direction was made following the SP of Kendrapada submitted an inquiry report and response submitted by Sanjukta Panigrahi, one of the signatories complaint.

Having considered the facts stated in the report and the reply on behalf of the com-

that the inquiry of the matter be handed over to OHRC investigation wing. The divisional bench has been conducting an inquiry in the alleged matter.

Notably, the OHRC on February 2020 had directed the SP of Kendrapada to submit his reaction on the murder case of RTI activist Das, before March 2.One Debesh Das and other RTI activists earlier had filed a complaint before the OHRC, seeking the latter to intervene in the case following the inaction of police in the case.

The complainants alleged that on February 1 morning, activist Das was found lying dead on road side of Beruhan village under Marshaghai police station. Hundreds of deceased, friends and relatives of the deceased suspected Das's death as cold blooded murder over vengeance.

The police did not reach the spot on their own. After strong resentment by an angry mob along with staging a road blockade, the Marshaghai police were forced to arrive at the spot .But, they did not examine whether the person was dead or alive.

Only after an FIR was lodged by the deceased's brother-in-law at around 12 noon, the police team led by the SP of Kendrapada prepared the inquest report, recovered the body and dispatched it for autopsy to the SCB Medical College and Hospital, Cuttack, the complainants alleged

State capital foundation day on April 13

A preparatory meeting was held on Monday at the Capital High School here for celebration of the State capital foundation day. Owing to Covid restrictions, this time the usual three-day-long celebration from April 13 to 15 would be limited to one day only on April 13.

It was decided that people would gather at the Capital Foundation Stone site. BDA and PWD Division-1 have been requested to make the site attractive. A special event wouldl be organised in the evening to felicitate 13 eminent citizens with 'Rajdhani Goury' honour. The State Assembly Speaker has been invited to grace the occasion. Various institutions like commercial establishments, towers and prominent Government buildings would be illuminated to mark the foundation day.

The meeting was chaired

by Rajdhani Pratistha Utstav Committee president Pradosh Patnaik, The Bhubaneswar ADM, representatives of BDA, BMC, CRPF, Traffic police and PWD and HMs of various schools were present. Committee vice-president Pradyumna Mohanty proposed a vote of thanks.

the clerk Dillip Kumar Jena, a native of Ratanpur village **RPDAC** meet: MCL areas' issues discussed under the Gandia police limits in Dhenkanal district. He was staying at Government quarters at Ghatikia in Bhubaneswar. Properties detected include a triple-storied building worth

Rs 1.8 crore located at Mallick Complex in Jagmara and gold jewellery, vehicles, cash amounting to over Rs 2 crore. The disproportionate assets were estimated to be 252 per

Crorepati

arrested on

DA charges

 $V^{
m igilance}$ officials on Saturday arrested a Senior Clerk posted at the office of

Chief Conservator of Forest (Kendu Leaf), Cuttack on the

charge of amassing dispropor-

tionate assets amounting to

over Rs 1.50 crore.

clerk

cent higher than his income. Further investigation was underway, said an official.

IN BRIEF

WORKSHOP ON REVENUE LAWS HELD IN JSPUR Jagatsinghpur: A district-level workshop on revenue laws and rules

was held here on Thursday being inaugurated by Collector SK Mohapatra. Addressing revenue officials, Mohapatra asked them to study different revenue laws and rules for their strict enforcement. As revenue laws have been changing from time to time and the Government is adding several rules, officials should be aware about them, he said. Among others, ADM Chinmayee Biswal, Sub-Collector Dhramendra Mallick, Tehsildar Manas Mallick were present.

2 HELD IN 2 JSPUR BOMB HURLING CASES Jagatsinghpur: Two bomb hurling incidents occurred in Jagatsinghpur

town in past 24 hours in Jagatsinghpur district. Police arrested two youths anticipating their involvement in the cases. Four motorcycleborne youths reached at a poultry feeding shop here and hurled bombs. However, no damage occurred to the shop. In the other incident at Pakanapur on the outskirts of the town, a hatchery farm was partially damaged. Police rushed to the spot and, after examining CCTV footages, raided a questhouse and picked up two youths. Investigation is on and arrest of more people is expected, said Jagatsinghpur PS IIC Rajanikanta Mishra.

IGRKA HOLDS KARATE BELT CEREMONY AT PARADIP



Paradip: A belt awarding ceremony was organised by the Odisha uni of International Gosoku Ryu Karete Association (IGRKA) here on Friday. Over a hundred karatekas performed martial art demonstrations and received certificates and colour belts. The guests were Bethany Convent School Vice-Principal Sister Irene, Sister Magdali, Paradip Ladies' Club member Preeti Aarti Parija, journalist Sasanka Acharya and sports trainer Nakul Behera. The event was moderated by association secretary advocate Sanjay Mishra. IGRKA State general secretary and coach Sanjay Saha handed over the belts to the

A review was done about the projects undertaken in the

RAJ KUMAR SHARMA ■ **JHARSUGUDA**

Ameeting of Rehabilitation and Periphery Development Advisory Committee (RPDAC) was held on Friday in the Jharsuguda DRDA conference hall under the chairmanship of RDC (Northern Division) and Chairman of the committee Anil Kumar Samal.

Various issues relating to the Mahanadi Coalfields Limited's (MCL) Ib Valley, Orient and Lakhanpur mining areas were discussed thread-

RDC Samal told media that displacement issues were discussed in the meeting. Besides, MCL CSR funds would be utilised for converting some high schools into

The Odisha Ministerial Officers' Association

(OMOA), Rayagada unit held

its meeting here and discussed

anguish over the status of their

grade pay, house rent allowance, restructuring of

They expressed their

its various demands.

IN RAYAGADA



was also decided to give due compensation to the displaced

OMOA threatens stir against apathy

smart schools in the district. It timeframe. Further, more job opportunities would be created for local unemployed per-

Steps would be taken to convene RPDAC meeting at least once in every two to three months, Samal said.

the apathy shown by the Government towards them and warned to resort to agitation if

District president OMOA

Kali Rath, secretary Rama Chandra Rath, advisor Rup Keshari Dalei, among others

were present. It was unanimously resolved to approve the working committee constituted last year. President of Odisha Non-gazetted Officers'

Coordination Committee,

Rayagada Unit Niranjan Nayak

advised to strengthen the asso-

the demands are not met.

district through MCL CSR fund and how more fund can be utilised in welfare projects.
Brajrajnagar MLA Kishore

Kumar Mohanty said public discontentment was continuing since long for mines issues. After detailed discussions on the matter, a positive mood is evident. In the coming days, the issues would be solved after discussions with the MCL management, people's representatives and the district administration. Bargarh MP Suresh Pujari,

Northern Range Police IG Narasingh Bhol, Jharsuguda Collector Saroj Kumar Samal and SP Bikash Chandra Das and MCL Directors Keshav Rao, OP Singh and KR Vasudevan were present in the meeting among others.

'Shift BU

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Journalism exam date'

Demanding shifting of the date of internal examina-

tion, students of the PG

Department of Journalism and

Mass Communication of the Berhampur University on Friday

submitted a memorandum to

in issuance of the Library Card

which was much after the class-

es began. They got cards only

on Thursday. Earlier, the unito conduct the internal exam-

inations from April 15 to 17.

of library cards, the students

alleged that they were not able

to take course books and other

learning materials. The stu-dent delegates met Chairperson

of the PG Council Prof

Arundhati Rath and requested

her to shift the scheduled date

Due to the delay in issuance

The students cited the delay

the Chairman PG Council.

NYCA greets Bidisha for her achievement



⊤he Niladrivihar Youth & **⊥** Cultural Association (NYCA), a socio-cultural organisation has greeted Dr Bidisha Panda, a House Surgeon, for receiving gold medal and citation from Odisha Higher Education Minister Aruna Kumar Sahoo in the presence of Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu in

mony of Utkal University.

Bidisha, daughter of senior member of the association and an employee of KIIT University Biswanath Panda and Manorama Panda, has secured highest mark in FMT section in final MBBS from the SCB Medical College.

NYCA president Dr Prakash Chandra Panigrahi, secretary Biswajit Pattnaik and

expressed that Bidisha has proved how hard work, dedication, devotion and determination move a person to pinnacle of achieve Bidisha is also recipient of

various awards like Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhabana Samman, Mother terrace peace award and Vivekananda International

cadres, pay structure, growing work load, promotion and facilities to their children, The members lamented Workshop, hackathon, startup

colloquium held at IIT BBS On AR-VR

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The IIT Bhubaneswar in association with the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), MeitY and the Government of Odisha held a two-day (April 9-10) workshop, hackathon and start-up colloquium on hybrid mode.

The inaugural ceremony of the conclave and hackathon was inaugurated by Director General, STPI and chief guest of the event Dr Omkar Rai via video conferencing. The event was presided over by Director, IIT Bhubaneswar Prof RV Raja Kumar and participants were Relations, IIT Bhubaneswar, Prof RK Panda.

Prof Raja Kumar said that taking into consideration the two clarion calls, "Make in India" and "Aatma Nirbhar Bharat" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, there was a need felt for creation of an ecosystem for manufacturing, research and development activities and creation of leadership in the core areas of AR-VR. A CoE in this important area was created at Research Entrepreneurship Park (REP)

Speaking on the occasion,

of IIT Bhubaneswar for activities majorly focussing on manufacturing along with research

welcomed by Dean Alumni and development in the areas Affairs and International of AR-VR. Chief Guest Dr Rai of AR-VR. Chief Guest Dr Rai spoke in details about the role of technology in addressing the gravest challenges of the world by delivering path breaking solutions. He also complimented IIT Bhubaneswar and the leadership of Prof Raia Kumar for the exemplary work in the domains of AR-VR. He also mentioned about the CoE being the first of its kind in the

> leader in the coming times. The conclave and hackathon included several guest talks, interactive sessions, workshops by student teams. The talks and sessions was followed by award cere-

country and foreseeing it as a

Punjab reports its second highest daily spike of 3,294 cases

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

 $F^{\text{ifty-eight more people died}}_{\text{from coronavirus in Punjab}}$ on Saturday as the State reported its 3294 cases, pushing its infection count to 2,69,733, according to a medical bulletin. The State had reported its highest daily spike of 3,459 cases on April 9 while 3187 infections on April 1. So far, the disease has killed 7448 people in the State.

The number of active cases rose to 28015 on Saturday. Mohali reported the maximum 413 cases, followed by 407 in Jalandhar, 389 in Ludhiana, 306 in Amritsar and 282 in Patiala

CS reviews Covid situation in Kalahandi PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

of examination.

To assess the Covid spread and to take stock of the ground situation in bordering districts, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra along with Health and Family Welfare Additional Chief Secretary Pradeepta Kumar Mohapatra visited Kalahandi district on Saturday.

The high-level team visited district Covid hospital and

looked into the treatment facility, availability of medicines, beds, ICUs and other facilities there. Then after Chief Secretary Mohapatra reviewed preparedness of the district with District Collector Gavili Parag Harshad and Officials for containing spread of the second surge of Covid; and gave necessary directions for enforcement of Covid appropriate behavior, increasing the RTPCR test, reactivating Covid

The high-level team visited district Covid hospital and looked into the treatment facility, availability of medicines, beds, ICUs and other facilities there

Care Centres, minimum seven days isolation of the people coming from outside States, etc. The CS also assessed the

available infrastructure and resources in the district. He assured the district administration to provide specialist Doctors and Life Support

ambulance to the district.

The delegation included Health Director Dr Bijova Mohaptra and DMET Dr ĆBK Mohanty. The meeting was attended by Supreitendent of Police Sravan Bibek,CDMO Dr Pratap Behera, Public Health Officer Rakesh Sahu.

Chandigarh to have wildlife census

From May 1 to June 30

MANOJ KUMAR ■ CHANDIGARH

handigarh will have a wildlife census from May 1 to June 30 this year to determine the animals and birds in the Union Territory.

Chief Conservator of Forest and Chief Wildlife Warden Debendra Dalai on Saturday said that Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun has been asked to carry out a wildlife census in Chandigarh along with Haryana which would carry out wildlife census from May

Talking to 'The Pioneer'

over the phone, Dalai said that to prepare an inventory of wild animals, the UT Forest and Wildlife Department has planned to carry out a second

The first wildlife census was held in 2010. "We earlier had a verbal communication with the director of WII, Dehradun, to carry out the wildlife census in Chandigarh along with Harvana. Now, we will soon write a letter to WII, Dehradun, regarding the same.

Chandigarh.

census

If our proposal is accepted then the wildlife census in Chandigarh would also start along with Haryana from May 1," he said.

Dalai further said that the availability of funds is no longer an issue. The department

would not need a large fund to carry out wildlife census in Chandigarh.

The wildlife census would be carried out in the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary, spread over an area of 26 square kilometres in the catchment area of the Sukhna Lake.

It would take nearly a week to complete the wildlife census exercise in Chandigarh. The master trainers of WII Dehradun will give adequate training to all the staff in Chandigarh and those who would be part of the wildlife ensus exercise

The Chandigarh Chief Wildlife Warden said that the first wildlife census was carried out in the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary a decade ago. The second census could not be car-

ried out in the last year due to the pandemic and Covidinduced lockdown in the country, he added. Another senior officer of

UT Forest and Wildlife Department said that a team of experts from the WII, Dehradun, environmentalists, representatives of NGOs and biology and zoology students from Panjab University took part in the first census held in 2010. The team took three days to count nine species of mammals and 65 species of birds by using direct evidence, including animals and birds spotted in the area, and indirect evidence such as footprints

and animal faeces. He further said that by using direct evidence, including the animals and birds spot-

ted in the area, and indirect evidence like foot-prints and animal faeces, nine species of mammals and 65 species of birds were accounted for. As per the first census report prepared by the WII, Dehradun, the population of sambar in the sanctuary was between 1,000 and 1,200 and peafowl population was between 900 and

However, leopards were not spotted directly, but their footmarks were found. Main animals spotted in the sanctuary include sambar, chital, pangolin (anteater), wild boar, jackal, small Indian civet, jungle cat, porcupine, Hanuman langur, rhesus monkey, Indian hare, common mongoose and three-striped palm squirrel, he

Indian adults struggling with obesity on the rise, says Report

The rising population of adult dobese in India has exceeded the total population of Australia and rising obesity causes several other health problems amongst adults.

Recently, the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020 report has brought out that more Indian adults became obese during 2012-2016 as the number of adults (18 years and above) who are obese grew from 25.2 million in 2012 to 34.3 million in 2016, thereby growing from 3.1 per cent to 3.9 per cent.

Dr Anupam Goel, Consultant Minimal Access Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery,

Mohali, said, "Obesity is arguably the most pressing public health problem we face and increasing rate of obesity amongst adults is a grave issue as it brings a host of other diseases and they constitute the largest chunk of the population".

On the treatment of obesity, Dr Goel said the conventional treatment methods like diet, exercise and medications for certain BMI range has shown fruitful results. However, when it comes to long term weight loss, Bariatric surgery or weight loss surgery has proven to be the most effective. The main purpose of bariatric surgery is making changes in the digestive system which helps

On the insurance coverage

of Bariatric surgery, he said, as per IRDAI's (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India) latest guidelines, Bariatric or weight loss surgery has been included under medical insurance cover helping patients in need of financial assistance. One of the methods in Bariatric surgery is Laparoscopy, which is a minimally invasive technique requiring small incisions, making wound healing faster, less pain and early recovery.

This also helps in the early discharge of the patient and making them get back to their routine faster.

jab shortage: Sonia



PNS NFW DFI HI

ongress president Sonia Gandhi on Saturday blamed the Centre for "mismanaging the situation" of corona pandemic by exporting vaccines. "The Government allowed a shortage to be created in India," Sonia said at a virtual meeting with the Chief Ministers of Congress-ruled States to review their efforts to fight Covid-19, including the availability of vaccines and access to medicines and venti-

Sonia advised the Chief Minister to focus on testing, vaccination."Covid is surging and as the principal Opposition party, it's our responsibility to raise issues and push the Government to move away from PR tactics and act in the interest of the people. Therefore, there must be transparency. Governments must reveal the actual numbers of infections and deaths across States, whether Congress-ruled or otherwise," she said.

During the interaction, she



Indians first and then the Government should think about exporting it to other countries. "We must focus on India's vaccination drive first and foremost, then only export vaccines and gift them to other countries. We must stress on responsible behaviour adhering to all laws and Covid regulations without exception," Sonia said in the wake of Centre exporting vaccines to several countries

Asserting that all parties are united in the fight against Covid-19, the Congress chief said, "Cooperation with States respecting federalism and in turn, for us to be constructive and cooperate with the Government in its efforts to fight the pandemic is equally important. We are all united in this fight.

She also blamed mass gatherings during election rallies and religious events for the spike in cases. "Mass gatherings for elections and religious events have accelerated Covid for which all of us are responsible to some extent. We need took on the Centre and said to accept this responsibility vaccines should be provided to and keep the interest of the

nation above our own."

Pushing for strict action to be taken to control the corona graph, Sonia Gandhi said, "In our states, we need to take strict measures to ensure that the pandemic doesn't go out of control and ensure testing at large scale, preparation of adequate facilities, setting up temporary ones. We must make all efforts to support those who face the brunt of reduced economic activity as the restrictions become harder and more stringent."

Taking about the economic situation in the country due to the coronavirus pandemic, Sonia Gandhi asked the State Government to looks for the impact of government schemes so far and the next course of

action which could be helpful.
"Various packages had been announced by the Central government to help MSMEs and stimulate the economy. What impact have these packages had and what more should the Government be doing to deal with the continuing crisis? Do you see economic recovery happening in the manner that is being officially claimed?"

Centre created Covid | Allegation to incite voters against Central forces unfounded: Didi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

 $D_{\text{sial remarks over the}}^{\text{efending her controver-}}$ Central forces' alleged partisan role in the ongoing State Assembly polls, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said there was no attempt to threaten, incite or influence the electorate against the force and any allegations to the contrary were unfounded' and 'denied'. Responding to the Election Commission's notice Mamata said she has the highest regard for the Central forces and "commend and laud their contributions to the safety and the security of the coun-

"In my speech, I had only called upon the voters, specifically voters who are women to protect (democratically by gherao) if and when somebody (including CAPF) created any obstruction in their right to vote," Mamata said adding that gherao is one of the democratic ways of registering public protest.

"Be it noted that multidimensional word gherao has been a legitimate entry in the political lexicon of West Bengal since late 1960s...," she said. In recent years, the word has been used to connote peaceful satyagraha against authorities by silent victims of the situation, she added.

Mamata also urged the poll body to rescind its notice, contending she has not violated the model code or the various sections of the Indian Penal Code. She claimed that a girl was allegedly molested by an unidentified CRPF personnel in the early hours of April 6 at Ramnagar, under Tarakeshwar police station and the matter was reported to the



Thursday issued a notice to Mamata for her provocative remarks against **Central forces**

police which lodged an FIR. ...Till date, no tangible action has been taken or at least an advisory or instruction has been issued by the Election Commission to CAP," Mamata said, adding several police officers have been removed on "frivolous complaints by the

To drive home her point that she did not instigate people to carry out violent acts against the central forces, Mamata also reproduced certain portions of her speech in her reply to the EC.

The EC had on Thursday issued a notice to Banerjee for her prima facie "completely false, provocative and intemperate statements" against central armed police forces, saying her remarks are demoralising the personnel.

The TMC chief again targeted the Centre and the CAPF on Saturday, after four people were killed in firing by CISF personnel allegedly after coming under attack from locals who "attempted to snatch their rifles" in West Bengal's Cooch Behar district. Mamata said her government will initiate a CID probe into the incident and questioned the central forces' version of firing in selfBJP releases Kishor's video claiming 'Modi's popularity'

mid polling for 44 Assembly A mid polling for a fine of Seats in West Bengal, a controversy broke out on Saturday as BJP IT Cell head Amit Malviya released an audio clip where Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's election strategist Prashant Kishor is purportedly heard saying "PM Modi, Mamata equally popular" in the

Malviya, who is also BJP's deputy-in-charge of Bengal, tweeted four audio clips of what he said was parts of a conversation between Kishor and a group of journalists on the Clubhouse

Malviya quoted Kishor as saying that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal, antiincumbency against the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC), 'Muslim appeasement" of political parties in Bengal over the years and the Dalit vote would likely work favour of the BJP.

Kishor's rejected the inter-pretation with 'selective quotes' and accused the BJP of "distorted use of parts of the conversation", and asked the party to release the "full conversation".

The controversy came on the day 44 of West Bengal's total 294 seats were voting in the fourth round of an eight-phase polling process.

In the first tweet by Malviya, Kishor could be heard purportedly saying "...Polarisation, Modi, Hindi-speaking people,

are the factors." Former minister Suvendu Adhikari leaving the TMC, or Kishor coming in as the TMC strategist were not the issues of significance at all, he

"Modi is popular here, the Hindi-speaking people have over 1 crore votes, Dalits account for 27% (of the population) — and they are fully backing the BJP. Plus, there is of course polarisation," Kishor said.

"Matuas will be predominantly voting for the BJP, but not as unitedly as they did in the Lok Sabha (elections in 2019). I still think 75% of the Matuas will vote for the BJP and 25% for the TMC," Kishor purportedly said.

"Even our surveys on who will form the Government shows the BJP coming to power. This is because the BJP supporters are claiming the party will form the Government. Of the people voting for the Left — 10-15% — about two-third think the BJP will form the Government. So, the majority view you are hearing is that the BJP is coming to power," Kishor

He said the perception, mostly among people from outside the state, that the BJP did not have workers on the ground in Bengal was not true. "They could be imported from the Left, but they are dedicatedly working for the BJP today," he said, adding that the Left voters would like to see Banerjee lose.

ing for the TMC, Kishor also purportedly clarified that he meant to say "50-55% Hindus are voting for the BJP".

In the second clip, he said the major problem "we have to accept is that for 20 years there have been efforts to appease the minority". For example, in Bengal the predominant belief was whoever got the Muslim vote would the elections, he said.

"The entire political ecosystem — be it of the Congress, Left or of Didi (as Banerjee is popularly known as) —has been thinking about that (getting Muslim votes). The first time, Hindus are thinking that they are seeing a chance...There is some element that the BJP is exploiting. And that element is coming from blatant misuse of minority politics by some of these parties...We can't deny that..," he said.

In the third clip, Kishor said the Hindi-speaking people in Bengal were Modi's core voters in Bengal. "Plus, the anti-incumbency is against the state government, not against the Centre."

"If we do a survey of leaders, Modi and Mamata are equally popular (in Bengal) — which is a very big thing," he said. "Bengal has not seen a BJP rule. That is a factor. The people who have not seen it (BJP rule) for 30-35 years think they (the BJP) will do something hitherto undone. They want to taste the ladoo they have not yet," he said.

CRPF staff's special

school bus facility

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

n a major relief to CRPF per-Isonnel parenting specially-abled and autistic children, the

Union Home Ministry has cleared a proposal for the pro-vision of a school bus facility to

such children to transport them

to special school or institution

irrespective of the minimum

number of such children in a

this month, the Union Home

Ministry conveyed the clear-

ance of the proposal to the

subject title as "Wellbeing of

Specially Abled and Autistic

Children of employees of CRPF

in Government Vehicles to

School/Institutions," it said the CRPF proposal dated February

abled children, it has been decid-

ed that school bus facility may

be provided irrespective of the

strength (number) of such chil-

dren in a camp," reads the com-

According to an earlier order dated April 5, 1999 on the

issue, the provision of manda-

tory requirement of number of

children as five for Gazetted

Officers and non-Gazetted

Officers or 12 for the children of

all other ranks for free of cost

school bus facility was recon-

sidered for the latest order doing

away with the requirement of the

number children in a camp for

issued subject to the condition

'This amendment is being

availing such facility, it said.

"It case of autistic/specially

24 has been approved.

munication.

In an order issued earlier

children to get

Assam polls: EC orders repolling in 4 booths on April 20



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission The Election Comments (EC) on Saturday ordered re-polling on April 20 in four polling booths including Haflong constituency of Assam where 181 votes were cast even though 90 people were eligible to exercise their franchise. The Commission has declared the votes cast at these polling stations on April 1 as void.

In a massive breach of conduct, a polling booth station at 107(A)-Khothlir LP School under Haflong Assembly constituency, located in Assam's Dima Hasao district, where 181 votes were cast even though 90 people were eligible to exercise their franchise. The presiding and first polling officer in their statements had admitted that they had allowed the voters registered at the main polling station at 107-Mouldam LP School to cast their votes at the auxiliary polling station. The Haflong constituency has witnessed 74 percent polling. The ECI order said,

repolling will be held at polling station number 149 at Indira M V School, after an electronic voting machine (EVM) was found in a car belonging to the wife of a BJP candidate. A magisterial probe was ordered by Karimganj district Deputy Commissioner and Returning Officer to enquire as to why a polling team in Assam carried a polled EVM in a vehicle owned by the wife of BJP candidate and sitting MLA Krishnendu Paul.

Repolling has also been ordered in Sonai constituency's 463- Madhya Dhanehori ĹP School polling booth where at least three persons were injured in an incident of firing, fol-lowing which the state's deputy speaker and BJP candidate Aminul Haque Laskar was questioned by the police and five police personnel attached to him were suspended. According to the reports, the clash broke out between two groups after there was alleged mismanagement at Madhya Dhanehari polling station.

Tomar urges agitating farmers to call off strike amid Covid surge

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Saturday appealed to the farmers protesting at Delhi borders to call off their long-running agitation in view of second wave of Covid-19 cases, saying the Government is ready for a discussion whenever they come with a concrete proposal. Tomar expressed concerns about the farmers' health and wellbeing as India witnessed a record surge of cases on Saturday. Thousands of farmers have

been protesting against the three new agri-marketing laws for nearly five months now, braving the raging pandemic. There has been no headway in the logjam over the issue since January 22, when the 11th and the last round of formal talks happened between the Central government and the protesting farmer unions.

"Now in the second wave of pandemic, the entire nation and the world is following COVID-19 protocols. Even protesting farmers should follow the protocols. Their life is important for us," Tomar said.

"In the current COVID-19 situation, I urge them (agitating farmers) to call off their protest. The government is ready for a discussion whenever they come with a proposal," he said.

Stating that there is no "dissatisfaction" among the farming community across the country over the new farm





farm bodies in fact are in the favour these legislations, while some are opposing them. "Ours is a democratic

country, be it farmers or citizens, if they have any doubt, the government believes it is its responsibility is to clear doubts and find a solution," he said. The minister said the three laws were not drafted all of a sudden, but there was a long discussion in past and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken it forward, he said.

He said that normally any protest continues if the government is not ready for talks. But this government has held with open heart 11 rounds of discussion with representatives of protesting farm unions, yet their agitation did not stop, he said.

In these meetings, the gov-

ernment had identified their concerns and offered them a for 1.5 years and set up a committee to examine them. "We proposed that a com-

mittee be set up to look into these laws and the MSP (issue) also. After the committee submits its report, the Government will discuss. This proposal was welcomed across the country, but the protesting farmers rejected it without citing any reason," he said.
"We had told farm unions

to come up with their own proposal and we were ready for discussion on that also," the minister said, asserting the government is ready for talks even today. Tomar reiterated that he had appealed to the farmer unions in all 11 rounds of meetings to send back senior citizens and children from the protest sites in view of the pandemic.

The Minister also said the agitating farmers should understand that ordinary citizens are facing difficulty due to their sit-in protest at the

Covid recovered patients not coming forward to donate plasma: Experts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With more and more Covid-19 patients landing into intensive care units, there is a serious shortage of Convalescent plasma, antiviral drug Remdesivir, and Tocilizumab injection being prescribed by doctors for treatment— even as scientific evidence on their efficacy is awaited. Though the World Health

Organization (WHO) does not recommend these drugs hospitalised with Covid-19, in India medical experts have been using these treatments on an experimental basis for moderately to severely ill

Vasu Goel, a resident of Murad Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, said he had been trying hard for the last two days to get plasma for his grandfather who is admitted to JP Hospital in Noida for Covid treatment.

"I have not lost hope, yet," he said.

However, Vivek Jain from Kab Welfare Foundation, who had been coordinating with plasma donors to reach out to the needy this time too like last year, said that he has been getting several requests every day for the past few weeks. While the demand is rising, he pointed out, Covid-19 recovered patients were not coming forward to donate the plasma and help those in

He echoed the views of Dr

SK Sarin, head of the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences, which houses the city's first plasma bank. Dr Sarin too recently pointed out that the number of donors was not

enough.
"If the pandemic continues unabated, we would need donors who have recovered to come and donate but we would not deny anyone in need of plasma. People should come forward to donate plasma," he said. Delhi along with a few

other States like Maharashtra banks to meet the demand which was at its peak.

Experts say those who are infected now will recover in the next two weeks, after which they will be eligible to donate plasma.

Amid states grappling with stretched Covid facilities and vaccine shortage, there are also reports of shortage of anti-viral drug Remdesivir that is used to treat Covid patients, in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and

Madhya Pradesh. In some cities, the drug is being sold in black markets, leaving the patients and their relatives at the receiving end. In some cases that highlight the limited options available to physicians treating Covid-19, doctors are recommending tocilizumab injection too. The doctors believe that the drug reduces inflammation that causes Covid-19 patients to become severely ill, particularly in their lungs.

that no new vehicles would be authorised and CRPF should manage this facility within available resources," added the letter. It said that a person, who "The move will go a long way in mental succour for par-

ents of specially-abled or autistic children as they need to attend special schools or institutions as part of their educational course. The removal of the fetters of a number of such children in a camp will mean that even a single such child of either officers or those from other ranks will be entitled to free school bus transport. The facility is also expected to help such parents concentrate on their core duties," a senior official said. The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) is the world's

biggest paramilitary force with an operational strength of 3.25 lakh personnel. It is the designated Central force for anti-Naxal operations, counter-terror role, and anti-insurgency operations with significant deployments in Jammu and Kashmir, the Northeast, and Naxal-hit

SC asks Centre, four States to respond on plea seeking repeal of provisions criminalising begging

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has asked the Centre and four States, including Maharashtra and Gujarat, to file their response within three weeks on a plea seeking a direction to repeal the provisions crim-

inalising begging. A bench of justices Ashok Bhushan and R Subhash Reddy noted in its order that though a notice was issued on the plea on February 10 this year, only Bihar has so far filed its response in the matter.

"Although notice has been issued on February 10, 2021, a reply has been filed by the respondent - state of Bihar only and other respondents have not yet filed their reply.

weeks," the bench said in its order passed on Friday.

The apex court has posted the matter for hearing after three weeks.

The top court had in February sought a response from the Centre, and the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Bihar on the plea which has claimed that the sections of the statute criminalising begging are violative of constitutional

The plea filed by Meerut resident Vishal Pathak has referred to the August 2018 verdict of the Delhi High Court which had decriminalised begging in the national capital and said that provi-

Let reply be filed within three sions of the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959 which treats begging as an offence cannot sustain constitutional scrutiny.

The provisions of the statutes criminalising the act of begging put people in a situation to make an unreasonable choice between committing a crime or not committing one and starving, which goes against the very spirit of the Constitution and violates Article 21 i.E. Right to Life," said the plea, filed through advocate H K Chaturvedi.

Referring to the Census 2011, the plea has said that the total number of beggars in India is 4,13,670 and the number has increased from the last



It said that the government has the mandate to provide social security to everyone and ensure that all have basic facilities, as embedded in the Directives Principles of

Policy in

"However, the presence of beggars is evidence that the State has failed to provide these basic facilities to all its citizens, thus instead of working on its failure and examin-

criminalising the act of beggary is irrational and against the approach of a socialist nation as embedded in the preamble of our Constitution,"

the plea has claimed.

is compelled to beg due to certain circumstances, cannot be faulted for his actions. The plea has claimed that

The Abolition of Begging and Rehabilitation of Beggars Bill 2018' was introduced in Lok Sabha but "till date, this bill is not passed and is wedged in length parliamentary procedures, that has resulted in thousands of poor facing more hardships because of present arbitrary statutes".

The petition has sought directions to declare as "illegal and void" all provisions, except some sections, of the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959, Punjab Prevention of Beggary Act, 1971, Haryana Prevention of Begging Act, 1971 and Bihar Prevention of Begging Act 1951.

It has also sought to declare all other similar Acts prevailing in any part of the country as illegal

Myanmar junta attacks again

Security forces in Myanmar Cracked down heavily again on anti-coup protesters even as the military downplayed reports of state violence.

Reports on online news outlets and social media on Friday said at least four people were killed in Bago, about 100 kilometers northeast of Yangon, in an attack by government troops and police that began before dawn and continued sporadically until after dark. The Bago Weekly Journal Online said a source at the city's main hospital, whom it didn't name, believed about 10 people had been killed.

It was the third attack this week involving the massive use of deadly force by security forces to try to crush active opposition to the February 1 coup that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu

On Wednesday, attacks were launched on opponents of military rule in the towns of Kalay and Taze in the country's north. In both places, at least 11 people — possibly including some bystanders — were reported killed. Security forces



Children flash the three-fingered symbol of resistance as they join an anti-coup protest in Yangon on Saturday

were accused of using heavy weapons in their attacks, including rocket-propelled grenades and mortars. The allegations could not be independently confirmed by The Associated Press.

Some of the protesters used homemade weapons, especially in Kalay, where defenders called themselves a "civil army," and some were equipped with rudimentary hunting rifles.

Most protests in cities and town around the country have been nonviolent, with demonstrators espousing civil disobedience.

Violence by security forces was also reported Friday in sev-

eral other areas, including Loikaw, the capital of Kayah sate in the east, where live ammunition was employed,

according to numerous social

media posts.

At least 614 protesters and bystanders have been killed by security forces through Thursday, according to the

Political Prisoners, which monitors casualties and arrests.

At a news conference in the capital, Naypyitaw, a spokesman for the ruling junta defended the actions of the security forces. Brig. Gen. Zaw Min Tun,

when asked about reports that automatic weapons have been fired at protesters, replied that if that were the case, 500 peo-ple would have been killed in just a few hours.

He challenged the death toll issued by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners and said the Government's tally was 248. He also said 16 policemen had been killed. Asked about air strikes

carried out by Government jets on territory held by guerrillas from the Karen ethnic minority in eastern Myanmar, which réportedly killed at least 14 civilians, Zaw Min Tun said the aerial raids allowed more exact targeting than ground attacks which would have caused more deaths. Supporters of the Karen charge that the army is carrying out a ground offensive as well, including the use of artillery.

Iran tests advanced nuclear centrifuges

Iran said on Saturday it has begun mechanical tests on its newest advanced nuclear centrifuge, even as the five world powers that remain in a foundering 2015 nuclear deal with Iran attempt to bring the US back into the agreement.
Iran's IR-9 centrifuge, when

operational, would have the ability to separate uranium isotopes more quickly than the current centrifuges being used, thereby enriching uranium at a faster pace. The announcement carried on state TV came on Iran's annual Nuclear Day.

The IR-9's output is 50 times quicker than the first Iranian centrifuge, the IR-1. Iran's nuclear program is also developing IR-8 centrifuges.

Since January, Iran has begun enriching uranium at up to 20% purity, a technical step away from weapons-grade levels, though Iran's leadership insists the country has no desire to develop a nuclear weapon. Former US President Donald Trump pulled the US



President Hassan Rouhani, second right, listens to head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Ali Akbar Salehi while visiting an exhibition of Iran's new nuclear achievements in Tehran. Iran on Saturday

out of the nuclear accord in 2018, accusing Iran of failing to live up to the agreement, opting for what he called a maximum-pressure campaign of stepped-up US sanctions and other tough actions.

Iran responded by intensifying its enrichment of uranium and building centrifuges in

plain violation of the accord, while insisting that its nuclear development is for civilian not military purposes. Israel maintains Iran still maintains the ambition of developing nuclear weapons, pointing to Tehran's ballistic missile program and research into other technolo-

fired to mark the death of

Queen Victoria in 1901," it

notes. They also honour the

Duke's strong military links, having served with the Royal Navy in World War II.

been a great friend, inspiration

and role model for the armed

"His Royal Highness has

12 hurt as hardline **Islamist attack** devotees inside mosque in B'desh

Dhaka: Activists of a hardline Islamist group attacked devotees inside a mosque in northern Bangladesh, injuring at least 12 persons, according to a media report. The incident took place on Friday at the mosque in the Gaibandha district when self-proclaimed Hefazat-e-Islam activists snatched the mic from the Imam and preached about the organisation, Dhaka Tribune reported.

They attacked the devotees who tried to intervene, Imam Motlob Uddin said. At least 12 men were injured in the attack, the report said. A case is being filed at Sundarganj Police Station. Officer in Charge Bulbul Islam said: "Disagreements over the mosque's committee is the reason for this untoward incident."

Two Christian nurses booked under blasphemy charges in Pak

Lahore: Two Christian nurses have been booked under blasphemy charges in Pakistan's Punjab province following a complaint by hospital authorities, police said, as people staged demonstrations against the duo demanding strict action against them. According to police, an

FIR has been registered against the two nurses, Mariyum Lal and Newish Arooj, working in District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital, Faisalabad, on Friday. The nurses are accused of

removing the stickers inscribed with Islamic verses from the wall of a hospital ward where psychiatric patients are being

Djibouti says longtime Prez Ismail on way to winning 5th term

Mogadishu: Djibouti's government says longtime President Ismail Omar Guelleh has overwhelmingly won a fifth term, citing provisional results. Home Affairs Minister Mumin Ahmed Sheikh told reporters overnight that Guelleh has received more than 98% of the 177,391 votes cast in the Horn of Africa nation, defeating his sole rival, businessman Zakaria Ismail Farah. Other opposition boycotted Friday's vote. The final results are expected to be announced later Saturday by the electoral commission.

Thank you for your confidence!" the president tweeted overnight. "Let's continue together!'

Harry expected to fly in for funeral of grandfather

London: The rift in the royal ranks after an explosive interview by Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle is to be set aside as reports suggest that the Duke of Sussex is keen to fly to the UK to attend grandfather Prince Philip's funeral.

Harry was close to his grandfather and, according to media reports, he is keen to be by the side of his grandmother, Queen Elizabeth II, as she mourns the passing of her husband of 73 years. Harry, who is now based in California, is unlikely to be joined by Meghan, who is heavily pregnant with their second baby. "He will, of course, be there, no matter how difficult relations are between the Sussexes and the family," a source was quoted as saying in 'The Daily Telegraph'. AP

Gun salutes honour Prince Philip **UK enters 8** day mourning

PTI ■ LONDON

Gun salutes in all capitals of the United Kingdom as well as aboard some Royal Navy ships on Saturday honoured Prince Philip, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh, who passed away aged 99 at Windsor Castle on Friday.

The 41 rounds fired in London, Cardiff, Belfast and Edinburgh at a rate of one shot per minute from midday local time on Saturday mark the start of an eight-day national mourning period. "The tradition of Gun

Salutes being fired throughout



grounds of Cardiff Castle in Cardiff on Saturday

the country to mark significant national events dates back to at least the 18th century, and there are historical records of salutes taking place as early as

the 14th century when guns and ammunition began to be adopted more widely," a statement on the royal website read. "Similar gun salutes were forces and he will be sorely missed," said General Sir Nick Carter, the UK's Chief of the Defence Staff. The Duke of Edinburgh served among us during the Second World War, and he remained devoted to the Royal Navy and the armed forces as a whole. A life well lived, His Royal Highness leaves us with

a legacy of indomitable spirit, steadfastness and an unshakeable sense of duty. From all of us who serve today and who have served, thank you," he

US unveils new rules for Govt contacts with Taiwan

rules for US government contacts with Taiwan that are likely anger China but appear to reimpose some restrictions that had been lifted by the Trump administration.

department announced the changed policy in a statement that said the Biden administration intends to "liberalize" the rules to reflect the "deepening unofficial relationship" between the US and Taiwan. However, the revised guidelines don't include all the changes put in place by former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in the waning days of the Trump administration.

Pompeo had lifted virtually all restrictions on contacts with Taiwan, including allowing Taiwanese military officers to wear uniforms and display

Saudi Arabia

executes 3

soldiers for

'high treason'

Dubai: Saudi Arabia executed

three soldiers Saturday it

accused of committing "high

treason," without elaborating

on which enemy the kingdom

Agency identified the men as

soldiers working in the Defence

Ministry. It did not elaborate

on how the men aided the

kingdom's enemies. Saudi

Arabia is fighting Yemen's

Iranian-backed Houthi rebels.

The kingdom also views Iran as

men were convicted in court

and a later royal order served

as a death warrant. Saudi

Arabia carried out the world's

third most executions in 2019,

according to figures from

Amnesty International. The

kingdom followed China and

The kingdom said the three

a regional archrival.

Iran, respectively.

The state-run Saudi Press

believed the men aided.

Washington: The State the Taiwanese flag at meetings ith US officials. changes were silent on those matters, although the rules do continue to permit US officials

> terparts in federal buildings. China regards Taiwan as a renegade province and opposes any attempt to treat the island as an independent country. China had condemned Pompeo's easing of the restrictions that had been in place since the US recognised Beijing and dropped formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1979.

to meet their Taiwanese coun-

"These new guidelines will continue the U.S. Government's longstanding practice of providing clarity throughout the US executive branch of how to implement our one China' policy," the department said. AP

Cairo: Egypt's best-known archae-

ologist on Saturday revealed fur-

ther details on a Pharaonic city

recently found in the southern

province of Luxor. Zahi Hawass

said that archaeologists found

brick houses, artifacts, and tools

from pharaonic times at the site

of the 3,000-year-old lost city. It

dates back to Amenhotep III of

the 18th dynasty, whose reign is

considered a golden era for

that was lost... The inscription

that found inside here says that

this city was called: 'The daz-

zling Aten'," Hawass told

"This is really a large city

ancient Egypt.

Egyptian archaeologist

reveals details of ancient city

A man covers a skeleton in a 3,000-year-old lost city in Luxor province, Egypt on

reporters at the site.

temple

served large city.

Archeologists started excavating in the area last year, searching for the mortuary

of boy King

Earthquake in Indonesia's Java, Bali kills at least 6

Malang: A strong earthquake killed at least six people and damaged buildings on Indonesia's main island of Java and shook the tourist hotspot of Bali, officials said Saturday. No tsunami warnings were posted. The US Geological Survey said the magnitude 6.0 quake struck off the island's southern coast at 2:00 p.M. Local time (0700 GMT). It was centered 45 kilometres south of Sumberpucung town of Malang District in East Java province, at a depth of 82 kilometres (51 miles).

Rahmat Trivono, the head of Indonesia's earthquake and tsunami center, said in a statement the undersea earthquake did not have the potential to cause a tsunami.

Stalled at first jab: Vaccine shortages hit poor countries

s many as 60 countries, As many as ou commended including some of the world's poorest, might be stalled at the first shots of their coronavirus vaccinations because nearly all deliveries through the global programme intended to help them are blocked until as late as June. COVAX, the global initia-

tive to provide vaccines to countries lacking the clout to negotiate for scarce supplies on their own, has in the past week shipped more than 25,000 doses to low-income countries only twice on any given day. Deliveries have all but halted since Monday.

During the past two weeks, according to data compiled daily by UNICEF, fewer than 2 million COVAX doses in total

Iran enforces 10-day

lockdown amid fourth

Iran's coronavirus task

force, charged with determin-

ing virus restrictions, ordered

most shops closed and offices

restricted to one-third capaci-

ty in cities declared as "red-

wave of pandemic

outbreak

zones.

were cleared for shipment to 92 avirus is spiking worldwide. world — the same amount injected in Britain alone.

On Friday, the head of the World Health Organization slammed the "shocking imbalance" in global COVID-19 vaccination. WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreysus said that while one in four people in rich countries had received a vaccine, only one in 500 people in poorer countries had gotten a dose.

The vaccine shortage stems mostly from India's decision to stop exporting vaccines from its Serum Institute factory, which produces the overwhelming majority of the AstraZeneca doses that COVAX counted on to supply around a third of the global population at a time coron-

cines cleared by WHO, and countries are increasingly impatient. Supplies are dwindling in some of the first countries to receive COVAX shipments, and the expected delivery of second doses in the 12-week window currently recommended is now in doubt.

are affected by the delays. In vaccination tents set up at Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi, many of those who arrived for their first jabs were uneasy about when the second would arrive.

known as GAVI told The

Associated Press that 60 countries

"My fear if I don't get the

second dose, my immune system is going to be weak, hence I might die," said Oscar Odinga, a civil servant.

ई-निविदा सूचना नगर निगम हल्द्वानी-काठगोदाम क्षेत्रान्तर्गत निम्नलिखित कार्यों हेतु पुनः

ई–निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा के संबंध में समस्त शर्तें एवं सूचनाएं http://www.uktendres.gov.in पर दिनांक 12.04.2021 को अपरान्ह से दिनांक 24.04.2021 को अपरान्ह 2.00 बजे तक उपलब्ध रहेगी।

CC VIET WIII OILLY SILIP VAC							
cines cleared by WHO, and coun-	क्र0	कार्य का नाम	अनुमानित	कार्य की घरोहर राशि	निविदा फार्म	कार्य पूर्ण करने की	निविदा की वैधता
tries are increasingly impatient.	₹10		लागत (रु0 लाख में)	धराहर साश (रु० लाख में)	का मूल्य	करन का अवधि	का वधता
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the first countries to receive	550	अंतर्गत 20 पार्कों के	400.00	3.50	5000+18%		
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ly recommended is now in doubt.	,	महापौर				र आय	55
In a statement, the vaccine alliance	नगर निगम हल्द्वानी		नगर निगम हल्द्वानी				
known as GAVI told The		stelle totalot Se	gion		alols 1	alolal S	celon

राजस्थान राज्य पथ परिवहन निगम

ई–बोली सूचना

निगम द्वारा निम्न कार्य हेतु ई-बोली के माध्यम से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ऑनलाईन बोलियाँ आमंत्रित की जाती है। बोली से संबंधित विस्तृत विवरण वेबसाईट <u>www.rsrtc.rajasthan.gov.in</u> एवं http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in व स्टेट पोर्टल (SPPP) पर देखा जा सकता है।

₅ .सं.	ई-बोली सूचना संख्या	कार्य
1.	01/2021-22	निगम की बसों के माध्यम से लघु पार्सल सेवा संचालन करने हेतु सोल लाइसेंसी नियुक्ति का सुनहरा अवसर प्रदान करते हुए लघु पार्सल एवं सामान्य वस्तुओं के परिवहन हेतु निर्धारित प्रपन्न में ई-बोली प्रक्रिया द्वारा ऑनलाईन बोली आमंत्रित की जाती है।
संवाद/सी/2021-22/404		कार्यकारी निदेशक (प्रशासन)

WESTERN RAILWAY

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No. S/14/2021 Date 09.04.2021

S.N.	Short Description of Item	Quantity	T.O.D.			
277	Stop valve hand wheel for tank wagons	453 Nos.	19.04.2021			
278	Set of Air Brake Pipes	100 Set	23.04.2021			
279	Application Form for Reservation	20000000 Nos.	30.04.2021			
280	IR-DRDO Bio-toilet tanks	30 Set	30.04.2021			
281	Air Brake Hose Coupling for Brake Pipe	3000 Nos	30.04.2021			
282	Body Side Lower Panel of Lavatory	1350 Nos.	30.04.2021			
283	Air Brake Hose Coupling	2600 Nos.	30.04.2021			
284	Disposable HIV Protection Kit	5000 Nos.	30.04.2021			
285	Liquid Oxygen for Medical use	477000 CUM	03.05.2021			
286	Pipe 32 N.B.	30 Nos.	03.05.2021			
287	Set of Air Brake Pipes	700 Set	03.05.2021			
288	Compreg packing	10400 Nos.	03.05.2021			
egarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed						

tender conditions, please visit website www.ireps.gov.in. and www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in.

For Principal Chief Materials Manager

Pakistan OK's emergency use of third Chinese vax despite low efficacy rate

Tehran: Iran on Saturday Islamabad: Pakistan has began a 10-day lockdown amid approved the emergency use of a fourth wave of coronavirus the third Chinese vaccine, infections, state TV reported, a despite its low efficacy rate, as worrisome trend after more the country struggled to conthan a year of the country battain the spread of the corontling the Middle East's worst avirus. The Drug Regulatory

Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) Thursday granted Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) to CoronaVac, developed by Chinese company Sinovac Biotech, officials said on Saturday.

"This is the third Chinese vaccine allowed to be used in Pakistan," a DRAP official said, adding that the country now has five approved COVID vac-

Pakistan has already granted the EUA to China's two-dose Sinopharm and single-dose Convidecia vaccine developed by the Cansino Biologicals Inc. ÚK's AstraZeneca and Russian Sputnik V vaccines have also been approved by the DRAP.

Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004

NOTICE INVITING BID Bids are invited for works given below in various zones as per details given:

UBN No Last Date Nature of Work (Lacs) UBN: JDA2122WSOB00022 219/2020-21 EE-11 Road Renewal 03.05.2021 Details are available at Procurement Portal website www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.jda.urban.rajasthan.gov.ir **Executive Engineer 8** TA to Dir. Engg.-I Rai, Samwad/C/2021-22/434

Tutankhamun. However, within weeks they found mud brick formations that eventually turned out to be a well-pre-City walls and even rooms filled with ovens, storage pottery, and utensils used in daily

JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

No.: JDA/EE&TA to Dir.Engg.-I/2021-22/D-35

NIB No.: EE & TA to Dir. Engg.-I/25/2021-22

life are said to be present. Archeologists also found human remains that were visible to reporters and visitors on

Follow us on: Description to the transfer to the Follow us on the transfer to the transfer to

E-comm to accelerate India's auto sector growth: Report

sunday pioneer

IANS NEW DELHI

Strong acceptance of e-commerce and digitisation is expected to accelerate the growth of India's auto sector, advisory firm Grant Thornton Bharat said.

Accordingly, India's automobile market is estimated to grow more than '2.3X' from \$222 billion currently to \$512 billion by 2026.

Notably, the analysis by Allied Market Research, Market Line, Reserve Bank of India and Grant Thornton Bharat showed that e-commerce portals focused on the automobile market, such as Droom, Cardekho, and Olx have put consumers and the user experience in the spotlight helping the manufacturers attract more users.

Besides, the growing base of internet and smartphone users will further boost the digital transformation, and lead to an increase in expanding the market size of the e-commerce portals.

"The strong emergence and acceptance of the online channel have provided an impetus to seamless solutions, price discovery, transparency,

India's toll roads are likely to witness a 14-15 per cent

growth in collections in FY22,

ratings agency ICRA said in a

report.Accordingly, this growth

will be achieved on a low base

following an estimated de-

growth of 5-7 per cent in FY21.

"Road traffic has witnessed

Strong bounce back witnessed

SUMMER SPECIAL TRAINS

Northern Railway will run following

summer special express trains as per the

programme mentioned below:-

STATIONS

New Delhi

Aishbagh

Gorakhpur

Siwan Jn.

Chhapra

Sonpur Jn.

Hajipur Jn.

Samastipur

New Delhi

Aishbagh

Gorakhpur

Siwan Jn.

Chhapra

Sonpur Jn.

Hajipur Jn.

Samastipur

RailMadad

Helpline No.

Muzaffarpur Jn.

Darbhanga Jn.

Deoria Sadar

Kanpur Central

Badshahnagar

Muzaffarpur Jn.

Darbhanga Jn.

(Sunday) & 15.04.2021 (Thursday)

STATIONS

Kanpur Central

Badshahnagar

04074 New Delhi - Darbhanga Jn.

Special Express Train

for toll road assets: ICRA a marked improve



digital real-time payments along with certification on the quality of the vehicle for the consumers in the auto sector," said Rahul Kapur, Partner, Growth at Grant Thornton

According to the analysis report, since last year, Maruti Suzuki saw a five-fold increase in sales through digital means which now stand at 20 per cent of their total sales.

These changes in consumer's buying and research preferences signal a shift for the auto sector, as Covid19 played a big part in the online changaining traction."

Technology-enabled innovations like secure digital

a marked improvement in H2

FY2021 after subdued traffic

post resumption of tolling from

increased movement of both -

passenger and commercial

vehicles, resulting in growth of

This has been driven by

Train No. 04074

Dep.

23:15

05:30

07:00

07:28

11:55

12:57

14:00

15:25

16:35

16:55

17:50

19:40

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1 Trip

Dep.

23:15

05:30

07:00

07:28

11:55

12:57

14:00

15:25

16:35

16:55

17:50

19:40

Train No. 04076

Arr.

05:25

06:50

07:25

11:45

12:55

13:58

15:15

16:30

16:50

17:45

19:10

21:00

Arr.

05:25

06:50

07:25

11:45

12:55

13:58

15:15

16:30

16:50

17:45

19:10

21:00

Days of Run: 04074 Ex New Delhi from 11.04.2021

Accommodation: Sleeper, Reserved 2nd seating, Chair Car

Days of Run: 04076 Ex New Delhi from 13.04.2021 (Tuesday)

te: All norms of the State and Central Government regarding

COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other

precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

For any kind of Information such as detailed Time-Table and

Stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact

RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website

http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

Visit RailMadad website:-

www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in

Download RailMadad app.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Always at your service

Visit us at : www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

Accommodation: Sleeper, Reserved 2nd seating

04076 New Delhi - Darbhanga Jn.

Special Express Train

witnessed in the initial months,

April 20, 2020.

payments, hyper-logical logistics, analytics-driven customer engagement, increasing consumer awareness and digital advertisements are likely to support the growth going for-

As per the report, other factors such as rising middle class and young population with increasing disposable incomes will contribute towards growing the sector.

Furthermore, ease of owning a vehicle through the availability of multiple financing options as well as reduction in vehicle ownership tenure due to regulatory rules in some states, cited the report as other growth inducing factors.

hina's antitrust regulators

Con Saturday slapped a

record fine of USD 2.78 billion

on Alibaba Group, the world's

biggest e-commerce company,

for abusing its dominant mar-

ket position as Beijing tight-

ened the screws on the coun-

investigation that began last

Christmas eve, China's State

Administration for Market

Regulation (SAMR) slapped a

fine of 18.23 billion yuan (USD

2.78 billion) on Alibaba, head-

ed by the country's top bil-

lionaire Jack Ma, setting a

precedent for the ruling

Communist Party to use the

anti-monopoly rules to regulate

made an administrative penal-

ty decision under China's anti-

monopoly law, ordering

Alibaba Group to stop illegal

activities and imposing a fine

of 4 per cent on its 2019

yuan, totalling 18.23 billion

cluded the four-month inves-

tigation, alleging that Alibaba

has been abusing its market

dominance since 2015 by pro-

hibiting merchants from open-

ing stores or participating in

promotional activities on other

competitive platforms, state-

The market regulator con-

The SAMR said that it had

Closing a months-long

try's tech giants.

tech giants.

Petrol, diesel prices remain unchanged

IANS NEW DELHI

Fuel prices in the country remained unchanged on Saturday with oil marketing companies continuing on the pause mode and keeping petrol and diesel prices static for 11th consecutive day.

Accordingly, pump price of netrol and diesel remained at previous days level of Rs 90.56 and Rs 80.87 a litre, respectively, in the capital.

Petrol and diesel fell by 22 paisa and 23 paisa per litre respectively last week on Tuesday in wake global softening of oil prices. OMC have decided to pause price revision as they want to watch the crude price movement that has now fallen to around \$62.5 a barrel from remaining above this level in much of the last

Across the country as well the petrol and diesel price remain static on Saturday but its retail levels varied depending on the level of local levies on respective states.

In Mumbai, petrol continues to be priced at Rs 96.98 a litre and diesel at Rs 87.96 a litre. Premium petrol, howev-

China slaps record USD 2.78 billion fine

on Alibaba over anti-competitive tactics

The move is a new setback

for Alibaba and its

billionaire founder Ma

following a November

decision by regulators to

suspend the stock market

Alibaba's "pick one out of two"

requirement restricted compe-

tition among online retail plat-

forms and infringed the legit-

imate rights of the merchants,

at the same time hurt con-

for Alibaba and its billionaire

founder Ma following a

November decision by regula-

tors to suspend the stock mar-

ket debut of Ant Group, a

finance platform spun off from

the e-commerce giant. Ma, one of China's most

prominent entrepreneurs, dis-

appeared temporarily from

public view after criticizing

regulators in a speech in

days later by the Ant Group

the company said "Alibaba

accepts the penalty with sin-

cerity and will ensure its com-

operations in accordance with

the law, step up the building of

a compliance system, and bet-

pliance with determination,"

In a statement on Saturday,

It pledged to strengthen its

The move is a new setback

sumers' interests.

The SAMR said that

run CGTN TV reported.



er. continues to remain over Rs 100 a litre in the city as is the case with several cities across the country

The OMCs went on price cut for the first time this year on two consecutive days March 24 and 25 after keeping oil prices steady for past 24 days. It again reduced the price on March 30.

Thereafter, fuel prices have

remained unchanged. Earlier, petrol and diesel prices increased 26 times in 2021 with the two auto fuels increasing by Rs 7.46 and Rs 7.60 per litre, respectively, so far this year.

Ófficials in public sector oil companies said that retail price may rise again if crude and product prices pick up but for now it will fall or remain static for few more days.

ter fulfill its social responsibil-

ities, the CGTN report said.

a series of measures to lower

platform operating thresholds

and reduce platform operating

costs to create a more trans-

parent and efficient platform

environment for businesses,

sage to the world that China

will crackdown harshly on any

monopolistic behaviour if Big

Tech companies such as

Alibaba breach the law with

their monopolistic business

models, said Zhai Wei, execu-

tive director of the Competition

Law Research Centre at East

China University of Political

Science and Law in Shanghai.

way more important than the

penalty," Zhai told the Hong

Kong-based South China

Morning Post owned by Jack

which previously had to pick

sides among Big Tech compa-

implementation of anti-

development has obviously

been maintained and expand-

Observers say the fine shows China intends to move

against internet platforms that

it thinks are too big and aimed

IFC proposes \$50mn debt

at serving warning to them.

monopoly law.

He said small businesses

'The space for their free

"This is the biggest impact,

The fine sends a clear mes-

the report said.

It also vowed to introduce

Petrol pumps closed in Rajasthan as dealers demand rollback of VAT on fuel

PTI ■ JAIPUR

People faced difficulty across the state due to a one-day strike called by Rajasthan Petroleum Dealers Association of fuel stations on Saturday with the demand of a rollback in VAT on fuel in the state.

Around 7,000 petrol pumps remained closed in the state due to the strike.

However, fuel pumps that are company owned and company operated were open for the public. Association president Suneet Bagai said diesel and

petrol sales remained closed on the day. "The State Government increased VAT during the coronavirus pandemic and

generated extra revenue. The sales volume in the state has declined by 34 per cent because the fuel prices are

comparatively low in neighbouring states," he said. The association has

already submitted a memorandum of demands and we would go on an indefinite strike from April 25 if there is no positive decision by the Government, Bagai said.



¬he signing ceremony of the ■ Memorandum Understanding (MoU) between the School of Advanced

Sciences, VIT-AP University and CSIR-IICT was held at IICT, Hyderabad on the Saturday of 10th April 2021.

Chancellor, University after signing the MoU with CSIR- IICT, told that this collaboration will help faculty and students to get an opportunity to conduct research in advanced thrust areas in science and technology. This collaboration can bring forth project proposals in areas of mutual interest of faculty and students can be sub-

The expertise and techniconducting

VIT-AP inks Academic & Research MoU with



Dr. S V Kota Reddy, Vice-

mitted to various Agencies Industries for funding.

cal support that this collabo-Development Programmes (FDPs), National, International Conferences / Seminars / Symposium / Workshops etc. VIT-AP along with IICT, Hyderabad look forward to working on areas that would be beneficial to the academia which in turn would reflect on to the society we live in.

Mid and small caps best performers, gold slumps in 1st quarter

IANS NEW DELHI

Mid and small cap stocks are the best performing asset class for the quarter ending March 2021 while gold is the worst performer.
Mid and small cap stocks

delivered returns of 14 per cent in the quarter while gold under-performed with negative 11 per cent returns. Gold is the biggest under-performer for the first three months of 2021 vs. the other asset classes. Gold prices are down by 11 per cent in rupees and 10 per cent in US Dollar in the last three months. Apart from 'Risk on' trade, rising bond yields are now short term negative for the gold

As per Axis Securities, gold proved to be one of the best performing asset classes in 2020. In the last 10 years, Nifty outperformed the Emerging market in five years and developed market in four years.

The performance of smallcaps is highly volatile versus other asset classes. Small-cap ranked at the bottom in 2018 and 2019 and recovered sharply in 2020, outperforming the other asset classes in the first quarter of 2021.

NIFTY50 delivered a healthy 15 per cent return which was significantly better than the 2019 return of 12 per cent. While NIFTY Midcap 100 and Nifty Smallcap 100 delivered 22 per cent and 21 per cent returns respectively in 2020, the returns for mid and small-cap indices were negative "We expect the broad-

based rally of 2020 to continue well into 2021 (already visible in Q12021) as we believe a strong earnings revival across the board is on the cards. A lower interest rate environment and higher fiscal spending will continue to support the equity markets," Axis Securities

It said that asset allocation and sector rotation will be key to generate out-performance in 2021. An equity market is likely to be the best performing asset class for the next one to two years.

Ít said that trading at a 10 per cent premium to large caps From a valuation perspective, the midcaps look attractive vs. large caps.

Historically, during the bull phase of 2017, midcaps were trading at a 45 per cent premium to large caps. The recent spate of IPOs and their success mid and small-cap stocks, the report said. Since November 2020,

small and midcaps are picking up steam and they should deliver solid returns in 2021 as economic uncertainties will reduce and volatility will decline.

The report said that top 10 stocks domination is dwinSmall Caps Large Caps

dling in the market. Since December 2017, Nifty has delivered a return of 40 per cent. Out of which, the top 10 stocks by free-float market cap have delivered a stellar return of 58 per cent while the remaining 40 stocks had delivered only 17 per cent. This divergence has started narrowing in recent months. Based on the top 10 stocks, the adjusted Nifty value works out to 16,647 while the remaining 40 would lead NIFTY to just

This indicates Nifty is better valued beyond the top 10 names. Long term risk rewards are better in the next 40 names vs. the top 10, the report said.

Broader rally since November and broad-based market performance was seen in the month of March despite higher volatility signifying intact overall risk appetite towards mid and small stocks. Stocks ranking from 101-200 rallied by 2 per cent in March, and 98 per cent in the last year which is superior to the largecap performance. Stronger FII flows since

November continue to drive the momentum FIIs are net buyers; FIIs have added \$7.8 billion while DIIs have pulled out \$3.1 billion from the Indian equity market in the last 3 Since Jan 2020, FIIs have

bought a massive amount of \$30.9 billion while the DIIs have sold \$8.6 billion from the Indian equity market. Highest ever FII inflows

seen in the current financial year: \$37 billion, higher than FY10/11/13 levels.

The fiscal year ended on a strong note for the equity markets with all the sectors deliv-

ering positive returns. The report said metals and IT registered the strongest gains while FMCG grew the slowest. Autos and Realty also

delivered solid returns during the fiscal. While FY21 was strong which was aided by cheap valuations and a low base, March performance was a mixed bag.

The high beta sectors such as ing while defensives such as FMCG and Pharma registered marginal gains. The report said now the investors are betting higher

on riskier assets like equity. Sentiments are improving further with increasing optimism driven by vaccine development and faster than expected economic recovery.

Apple likely to use

scaling up

IANS NEW DELHI

TioMart activity is scaling up as per a report by JP Morgan research which found brisk online activity across stores and formats it visited in Mumbai in the last week of March that could have been nudged further by rising Covid-19 cases "We found the delivery

infrastructure to be a mix of bike-based delivery executives, similar to e-commerce/food O2O, and van-based batched delivery that peers use (e.g., Bigbasket, DMart, Grofers). Our conversations suggest that there has been an evolution from bikes to largely vans at several stores, reflecting higher value, and heavier and more complex orders delivered with

greater efficiency. Bike-based delivery ensures short turn-around times for lighter, lowvalue orders, improving customer experience," JP Morgan

ery staff identified themselves as being from JioMart or Grab (a delivery firm acquired by Jio JioMart or Grab branding, and the vans and drivers were large ly outsourced.

fleets maintained by peers (Bigbasket, DMart Ready, Swiggy) that provide free pub-

current infrastructure can support \$8-11 billion in annual gross merchandise value (GMV).

Apart from lending \$50

IANS CHENNAI

allel lenders. According to IFC, the total solar power project cost is estimated at \$200 million.

Power India, one of the stepdown subsidiaries of Enel Green Power S.p.A., an existing IFC client.

the largest renewable energy developer in the world with 49 GW installed capacity across wind, solar, geothermal and hydropower projects, and with presence in 28 countries.

finance for Thar Surya solar power project Tndia's automobile OEMs are

Laccelerating their shift towards EVs by investing in startups and enhancing collaborations, HDFC Securities "Along with developing

electric products in-house, OEMs are open to collaborations, to reduce the speed-tomarket as well as maintain capital efficiency," HDFC Securities said in a report.

"Part suppliers are attempting to be segment agnostic, developing components for ICE, hybrid and EV products."

Further, the report cited that other OEMs are adopting different methods towards electrification such as investing in startups and ramping up production of EVs in their portfolios. Besides, it said that passenger vehicle OEMs such as Maruti are expected to introduce hybrid models, which will enable the company to transition towards EVs in the medium term (FY25-30).

"However, as we look further ahead i.e. beyond 2030, the outlook becomes cloudy as the longer-term threat from BEVs and the resultant competitive dynamics will impact the traditional business models in different manners.

120Hz ProMotion display in 'iPhone 13' lineup

SAN FRANCISCO The next-gen iPhone 13 Pro lineup will reportedly come

with 120Hz ProMotion display for the first time. According to AppleInsider, lowtemperature polycrystalline oxide (LTPO) displays have been rumoured for the iPhone for about two years. However, the report claims

that the displays will finally arrive on the iPhone, granting the device a 120Hz refresh display for the first time. Citing 'industry sources," supply chain monitor DigiTimes claims that Samsung and LG are converting iPhone-only production lines to LTPO tech production.

The report claims that this migration will end shortly, allowing both to provide the screens to Apple in time for use in 2021. Apple is said to be using the displays in its higher-end "iPhone 13," likely in the so-called "iPhone 13 Pro" and "iPhone 13 Pro Max".Display panel orders for lower-end "iPhone 13" models are expected to be filled by OLED suppliers LG Display and BOE.

Apple was reportedly working on a battery-saving technology for LTPO thinfilm transistors prior to release of the iPhone 12.

JioMart activity

The note said most deliv-

in 2018), although few wore This is unlike the branded

The report notes that the

PUBLIC NOTICE This is to inform you that Late Shri Sunheri S/o Shri

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Mrs. Vimlesh Gupta is the owner and in possession of Property bearing No. 460/3, area measuring 126.66 sq. yes, built on Piot No.3, out of Khasra No. 2202/635, situated in the area of Village Chandrawall alias Shahdara, in the abadi of Gail No.17, Block No. 25-A, Vishwas Nagar Known as Bhola Nath Nagar, Illaqa Shahdara, Delhi: "Said property" by virtue of Sale Deed dated 27.09.2018, duly registered as Document No. 8240, Further, Original Regd. Relinquishment Deed dated 10.07.2000 executed by Mr. Sushil Kumar Arya, Vijay Kumar Arya & Mrs. Savita Aggarwal in favour of Mrs. Sharda Devi in respect of the said property is lost. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner intends to take loan from our client ie. DCB Bank Ltd. by mortgaging the said property to our client, if anybody has any objection's upon said property its ownership & Title! its Sale and Mortgage, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 15 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants) 200, Inde Floro, 23, Niviji Marg, Moti Nagar, N Delhi-15

urnar & Associates (Advocates & Consultan 200, Ilnd Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, N. Delhi-15

Ratan Singh R/o Village- Shahpur Govardhanpur Post-Dadri, Distt. G.B. Nagar U.P. has a plot ir Noida whose no. is Plot No GT-70, Sector-145 Noida G.B. Nagar (U.P) is registered at sub registrar office Dadri in Bahi No. 3, Jild No. 65, at page no. from 405–408 on 06.03.1995 at serial no 65. So above plot is being transferred to the name of Pravin Kumar S/o Late Shri Ranveer Singh Tajveer Singh S/o Late Shri Ranveer Singh Lokesh Chouhan S/o Khillu Singh R/o Village Shahpur Govardhanpur, Post-Dadri, Distt. G.B Nagar U.P. on the basis of registered will. So all elated people is informed that if someone has any bjection about transfer of above plot, then he submit his objection in Noida Authority Residentia department with all document proof within 30 days from the publishing date of this information.

International Finance Corporation (IFC) plans to debt finance the construction of Thar Surya 1 Pvt Ltd's 300 MW solar power project in Bikaner, Rajasthan by \$50 mil-

million, IFC will also mobilise \$100 million debt through par-

The solar power project is sponsored by Enel Green

Enel Green Power is one of

Enel Green Power is a sub sidiary of Enel S.p.A., Italy.

The solar power generation project was awarded by Solar Energy Corporation of India The power generated by

Thar Surya will be sold to SECI under 25 year Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Rewa: A view of the Ultra Mega Solar Power project in

Madhya Pradesh's Rewa that

was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from New Delhi via video conferencing on July 10, 2020. Union Power Minister RK Singh and Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan were among the dignitaries present on the occa-

The 750-MW solar project is said to be Asia's biggest. The Rs 4,000-crore project has three units of 250 MW each at a solar park spread over 1,500 hectares developed by Rewa Ultr.

India's OEMs accelerating shift towards EVs: **HDFC Securities**

IANS NEW DELHI

CAPTAIN'S CALL

RUNS

54

49

48

5

2

4

3

WKTS

Raina returns with firepower

Suresh's 54 in his first match since 2019 final, Sam Curran's quick 34 guide Super Kings to 188-7

uresh Raina announced his IPL comeback with a blazing 36-ball 54 and powered Chennai Super Kings to a solid 188 for seven against Delhi Capitals here on Saturday.

Sam Curran smashed away to 34 off only 15 balls to prop up the CSK innings towards the end. Curran hit four fours and

The last five overs yielded 52 runs for CSK, thanks to Curran's power-packed innings.
Asked to bat first by

Rishabh Pant, Ruturaj Gaikwad got CSK off the mark with a pleasing drive through the off side between point and cover, two deliveries after being beaten all ends up by a Chris Woakes outswinger.

Last season's runners-up DC didn't have to wait long for their first breakthrough as Avesh Khan (2/23 in 4 overs) had Faf du PLessis trapped in front of the wicket in the second

In the first ball of the third over, Woakes had Gaikwad caught in the slip cordon as CSK slipped to seven for two.

The English pacer drew Gaikwad into a push with a ball that moved a slightly on pitch-

In came Raina — he had missed the last IPL owing to personal reasons — and in the company of Moeen Ali, the seasoned campaigner revived CSK's innings and looked to put up a challenging total against a strong DC batting line-up at the Wankhede Stadium.

During his 24-ball 36, Moeen struck four boundaries



Chennai Super Kings batsman Suresh Raina raises his bat after he completes his fifty against Delhi Capitals

helping hand to Raina.

ping hand to Raina. Moeen's innings when the all-going for a reverse sweep, the who ran backwards from short Experienced off-spinner rounder got himself into an ensuing top-edge ending in a third man to hold on to the ball.

and two sixes, playing a fine Ravichandran Ashwin cut short uncomfortable position while good catch by Shikhar Dhawan,

sive boundaries, not afraid to dance down the wicket against

the wily spinner's flight. Using his feet well, the veteran southpaw hoicked legspinner Amit Mishra for two and also got a maximum against Ashwin.

Ambati Rayudu came in

Meanwhile Raina went

Raina got himself going

It was no different with Marcus Stoinis as Raina pulled the Australian medium pacer for another six before being run-out following a mix-up with Ravindra Jadeja (26).

MOTION PICTURE

PLAYER

PLAYER

1. Suresh Raina (CSK)

3. AB de Villiers (RCB)

1. Harshal Patel (RCB)

2. Avesh Khan (DC)

3. Chris Woakes (DC)

1. Suresh Raina (CSK)

3. AB de Villiers (RCB)

SUMMER SLAM

2. Chris Lynn (MI)

MOST SIXES

2. Chris Lynn (MI)



WE'RE A TEAM: Delhi Capitals players and support staff pose for group photo at the end of final training session ahead of IPL 14 first game against Chennai Super Kings



HE'S BACK: Rajasthan Royals pacer Mustafizur Rahman poses



Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma wore shoes highlighting the great one-horned rhinoceros during the IPL opener against Royal Challengers Bangalore on Friday to help build awareness about conserving the endangered species

COVID -VE REPORT MUST AT WANKHEDE

The Mumbai Cricket Association has asked its Apex Council members to produce a Covid-19 negative certificate in order to enter the Wankhede stadium, which will host 10 matches of the 14th edition of the IPL. "Dear Apex Council members. As per BCCI's protocol, all the officials who would be attending the IPL 2021 matches at Wankhede Stadium are required to produce a Negative report of RT-PCR test conducted within 48 hours of the match day," MCA secretary Saniay Naik, wrote in a note to all the members. "The tests are mandatory even for those who have been vaccinated. The report will have to be

meet flashy KKR

KEY PLAYERS

RASHID KHAN

Afghanistan premier spinner's four over spell will decide result of the game



ANDRE RUSSELL

After disappointing season last year, the West Indian will be eager to leave his impression

ormer champions Kolkata Knight Riders will Flook to strike a perfect balance under the astute leadership of Eoin Morgan when they open their IPL campaign against a consistent Sunrisers Hyderabad at Chepauk on Sunday.

In his first stint as full time captain, all eyes would be on the ODI World Cup-winning English skipper who will look to transform the misfiring army of cricketers and bring back the glorious days of two-time IPL champions.

In Shubman Gill, they have a fantastic young top-order batsman who can easily shift gears, while the likes of Rahul Tripathi, Nitish Rana and veteran Karthik, who's free from the captaincy burden, can form the core of their Indian batting. Then there is the skipper Morgan who will

look to bat through the overs while hoping that 2019 MVP Andre Russell gets back his explosive touch after a quiet season in 2020.

Russell had the worst season by his standards averaging 13 in nine innings without a single match-winning performance as the over-dependency on the Jamaican cost KKR dear last season.

Another West Indian who flopped big time in the UAE was Sunil

It's time that they think beyond the Trinidadian and try out Shakib Al Hasan, their buy in this year's

They also have a mystery spinner in Varun Chakravarthy who struck it rich in absence of Narine last year but his fitness remains a concern

One the other end, SRH will be bolstered by the return of Bhuvneshwar Kumar who played just four games in last year due to a hip injury.

Fresh from his fine form during the white-ball leg of the England series at home, Bhuvneshwar will spearhead their attack with yorker specialist T

Natrajan by his side. Add Afghan star spinner Rashid Khan to the bowling lineup and the Orange Army looks

VENUE: CHIDAMBARAM STADIUM, CHENNAI HEAD TO HE

Matches 19 Sunrisers Hyderabad 07 Kolkata Knight Riders

LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

Kolkata Knight Rider defeated Sunrisers Hyderabad by 7 wickets at Abu Dhabi

Kolkata Knight Rider beat SRH in Super Over after match ended in a tie at Abu Dhabi

912

Sunrisers Hyderabad opening batsman and captain David Warner who scored 912 runs at an average of 45.60 in 23 innings of as many matches for Delhi Daredevils and Sunrisers Hyderabad is the second highest run-getter against Kolkata Knight Riders in IPL history

1459

Andre Russell who made 1459 runs at an average of 31.04 in 57 innings of 67 matches, needs 41 runs to become the fourth batsman to score over 1500 runs for Kolkata Knight

Riders in IPL

pretty balanced in their attack. But the real strength of SRH will be their destructive top-order with the duo of David Warner and in-form Jonny Bairstow. They also have Kane Williamson and Manish Pandey, forming a solid top four.

But it remains to be seen who will play the role of the finisher for the SRH as they seem to lack muscle power teams badly need in the last five overs.

Consistent Sunrisers Knew my role in RCB since I was traded: Harshal

Harshal Patel was told well

will be death overs' "pointsman" for Royal Challengers Bangalore, a role he played to perfection in the IPL opener against Mumbai Indians.

Harshal's career-best 5 for 27 was one of the two match-winning performances for RCB with the other coming from AB de

"When I was traded from Delhi Capitals, I was told what role I will play for the franchise," the Haryana pacer said at the post-match press conference.

He was brilliant at the death and just like skipper Virat Kohli said, Harshal also knew that he is expected to perform the tough job for

which he had planned always had the yorker but earlier meticulously.

"There were ing in the last two overs (he bowled 18th and 20th). That gave me a lot of clarity. It helped me prepare certain plans against batters and kept

my preparations concise." Harshal said that change of pace and the slow yorkers have been his biggest strength.

'The ball started reversing at one stage. It was important to bowl the yorkers and slower balls," he said.

According to Harshal, he has been bowling those slower yorkers that got rid of Ishan Kishan and Marco Jansen, for almost two seasons now.

"Just that when you don't get wickets of slow yorkers, people don't tend to see that. I

couldn't take it into the game. He did a lot of simulation of

clear instructions bowling yorkers during training n to get it right during the "In the past 15-20 days, I was

trying to put myself into situa-

'OUR DEATH BOWLER'

Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli was all praise for Harshal Patel's match-winning bowling performance, terming him their designated death bowler in this edition of the

"We brought Harshal in a trade from Delhi. He is relishing the responsibility and is clear with his plans. He was the difference today (Friday). He is going to be our death bowler. As a captain you want players with clarity, and he has that," Kohli said at the postmatch press conference.

produced at the time of entry to the stadium on each

MI favourites to lift trophy: Anjum

HARSHIT BISHT ■ NEW DELHI

 $F^{ormer\ skipper\ of\ India's\ national}_{women's\ cricket\ team\ and\ commen-}$ tator Anjum Chopra backs Mumbai Indians to make a hat-trick of the IPL titles after winning back-to-back tournaments in the UAE last year.

The side, led by Rohit Sharma, defeated Delhi Capitals in the 2020 final in Dubai on November 10 and, in five months, is back on the field to take part in the 2021 edition.

Speaking to The Pioneer ahead of the 2021 season, Chopra said: "Mumbai Indians will start as the favourites because there are no loopholes in that line-up. Just six (five) months back, they won the last championship. And they haven't changed many players from that squad. At least the playing eleven remains the same. The majority of their players are in good form and you can never discount them from the competition because of their consis-İn March, Mumbai Indians middle-

order batsman Suryakumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan made their India debut, with both scoring 50s in their maiden International innings against England in the recently-concluded T20 International

Also in the One Day Internationals,

Krunal Pandya hit 50 in his first match.

Ahead of the auction in Chennai this year, Mumbai — who have lifted the trophy on five occasions — retained the core group, apart from adding the likes of experienced Piyush Chawla, Kiwi

all-rounder Jimmy Neesham and pacer Adam Milne, besides a few rookies including Arjun Tendulkar.

In fact, the 20-yearold, 6'8" South African left-arm pacer Marco Jansen made his debut against Royal C h a l l e n g e r s Bangalore in the season's opener on Friday and took 2-28 in his four-over spell. And if that was not enough the return of Hardik Pandya as a bowler is a welcome boost for the side. Hardik didn't bowl in the last season but, with his remodelled action, picked up the ball against England in the T20I series. However, whether he will bowl during the

Talking about other teams, Anjum, who is part of the Star Sports commentary team for this IPL, said the form of Virat Kohli and Ab de Villiers will be crucial for Royal Challengers Bangalore's chances despite the team having the likes of T20 specialist Glenn Maxwell.

"Like every year, there are high expectations from RCB. Last time, they came close (finished third after losing Qualifier 2 against Delhi Capitals). But again the onus lies on two players -Virat Kohli and Ab de Villiers. It's

good to have Glenn Maxwell but Virat and AB's form will be decisive," she said.

After the final T20I against England on March 20, Virat announced that he will open the innings in IPL as well.
Anjum believes that it is a well-planned move by the Indian skipper to

get into the g r o o v e ahead of T20 the World Cup in India later this year. "It (Virat as opener) just broadens the options.

If he wants to open, no one will

stop him and, I think, before he

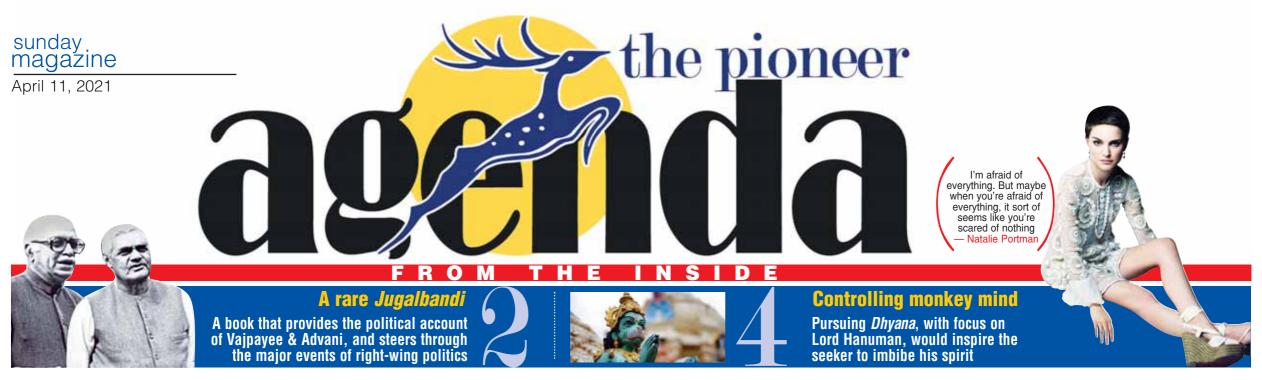
decides to open, he definitely would have worked out the combination of the Indian line-up as well. The IPL matches are just going to give him that greater exposure to open and structure the innings because we (India) are leading into the World Cup.

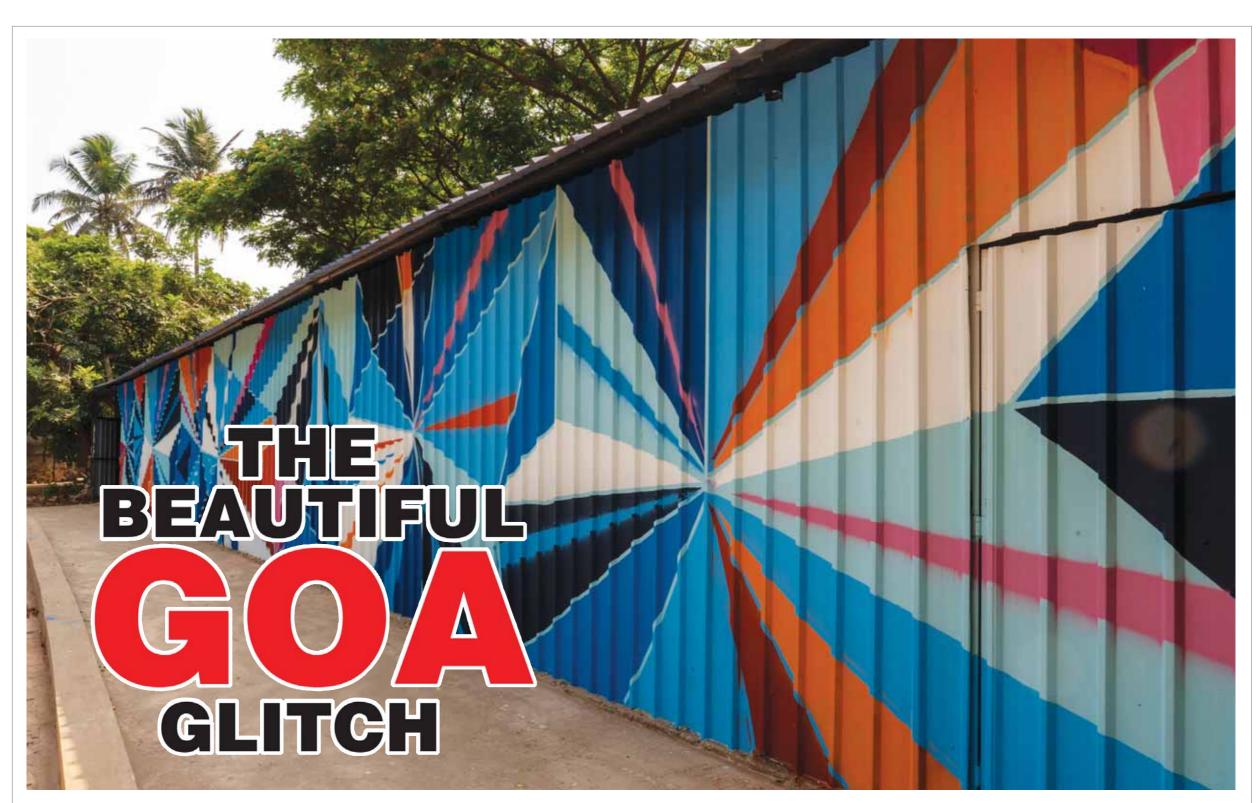
"And if Virat and Rohit Sharma open in the World Cup and lay a strong foundation, it will be easy for players like Suryakumar and Hardik to follow," she added.

One thing that makes this edition different from yesteryears is that there are no home games for any team. It is going to play a key role in the tournament,

according to the former India captain. "The neutral venue concept will affect a lot in this tournament because teams make strategies according to home conditions. When it was announced that the tournament would be held in India, it meant seven home games for every team. So everyone picked the players according to that but now when it is not there, it will have an impact," Anjum

On the "one player to watch out for" in the tournament, she put her weight behind Hardik Pandya. "He will have a fantastic tournament. He had one in Dubai too and, this time, he will do even better," she concluded.





Street artist and co-founder St+art India, Hanif Kureshi, Bombay Sapphire's Stir Creativity, Serendipity Arts Foundation and the Corporation of the City of Panaji join hands to paint Goa's dry waste sorting stations and turn them into works of art. NAVNEET MENDIRATTA speaks to the artist

ou just cannot miss the beautiful mural painted in colours of Goa as you drive past the busy road in Dona Paula, Panjim, Goa. It's an unusual canvas. Painted in bright hues, mostly blue, this work of public art is painted on Goa's dry waste sorting stations, making for an attractive selfie point.

Called Goa Glitch, this mural is a joint initiative of Bombay Sapphire's Stir Creativity, Serendipity Arts Foundation, the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) and St+art India cofounder Hanif Kureshi. The idea being to tap into the imaginative spirit of those passing by. The mural features geometric visuals in beautiful hues of the Bombay Sapphire blue, representing the spirit of adventure and the openness of Goa, and bringing to life the endless coastlines, and the expansive blue skies of the city.

"The mural is about exploiting the colours of

Goa, like a glitch," says Kureshi in a candid conversation post the unveiling of the mural. "I visualised it as glitching of the colours of Goan skies — in summer, monsoon, winter; morning, afternoon and noon...

Different shades of blue that could also be interpreted as colours of water, more specifically the ocean. It's like the

glitch of both skies and the ocean and that's why Goa Glitch," he says.

Kureshi has been working with Serendipity Arts for the last four years or since it started. In the first edition, Kureshi participated as an artist and then from the next edition onwards he worked as a curator, where he brought in St+art India and put together street art editions in Panjim.

where he brought in St+art India and put together street art editions in Panjim. Bombay Sapphire's Stir Creativity platform aims to revive and enable creative self-expression amongst the audience. For over three decades, the

brand has collaborated with designers, artists, architects, and individuals from outside the creative industry to create artworks that reawaken creative potential.

"Each mural has a story. It's interesting when you work on the street, you find that there are so many stories that are waiting to be told. As for this, I am kind of familiar with Panjim's landscape and whenever a new structure comes up, we look at it as a possible canvas," he shares. This, or shall we say, these canvasses have been particularly interesting. "Not many are aware that these new structures are actually dry waste sorting stations. This is where CCP segregates the waste of dry kind such as paper, plastic, sharp objects, glass, steel and metal. These sheds play a very important role in the whole recycling scheme of things. Our idea was to bring attention to the process and promote recycling. We wanted to give it a new life and make it not look like a dustbin. And we thought what better than art to get the conversation started," he says, speaking of the collaboration.

Considering Dona Paula is one of the busiest public areas in Goa, the mural highlights the artist's message on the importance of sustainability and recycling very effectively. In India, Goa is one of the cities that recycles 80% of their waste with a strong model created for waste management and sustainability. In addition to stirring creativity among the community, the collaboration builds awareness for environmental sustainability and encourages people to

ability and encourages people to be more conscious of their actions, he shares. Besides this shed, Kureshi is collaborating to paint at least three more in a year.

more in a year.

An alumni of Baroda
School of Art, Kureshi
started painting on
streets in 2008. He began
with Graffiti and gradually
moved on to the world of
street art which he says, he
finds "more free". "The
difference between
Graffiti and Street Art,
you could say, is the sense
of style. While Graffiti can

THAT THESE NEW
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ATTENTION TO THE

PROCESS AND PROMOTE

NOT MANY ARE AWARE

99

RECYCLING

be likened to vandalism, Street Art is more positively thought out and refined. So, yes, you could say that I sought an expression that is more positive and would provoke people to think," he

From getting German street artist, Hendrick ECB to paint the 150 ft mural of Mahatma Gandhi at the Police Headquarters in New Delhi, as part of the St+Art Delhi street art festival in January 2014 to commemorate the martyrdom of the Father of the Nation, to putting together Street Art festival in Shahpur Jat and Hauz Khas in Delhi, the entire process evoked the idea on gentrification in the city. "The awareness regarding the street art grew as we moved towards Lodhi Colony and worked with the government properties. However, working at a central location like Lodhi Colony, we realised that there is no room for gentrification there. We have been doing similar work in Chennai and Mumbai," he shares.

While Kureshi shares that the response and reception to street art has grown in the past decade, the element of planning in the urbanscape continues to elude in the country. "There's no urban planning element to street art as of now. And that's why, I feel, it becomes more important for art to cover up for all that is not planned," he avers. Delhi's Lodhi Colony perhaps is a case in point but then there is a catch "Maybe at some point, Lodhi Colony will be demolished and there would be high rises instead. But I still feel the art that found place there would leave a lasting impact. I think about the children growing up in Lodhi Colony and their imagination and what they would like think about art and perhaps, choosing art as a career option," he says.

On the subject of Street Art versus vandalism, Kureshi has a take: "There is a thin line between vandalism and street art. Personally, when I set out to do graffiti, I could have gone on to become a rebel. More so in principle, as there is a school that produces rebels and is more of a breeding ground where you adopt a bottom down approach. Street art, on the other hand, takes a top down approach where you get on the ground with more voices on the street to inspire more people to express themselves. You can be vocal about issues with the same amount of rights which any other company has in terms of putting in money and making an ad and

putting on the face. If carried out properly, with requisite permissions, even the people start owning street art. That's when the real change takes

This is also not the first time that Kureshi has lent his creativity to a cause. Kureshi has recently partnered with Art For Change, a virtual art challenge and exhibition, as one of the jury members. The initiative aims to change the narrative by turning the focus away from the victim and putting the spotlight on the perpetrator. Organised by Gordon Thomas Honeywell-GA & Ogilvy India in partnership with UN Women India, Girl Up (UN Foundation), reputed academic institutions like National Institute of Fashion Technology, Delhi (NIFT) and Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune (SIMB), this initiative seeks to unleash the power of creativity to transform the way our society deals with survivors of rape & sexual violence, shifting the accountability from the survivor to the per-

"Art for Change is a project all about violence against women, which includes domestic abuse. It is about inviting ideas about how we can change the situation so the project moves people to act instead of being mute spectators," he says.

Besides Delhi, Kureshi has been working a lot in Chennai. "We did a district called Kannagi Art District. I find cities in south India to be much more welcoming than the cities in north India. The art culture is there and people understand and respect the art as well as the artist," he shares.

Similarly, Kureshi-led St+art has worked on creating Mahim Art district in Mumbai; Ukkadam Art District in Coimbatore and Maqtha Art District in Hyderabad. "Different cities have different styles. So in Maqtha, which is predominantly a Muslim district, we try not to paint portraits. The focus is to be more abstract in that space, trying to be more sensitive to the surrounds. It is also about encouraging people to own the art and the space," he shares.

Ask him about the dream city to paint, Kureshi says: "We are okay with the metros that we are painting. There really is no dream city as such in our mind. The idea, however, is to go to cities where people are excited and reach out to the grassroots of India. For that is where the real artist would love to leave their mark.

April 11, 2021

The book not only provides the political account of Vajpayee and Advani, it also delicately steers through all the major events of the Indian politics, mainly right-wing, writes MOHAMMAD IRSHAD

A rare Jugalbandi

before Modi by Vinay Sitapati presents a fascinating account to trace the journey of the two tallest and major drivers of the 'India Right-wing' as they remained at the helm and navigated through the testing times beginning from Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to managing and executing the affairs of the Bhartiya Jan Sangh (1951) and Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP). Book offers a larger ambit to study the rise of 'LK Advani and AB Vajpayee' and analytical chronology of all the organisations cemented on the idea to unite Hindus that is Hindu Mahasabha, RSS (1925), Bhartiya Jan Sangh (1951), VHP (1964), BJP (1980) and Bajrang Dal (1984) and Sawdeshi Jagran Manch (1991).

Sitapati, an academic's shadow falls over the book. He is aptly thoughtful in metaphorically chosen title; Jugalbandi demonstrates the relationship between Vajpayee and Advani — means the melody of the ragas in Indian classical music concerts by two musicians playing different instruments, however perfectly in tune with the other. Neither of the artistes does survive under the shadow of the other, instead mutually compliment to mesmerise through that music recital. Sitapati had pitchfully utilised all the available resources, to tease out the argument to his book and left a mark of solid scholarship. It took him three straight years to complete book.

Book not only provides the political account of Vajpayee and Advani, it also delicately steers through all the major gleaning events of the India politics mainly right-wing, who have marked a substantial presence on the political map of this country. Markedly, ranging from their struggle — to register mass acceptability, electorally — prevailing in the early years of the post-independent India to the rise of bahujan politics, Khalistan movement in Punjab globalisation and Babri Masjid demolition movement. Conspicuous shift had taken place in 1980, the author says: "After decades in which Advani was subordinate to Vajpayee, by 1980 their relationship had become more equal. While Advani had always needed Vajpayee, he was now needed. They were now a classical *jugal-bandi*." (p 108-109) Before 1980,

Vajpayee with support of Advani was busy crafting a space for himself by polit-ical burying leaders like Balraj Madhok - founded ABVP in 1948 — ML Sodhi, Nanaji Deshmukh, and others

First chapter of the book puts light on events that caused the emergence of RSS (1925) and Hindu Mahasabha and prepares a background which helped Advani and Vajpayee joined politics with a resolve to unite the Hindus of all sects. Sitapati, theoretically spurns a widely believed argument followed after the murder of Mahatma Gandhi by Nathuram Godse, that Godse was a direct beneficiary/borrower of RSS' religious-political ideas — on the contrary, he argues far from supporting political violence, RSS had wanted nothing to do with politics during this period (p. 33). He maintained considering Godse's differences with RSS, Godse went on to repeatedly criticise him throughout the mid-1940s. Book detests the fact that RSS was remotely involved in the murder of the Mahatma Gandhi. This could be a matter of great further academic dispute. Through the journey of both the

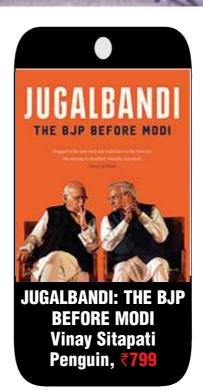
leaders — nurtured by the RSS — during the formative years of the modern Indian state, book exposes the hypocrisy and inconsistency in their ideology to accomplish political goals, whether it was their shift from adopting 'Gandhian Socialism' to drift towards capitalism as a core economic principle and approach towards the minorities especially Muslims and Christians. Jinnah grandson, Nusli Wadia, was the first one wealthiest business person to fund the party; Bhartiya Jan Sangh (BJS) and BJP find no hesitation in accepting the donation from him. Advani perhaps paved his debt back to Nusli's grandfather, Jinnah, — founder of Pakistan — during his visit to Pakistan and hailing him as 'secular', 'Great Man' and Apostle of 'Hindu-Muslim Unity.' In my reading, this 'political jugalbandi' was to deceptively trick non-Hindus to garner the political acceptability to further marginalise them masking their much admired fascist ambition under the garb of so called secularism followed by Vajpayee to spear the right-wing.

Jugalbandi of the Advani and Vajpayee took shape on the foundation of organisational Hindu unity and theocratic principles, meanwhile if we take to

first decade of post-independent India, Jugalbandi of Nehru and Patel build on democratic-secular values, which thrive on adequate scope to diverse viewpoints, still remains as a major glue to unite the

In Sitapati's argument there is a fundamental flaw, he only takes into account Vaypayee's verbal conflict with RSS on various subjects but it largely ignores his assessment on the basis of the power and positions including prime ministership, happily cherishing on the RSS' support in his political life, more than benefit taken by Advani, therefore Sitapati's argument fails on merit, as Vajpayee markedly compromised on his principles in public life to peddle the idea, Right wing fundamentally stands for.

Book suggests Vaypayee's politics was formulated during the Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru's golden era perhaps that amplified his never ending discontent with the RSS in contrast his public political actions largely contradict Nehruvian vision except on countable occasions. For instance, after the Babri Masjid demolition, Vajpayee is famously known to be quite disturbed; however, he followed the party route and surprisingly demonstrated himself as secular leader to later siege the power in Delhi. This morally does not carry any weight as Vajpayee never distanced himself officially to fight back the unjust, inhuman and degrading ideas. It, however, will remain a perennial irony that the person who drove the rath



to Ayodya to mobilise mass support in favour of the Ram Mandir, could not secure the seat of prime minister and finished in his self-nurtured party with humiliation and forced to live life in political seclusion of never fading quarters of the Lutyens Delhi.

When the right-wing could not obtain desired outcome, they tacitly decided to follow the essence of Brahman — described as absolute knowledge in Advaita vedantic philosophy — known to us as neti neti (not this, not this), similarly, without projecting a clear vision of its hierarchical and communal philosophy to gather support from all non-Hindus to establish and politically empower RSS and BJP. Neti *neti*, basically, here means it advocates nothing but accepts everything as long as it suits them to expand organisation, to secure the throne of Delhi, which Indian right-wing always imagined ever since its inception, to declare India as 'Hindu Rashtra'. Had Deendayal Upadhyay and Balraj Madhok survived strategies employed against them, we would have read their Jugalbandi.

Book seems lost in its argument as it attempts to strike a balance when two contentious historical subjects require the definite response of the author. It could be an intentional move, since the book is devoid of mere subjective convictions and prejudices as the author approaches them purely, while using considerable references

Despite other things, it is the Hindu nationalism and call for the organisational unity that kept them together. They were devout to their ideology. At the end book, attempts to see through the new developing jugalbandi between Modi-Shah.

Book points out their similarities and dissimilarities; as new on-going jugalbandi is more hostile towards the opposition though adhere to age old conviction of public display of internal unity (p 299). New *jugalbandi*'s expanded social base from upper castes, to tribals, middle castes and even dalits (p 300), mastered the strategy to hide their failures by directly channelising the Hindu anger towards the Muslims on all the matters, to conveniently safeguard the ideology and galvanising the support for the larger good of Hindutva. It aims at Hindutvisation of Dalits, Advasis and OBC, this trait is a unique and distinct attribute of the Modi-Shah jugalbandi. It is authoritative, less democratic in its functioning as only the few are allowed to speak the truth to power. The Vapayee-Advani relationship was more ideological than the Modi-Shah's relationship. But still to conclude their relationship, could be a little unfair as long as the artistes of new jugalbandi (Modi-Shah) have not gone off stage after the

delivering performance. This book engages the reader and is written sedately. Sitapati has interwoven all the major events and figures essentially required to make it an intriguing read to students of right-wing politics and post-colonial Indian Politics in gen-

The reviewer is Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Indraprastha College for Women, DU

WRITTEN ON THE WIND Anuradha Kumar-Jain Rupa, ₹295

Set in pre-Partition Lahore,

from the turn of the century to the time of Independence, this is the story of two women, both strong and willing to challenge the limits of the acceptable, but in their own way and under very different circumstances. Harjeet, belonging to a landlord family of Punjab, is married to Gautam, from an equally prominent Khatri family of Lahore. Deeply dissatisfied with her life, harjeet enters into a passionate affair with Haider, a Muslim. The book explores their relationship against the backdrop of the growing Hindu-Muslim divide, and the politically turbulent times they are living in. Author Anuradha Kumar Jain offers a powerful accounts of desire, love, society and politics, and takes a probing look at the struggles and aspiration of a nation and its

#ME TOO Karan Puri Invincible Publisher, ₹199

The book is a miniature of

human life as it comprises real-life sentiments. Readers can feel this book close to their life as they continue floating between emotions like dreams, passion, love, betrayal etc. just like in real life. The book talks about speaking up for oneself irrespective of their age, gender, profession, and financial background, etc. #MeToo comes as an eye-opener for the people who think it is okay to be hurt when it is not. In India, where individuals and institutions give tremendous amounts of significance to respect and social image, living with hampered self-esteem is incorrect. The book highlights that every human is eligible for personal space. Anybody violating the pre-defined boundary is dis-respecting and harming that individual space of yours

which is nothing but a serious crime.

ear partner, this is for you. Menopause can be a big deal, and maybe your partner is having a hard-enough time to have given you this book. This is unlikely to be easy. Sorry. This is not a slight blip in the road; you are effectively on a journey together that will take some time to get to the end estimates range from 4 to 14 years. There will be challenges and setbacks but, at the end of it, you and your partner have the potential to be astounding. But you will both need to work together and have a clear understanding of what you want from this second phase of your lives together.

The fact that she has given you this book is an indication that she loves you and wants that she is in need of some cate with you what this is like.

THE ICEBERG EFFECT

Menopause is like an iceberg, in that the majority of what is going on is beneath the surface. You might think you are getting the rough end of the deal. While I sympathize with you, I can assure you, you are

Your partner's hormones are slowly but surely receding to their steady post-Menopausal state. They play such a pivotal role in her sense of who she is, and how she is in the world that as they diminish, they cause havoc with her sense of self and her day-to-day behaviour. Their increasing absence delivers a whole host of symptoms as well.

You are likely at the sharp end of her symptoms, vicariously experiencing them with her. Most women require reassurance that their partners are still committed to them and the relationship. It's easy to believe that you're all right and that this is her problem. To some degree it is, but it would be unfair of you

your support. She is also saying words to successfully communi-

to believe that this was com-

pletely the case.

You are a team of two that no doubt has had to face adversity before. How did you manage it? What was the dynamic between you? Is this the same or different? If it's the same, due to its unpredictability or that one of you needs additional consideration and support, you already have a model of how to work together. If it's different, what kind of different is it? If it's different because it was you who needed support and now it's her, then there is an element of quid pro quo. How did she manage it, what did she do that was so effective and also, what was ineffective and why? These are all

things you both can learn from. Discuss between you what worked and what didn't and identify what you can use here.

WHAT IS THIS THING THAT'S HAPPENING TO HER ... AND ME? Earlier in this book, you will find a section on symptoms where we discuss the variability in women's experience of Menopause by duration, type and their severity. Please read through it, as awareness is a considerable part of successfully

supporting your partner.
First, Menopause is not a sprint, which is essentially what the monthly period experience was, or even an 800m run,

which was pregnancy. No, Menopause is an endurance race, and it goes on for years. With this in mind, it's important to make yourself aware of what your partner might be experiencing and think about what support she might need.

FOR YOUR PARTNER

Please note, this does not give her a licence to be revolting to you without any form of comeback. If her behaviour makes her more difficult to handle than a bag of poisonous snakes, you have a right to say so. This is about creating a psychologically safe place for both of you to air your grievances without a shouting match or sulky silences. This space should be non-judgmental, with no fear of consequences. You are adults and now is the time to behave

FIRESIDE CHAT

Where do the two of you get uninterrupted time to chat face-to-face? Whether over breakfast, dinner or some other time, whenever it is, choose a day when you know neither of you will be preoccupied or focused on something else. Be clear that this is a conversation about understanding what is happening and what it feels like for her. Make sure you are actively listening - a method of intently listening to



what the other person is saying whilst giving them your full attention.

Once you have actively listened, ask questions and share how you feel about it. Please note, this about listening, sharing and reconnecting, not about point scoring or arguing. If you find that you are descending into this, you may need to walk away and come back later. You are both adults and equal partners — you are not a winner or a loser, a leader or a follower, in charge or subservient. You are a team of two equal parts.

Excerpted with permission from Your Second Phase: Reclaiming Work and Relationships During and After Menopause by Kate Usher, published by SAGE Publications

CHINA'S GAME ON NORTH KOREA

China has spread its tentacles across almost all corners of the world. With North Korea, China has employed a unique strategy both to support stability and to have a grip over the nuclear gear of this mysterious land.

Successive Chinese leaders have maintained three distinct strategies towards North Korea: first, not to provoke a war; second, to maintain the status quo; and finally, no to nuclear arsenal.

Succinctly, China is North Korea's all-weather friend. Thus, though Beijing ostensibly condemns North Korea's nuclear developments, it avowedly opposes harsh global sanctions on that mysterious nation. And China's strategy is aimed at addressing two major critical concerns: to obviate massive refugee influx across 870-mile border area that it shares with North Korea and prevent an immediate collapse of the Kim rule.

The relationship between China and North Korea can aptly be described through this Chinese proverb: "Chun wang chi han" (If the lips are gone, teeth will be cold). It rightly indicates that both the countries are intimately interdependent. Beijing's support for Pyongyang dates back to the historic 1950-53 Korean War. Those were the days, China under Chairman Mao, was more than eager to aid its northern Communist ally North Korea, against the capitalist South Korea. Its support to North Korea continues irrespective of whoever comes to power in Pyongyang.

Kim Il-sung from 1948-94, Kim Jon-il (1994-2011) and now Kim Jong-un since 2011 till date, China has been offering both political and economic support to various regimes of Kims.

On record, China is North Korea's biggest trade partner till date. In fact, from 2000-2020, the bilateral trade between both the nations have increased almost ten-fold. Even amid tougher international trade

Pyongyang's

announcement almost

three months before the

start of the Games of no

participation is a clear

want to take the bait by

signal that it doesn't

Olympics to create a

mood for dialogue. It

determination to boost

pressure on the new US

respectable negotiations

could also show a

administration of

President Biden for

Seoul to use the

sanctions against North Korea, the long China-North Korea border is still open for established trade routes in commodities such as mobile phones, silkworms, fuel, seafood, etc.

Much beyond these regular economic activities, China has established a high-speed railway link between its border cities like Dandong and Shenyang so as to boost trade with North Korea. Both the nations have also opened a cargo and container shipping route to enhance the supply of coal from North Korea to China. China also offers aid to North Korea primarily in food and energy sectors.

Besides China, the US, Japan and South Korea provided more than 75 per cent of the food aid to North Korea since 1995. The country's severe famine was caused by heavy floods and droughts that took lives of more than million people in the 1990s. Unfortunately, the country has not been able to come out of this prolonged food crisis till date. Thus, Pyongyang is fully dependent on China and its goodwill.

As per the estimates revealed by the UN agencies, more than 43 per cent of the country's population is malnourished. Though Kim Jongun is focusing on rapid economic development, the country has not been able to attract any foreign investment because of severe international sanctions. Its only hope is China and the country is looking for robust economic ties with the former. However, China's contin-

ued support to Pyongyang came under severe strain when the latter tested a nuclear weapon in October 2006. Subsequently, Beijing had to back a UN Security Council Resolution No. 1718 that led to the imposition of severe sanctions against North Korea. And for the first time, the international community witnessed transition of China's tactics from sustained diplomatic support to outright punishment towards its Northern



Communist neighbour.

When in November 2017, Kim again tested a missile, Beijing called on Pyongyang to restrict all actions that create tensions in the Korean Peninsula. These all clearly demonstrate that China is wary of North Korea's belligerent moves that may militate against the mutual interests of both the

Beijing has played the role of a powerbroker during all

high-profile global negotiations on North Korea. After two crucial summits between then US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, international policy makers have so far

focused mainly on denuclearisation steps, immediate measures towards peace in the Korean peninsula and finally, corresponding sanctions relief.

However, Pyongyang has been becoming an Asian tinder box. Kim's madness and clandestine nuclear programme could turn the entire Korean peninsula into a serious war zone of the continent.

Probably, China knows best how to tackle Kim dynasty. But then at times some foundational questions arise as to whether North Korea is a strategic liability or an opportunity for China. The Communist leaders in Beijing must have realised the fact that its northern neighbour is to be tamed and to be used for all possible gains both domestically and internationally.

The world brands North Korea as a pariah state, but Beijing takes the Kim regime otherwise. Though apparently China has backed the UN sanctions against North Korea over its incessant efforts to become a formidable nuclear state, its financial and trade support directly and effectively facilitated Kim's nuclear machine for long. This has also helped North Korean economically survive so far. Further, these Chinese efforts are indirectly dashed the hopes of the reunification of both the Koreas.

The US is literally pressuring North Korea to abandon its nuclear programme. Washington says once it is done, there could be a guarantee of trade, diplomatic relations, aid and normalisation of ties with the rogue state. Though the US and China both are interested in denuclearising North Korea, their approaches to the same goal are completely different. America wants China to use its economic leverage to pressure or convince Kim to abandon it nuclear ambition. Thus Washington officials look at China as a part of the solution but unfortunately Beijing is fast becoming part of the Korean conundrum only. For Xi, the

Chinese President, who is now a life-time leader, wants to use North Korea to win brownie points at the domestic front. US President Joe Biden is fully aware that only China can maintain stability in the region if not solve the Korean puzzle for now. Certainly, Beijing will use this opportunity to turn in his favour other vital issues that are constantly pestering Xi, like Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet,

Xinjiang and South China Sea.

What is the problem with Kim? Kim wants to sustain his family rule. And for him, the nuclear button is the only guarantee for him to maintain both his hereditary regime and to threaten the neighbours and the world. Despite the leverage over North Korea, China and South Korea have failed to bring Kim to a negotiating table. Kim is totally against bringing reforms in his country. As such reform measures might bring down the curtain on his rule. The elites in North Korea know very well that its central problems lie within, not outside. Thus, they, along with Kim, ensure no reform takes place, in order to solidify their control over its impoverished populace.

Clearly, hollow summitry will not work with Kim. He demands serious negotiations on the nuclear front. It is better for Biden to extend grand gestures the way Trump did. At times, Beijing's bosses have displayed stern attitudes towards Kim Jong-un. But Western nations, particularly, America will never ever believe the intentions of China. Because nowhere Chinese leadership has indicated its commitment towards implementing even the limited trade restrictions over this reclusive nation. And the whole world knows that only China keeps North Korea going and precisely surviving against all odds. Many in the West have accused China of circumventing global sanctions against North Korea.

(The writer an expert on international affairs)

Though the US and China both have voiced concern over North Korea's nuclear ambition. their approaches to the same goal are distinctly different. **America wants China** to use its economic leverage to pressure Kim to abandon nuclear ambitions. However, China under Xi, is willing to do only what suits



MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE •

No Olympic participation: Kim's message for Biden

North Korea has become the world's first country to drop out of the Tokyo Olympics, ostensibly because coronavirus has spread its deadly tentacles. It is true that the rogue nation is extremely sensitive about Covid-19, knowing that a widespread outbreak in a country with an already battered health system could be disaster.

However, North Korea also has previously used big sporting events to set up diplomacy with the United States meant to win it much-needed sanctions relief in return for nuclear disarmament pledges. Some see pulling out of the Olympics as the North sending Washington a message.

Purportedly, there is legitimate coronavirus fears. A state-run website has claimed that North Korea's Olympic Committee has decided not to take part in the Tokyo Games slated to begin in July "to protect players from the world public health crisis caused by Covid-19."

North Korea has previously boycotted Olympics and other international sports events for political reasons or failed to appear when none of its athletes or teams qualified. But this is the first time North Korea has pulled out of a major international sports event citing an infectious disease, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry.

Pyongyang has developed a reputation for withdrawing from talks with Seoul and Washington before returning at the last minute to boost its bargaining power. But given that the country has been on high alert over Covid-19, experts say there is little chance that it will



In this Feb. 15, 2019, file photo, North Korea's Olympic Committee President and Sports Minister Kim II Guk, left, and South Korean Sports Minister Do Jong-hwan attend a meeting with the IOC for their bid to co-host the 2032 Summer Olympics, at the IOC Headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland

reverse its Olympics decision. North Korea has shown "a

North Korea has shown "a coronavirus-related neurosis since it declared an emergency anti-virus system in January last year," said Park Won Gon, a professor of North Korea studies at Seoul's Ewha

Womans University.

Park said it is highly

unlikely that North Korea will secure enough vaccines for its 26 million people or report major progress in its anti-virus fight by July.

North Korean officials a

know how disastrous a major virus outbreak would be in a nation with public healthcare infrastructure that has been in a shambles for decades. North Korea has so far taken some of the world's most draconian anti-virus steps, including a 15-

month-long closure of its international borders and the departure of foreign nationals.

North Korea still officially claims to be coronavirus free, an assertion many foreign experts dispute.

North Korea's decision to skip the Olympics shows that it "thinks contact with foreigners is the most dangerous thing now," said Seo Yu-Seok at the Seoul-based Institute of North Korean Studies.

North Korean Studies.

However, there is certainly a message for US President Joe Biden. The North Korean announcement, three months before the Games begin, could signal that Pyongyang is rejecting a repeated push by Seoul to use the Olympics to create a mood for dialogue. It could also show a determination to boost pressure on the new US administration of President Biden.

North Korea is sending the message that it wants to deal directly with the US now rather than using the Olympics as a venue to reach out to Washington for talks, said Kwak Gil Sup, head of One Korea Center, a website spe-

cialising in North Korea affairs.
Now-deadlocked nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington began in 2018 after a reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula following North Korea's participation in the Pyeongchang Winter Games in the South earlier that year.

During those Olympics, athletes from the Koreas marched together under a single unification flag during the opening ceremony and formed the Koreas' first-ever joint team in women's ice hockey. Kim Yo Jong, the influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, became the first member of the North's ruling family to visit South Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

There's been little progress in nuclear talks the past two years. North Korea recently fired two ballistic missiles into the sea in the first such weapons tests in a year. Kim Yo Jong has warned Washington not to "cause a stink" and called South Korea's president "a parrot raised by America."

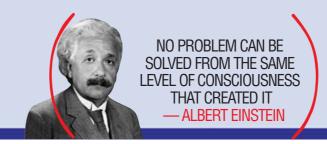
Experts say North Korea eventually wants talks with the Biden Administration to win sanctions relief and achieve better ties because its economy has been devastated by the pandemic, US-led sanctions and natural disasters last year.

Analyst Seo said North Korea likely wasn't sure about the benefits of attending the Tokyo Games because Biden has made it clear that he won't engage in made-for-TV summits with Kim Jong Un like his predecessor Donald Trump did.

"They knew that they would return home emptyhanded from Tokyo," Seo said. But North Korea's domes-

tic difficulties may push it to pursue talks with the United States soon. Seo said North Korea could perform big weapons tests, such as an intercontinental ballistic missile launch, in coming months if it's not satisfied with the Biden Government's North Korea policy review expected to be completed soon.

(With inputs from AP)



























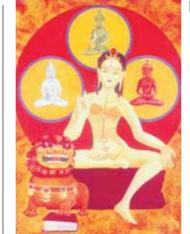




ARIES March 21-April 19

Those seeking fitness must follow a proper workout regimen. Negativity around and within is disappearing. Your presence of mind and wisdom is unmatched. You feel strong both physically and mentally. Professionally, you will be working hard but results are awaited. You find it difficult to earn accolades for a job well done. Be careful on the financial front. Reschedule your investments. Restrict your expenditure as this will help you to maintain balance. On the relationship front, a fresh start is indicated. You are not ready for a commitment yet, even though others might be pressing you for one. Now is the time to make it. This is a positive period for your love life.

Lucky number 20 Lucky colour Mauve Lucky day Monday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week you need to be strict and draw a line in certain matters. No compromise should be made on the health front. Direct or indirect spiritual influence is needed to bring balance in life. Your casual attitude in health may result in seasonal ailments. Be cautious of cold, cough, constipation, bowel syndrome and weight related problems. On the professional front, the situation is getting better and stronger for you. You are ready to take any type of challenge. You are creative and very enterprising. If you have applied for a job, you may get an interview call this week. Shifting or change of office or home is likely. In love relations, a better understanding between you and your partner is indicated. Allow your partner to have his/her space.

Lucky number 18 Lucky colour Silver Lucky day Wednesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

In terms of health, you need to be practical. Listen to the body, and not the heart. You have to change your food habits or craving for sweet food. You will have to make some efforts to improve your health situation. You need more exercise, nutritional education to improve your health. At work, something planned meticulously is likely to take off smoothly if you go with the flow. Be cautious in your verbal communication. Face the challenges with a cool mind. Your ability to logic and reasoning are giving you full benefits in this week. On the personal front, feel free to express your feelings. If you have some loving words to say, say them now before it is too late. Attending a family function is likely.

Lucky number 8 Lucky colour Magenta Lucky day Friday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

You need to think about improving your health. Your health and feelings of well-being should be a priority. This is a great time to take some time off and just go for an improved lifestyle, nutrition and balancing your work. A need for balance in body, mind and soul is required. You need to have patience at the workplace. Make strategies to get more outputs and productive results but try to keep it to yourself. You may need some assistance to find a better approach to work and don't hesitate to ask. If you're looking for work, you may need to look in a different way or a different field than the one you've been pursuing. On the relationship front, warmth, care and concern for each other at home and in a loving relationship is indicated.

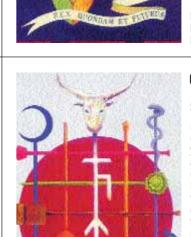
Lucky number 17 Lucky colour Green **Lucky day** Saturday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

Value your health and make it a priority. Count your blessings. Your health may not be all that good as you would like it to be, but it is better than that of many other people. Be grateful for what you have. Careerwise, you must not impose restrictions on yourself. Be careful in your communication. If you are bent upon thrusting your suggestions down somebody's throat, don't get surprised if she or he rebels. Arguments and conflicts are on the cards which will go against you. On the personal front, make peace with someone, who seems to be against you. There is a need for liberating the mind and reconnecting with the heart. You need to reintroduce trust and find a way of freeing yourself from suspicion, mistrust and jealousy.

Lucky number 6 Lucky colour Purple **Lucky day** Friday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

A good message in terms of your health is on the cards. Those who are waiting for test results need to know that nothing so serious is indicated. You need a small course of medication to free yourself from the health problem you are suffering from. Increase intake of liquids, juices and fibrous food in your diet. On the work front, new opportunities will be on the horizons making you hopeful about the future. Money inflow looks good this week. A prestigious assignment is yours if you play your cards right. On the relationship front, something may be troubling. Serious differences with spouse may take place. You can be stubborn when the circumstances demand but make an exception when your near and dear ones are involved. Don't be in too much of a hurry.

Lucky number 13 Lucky colour Brown **Lucky day** Saturday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week you will manage balancing challenges and blessings with ease. This will improve your health and bring great hope. You will be full of life this week. The negativity in the past is dissolved. You are hopeful and playful now. Spending money on medical tests, for better living is on the cards. On the career front, you have some plans in your mind. It could be a change of job, or starting a new venture or any other thing that enhances your liability. Even if things have been lousy at work for the last few months, there is cause for hope and positive anticipation. In terms of love, you are ready to start something new. If you are in a committed relationship, there's something positive on

Lucky number 3 Lucky colour Pink Lucky day Sunday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week you need a break. Take time out of your monotonous schedule. Those waiting for test results are likely to get favourable news. You may take spirituality as a stress buster and lead a healthy life. This is the right time to get involved in Yoga, Pranayam and meditation. Good news awaits this week on the career front. At work, someone's advice will come in handy in tackling a complicated issue. You may be tempted to take on more duties and responsibilities. Regularise your work. On the personal front, you might be having some doubts about the issues regarding the ancestral property. Discuss them with someone you trust in the family. Worry on accord of children's future, their study, marriage and expenses is

Lucky number 15 Lucky colour Sky Blue **Lucky day** Thursday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week you will feel enthusiastic and adventurous enough to take on challenges life throws at you with full spirit. You are on the right path on the health front. Your health concern is paying you rich dividends now. You feel very chirpy, vibrant, energetic and full of life. Your positive mindset and cheerfulness will add charm to your personality. Work-wise, you take life easy with a positive mindset and stay focused on your work. Your mind and thoughts are in harmony. There are chances that others might take advantage of your efforts. Use your judgment, instead of blindly following orders to remain on the right track. On the personal front, great fun is in store. Your goodwill and reputation will pay you rich dividends.

Lucky number 14 Lucky colour Green Lucky day Thursday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week you will feel lost due to work overload. Neglecting your health at this point is not advisable. Be alert physically and mentally. Listen to your body. Nurture it, care for it and feed it with natural food Avoid junk and oily food. You have to give up all the bad habits. Prevention is better than cure. On the work front, you may be moving to a new position or a new set of responsibilities. Promotion, hike in salary or business profit is on the cards. You feel at ease on the financial level. Business expansion plans could materialise this week. This is a good week for students. On the personal front, something undesirable may occur on an emotional level. You may lose your cool in a strenuous relationship.

Lucky number 12 Lucky colour Peach Lucky day Tuesday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week you will be filled with energy and vitality. Your body, mind and soul are in perfect harmony. You are focused and know what you want from life. You are smart enough to bring balance between professional and personal commitments. On the work front, leaving nothing pending at work will work in your favour. If you have started a new business or job recently, this may cause some worry. Things may not seem clear. Ask questions and practice active listening to make sure that you and your co-workers understand each other perfectly. Relationship-wise, expect to harmonise your bonding with someone who had offended you in the past. Love blooms and so will you. Happiness, contentment in all relations is on the cards.

Lucky number 19 Lucky colour White Lucky day Tuesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week balance is needed in all areas of life. You should know how to handle your professional and health commitments. Take care of your diet, exercise, and relaxation time. A nap between the busy hours vould help you relax and refresh you to take on the challenges. On the career front, the financial part is looked after well this week. Those in media, finance, and artwork are likely to do better. Use your inner power, communication skills and wisdom. Time is favourable, crack your full potentials. New contacts in this period will prove fruitful for you. On the relationship front, stop being too formal with your partner, it may keep you away from expressing your true feelings. Your loved ones need your attention too.

Lucky number 11 Lucky colour Beige

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BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Controlling the monkey mind

ord Hanuman is believed to have surrendered himself in service of ⊿his ideal, Lord Rama. Driven by his intense sense of love, he put in his heart and literally merged his identity with his ideal's consciousness. Having thus, being fully in tune with his ideal, he could avail of the wholesome powers intrinsic to the consciousness element. No wonder he could perform such extraordinary feats as would find no parallel.

In prayer mode, when you put in your whole, you acquire the virtues of what you remain focused to. So says The Bible: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all his goodness, and all that get added on to you."

The paradox, however, is that Lord Hanuman ordinarily remained ignorant about immense power, he was endowed with. Evidently, under usual circumstances, he would be driven by his animalistic instincts. But when reminded, Lord Hanuman could invoke his indwelling powers if ever

As the Ramayana story line runs, Lord Hanuman was entrusted with the task to locate Sita, who had been kidnapped and was in Ravana's captivity. As per available indications Sita was somewhere in Sri Lanka. To make it to his desired destination, Hanuman had to cross over the ocean, which appeared impossible. But when reminded by Jamvant, the boar chieftain, about the powers latent in him, he realised that he could fly across ocean. So, he invoked his untapped power base and then made it to Sri Lanka.

Hanuman story is similar to human dilemma. Human beings are armed with immense power. If full human potential gets unfolded, one would know no limits. The irony, however, is that invariably human beings are not aware of their own true self. Fact remains that human beings are born with a clouded and preconditioned mind. Stuck to the limits circumscribed, human beings fail to have access to full land scape of mind. One's mind power, thus, remains limited. It is said that human beings have access to just 5 to 7 percent of their mind-power by default.

More than that is subject to our conscious efforts. If, however, even if they are able to make optimum use of



whatever they have in hand, they could successfully negotiate the usual callings of life with ease and comfort.

The irony, however, is that an ordinary mortal, caught up in the thought web of their own making, dissipate a considerable sum of their mind power over inconsequential acts — dealing with carryover effect of negative imprints picked up in the past, which in turn induces a sense of insecurity over assumed thoughts and thereby stress; over assumed dream perceptions. Consequently, they are hardly left with enough to do justice to their priority preferences, and with obvious consequences.

Human beings too carry both animalistic instincts as well as humanistic virtues. Which of the two drives a being would depend on how one's mind is oriented. The irony of the whole situation is that one's animalistic instincts keep playing their part involuntarily from the front. But one's virtues need to be identified, acknowledged, honed, and then consciously invoked to be put to use.

What stands in the way is the fact that human mind is fragile. It keeps

randomly flirting around with varied thoughts, something like a monkey randomly and unmindfully jumping from one branch of a tree to the other. It, thus, becomes incumbent upon a being to first control one's monkeymind, for the indwelling virtues to play out unhindered. And that can be achieved following the two-stage meditation process as discussed in the previous chapter.

Pursuing Dhyana, with focus on Lord Hanuman, would inspire the seeker to imbibe his spirit. Accordingly, one would be tempted to explore, identify, and acknowledge, inlaid virtues, and then hone them, so that they become worth use in contemporary

And because Lord Hanuman is identified with valour, reflecting on His imagery may also help get over the sense of fear and insecurity if any. Also, it may grant the will and resolve needed to take on the challenges ahead in life in all strength.

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