

OPINION 6
INDIA'S FLAMING
FORESTS PLAY HAVOC**WORLD 8**
MYANMAR COUP FOES TOUT
MINORITY-BACKED SHADOW GOVT**SPORT 12**
STOKES OUT
FOR 12 WEEKS

CHANDIGARH, SATURDAY APRIL 17, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹2



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**SAFETY OVER
COMFORT:
SUNNY LEONE
10 VIVACITY**

4L daily Covid cases by Apr end likely

At current rate, deaths could go up to 200/day; Delhi sees record 20k cases in 24 hrs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the current rate of the daily surge, India's Covid-19 cases could reach anywhere between 3.5 and 4 lakh by the end of April. Going by the current death rate of around 0.5 per cent, India could see a daily fatality of around 175 to 200 per day by month-end. On Friday, India recorded over 2.08 lakh new cases and 1,124 deaths, compared to 2.17 lakh cases and 1,185 deaths the previous day.

The country's average daily Covid-19 growth during the last two weeks is around 5.2 to 6 per cent, or 12,000 to 15,000 a day.

Even in the case of a highly optimistic scenario where the cases stabilise around an average of 10,000 per day, the country total should go easily past 3.5 lakh in the remaining two weeks of this month.

The most worrying part is the fact that the number of new cases is rising alarmingly in States other than Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh, which bore the brunt of the onset of the second wave of the Covid-19.

On Friday, Maharashtra recorded its single-day high of 63,729 cases and 398 deaths. Delhi also recorded its single day of 19,486 cases and a record 141 deaths. Chhattisgarh has seen an alarming 131 per cent rise in



Passengers stand in a queue outside Anand Vihar Railway Station as they arrive to board train for their native place amid rise in Covid cases in New Delhi on Friday. Ranjan Dimri / Pioneer

the number of fresh cases during the last one week.

Now, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Uttar Pradesh have more than one lakh active cases each.

BSY +ve for 2nd time in 8 months; Javadekar too Covid positive

Bengaluru/New Delhi: Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa on Friday tested positive for Covid-19 for the second time in eight months, and has been shifted to a private hospital. Union Minister Prakash Javadekar too tested positive for coronavirus.

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL CASES:	1,44,96,651 (+2,08,725)
DEATHS:	1,75,459 (+1,124)
RECOVERED:	1,26,50,298 (+1,06,248)
ACTIVE:	16,63,789
MAHARASHTRA:	37,03,584
KERALA:	12,07,333
KARNATAKA:	11,24,509
TAMIL NADU:	9,71,384
DELHI:	8,03,623 (+19,486)

Sunday curfew imposed on all UP dists till May 15

₹1,000 fine for no mask; markets to be sanitised on Sundays

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

As a corona surge continues, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has ordered "Sunday curfew" across the State and also ordered setting up of 1,000-bed Covid hospitals in Lucknow to meet the demand of shortage of beds.

The State Government also stated that ₹1,000 fine will be charged for not wearing masks and ₹10,000 fine for second time violation. The Sunday curfew will continue till May 15.

In the review meeting, the CM ordered closure of markets, offices and other business establishments on Sunday so as to allow sanitisation of the markets across the State. "There will be a weekly closure in all rural and urban areas of the State on Sunday. Only sanitisation and emergency services will operate during this period. Necessary awareness works



A view of the iconic building of Lucknow, Imambada. ASI protected monuments remained shut for visitors in view of the rising Covid-19 cases in the country, in Lucknow on Friday. PTI

should also be done in this regard. He hinted that even public transport and commutation won't be allowed.

"A 1,000-bed Covid hospital will be established in Lucknow.

The venue of the Defence Expo in Vrindavan Colony has been chosen for setting up of this makeshift hospital," the Chief Minister said during a review meeting with divisional commissioners, district magistrates, Chief Medical Officers

and members of the Team-11 (a core team of 11 officers).

Yogi also ordered closure of OPDs in all Government hospitals in the State to control crowds.

He also announced that it is compulsory for everyone to wear a mask.

"A fine of ₹1,000 would be imposed for the first time caught without a mask. If caught without a mask a second time, a penalty of ₹10,000 would be imposed," he added.

Covid spreads mainly via air: Lancet study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes Covid-19 is predominantly transmitted through air, according to a new assessment carried in the medical journal Lancet which said it found little to no evidence that the virus spreads easily via large droplets, which fall quickly through the air and contaminate surfaces.

The study added that public health measures that fail to treat the virus as predominantly airborne leave people unprotected and allow the virus to spread.

The study observation is significant for India where mass gatherings and election rallies continue unabated even as overall Covid-19 cases are breaking records daily.

A multi-research team from the UK, the US and Canada warned that public health measures that fail to treat the virus as predominantly airborne leave people unprotected and allow the virus to spread.

Silent (asymptomatic or presymptomatic) transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from people who are not coughing or sneezing accounts for at least 40 per cent of all transmission.



This silent transmission is a key way Covid-19 has spread around the world, "supporting a predominantly airborne mode of transmission," as per the assessment.

By contrast, the researchers found little to no evidence that the virus spreads easily via large droplets, which fall quickly through the air and contaminate surfaces.

"The evidence supporting airborne transmission is overwhelming, and evidence supporting large droplet transmission is almost non-existent," said Jose-Luis Jimenez, a chemist at the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES) and the University of Colorado Boulder.

CICSE defers Class X, XII Board exams

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) on Friday deferred the board exams for Classes 10 and 12 in view of a rise in Covid-19 cases across the country.

In light of the nationwide surge in coronavirus cases, the Class 10 and 12 exams which were to be held from May 4 have been deferred, CISCE's chief executive and secretary Gerry Arathoon said.

"We will closely monitor the situation and review it in the first week of June to take a final decision on conduct of examination," he said. "While Class 12 exams will be conducted at a later stage, Class 10 students will get an option to either appear in offline exams later or get evaluated on basis of fair and unbiased criteria to be developed by board," Arathoon added.

Earlier this week, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) had cancelled its Class 10 board exams and deferred the Class 12 board exams. Several State boards have postponed or cancelled their exams too.

Haryana reports a record 6,277 fresh Covid cases, 20 deaths

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Continuing the upward trend in fresh Covid-19 infections, Haryana on Friday reported 6,277 positive cases, again the highest-single day spike since the outbreak of the virus last year.

Twenty more people died due to the virus in the last 24 hours in Haryana. The fresh infections have led to a huge jump in active cases which stood at 33,817 while the total caseload reached 3,42,077.

The death toll reached 3,354 in the State.

According to the State's Health Department's bulletin, three people died in Rohtak, two each in Panchkula, Kurukshetra, Yamunanagar, Jind, Gurugram, Faridabad and one each died in Hisar, Karnal, Bhiwani, Fatehabad and Nuh.

Among Covid-19 patients, there were 503 critical patients in the State out of which 415 were on oxygen support while 88 were on ventilators.

A day before, the State had recorded 5,858 fresh infections and 18 deaths.

Gurugram district continued to be the worst affected in



A medic collects swab sample from a police personnel for Covid-19 tests at old Civil Hospital in Gurugram on Friday. PTI

the State and recorded the highest number of fresh infections at 1,919 on Friday. Among other worst affected districts, Faridabad reported 980 fresh cases, Karnal 449, Sonapat 418, Panchkula 314, Hisar 288, Ambala 269, Kurukshetra 243, Sirsa 202, Rohtak 110, Panipat, 155, Jind 162, Yamunanagar 142, Jhajjar 148, Bhiwani 101, Fatehabad 103.

In Gurugram, the active cases jumped to 8,979, the highest in the State. There were 4,072 active cases in Faridabad,

2,839 in Karnal, 2,137 in Sonapat, 1,856 in Ambala, 1,831 in Panchkula, 1,649 in Hisar, 1,359 in Panipat.

In the last 24 hours, 2,958 patients recovered from the virus taking the total recoveries to 3,04,906. The Covid positive rate has increased to 5.07 per cent while the recovery rate has declined to 89.13 per cent. The fatality rate was recorded at 0.98 per cent in the State. Over 67.65 lakh samples have been tested till date in Haryana.

Related reports on P3

51 more deaths, 3,915 new cases in Punjab

Chandigarh: The Covid-19 death toll in Punjab rose to 7,772 on Friday with 51 more fatalities, while 3,915 new cases pushed the infection tally to 2,90,707, a medical bulletin issued here said.

The number of active cases rose to 30,745 from 30,033 on Thursday, it said. Of the new fatalities, seven people died in Amritsar, six in Ludhiana, five in Sangrur and four in Gurdaspur, the bulletin said.

Among the fresh cases, Ludhiana recorded 598 infections, the maximum in the state, followed by 560 in Mohali, 412 in Amritsar and 405 in Jalandhar.

A total of 3,129 coronavirus patients were discharged after recovering from infection, taking the overall recoveries to 2,52,190, as per bulletin.

There are 43 critical patients who are on ventilator support while 386 are on oxygen support, it said.

A total of 65,17,986 samples have been collected for testing so far in the state, it said. Meanwhile, the Mohali district administration in Punjab

on Friday announced imposition of further curbs by restricting gatherings at marriages and funerals to 20, amid rising Covid-19 cases.

Earlier, 50 people were allowed indoors and 100 outdoors, said an official.

Deputy Commissioner Girish Dayalan directed officials to impound cars or vehicles plying between 9 pm to 5 during curfew hours.

Special 'nakas' will be set up around containment zones to maintain strict vigil of unauthorised movement, he said.

Police and revenue officials would conduct surprise checks in markets and crowded areas to issue challans to offenders, he said.

They would also conduct joint inspections of marriage halls wherein not only the guests found violating safety protocols would be penalised but action would also be taken against the owner of the marriage halls for failing to ensure compliance of the guidelines inside their premises. PTI

EC cuts Bengal campaign time by 3 hrs at night over Covid rise

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of rising Covid-19 cases and the heavy political rhetoric in poll-bound areas, the Election Commission (EC) on Friday extended the "silence" period from 48 hours to 72 hours in each of the remaining three of the eight phases of the West Bengal polls to be held on April 22, 26, and 29.

The commission has curtailed the timing of campaigning up to 7 pm from 10 pm. It has banned rallies, public meetings, nakkad sabha, and street play from 7 pm to 10 am beginning Friday.

"Commission curtails the timing of the campaign up to 7 pm. The silence period has been extended from 48 hours to 72 hours in each of the remaining three phases in West Bengal.

These orders have come into effect immediately," the EC said in a letter to the president, general secretary and chairman of the national and state-level political parties.

CAPSULE

CBI EX-DIRECTOR RANJIT SINHA DIES FROM COVID



New Delhi: Former CBI director Ranjit Sinha died on Friday morning in what is believed to be a Covid-19 related death, senior officials said. He was 68.

'DIALOGUE CAN SOLVE INDIA-NEPAL ISSUES'

Kathmandu: There is no issue between Nepal and India that cannot be resolved through dialogue, Nepalese Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali said on Friday, underlining that the two countries are "friends and not competitors".

COLLECTION OF CHALLAN DUES IN CASH SUSPENDED

New Delhi: The Delhi Traffic Police has suspended the process to collect dues for pending challans in cash in view of a surge in Covid-19 cases here, officials said on Friday.

Monsoon normal this year, predicts IMD

Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, eastern UP, Assam may not get sufficient rainfall

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Barring Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, north-Chhattisgarh, eastern Uttar Pradesh, Meghalaya and Assam, India will probably experience normal monsoon rainfall this year as La Nina or El Nino weather conditions, which impact rain patterns, are likely to be absent.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday predicted overall "normal" monsoon rainfall at 98 per



cent of the Long Period Average (LPA), which has a model error of plus and minus 5 per cent during the June-September period across the country.

The LPA of the monsoon is 88 centimetres.

Rainfall between 96-104 per cent of the LPA is considered normal. The IMD said the

probability of the 2021 monsoon being "normal" was 40% while there was 21% chance of it being "above normal".

While releasing the first Long Range Forecast for the four-month rainfall period from June to September, M Rajeevan, secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, said, quantitatively, the monsoon seasonal rainfall is likely to be 98% of the LPA with a model error of +/- 5 per cent.

"It is really good news for the country and will help India have a good agriculture output," he said.

The news augurs well for an economy battered due to the coronavirus pandemic. Large parts of the country rely on the four-month rainfall season for agriculture and also for filling reservoirs.

Covaxin production to double by June, 7 fold by July-Aug

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The current production capacity of Bharat Biotech indigenously developed Covaxin vaccine will be doubled by May-June 2021 and then increased nearly 6-7 fold by July-August 2021, the Government said on Friday.

The Union Ministry of Science and Technology issued a statement in this regard, saying "the current production capacity of indigenously developed Covaxin vaccine will be doubled by May-June 2021 and then increased nearly 6-7 fold by July-August 2021 — that is increasing the production from 1 crore vaccine doses in April 2021 to 6-7 crore vaccine dose by July-August. It is

expected to reach nearly 10 crore doses per month by September this year." It said the Govt will provide financial support as a grant to vaccine manufacturing facilities for enhanced production capacities. Recently, inter-ministerial teams visited the sites of two main vaccine manufacturers in India to get their inputs on how production can be ramped up. There have been extensive reviews and feasibility studies on the plans being discussed with vaccine manufacturers.

"As a part of this augmentation plan, capacities of Bharat Biotech Limited, Hyderabad as well as other public sector manufacturers are being upgraded with required infrastructure and technology.

Ensure sufficient oxygen for emergency care: PM

Modi calls for increase in manufacturing

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the second wave of Covid-19 variant has led to a rapid rise in positive cases across the country and brought health facilities under increasing pressure, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday undertook a "comprehensive" review to ensure adequate medical grade oxygen supply in the country and called for stepping up its production.

Oxygen supply has been under pressure with the multiplication of coronavirus cases after it had largely ebbed out by the start of this year.



According to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Modi took a comprehensive review to ensure adequate medical grade oxygen supply in the country. Inputs from Ministries like health, steel, road transport, and the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade were also shared with the PM during the review, said the statement of the PMO.

The PM stressed that it is important to ensure synergy across Ministries and State Governments, the PMO said.

He also took a detailed review of the current situation of oxygen supply and projected use in the coming 15 days across 12 high-burden States — Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan.

The PMO said an overview of the district-level situation in these States was presented to the PM. He was informed that the Centre and States are in regular contact and estimates for projected demand has been shared with states as of April 20, April 25 and April 30, it said. The PMO said, accordingly, 4,880 MT, 5,619 MT and 6,593 MT have been allocated to these 12 States for meeting their projected demand of medical oxygen as on April 20, April 25 and April 30, respectively.

In current situation, possibility of lockdown can't be ruled out: HP CM

Shimla:Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Friday said that the possibility

of imposing a lockdown in the coming days cannot be ruled in the state. "The cases are increas-

ing every day and states have imposed lockdown and week-end curfews. We will also con-

sider the same whenever required in the state," the Chief Minister said while talking to

the mediapersons after holding a review meeting regarding COVID-19 situation.

He said that there is adequate availability of medicines, oxygenated beds, masks and sanitizers etc. in the state.

During the meeting, Thakur directed the Health Department to enhance the capacity of oxy-

genated beds in the hospitals. So far, 13,60,794 people have been screened for COVID-19 through RT-PCR, rapid antigen test, True-Nat and CV-Nat and the testing rate of the state was 194399 per ten lakh, he said.11,87,275 doses of COVID vaccines have been provided so far in the state, he added.

HARYANA CABINET MEETING ON APR 22

Chandigarh: Haryana Council of Ministers will hold its meeting on April 22, 2021, (Thursday) at 11 am in Haryana Civil Secretariat, Chandigarh, a statement issued here said. PSPCL officials must observe all necessary precau-

tions for the safety of Covid 19, says Pandove

Classifieds

LOST AND FOUND

I. Shubham Jindal S/o Ramani Jindal R/o C-3/19, Ground Floor, DLF Valley, Sector-3, Gurgaon Urban Complex, Panchkula my marksheet/ Semester Grade Report, Degree Certificate of MSC JNU University & Migration Transfer Certificate have been lost.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I. Leela Devi W/o Late Sh. Shatrughan R/o #1458/24, Chanarthal Colony, Kirmach Road, Thanesar, District Kurukshetra declare that my son Shiv Shankar is out of my control. So, I disown him from all my movable & immovable properties. Note all concerns.

I. Premwati W/o Late Sh. Doda Raj R/o H.No. 1780 Deep Complex Halla Majra Chandigarh declare that my son Vikas Kumar and his wife Anjali are out of my control I disown them from my moveable / immovable property anybody dealing with them at their own risk.

I. Saroj Rani W/o Rajinder Kumar, Kailash Nagar (Kaika Mandir), Fazilka, disown my married son Aman Doda, living separately, from moveable/immovable property. Anybody deals him at own risk/responsibility, I shall not be responsible.

I. Govind Ram S/o Telu Ram R/o 152/5, Jind declare that my son Manish is out of my control. So, I disown him from my all moveable/immovable properties. If anybody deals with him shall do on their own risk in future.

I. Rakesh Julaha S/o Radhey Shyam R/o Tanga Gali, Ward -7, Tohana, District Fatehabad, have disown my daughter Neha from all my moveable immovable properties, as she is out of my control. Anybody dealing with her at their own risk.

I. Gyan Devi W/o Netra Pal S/o Ved Pal R/o Patiala Bank Colony, Near Kheri Mandir, Tehsil Thanesar, District Kurukshetra, have disown my son Rohit Kumar, his wife Poonam from all my moveable immovable properties, as they are out of my control. Anybody dealing with them at their own risk.

I. Dilbag Singh S/o Sh. Dei Ram R/o H.No.107/12, Hanuman Colony, Rohtak declare that my son Hemant and his wife Sunita are out of my control. So I disown both them from our all moveable/immovable properties. If any body dealing with him, he himself shall be responsible. Me and my family will not be responsible for their illegal act.

We, Santosh Devi W/o Sh. Balwan Singh S/o Sh. Pirthi Singh R/o Basant Nagar, Panipat declare that Our son Monty also Vikas is out of our control. So I disown him from my moveable/ Immovable property. Anybody dealing with him at own risk.

I. No.1576107-F Ex Hav Vijay Kumar S/o Sh. Kishan Chand R/o H.No.586/21 Mange Ram Colony, Near Hafed Chowk Rohtak (Haryana) declare that my elder daughter name Seema and my younger daughter name Asha Devi are wrongly mentioned in my Army record. But my elder daughter correct & actual name is Seema Sharma and my younger daughter correct & actual name is Asha. vide affidavit dated 16.04.2021 before Notary Public Rohtak.

I. Gurmit Kaur W/O Late Shiv Kumar R/O Village Hasanpur Tehsil Derabassi, S.A.S. Nagar Mohali Declared My Son Jagtar Singh Is Out Of My Control. So I Disown Him From My Moveable And Immovable Properties. Anybody Dealing With Him On There Own Risk.

I. Tarun Desai Is Legal Father Of Shubhi R/O Chenab-I Officer's Enclave Air Force Station Halwara (Ludhiana) Have Changed My Minor Daughter Name From Shubhi To Paankhi Desai Vide Affidavit No.259 Dated 15-04-2021 Before Raikot.

ਮੈਂ ਯੋਗ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੁਜ਼ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਰਾਮ ਜਾਤ ਜਾਤਕਾਨਾ ਬੰਡੀਓ, ਹਾਏ ਅਲੋਚਾ ਜਿਤਾ ਯੋਗ ਦਾਤਾ ਕਰਕਾ ਫੂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਸੋਹਨਾ ਆਪੇ ਦੁਰਗੁਤ ਕਰਿਯਾ ਸੋਹਨਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੰਡੇਓਲਾ ਸੇ ਗਾਹਰ ਹੈ। ਦੋਸ਼ੀ ਕੋ ਮੇਰੀ ਅਦੁਨੀ ਬਲ-ਅਚਲ ਸਜੀਓ ਸੇ ਸੇਵਕਤ ਕਰਕਾ ਹਾਏ। ਤੁਸਕੋ ਕਿਲੀ ਕਰਕਾ ਯਾ ਲੇਨ-ਦੇਨ ਕੋ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਪੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਜਿਸੇਗਾ ਹੀ ਹੋਗੀ।

CHANGE OF NAME

I. Charanjit Singh S/o Mohinder Singh, Village Dharamkot, P.O. Darapur, Tehsil Dasuya, Distt. Hoshiarpur declare that I am permanent resident of Village Dharamkot. That my name has been written wrongly Taranjit Singh in Revenue Record of village Darapur, Hadd Bast Number 52.

I. Rinku S/o Manjit Singh Vill. Unchi Bassi, P.O. Lamin, Tehsil Dasuya Distt. Hoshiarpur (Pb.) have changed my name from Rinku to Surname Singh name Rinku All concerned to note.

I. Bhupinder Singh S/o Gurmit Singh R/o Village Bhaur, PO Mohabipur Tehsil Sultanpur Lodhi, District Kapurthala, Punjab India. That in my passport my father name mentioned as Weiss Gurmit instead of Gurmit Singh. My father's correct name is Gurmit Singh.

I. Nasim Ahmed S/o Late Vajir Ahmed, House-354, Village Maloya, Chandigarh declare that in my driving licence 402091 my father name wrongly recorded Usar Ahmed. My father correct name is Vajir Ahmed.

I. Israr S/o Sh.Abdul Aziz R/o H.No 3768 Maloya Chandigarh have changed my name to Israr Ahmed

I. Kashmir Kaur Wife Of Bhupinder Singh Bains, R/O. 3129, Sector 40-D, Chandigarh Hereby Declare That I Have Changed My Name From Kashmir Kaur To Kashmir Kaur Bains.

I. Harsh Sharma W/o Inder Kumar Sharma R/o Village Kachhwa, Distt. Karnal have changed my name from Harsh Sharma to Shashi Prabha Sharma. In future I will be known as Shashi Prabha Sharma.

I. Malika D/o Sh. Ajay Kaushik, #878, Sector 7, Panchkula, have changed my name to Malika Kaushik.

I. No.15576067F Spr (ACP Hav) Maninder Kumar S/o Shri Madan Lal R/O Village Sehjowal PO Gahdwal Tehsil Dasuya Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab have changed the name of My Mother from Nirmala Devi to Nirmala Concerned Note.

I. Service No.2473051W Ex Hav Satnam Singh S/O Kathla Singh R/O Vpo- Jaito Sarja Tehsil Batala Distt Gurdaspur Punjab, That I Declare Changed My Daughter Name From Kettanbir Kaur To Ketan Kiranbir Kaur In Army Record.

I. Surekha D/o Late. Sh. Tejbir Singh (Army No. 13676711, Rank GDSM) R/O Vill. Jasrana, Teh. Gohana, Distt. Sonapat, Current Address: B-22, Nanhe Park, Uttam Nagar, West Delhi, Declares that in my father's pension book, name & date of birth were wrongly entered as Surekha Rani & 12/09/1990. My actual name is Surekha & date of birth is 12/09/1992. Please correct it.

I. No.Jc-215885F Ex Sub Kuldeep Singh S/O Sh. Harbans Singh R/O Vpo Khokhar Faujanj Tehsil Batala Distt Gurdaspur State Punjab. Have Changed The Name Of My Daughter Harmit Kaur To Harmeet Kaur.

I. Ex No.2480554K Hav Gurdial Singh S/O Sh. Ajaib Singh R/O Village Rajada Po- Qadian Teh/Distt Gurdaspur (Punjab). Have Changed The Name Of My Son Karanveer Singh To Karanbir Singh.

I. Mamta Kamra W/o Ashok Kumar, H.No.B227, Jhule Lal Colony, Fazilka, have changed my name Mamta Kamra to Mamta Rani

I. Gurdeep Singh S/o Sinder Singh, Vill Kakraia Inayat Telsil Gullha (Kaithal), declare that Gurdeep my name and Singh Surname.

I. Gurdeep Singh S/o Harbans Singh r/o Dera Ranjit Nagar, Village Gondar, Sub Tehsil Nissing (Karnal) have changed my name from Gurdeep Singh Cheema to Gurdeep Singh.

I. Gurdeep Singh S/o Harbans Singh r/o Dera Ranjit Nagar, Village Gondar, Sub Tehsil Nissing (Karnal) have changed my minor son's name from Jaspreet Singh Cheema to Jaspreet Singh.

I. Harvinder Kaur W/o Gurdeep Singh r/o Dera Ranjit Nagar, Village Gondar, Sub Tehsil Nissing (Karnal) have changed my name from Harvinder Kaur Cheema to Harvinder Kaur.

I. Rohit S/o Labh Singh r/o Village Ghisarpari, Sub Tehsil Babain (Kurukshetra) have changed my name Rohit to Rohit Antal.

I. Army no. 2711857M GDR Sunil Kumar R/o VPO Naloi, Tehsil Siwani, Distt. Bhiwani (Hry) have changed my brother's name from Surennder to Surennder Kumar in my Army Service Record.

I. Army no. 2711857M GDR Sunil Kumar R/o VPO Naloi, Tehsil Siwani, Distt. Bhiwani (Hry) have changed my mother's name from Sakuntla to Shakuntla Devi in my Army Service Record.

I. Jagtar Singh Bhama S/o Darshan Singh R/O House No. 8, Royal Valley, Dhandra Road, Dhandra, Ludhiana have changed my name to Jagtar Singh.

I. Simla Devi Mother Of No-32014001 Nk Devendra Pal Singh Of 6 Jat Presently Residing At Village-Tahri, Po- Taharpur Kalan, Teh-Chhachhrauli, Distt- Yamuna Nagar (Haryana), Have Changed My Name From Simla Devi To Shimla Devi And Date Of Birth From 14 July 1956 To 01 Jan 1962 Vide Affidavit dated 16 April 2021 Before Distt Court Gurdaspur (Pb).

I. Army No. Jc-572521m Rank Nb/Sub Guman Singh S/O Umrav Singh. Presently Serving In Indian Army, 7 Pb Bn Ncc (Unit), Declare That In My Service Record My Son Name Nikhil Singh Which Is Wrong But My Son Name Nikhil Singh Tanwar Which Is Correct. Vide Affidavit No.At 385551 Dated 15-04-2021 Before Notary Public Gurdaspur. Punjab.

I. Meena Spouse Of Army No Jc-572521m Rank Nb/Sub Guman Singh. Presently Serving In Indian Army, 7 Pb Bn Ncc (Unit), Have Changed My Name Meena Which Is Wrong. But My Name Meena Kanwar Which Is Correct. Vide Affidavit No.At 385552 Dated 15-04-2021 Before Notary Public Gurdaspur. Punjab.

I. No.4486276K Sep.Sunny Singh S/o sh late Kashmiri Lal of unit 7 SIKHli c/o 56 APO declare that my service record my son name is wrongly entered as Varan Kalyan instead of Varun Kalyan vide affidavit no AT 237808 Dated- 15-4-21 before notary Pathankot ,Punjab

I. Smrita Ashok Thosar Spouse of Prasad Dhokale R/o 80/3/A, Near Hanuman Temple, Thombareward, Lonavala, Pune (Maharashtra) 410401 have changed my name from Smrita Ashok Thosar to Smrita Prasad Dhokale vide affidavit dated. 15/04/2021 before Rajesh Sharma Notary Pathankot.

I. Seema Singh wife of Niraj Kumar Singh residing at Qr.No.23/4, No.1 Area, Air Force Station, Pathankot, have Changed my name from Seema Devi to Seema Singh vide affidavit No. 231 dated 16 April 2021 before Rajesh Sharma Notary Pathankot.

I. Reena legally wedded spouse of No. 3998448M Rank Hav. Name Dalvir Singh residing at village Pangoli, P.O. Pathankot Tehsil & District Pathankot, have changed my name from Reena Devi vide affidavit No AT 237495 dated 08 April 2021 before Executive magistrate Pathankot.

I. Simple S/o Raj Kumar R/o Village Sirsal, Tehsil Pundri, District Kaithal, Informs that, I have changed my name as Simple Sharma from Simple. Call me Simple Sharma in future.

I. Rajesh Sharma S/o Subhash Chand Sharma r/o h.no 243-L Bhagat nagar teh.camp panipat declared Subhash Chand Sharma and Subash Chand Sharma both are my father name all concerned noted.

I. Heena Kouser W/o Sabar Khan R/o H.No. B-21/504, Nabha Gate, Patiala (Punjab) have changed my name from Heena Kouser to Heena Kouser

I. No.15335220N Rank HAV Name Niraj Kumar permanent R/O Puthi Saman (60), Hissar, Haryana-125042, have changed my daughter name from Sneha Rani to Sneha. Both the names Sneha Rani and Sneha pertain to one and the same person i.e. my daughter.

I. Poonam legally wedded W/O No.15335220N Rank HAV Name Niraj Kumar permanent R/O Puthi Saman (60), Hissar, Haryana-125042, have changed my Name from Poonam Kumari to Poonam. Poonam Kumari and Poonm both the names pertain to one and same person.

I. Dharamjit Kaur W/O Nirmal Singh R/O Village Naraingarh, Sas Nagar, Mohali, Changed My Name Paramjeet Kaur To Dharamjit Kaur.

I. Kunal S/o Gulshan Sikka R/o House No W G 110, Islam Ganj, Jalandhar City Have Changed My Name From Kunal To Kunal Sikka.

I. Amarjit S/o Nasib Chand R/o VPO. Chaman, Tehsil .Nakodar, Distt.Jalandhar-144033 Have Changed My Name To Amarjit Mehmi.

I. Sunita Devi W/o Anoop Dogra R/o H.No.38, New Raj Nagar, Basti Bawa Khel, Jalandhar Have Changed My Name/Spelling To Sunita Davi (Same Person)

I Jaskirat Kaur W/O Lakhvir Singh Toor R/O Vpo. Bhinder Kalan (Moga) Have Changed My Name To Jaskirat Kaur Toor.

I Lakhvir Singh S/O Gurcharan Singh R/O Village Kaunka Khurd (Khosa) Tehsil Jaunke, Distt. Ludhiana Have Changed My Name To Lakhvir Singh Sidhu.

I Ashok Kumar Narula S/O Madan Lal R/O Jand Sahi Road, R/O Vpo. Sadiq Distt Faridkot-151212 Have Changed My Name To Ashok Kumar.

I Rhythm Gill D/O Gurpreet Singh Gill R/O House No.241 Near High School Tehsil Jaitu Distt. Faridkot-151202 Have Changed My Name To Rhythm Singh Gill.

I Gurmel Singh S/O Surjeet Singh R/O Vpo. Sikhan Wala Distt. Faridkot Have Changed My Name To Gurmail Singh.

I Paramjit S/O Gurdev Ram R/O Village Mehrampur P/O Khankhana Tehsil Banga District S.B.S. Nagar Have Changed My Name From Paramjit To Paramjit Singh.

I Harjeet Singh S/O Gurjant Singh R/O Kalgidhar Nagar Firozepur Road Zira Have Changed My Name From Harjeet Singh To Harjeet Singh Aulakh.

I Chanpreet Kaur Eshar D/O Gurmeet Singh, W/O Navneet Singh R/O House No.112, Gali No.4, Naam Dev Colony Sultanwind Road Amritsar Have Changed My Name As Chanpreet Kaur.

I Madhu W/O Anil R/O Mahna Singh Road Dholi Muhala Basti Isiaa Sultanwind Road Amritsar Tehsil & District Amritsar Punjab, India Have Changed My Name Madhu To Manpreet Kaur.

I Mansimrat Kaur D/O Sukhlal Singh R/O Village Kaulowal P.O. Brar Tehsil Ajnala District Amritsar Have Changed My Name Mansimrat Kaur To Mansimrat Kaur Sandlu.

I Vignesh Singh S/O Joginder Singh Kalsi R/O 125, Gali No.2, Ranjit Vihar, Loharka Road Amritsar Have Changed My Name Vignesh Singh Kalsi To Vignesh Singh.

I Megha W/O Sangam Rana R/O Vpo. Bakhlaur Tehsil Nawanshahr District S.B.S. Nagar Punjab India Have Changed My Name Megha To Megha Rana.

I. Baj Singh S/o Makhan Singh R/O Village Ajrana Khurd, Tehsil Thanesar, District Kurukshetra, have changed my name to Gurbaj Singh.

I Gurvinder Singh Dhillon S/o Balvir Singh Vill-Dhiliwan Nabha Distt. Barnala have changed my name to Gurvinder Singh.

I. Parmjeet Singh S/o Sadhu Singh R/O Vill: Holan Wali Teh-Zira (Ferozepur) changed my name to Paranjit Singh.

I. Parmjeet Kaur W/o Paranjit Singh R/O Vill: Holan Wali Teh-Zira (Ferozepur) changed my name to Paranjit Kaur.

I No. 2492089P Hav Sukhman Singh S/O Sh. Partap Singh VPO. Manochahal Kalan, Tehsil & Distt Tarn Taran I Have Change My Daughter Name Eknnoor Kaur To Ekamnoor Kaur.

I. No. 4468238Y Nk Tarsem Singh S/O Sh. Tara Singh Resident of Vill: Mugal Chak Gill Po. Kad Gill Teh & Distt. Tarn Taran (Pb) declare that I have changed the name of my minor son from Virinder Singh to Varinder Singh.

I. No. 3391250N Ex Nk Samukh Singh S/O Vir Singh resident of Vpo. Goidwal Sahib Teh-Khadoor Sahib Distt. Tarn Taran (Pb) declare that i have changed the name of my minor son from Jograj Singh to Yograj Singh.

I. No. 15135035W Rank Hav Name Gural Singh S/O Kewal Singh R/O Vill: Bela Ramgarh (Patti Tek Singh) Po. Bhallan Teh-Nangal (Rorpar) Pb, changed my son name from Baranjit Singh to Baranjit Singh.

I. Balwinder Kumar S/o Prem Lal R/O W.No. 17 Kartar Nagar Khanna Teh-Khanna (Ludhiana) changed my name to Balwinder Singh.

I. Alla Rakha S/o Joinal Abdin Mulla R/O Gali Gujran Wali Sachkhand Road Tarn-Taran have changed my name to Alokok Mulla.

I Jagseer Singh Son Of Gurcharan Singh R/O Near Gurudwara Pind Gulabewala Po And Distt Sri Muktsar Sahib Have Changed My Name To Jagsir Singh.

I Gori Shanker S/O Om Parkash Sharma R/O House No. 40 Ward No. 03 Street No. 09 Near Baba Navdev Gurudwara Ferozepur Cantt To Gouri Shanker Sharma.

I. Rabia W/O Abhishek Bathla (D/O Rajesh Kumar Vohra) R/O Street 6, Sunder Nagar, Abohar, Distt. Fazilka Have Changed My Name Rabia To Rabia Bathla.

I. Suzal S/O Rajesh Kumar R/O Mata Moge Wali Mandir, Adarsh Nagar, Guru Har Sahai, Distt. Ferozepur Have Changed My Name Suzal To Suzal Kandhari.

I hitherto known as Angrez Singh Brar Son of Gurcharan Singh, Residing at VPO Sotha Tehsil And Distt Sri Muktsar Sahib, Punjab - 152032 (India) have changed my Name and Shall hereafter be known as Angrej Singh Brar.

Disclaimer

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Classified Advertisement
Contact : 94174-19351

Chandigarh, April 16: A total of 49.86 lakh tonnes of wheat has arrived in the mandis and procurement centres of Haryana from April 1 to April 16, 2021 out of which a total of 41.35 lakh tonnes of wheat has been procured by the government agencies at the Minimum Support Price (MSP).

Giving information in this regard, an official spokesperson said that on April 16, 2021, procurement of 1.99 lakh tonnes of wheat was made by the government agencies at MSP. He said that so far 4,33,262 J-forms of 1,60,270 farmers have been created and today a total of Rs 873.27 crore has been paid directly to the farmers' account.

The spokesperson said that directions have been given to all concerned that lifting of wheat purchased in mandis should be ensured on a daily basis so that wheat does not get stored in the mandis and farmers have no difficulty in selling their produce. Apart from this, the State Government has appointed senior officers for the inspection of mandis, so that there are no obstacles in the procurement work.

No.IPRDH/2021

Lost and Found

I, Gurinder Kaur Makkar D/o Kartar Singh and W/o late Rajdeep Singh Makkar R/o 206E, Sector-74, Mohali, have lost share certificate No. 5426 of The Wembley's Co-operative House Building Society Ltd. Further I want to apply fresh original document against the same. If anybody has objection to this action/ notice then may contact The Wembley's Co-operative House Building Society Ltd., Plot No. 586, Sector-91, Mohali.

CNR NO: CHCH20035772019
CIS NO: CS CJ-1843-2019
ICICI BANK LTD
VS
MANOJ KUMAR MALIK etc.
Present: Sh. Jatin Khulnar
Advocate for the plaintiff.
Summons to defendant could not be issued for want of RC/AD. However, today, Ltd., Counsel for the plaintiff has come present and moved an application under Order 5 Rule 20 of CPC for effecting the service of defendant through publication in the Newspapers namely "The Pioneer". Heard. Same is considered and allowed in view of averments mentioned therein. Let, summons to defendant be again issued through substituted service of publication in the Newspapers namely "The Pioneer" on filing of publication fee within 7 working days which is returnable to this court till 06.03.2020.
Date of Order: 20.01.2020
Sanjay Kumar Stenographer- II
(Navneet Kaur)
Civil Judge Jr. Div.
CHD-UID NO. PB00568

DIRECTORATE OF PUNJAB STATE LOTTERIES

DRAW DATE:16/04/2021

RESULT OF PUNJAB STATE DEAR 100 FRIDAY

Price Rs 100/- Per Ticket

1st Prize (1)Rs.1 Crore/- (On 5 digits With Series)
(Seller ₹5Lakhs + Sub Agent ₹1Lakh Total Prize Amount ₹1.06Crore)

2nd Prize (1)Rs.5 Lakhs/- (On 5 digits With Series)
(Seller ₹50,000 + Sub Agent ₹25,000 Total Prize Amount ₹5.75Lakhs)

3rd Prize (250)Rs.9000/- (On last 4 digits)

4th Prize (250)Rs.7000/- (On last 4 digits)

5th Prize (250)Rs.5000/- (On last 4 digits)

6th Prize (500)Rs.2000/- (On last 4 digits)

7th Prize (25000)Rs.200/- (On last 4 digits)

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0407	0425	0463	0469	0473	0536	0540	0561	0562	0597	5521	5530	5566	5588	5606	5631	5638	5650	5685	5724
0606	0636	0643	0658	0694	0699	0702	0730	0743	0758	5746	5856	5869	5877	5878	5886	5901	5961	5964	5968
0777	0800	0810	0804	0907	0979	1022	1025	1030	1053	5891	5916	5925	5955	6025	6028	6072	6098	6100	6136
1075	1077	1080	1110	1160	1192	1203	1247	1268	1269	6170	6184	6199	6267	6289	6292	6335	6364	6374	6381
1359	1362	1381	1396	1403	1410	1521	1524	1535	1534	6387	6451	6458	6466	6471	6494	6518	6528	6534	6553
1539	1561	1568	1570	1579	1598	1592	1622	1630	1636	6563	6621	6638	6645	6657	6689	6701	6728	6730	6745
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Weekend lockdown announced in Chandigarh

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

With the number of Covid-19 cases showing a surge, the Chandigarh administration on Friday announced a weekend lockdown in the Union Territory till 5 am on Monday.

Announcing the fresh restriction in an official statement here, the administration urged residents to stay indoors. Essential activities and services and home delivery of food are exempted from the purview of the lockdown.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting here chaired by Punjab Governor V P Singh Badnore, who is also the Administrator of the union territory. The administration also announced other restrictions, which will be in place till April 30.

While all gymnasiums and spas in the union territory will remain closed, cinema halls can run with 50 per cent capacity, it said. All government offices will function with 50 per cent staff strength, and the general public will be allowed to meet officers only with prior appointment. The administration also banned on all social, cultural, political and religious events

The existing limit on gatherings in permitted functions will be reduced to 100 for outdoor events and 50 for indoor ones. Buses will run but with 50 per cent capacity only. Museums, libraries, coaching institutions etc., will remain closed.

The statement clarified that candidates venturing out to sit in examinations and those deputed in exam duties will be allowed to travel on production of admit or identity cards. Visitors will be screened at the airport, railway station, ISBT etc., it said. Home delivery of food will be allowed.

All vaccination and testing centres, dispensaries and other medical facilities will remain open during the lockdown and people going there will not be stopped. Inter-state travellers will be allowed on all days, including the lockdown period, the administration said.

The high-level meeting was attended by Manoj Parida, Adviser to the Administrator, and Mandip Singh Brar, Deputy Commissioner, Chandigarh, and Director, PGIMER, among others.

Badnore expressed serious concerns about the rising number of COVID-19 cases in the city and also the high fatality

rate. The union territory reported 412 cases of the coronavirus on Thursday and a record.

Badnore directed all the three government medical institutes here to ramp up their facilities so as to accommodate the increasing number of coronavirus patients.

All COVID-19-related deaths must be specifically audited, he said, adding that the sector 48 hospital should be made fully operational, so that it can function as a dedicated COVID-19 hospital, he directed.

Badnore also directed all hospitals to store enough oxygen and vaccines. All COVID-19 patients currently under home-quarantine must be regularly contacted and provided necessary assistance, he said. The UT administrator said all shops must get their staff tested and display sign boards stating that their premises are coronavirus-free.

Action will be taken against shoppers going to the markets without masks and also against shopkeepers attending them, he said. Badnore also said that mobile teams should be sent to temples, gurdwaras, mosques and other crowded places during festivals so that visitors can

CATEGORIES EXEMPTED DURING WEEKEND LOCKDOWN

- People tasked with law and order/emergency and municipal services and duties, media persons with accreditation and government machinery tasked with Covid-19 related duties.
- Essential commodity shops and vendors dealing with food, groceries, fruits, vegetable, dairy and milk booths, medical equipment have been allowed to open for home delivery only.
- Manufacturing units of essential commodities shall be allowed to remain open.
- There shall be no curbs on inter-state and intra-state movement of essential and non-essential goods.
- All vehicles and persons in bonafide transit (inter-state, intra-state) shall be allowed to pass, but only after due verification of point of origin and destination.
- Hospitals, chemist shops, and ATMs shall be allowed to remain open 24x7
- Pregnant women and patients allowed for getting medical health services.
- During weekend lockdown, restaurants and hotels can remain open only for home delivery till 9.30 pm.
- All marriage functions which have been permitted shall be allowed subject to the limit of 100 people outdoor or 50 indoor or 50 percent of the total capacity whichever is less.

be screened and symptomatic cases tested.

481 COVID CASES IN CHANDIGARH, HIGHEST SINGLE DAY SURGE

The Union Territory Chandigarh on Friday reported 481 fresh Covid-19 cases, the highest single-day figure since global pandemic struck.

With this, the case count has reached 32,878, a medical bulletin said. Last year, on September 13, Chandigarh logged 449 cases. As many as 428 patients were discharged after they recovered from the infection, taking the number of cured persons to 29,047. So far, 355,840 samples have been taken for testing.

Capt Amarinder showcases Punjab as safest place to do business

NO LOCKOUTS AND STRIKES DURING LAST 30 YEARS

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH



Reiterating Punjab Government's firm commitment in facilitating investments from Japan through Invest Punjab, the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Friday highlighted his vision of having a "Little Japan" in Punjab that builds upon the current thriving presence of more than 100 Japanese business establishments in the State.

Capt Amarinder, in his virtual address to the "INDO-JAPAN Investment Symposium: Investment Opportunities in the State of Punjab" organised by the Japan Desk at Invest Punjab in coordination with Embassy of India, Tokyo, pointed out that Punjab is the safest place to do business having witnessed no lockouts and strikes in last 30 years.

"Invest Punjab has been

rated as the 'top performing' State IPA by Government of India and a dedicated Japan Desk has been formed at Invest Punjab for facilitating Japanese investors willing to invest in the State and would be the 'match making' platform for Japanese and Punjab based companies", asserted Capt Amarinder.

Inviting the Japanese Enterprises to Punjab, the Chief Minister highlighted the opportunities for investment or collaboration with Punjab based companies in multiple sectors such as agri and food processing, technical textiles, engineering, pharma and medical devices, skill development.

The Chief Minister also highlighted the availability of 1,000 acres of land near Rajpura for the development of dedicated Japanese Industrial Township in the State.

Punjab releases ₹151 cr pending to arhtiyas

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Finance Department on Friday released the pending arrears, amounting to ₹151.45 crore to the arhtiyas (commission agents). The amount, released on the directions of the CM Capt Amarinder Singh — was paid out of the state exchequer as the Food Corporation of India (FCI) has withheld the amount.

"The FCI was supposed to pay the arrears to about 5,000 arhtiyas but due to delay on its part, the Punjab Government released the same from the state exchequer to ensure smooth and hassle free wheat procurement during ongoing Rabi Marketing Season," said a spokesperson of the Chief Minister Office.

It may be recalled that before the commencement of wheat procurement, the arhtiyas had requested the Chief Minister to settle their arrears immediately on which Capt Amarinder had directed the Finance Department to release the due payment without waiting for the payment by FCI.

COVID SURGE

Haryana CM appeals to farmers to end agitation, announces mega vaccine drive

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Amid rapid spurt in the cases of Covid-19 across the country and state, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Friday once again urged the farmers to end their agitation against the three central farm laws during the ongoing crisis.

"It is everyone's democratic right to protest but it is also our collective responsibility to protect ourselves, family members and our near and dear ones from this global pandemic that has become a global threat to humanity. Therefore, farmers on moral and ethical grounds should end this agitation to prevent the spread of COVID-19," the Chief Minister said while giving his message during the 'Haryana Ki Baat' programme.

His message came on the day when the state reported 20 fatalities and 6277 fresh cases, the highest single-day spike ever since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

He said that wherever people gather in large numbers, there is a chance of spread of



the virus. So the farmers should end their protest and can again hold the agitation whenever the situation normalizes, he added.

Khattar said last year, the highest 3104 cases were reported in a single day in the state but in the second wave, more than 5000 cases are now registered on a daily basis. Last year, the districts in NCR like Gurugram, Faridabad, Sonapat were badly affected, but now a sudden spike is also recorded in Panchkula, Ambala, Kurukshetra among other districts.

Some restrictions have been put on public gatherings and night curfew has been

imposed to contain the spread of the virus. A cabinet meeting has been convened on April 22 to review the situation and more decisions are likely to be taken to deal with the second wave of COVID-19, he said.

Khattar said that from April 20 onwards, another massive vaccination campaign will begin in the state for people above 45 years of age. On the arrangements made in hospitals to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, he said that adequate numbers of oxygen cylinders, ICU beds, ventilators, masks and PPE kits etc are being made available in all the hospitals across the state.

Haryana deports 12 IAS officers to monitor Covid situation in 12 districts

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Government has deputed 12 IAS officers in various districts to review and monitor the Covid-19 preparedness in addition to their present duties with immediate effect.

Sanjeev Kaushal has been deputed in Faridabad, Alok Nigam in Panchkula district, Devender Singh in Karnal, TC Gupta in Gurugram, Amit Jha in Sonapat, SN Roy in Ambala, Dr Mahavir Singh in Jhajjar, Anurag Rastogi in Hisar, Vineet Garg in Sirsa, G Anupama in Kurukshetra, Apoorva Kumar Singh in Panipat and Rakesh Gupta has been deputed in Rohtak. These districts are witnessing a huge spike in COVID cases on a daily basis.

An official spokesman said that these officers will monitor and focus on active involvement of District Administration in fight against COVID-19 pandemic, promotion of COVID-19 testing and vaccination among general public through various government, non-government, religious and other organizations, addition of more private hospitals for COVID-19 treat-

ment, wherever required, increase contact tracing of active positive cases (up to 30 contacts to be traced and tested within 72 hours viz-a-viz each COVID positive case), and proper marking of micro-containment zones by district authorities.

They will review the availability of adequate healthcare infrastructure to tackle COVID-19 situation, such as isolation beds, oxygen support beds, ICU beds, ventilators, drugs and consumables (masks, PPE kits, sanitizers, etc.) oxygen reserve, etc. in both government as well as private health facilities in their respective districts, the spokesman said.

They will review arrangements for strict monitoring of COVID-19 patients under home isolation. They will also monitor enforcing COVID-19 appropriate behaviour, such as social distancing, wearing face masks, hand hygiene, etc., at all public places and ensuring strict implementation of orders regarding restrictions on social gatherings, especially in banquet halls during marriages or other family functions as well, he added.

Haryana closes all educational institutions till April 30

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Due to a surge in Covid-19 cases, Haryana Government on Friday ordered closure of all schools, colleges, coaching institutions, ITIs, libraries and training institutes whether government or private in the state till April 30.

The order was issued by the Financial Commissioner & Additional Chief Secretary Revenue & Disaster Management Department, Haryana on Friday. Instructions were also issued to the Deputy Commissioners to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Earlier, the schools upto class VIII were closed in the state. As per directions issued by the Haryana Directorate of School Education, all the teachers will continue to come to the schools as before so that



the exam results can be prepared and released on April 30 and the new academic session 2021-22 can be started from May 1.

In its order to DCs, the State Government said, "All government meetings should be encouraged through video conferencing with officers to discourage official visits in the offices of Secretariats at State and District level." The State Government has also directed the District Administrations to effective-

ly take steps for establishment of micro containment zones.

The State Government had imposed night curfew prohibiting movement of individuals for all non essential activities between 10 pm to 5 am in Haryana.

MANDIS AND PROCUREMENT CENTRES CLOSED FOR 2 DAYS

Mandis and procurement centres in Haryana will remain closed on April 17 and April 18. An official spokesperson said that farmers are requested not to bring their produce to the mandis on both these days as wheat will not be procured in the state on April 17 and April 18. Only the work of lifting wheat procured in the past will be done in the mandis. From April 19 onwards, wheat procurement will continue smoothly in the state as before.

Mohali Admn asks seven pvt hosps to reserve 50% beds for Covid patients

PNS ■ MOHALI

Mohali District Administration on Friday ordered the seven private hospitals — including Max Super-specialty, Fortis Healthcare, SGHS Sohana, Ivy Hospital — to set aside at least 50 per cent of their total bed capacity as isolation beds and wards for Covid care.

The other hospitals include Indus Hospital, Grecian Super-specialty, and Mayo Super-specialty hospitals. These private hospitals are already providing quality tertiary care (Level 2 and Level 3) for Covid patients in the district.

"The district possesses minimal public health infrastructure, given that the district hospital is under re-construction as a medical college — which will take time. Most of the ICU beds or ventilators (L2/L3 — that is tertiary care) are in the private sector," said Mohali Deputy Commissioner Girish Dayalan in an order.

The hospitals have also been asked to put certain ambulances exclusively attending to COVID-19 patients or suspected cases. Mohali Civil Surgeon shall decide on the exact number of beds and ambulances based on overall capacity of the hospital, read the order.

The Deputy Commissioner also made it clear that the private hospitals in the district shall not refuse admission or treatment to patients of COVID-19 referred by the Civil Surgeon, Mohali. The hospitals shall ensure that staff

— doctors, nurses, and paramedics — are all available on duty and no one shall refuse treatment.

At the same time, the Deputy Commissioner has assured the public that there was no reason to panic as there are sufficient COVID care beds in Mohali.

"Formal orders have been issued so that as a cautionary measure at least 50 percent beds are reserved for COVID patients in private hospitals. Seven hospitals which have been assessed by experts to have provided quality COVID care in the past have been directed for compliance," he said, while making it clear that the Hospital management would be held personally responsible for compliance of these directions.

The assertions came two days after Sidhu had chosen the "sensitive" Bargari issue to hit at his own Government and its legal team by claiming that the case was not properly defended and "weak lawyers" were hired. In fact, Sidhu visited Kotkapura — the epicentre of the sacrilege incidents and subsequent protests — on Baisakhi following which he shared his views on Twitter.

Reiterating his demand, Sidhu on Friday demanded that the Punjab Police constituted a SIT probe into the 2015 firings at people protesting in Kotkapura and Behbal Kalan against sacrilegious incidents should be made public.

Navjot Sidhu launches yet another attack on his own Govt

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Yet to be rehabilitated, the cricket-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu on Friday launched yet another scathing attack against his own party's government from the political pavilion he was relegated to after he resigned from Punjab Cabinet berth nearly two years back.

Sidhu, the former Minister, blamed the Congress-led Punjab Government for betraying the people who voted it to power on the promises that it would punish those guilty of sacrilege and drug menace.

Mincing no words, Sidhu went on to question the constitution of the special investigation teams by the Government as none of them have yielded any result in the State. "In Punjab, the SIT means SIT-down. No SIT has yielded any result so far," he said, while addressing the media in his and the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh's home town, Patiala.

The assertions came two days after Sidhu had chosen the "sensitive" Bargari issue to hit at his own Government and its legal team by claiming that the case was not properly defended and "weak lawyers" were hired. In fact, Sidhu visited Kotkapura — the epicentre of the sacrilege incidents and subsequent protests — on Baisakhi following which he shared his views on Twitter.

Reiterating his demand, Sidhu on Friday demanded that the Punjab Police constituted a SIT probe into the 2015 firings at people protesting in Kotkapura and Behbal Kalan against sacrilegious incidents should be made public.



"The government was formed on the promise of punishing the guilty of sacrilege and those involved in the drug cases, but it failed on both fronts. The public feels cheated as the government didn't keep its promise," said Sidhu, who questioned why the action was not taken against the guilty.

That was not all! Sidhu went on to raise questions on the working of the Capt Amarinder Singh Government, while blaming the "botched-up" investigations since 2015 for the delay in justice for the victims.

"Why has the government failed to name and nail the guilty? On whose directions did the policemen open fire on protesters? Why are their names not mentioned in the FIR? It's evident from the Justice Ranjit Singh Commission report that the then Chief Minister had spoken to the then police chief at midnight, hours before the firing on protesting Sikhs was undertaken. The report was tabled in the House, debated and a resolution was passed to punish the guilty, but no concrete action has been taken. Who is responsible?" he said, asking the government to make the report of the sacrilege probe public.

"Everyone knows who is guilty for the sacrilege and firing on Sikhs besides the drugs

problem of Punjab, but why has the government failed to act?" he asked, adding that the "public is angry with the government." He said that when the culprits are identified as per the report, and there is evidence that the "then state DGP was in touch with the Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal at 2.30 am then it's clear evidence that they were in cahoots."

Underlining that sacrilege was the "most important issue

for me", Sidhu made it clear that he would not sit until the guilty are punished. Also raising the drugs issue, Sidhu sought to also make the report on drug cases compiled by the head of the Government-constituted Special Task Force on drugs Harpreet Singh Sidhu.

Harpreet Sidhu's report was handed over to the Government by the court for taking action. The file has been sent to the Government

through the Advocate-General to act against the guilty. Why has no action been taken so far?" he asked.

Sidhu said that in case the Government does not believe the STF report, "it should probe the statements of drug lord Jagdish Bhola and others, who are on record to say that they were only pawns. Why have the big names involved in the drug racket not been exposed?"

PGIMER Director urges Punjab, Haryana, HP to increase beds, manpower

MANOJ KUMAR ■ CHANDIGARH

Anticipating a surge in the number of Covid-19 cases after confirmation of UK corona variant in Chandigarh, the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) Director Dr Jagat Ram on Friday urged the authorities concerned of neighbouring States- Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir to increase beds and manpower in their hospitals.

"There is a rapid surge of Covid-19 cases in the second wave of the pandemic. The peak of this virus is expected in mid May or early June", he told The Pioneer.

The director said that above 70 per cent of total covid beds in the Covid Block of PGIMER are full and about 69 per cent of these are occu-

pled by patients from Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. PGIMER has 300 Covid beds and 222 Covid patients have been admitted in Nehru Extension Block, out of which 82 belong to Punjab, 67 to Chandigarh, 41 to Haryana, 22 to Himachal Pradesh and 10 from other States.

After confirmation of the UK corona variant in Chandigarh, Punjab and other neighbouring States, it has been anticipated a surge in the number of Covid-19 cases in the region.

Dr Jagat Ram said that the Covid-19 cases surging at a rate much faster in the second wave than the first wave in the region. At PGIMER 3,492 covid samples tested, out of which 552 were found positive. The positivity rate was 15.8 per cent. Only, patients having moderate and severe symptoms of Covid-19 are admitted at Covid hospital in PGIMER, he added.

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd. SCO 485,486 Sec 35C, Chandigarh Pin 160022

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of movable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described movable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower (s) /Co Borrowers/ Guarantors	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Mr. Rakesh/ Shamila LAHIS00035148254	Make- CHEVROLET BEAT DSL LS, Registration No- HR21L1775, Manufacturing Year- 2017 RC Status- Not Available, Parked at Samil Yard, Hisar	Rs. 8,19,545/- as on April 10, 2021	Rs. 1,20,000/- To Rs. 25,000/-	All working Days, From 11:00 AM To 05:00 PM.	May 11, 2021 From 11:00 AM Onwards

The online auction will be conducted on website URL Link- <https://www.bidkaro.net> or of our auction agency Bid Koro. The Mortgagees/ noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till May 10, 2021 before 10 A.M. else these secured assets will be sold as per schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit their offer along with the earnest money deposit (refer column E) in a sealed envelope that mentions "Offer for purchase of property" to ICICI BANK LTD., (Basement) SCO 485,486 Sec 35C, Chandigarh Pin 160022 or to our marketing agent Bid Koro having their office at 419, 4th Floor, D Mall, Plot No-A1B-5, Twin District Centre, Sector 10, Rohini, Delhi- 110075 on or before May 10, 2021 before 5 P.M. The marketing agency has also been engaged as auctioneer for proper conduct of auction. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Chandigarh.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Bank Limited on 7347020115/ 7304914763 or Bid Koro on 9990710226/9910507695. Tenders which are acknowledged by the Bank/e-auction vendor official and registered before the cut-off time with complete details shall only be considered for auction.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

Date: April 17, 2021
Place: Haryana

Sd/-
Authorised Officer
ICICI Bank Limited.

Former CBI chief Ranjit Sinha dies of Covid-19



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former CBI Director Ranjit Sinha died here on Friday morning reportedly due to Covid-19.

Sinha, 68, was confirmed positive for novel coronavirus infection on Thursday night and succumbed to the disease early on Friday, officials said.

An IPS officer of the 1974-batch (Bihar cadre), Sinha took over as the Director of CBI on December 3, 2012 and retired on December 2, 2014. He was the 26th Director of CBI after its formation in 1963.

Prior to joining as Director, CBI, Sinha was Director General of ITBP. He had earlier held several important positions in CBI including the post of Joint Director and DIG. Sinha served as Superintendent of Police of Madhubani, Saharsa and Railway (Patna). He had also served as DIG, Magadh Range, Gaya. He had served in CRPF as Inspector General (Operations) at Srinagar, IG (Personnel) at Directorate General and ADG in ITBP.

Sinha, a Post Graduate in Science from Patna University, had an M.Phil from IIPA, New Delhi and a Diploma in HR Management from Wollongong University, Australia. He was decorated with the Police Medal for Meritorious Service in 1991

Ensure smooth passage to vehicles carrying oxygen: Centre tells States

Centre takes stock of Covid status in UP, Chhattisgarh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday directed the States to ensure uninterrupted movement of medical oxygen carrying vehicles along their borders, and said they must not impose any curb on production and supply of the essential public health commodity anywhere.

Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla's communication to chief secretaries of all States and Union Territories came in the wake of reports of shortage of the medical oxygen for Covid-19 patients in different parts of the country in the last few days.

The Home Secretary along with his Health counterpart Rajesh Bhushan chaired high-level meetings to review status of Covid-19 in Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh and the public health measures taken for containment and management of Covid-19 by the State health authorities. Dr V K Paul, Member (Health), NITI



Aayog, Dr. Balram Bhargava, DG ICMR, Dr (Prof) Sunil Kumar, DGHS were also present along with Chief Secretaries, DGs of State Police and Health Secretaries of both States.

"Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh along with Maharashtra are the only three States in the country which have more than one lakh active cases. Both Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh are reporting very high number of daily new Covid-19 cases and high deaths caused by Covid-19. Chhattisgarh has reported nearly 6.2% increase in weekly new Covid cases based on

7 day moving average. In last two weeks, the State has seen almost 131% increase in weekly new cases. 22 districts in Chhattisgarh have crossed their reported highest cases in the last 30 days; Raipur, Durg, Rajnandgaon and Bilaspur are the most affected districts. In contrast to the week 17th-23rd March 2021, in the week of 7th-13th April 2021, RT-PCR tests have decreased to 28% (from 34%) while the Antigen Tests have increased to 62% (from 53%).

"Uttar Pradesh has reported a growth rate of 19.25% in daily new cases. 46 districts in Uttar Pradesh have crossed their reported highest cases in

the last 30 days; Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi and Prayagraj are the most affected districts. In contrast to the week 17th-23rd March 2021, in the week of 7th-13th April 2021, RT-PCR tests have decreased to 46% (from 48%) while Antigen tests have increased to 53% (from 51%)," said the Home Ministry in a statement.

The Home Secretary emphasised that medical oxygen is an essential public health commodity and any impediment in its supply in the country may critically impact the management of patients suffering from COVID-19 disease in other parts of the country. "Therefore, you are requested to ensure that no such restriction is imposed on the movement of medical oxygen between the states and UTs, and transport authorities shall be instructed to accordingly allow free inter-state movement of oxygen carrying vehicles," the letter said.

Bhalla told the states that no curb shall be imposed on oxygen manufacturers and suppliers to limit the oxygen supplies only to the hospitals of the state in which they are located and there shall be free movement of oxygen carrying vehicles into the cities, without any restriction of timings, while also enabling inter-city supply without restriction.

India may witness 2,320 Covid deaths per day by June: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India may witness 1,750 coronavirus-related deaths per day, surging to around 2,320 daily by the first week of June while in financial terms, the country may need to expend over \$7.8 billion on testing and \$1.7 billion on healthcare usage because of infections by September 2021, according to a report of the Lancet Covid-19 Commission by India Task Force members.

The report, titled "Managing India's second COVID-19 wave: Urgent steps", underlines the key elements of the second COVID-19 wave. It also suggests measures like ramping up vaccine production, vaccination to the needy, quarantine and ban on assembly of groups of over 10 that should be taken to help mitigate the spread of infection.

As per the preliminary review of the report, "while the pandemic has spread, the geographic contours of the second wave closely mirror those of the first wave, though with a deeper penetration into tier-2 and tier-3 cities." The study also indicates that the second wave has been more geographically bundled so far.

The tally of districts constituting the top 50% of the cases has fallen from over 40



at the time of the first peak to less than 20 presently, it said pointing out that at the time of the first surge of the novel coronavirus cases during August-September 2020, the count of districts contributing to 75% of the total COVID-19 cases was 60-100, whereas it has been approx. 20-40 districts during the second wave. It took 40 days to go from 10K-80K in COVID-19 second wave

The second wave is unlike the first in two significant ways. Firstly, the rate of increase in fresh coronavirus cases is substantially higher. Secondly, more coronavirus cases are asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic, causing relatively low rates of hospitalisation and mortality.

The overall Case Fatality Ratio (CFR) since the outset of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020 has been

reported to be around 1.3%. The CFR among Covid-19 patients who have contracted the infection since the beginning of 2021 is considerably less at 0.87%.

The report also recommended solutions such as vaccination including all adults, comprising those below 45, with severe comorbidities into the priority group, enhancing job production, widening job basket including Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson and Johnson besides addressing vaccine hesitancy.

The report also doesn't propose a blanket national or state lockdown. Indicating that economic closures are most disruptive to the poorest sections of society, it proposes a middle-ground approach in India, comprising phased, localised closures or curbs.

Rahul takes potshots at Centre's 'Tughlaqi' 'ring-a-bell' strategy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the menace of Covid-19 getting scarier by the day, former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi on Friday said the Centre's strategy to fight the pandemic consisted of imposing a 'Tughlaqi lockdown, ringing bells and singing praises to the Lord. Rahul said one year later, the country continues to suffer and infrastructure have crumbled while the Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) continues to turn away from his responsibilities.

The Congress-led Opposition has been criticising the Government over its handling of the pandemic and the vaccination drive, while the Centre has maintained that its timely steps have been instrumental in fighting Covid-19. "The Central government's Covid-19 strategy — Stage 1- Impose a Tughlaqi lockdown, Stage 2- Ring bells, Stage 3- Sing praises to the Lord," Rahul tweeted.

Later, on Instagram, the Gandhi scion posted a video from his remarks to the media on this day last year when he had talked about lockdown



providing time for ramping up health infrastructure and contrasted it with a video report of how there is a massive shortage of resources to fight the pandemic currently. "One year later, our people continue to suffer, our infrastructure continues to crumble and our Prime Minister continues to turn away from his responsibilities," he said in his post.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra appealed to the people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour such as wearing masks and taking other precautions. "We have to win this battle together with caution and compassion," she said in a tweet in Hindi.

The grand old party in the past also has compared some of the government's decisions to those taken by Delhi Sultanate ruler Muhammad bin Tughlaq, to allege that they were arbitrary and not well thought out.

Amid Covid surge, security forces witness 5-fold jump in cases in last 10 days

AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI

Paramilitary forces have almost witnessed five-fold increase in active Covid-19 cases in the last 10 days. On April 5, jawans who had tested positive for the virus in Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) were 522 while now the tally goes up to 2,915. Apart from this, the total infected jawans who were tested positive in last 24 hours have also increased more than five times.

Fifty seven jawans were tested positive on April 5, which now increased to 301 on the 10th day (Thursday). According to the data, Central Reserve Police Force and Border Security Force have seen the highest spike in number of COVID cases. The BSF, which had only 20 cases on April 5 has seen a massive spike and on April 15 it witnessed 117 cases in the last 24 hours. The total number of active cases in BSF stands at 1,850 which was 166 on 10 days back. Similarly, CRPF which were witnessing four to five cases per day in first week of April has seen massive spike.

On April 5, 97 jawans had been tested positive for the virus. The total active cases in CRPF has almost doubled.

Incidentally, it was during Sinha's tenure at the CBI during which the agency earned the sobriquet of "caged parrot" from the Supreme Court.

The scathing remarks by Justice RM Lodha were a result of Sinha's nine-page affidavit to the Supreme Court giving details of his meetings with the

then Law Minister Ashwani Kumar and other senior officers during which changes were made in the coal scam probe report submitted to the apex court.

"Whatever the Supreme Court says is correct," was his response to the reporters after the controversy.

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has "activated" all its hospitals and operationalised a Covid care centre in Delhi for serving and retired personnel of the force in view of the spurt in coronavirus infections across the country.

ITBP director general S S Deswal issued a message in this regard to around 90,000 personnel and an estimated 20,000 retired and dependents of the force that was raised in 1962 after the Chinese aggression. "All our hospitals have been activated to treat our 'Himveers' (braves of the mountains) and their families. Our doctors are highly motivated and committed to take care of you. A helpline is being started in this regard. A COVID care centre has been made functional at Chhawla (south-west Delhi) campus and it is fully equipped," a statement issued by the force quoting the DG said.

"We are always concerned and committed to take care of our veterans and their families. These facilities are available to our veterans also," it added.

Deswal said it was again "challenging times for the country in view of the second



The ITBP is primarily tasked to guard the 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China apart from rendering a variety of duties in the internal security domain of the country

assault by COVID-19."

"Most of you have been vaccinated as per priority given to us by the government. We are warriors, and will fight it out by following the

COVID-19 safety protocols," the message said.

The ITBP chief asked the personnel not to take any chances.

"Himveers have to save other citizens also by rendering all help. Be a sincere follower of COVID-19 safety protocol. Protect yourself, families, and near and dear ones," the message said.

The ITBP is primarily tasked to guard the 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China apart from rendering a variety of duties in the internal security domain of the country.

As per official data published on April 14, various central armed police forces (CAPFs) are also witnessing a jump in coronavirus infections as the country is witnessing a surge in recent times.

ITBP spruces up its facilities to defend personnel against Covid

India firms up its stakes in Af

New Delhi: Two days after US President Joe Biden announced withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan, India on Friday said any political settlement in the war-ravaged country must be inclusive and should preserve the socio-economic and political gains of the past 19 years.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said it has noted the decision of the US to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan and to end its military operations there.

"India remains engaged with the Afghan stakeholders and also our regional and international partners regarding next steps," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.

He said India is "deeply concerned" about the increase in violence and targeted killings in Afghanistan and that it has called for an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire.

"We are closely following the ongoing intra-Afghan peace process. Afghan people have seen more than four decades of war and unrest and deserve long-lasting peace and development," the spokesperson said.

Bagchi was responding to

media queries on the US announcement.

"India is of the view that an Afghan peace process should be Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled. Any political settlement must be inclusive and should preserve the socio-economic and political gains of the past 19 years," he said.

"India supports a united, democratic and sovereign Afghanistan. We are deeply concerned about the increase in violence and targeted killings in Afghanistan. India has called for an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire," Bagchi added.

The MEA spokesperson said India has participated in the Doha conference, the Geneva conference and the Heart of Asia conference in Dushanbe on the Afghan peace process.

"India remains engaged with the Afghan stakeholders and also our regional and international partners regarding next steps," he said.

In a major announcement, President Joe Biden on Wednesday said US troops will be withdrawn from Afghanistan beginning May 1 and the process will be completed by September 11.

PTI

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, भोपाल
विद्युत शाखा
क्र. 294/वि.शा./2021
भोपाल, दिनांक 16.04.2021
--- संसोधन पत्र ---

विद्युत शाखा द्वारा दिनांक 15.04.2021 के निविदा क्र. 293/विद्युत शाखा/2021 (नि.क्र. 44/021/022) से जारी निविदा भोपाल जिले में कोविड-19 को आपात परिस्थितियों के दृष्टिगत ऑक्सीजन सप्लाय निर्वाध रूप से बनाए रखने के लिए पं. खुशीलाल आर्यवेदिक चिकित्सालय, भोपाल हेतु 1300 LPM के ऑक्सीजन प्लांट स्थापित एवं सप्लाय करने के लिए निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। इच्छुक निविदाकर्ता दिनांक 22.04.2021 को सार्व 05.00 बजे तक अपनी निविदा/ऑफर इस कार्यालय को ई-मेल आई.डी. commoffice@bmconline.gov.in पर प्रेषित कर सकते हैं। निविदा 22.04.2021 को सार्वकाल 05.30 बजे आई.एस.बी.टी. स्थित निगम की विद्युत शाखा में खोली जायेगी। 20 दिन में प्लान्ट स्थापित न होने पर निविदा शून्यत्व मानी जायेगी। निविदा के विरुद्ध भुगतान प्लान्ट स्थापन करने के उपरान्त किया जावेगा।

को निम्नानुसार पढ़ा जावे।

Serial No.	Online Tender No.	Name of Work	Portable Amount (in Rs.)	EMD (in Rs.)	Tender Cost (in Rs.)	Completion Period (in months)
01.	2021_UAD_140005_1	Supply, Delivery, Installation, Testing & Commissioning with 5 year CMC of 1300 LPM PSA (PRESSURE SWING ADSORPTION) Oxygen Generator Plant at Pt. Khushilal Ayurvedic Hospital Bhopal	1,30,00,000/-	1,30,000/-	12,50,00/-	1 Month

नियम व शर्तें :-

- निविदा प्रपत्र की निर्धारित राशि एवं धरोहर राशि एवं अन्य आवश्यक दस्तावेज ऑनलाईन प्रस्तुत करने होंगे अन्य समस्त विस्तृत जानकारी www.mptenders.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती है।
- ऑनलाईन निविदा प्रपत्र जमा करने की समयवधि दिनांक 16.04.2021 सार्व 6 बजे से 24.04.2021 सार्व 05.30 बजे तक है। ऑनलाईन प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से दिनांक 26.04.2021 सार्व 05.30 बजे अधोहस्ताक्षर कार्यालय में नियमानुसार निविदा खोली जायेगी।
- किसी भी निविदा को स्वीकार अथवा अस्वीकार करने का अधिकार विभाग के पास सुरक्षित होगा।

अधीक्षक यंत्री (वि.)
नगर निगम, भोपाल

SC's directive for speedy disposal of cheque bounce cases

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday came out with a slew of directions to ensure speedy disposal of cheque bounce cases and asked the Centre to amend laws to ensure clubbing of trials in cases which are lodged within one year against a person relating to the same transaction.

The apex court directed all the high courts across the country to issue guidelines for trial courts to deal with cheque bounce cases.

A five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde further said that the evidence in cheque dishonour cases can now be tendered by filing affidavits and there would be no need to examine witnesses physically.

The bench, also comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao,

B R Gavai, A S Bopanna and S Ravindra Bhat, asked the Centre to make "suitable amendments" in the Negotiable Instruments Act to ensure that trials in cheque bounce cases lodged in 12 months against a person can be clubbed together into one consolidated case.

It reiterated the earlier decision and held that trial courts have no "inherent power" to reconsider their decisions to summon persons to face trials in the cheque bounce cases.

The apex court said the issues which have not been dealt by it would be considered by a committee headed by Justice R C Chavan, former judge of the Bombay High Court.

On March 10, the top court had constituted the committee

to submit a report in three months specifying the steps to be taken for early disposal of cheque bounce cases across the country.

It said a three-judge bench would now take up the suo motu matter on ensuring early disposal of cheque bounce cases after eight weeks. It had earlier termed the pendency of over 35 lakhs cheque bounce cases as "grotesque" and suggested to the Centre to come up with a law to create additional courts for a particular period of time to deal with such cases.

On March 5 last year, the top court had registered a suo motu case and decided to evolve a "concerted" and "coordinated" mechanism for expeditious disposal of such cases.

SC appoints special public prosecutors for multi-crore coal scam

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has appointed former Additional Solicitor General Maninder Singh and advocate Rajesh Batra as special public prosecutors (SPPs) for trial of multi-crore coal scam cases filed by the Enforcement Directorate.

Senior advocate R S Cheema, who was appointed SPP in 2014 by the top court, has sought permission to be relieved of the responsibility citing his age and shortage of law officers assisting him.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde said that though there was no consensus on the names of individuals, the counsel appearing on all sides unanimously agreed that the apex court should appoint

a seasoned trial court lawyer of impeccable integrity and a designated senior advocate to guide him and conduct the proceedings.

"Taking into account the above said criteria, we hereby appoint (i) Shri Maninder Singh, Senior Advocate and former Additional solicitor General of India; and (ii) Shri Rajesh Batra, Advocate as Special Public Prosecutors in the place of R S Cheema.

R S Cheema, may get relieved upon the newly appointed Prosecutors taking charge. This Court records appreciation for the services rendered by R S Cheema," said the bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian.

PNS

BJP says Mamata planned riots over firing, releases audio tape

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Even as Mamata Banerjee continued to attack Prime Minister Narendra Modi for importing corona in Bengal in his bid to win elections, the BJP on Friday released an audio-tape showing a conversation between the State Chief Minister and Cooch Behar district Trinamool Congress president Pratha Pratim Roy where she was allegedly instructing him to make preparations for taking out a rally with the corpse of people killed in Sitalkuchi police firing last Saturday.

This, BJP leadership claimed was planned by the Chief Minister to stoke communal riots in order to polarise the Muslim voters. A timely banning of politicians — including the Chief Minister — by the Election Commission of India from entering Cooch Behar till last Tuesday however till foiled her “criminal designs to fan riots in order

to win elections.” BJP leader Amit Malavya said.

Four persons were killed when the CPF opened fired after an alleged crowd of 300-350 men tried to attack the booth number 126 during the fourth phase of polling.

In the purported audio-tape featuring Banerjee and Roy who is also the TMC candidate from Sitalkuchi the Chief Minister also directed him to make arrangements for lodging an FIR against those who opened fire and implicating in that document the district SP and the local Circle Inspector, the BJP leader said adding Roy was asked get the FIR drawn by professional so as to frame not only the central forces but also the district SP and the local circle inspector.

At a time when she should have stood with the law-enforcing agencies the Chief Minister was seen standing by the law-breakers, Malavya said. “Imagine had this rally been allowed to take place

what would have been the situation of Bengal what kind of communal disturbance it would have ignited,” he said.

“This betrays the criminal mindset of the Chief Minister who has no problem with playing politics with the death of people ... she was trying to reap political dividends with dead bodies,” Malavya said adding how Banerjee had been trying to instigate people saying the BJP would invoke National Population Register to victimize its opponents in the name of pushing out alleged infiltrators.

“There is no plans of brining NPR now and neither there is any proposal of raising detention camps,” Malavya said claiming how the Chief Minister has been spreading false stories in the election rallies to create a mass panic and reap political dividends. “This she is doing as a last resort because she knows that she is going out of power.”

Clubbing last 3 phase polls into 1 against democratic spirits: BJP

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Opposing Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee’s suggestions that the 8-phase elections be effectively reduced to six phases so to say, the BJP on Friday said it was against clubbing the last three phases of elections into a single-day polling saying the exercise would go against democratic spirit putting the voters and candidates into a position of disadvantage.

Bengal goes to the fifth phase of polling on April 17 that is Saturday. Senior BJP leader and its candidate from Tarakeshwar seat in Hooghly Swapna Dasgupta, said after emerging from the all-party meeting called by the Election Commission of India “we have said our party will abide by all protocols put in place by the Election Commission, and urged that no steps be taken that discriminates those voting in the next phases from those who have already exercised their franchise. We have not said anything about clubbing (of phases).... we feel that the elections will be held in eight phases.”

Fifth phase of polling today

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Considering the firing deaths in the fourth phase of Assembly elections in Bengal last Saturday the Election Commission of India have made massive arrangements for the fifth phase which would be held on Saturday.

More than a crore voters of 45 Assembly constituencies would exercise their franchise deciding the fate of 342 candidates on when 45 seats would go to polls in the fifth phase.

According to sources the ECI would deploy about 853 companies of central forces to ensure free and fair voting. Voting will be held at 15,789 polling stations in 16 seats in North 24 Parganas, eight each in Bardhaman East and Nadia, seven in Jalpaiguri, five in Darjeeling and one in Kalimpong district.

Rajya Sabha election: CPM fields John Brittas

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

John Brittas, the ideological consultant to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, has been nominated as the CPI(M) representative to the Rajya Sabha from Kerala. Brittas, who is presently the managing director and chief executive officer of the CPI(M)-owned Kairali TV channel was one of the close advisors to Pinarayi Vijayan along with Raman Srivastava, the former director general of Kerala Police.

The CPI(M) has also nominated V Sivadasan, a former president of the party’s student wing SFI as its second nominee. Based on the strength of the party in the current legislature, the CPI(M) can win two seats out of the three at stake. The Muslim League has nominated NRI businessman P V Abdul Wahab as its candidate for the April 30 election.

The names of Brittas and Shivadasan were announced after

the State Committee of the party met on Friday at the imposing AKG Centre at Thiruvananthapuram. A release issued by the party head quarters after the meeting claimed that the CPI(M)-led LDF would win 80 to 100 seats in the just concluded assembly election to Kerala. “Kerala will see for the first time the demolition of the anti-government feeling and the ruling party coming back to power with more seats,” said the release.

The nomination of Brittas is being seen as the CPI(M)’s move to cobble up a grand alliance before the 2024 Lok Sabha election which the party hopes to win comfortably based on the recent farm agitation and other people movements headed by the party. “Brittas enjoys considerable clout with many opposition politicians in New Delhi, his second home turf from where he controlled Deshabhimani, the CPI(M)’s official mouth piece.

BMC to use 175 Jaslok Hospital beds for Covid patients, 52 for non-Covid critical patients

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Taking cognisance of the fact that as many as 30 critical patients were undergoing cancer treatment and another 22 critical patients were being treated for cardiac/nephro ailments, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Friday made some changes in its earlier decision to convert Mumbai’s famed Jaslok Hospital in south Mumbai into a dedicated Covid-19 hospital.

A day after it announced its decision to convert Jaslok Hospital into a dedicated Covid-19 hospital, the BMC amended its earlier move and decided not to convert the private medical facility into a fully dedicated Covid-19 hospital, saying that it did “not want to risk the lives of these 52 critical non-COVID patients, presently admitted in Jaslok hospital”.

In a revised order issued on Friday, the BMC said that it had conveyed its Thursday’s decision to the Jaslok Hospital management. “However, it has been brought to the notice of MCGM by the said management that presently 30 critical patients undergoing cancer treatment and another 22 critical patients undergoing cardiac/nephro treatment are already admitted in the hospital and considering their medical condition, shifting them to other hospital at this juncture may prove fatal,” Mumbai Municipal Commissioner I S Chahal

said in his revised order.

“Hence, it is imperative on part of MCGM not to risk the lives of these 52 critical non-COVID patients, presently admitted in Jaslok hospital. Presently, 227 activated beds exist in Jaslok hospital,” Chahal said.

Making amendments in his earlier order, Chahal said “Of the total 227 beds in Jaslok Hospital, 175 beds will function as COVID beds. Of these 175 Covid beds, 29 will be ICU beds”

Chahal said that the remaining 52 beds catering to above mentioned critical patients shall continue to be non-COVID beds. “Rest of the conditions in our earlier will remain unchanged,” he said. In effect, the BMC will utilise 175 out of 227 beds to treat Covid-10 patients.

Meanwhile, the BMC has instructed the hospital management to discharge all the non-cancer and cardiac/nephro patients undergoing treatment in speciality wards, to shift all such patients requiring non-Covid tertiary care to nearby tertiary hospitals in 48 hours and to discharge all patients admitted for elective treatments by postponing their surgeries.

The BMC has also asked the Jaslok Hospital management to augment suspected/ holding area for suspected Covid-19 cases, if required and follow all protocols and guidelines laid down for dedicated Covid hospitals as earlier.

NCB busts gang cultivating cannabis in Thane flat

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major breakthrough in a sensational case involving international ramifications, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has smashed a gang engaged in the cultivation of cannabis inside a two bed room-Hall-Kitchen (BHK) flat at Dombivli in neighboring Thane district.

Announcing the busting of the cannabis growing gang that would purchase seeds from Netherland and sell the drugs in cash and crypto currencies like Bitcoins, NCB’s zonal director Sameer Wankhede said here on Friday: “This is indeed a big case. We are investigating the entire network that was involved in cultivation of Cannabis by hydroponic technique”.

Hydroponics is an effective method for growing plants that places the plants in a water solution that’s rich in nutrients. Instead of using soil to grow the plants, the roots of the plants come into direct contact with the nutrient-rich solution.

Acting on intelligence inputs, the NCB carried out the raids at a 2 BHK flat at Dombivli’s Palava City, where the investigators found Cannabis being cultivated.

The NCB identified the two arrested persons as Javed Jahangir Sheikh and Arshad Khatri. “We are trying to find out their antecedents and links,” Wankhede said.

“During our raids, we found that Cannabis was being cultivated there through Hydroponic techniques. From the site we have recovered cultivation setup, PH regulators, plant nutrients, clay pebbles, water pumps, air circulation systems, CO2 gas cylinders, photosynthesis lighting systems,” Wankhede said.

The cannabis cultivation was being done clandestinely in the flat owned by one Rehan Khan who is away in Saudi Arabia. Khan is suspected to be financing the illegal cannabis cultivation. While nArshad is an expert in hydroponic cultivation, Javed used to manage distribution of harvest.

“The two were procuring seeds from Amsterdam in the Netherlands through the dark web. The yield was sold to mediums size peddlers of Mumbai and Pune at the rate of 2,500 per gram for retail,” Wankhede said.

Aligarh cops start jail bharo movement

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Aligarh Police has started ‘Jail Bharo Andolan’ with Operation Prahar to crack down on criminals. Along with this, two other special operations have also been conducted, in which more than one thousand criminals have been arrested within 15 days. On an average, 50 people are being interrogated every day.

The ‘Jail Bharo Andolan’ was started by the new SSP Kalanidhi Naithani. SSP took over the district on 27 March. Three days later, on March 30, Operation Awara started. It was a screw up on those who drink on the road. Under this, action has been taken against 987 people. After this, the operation, ‘unarmed’ in the district started on April 2. It tightened up those people who are illegally possessing weapons. So far, reports have been sent to the DM to suspend the actual license of 120 people in this operation. After this, Operation Prahar was started from 10 April. Under this, the wanted and the warrants were attacked. In five days, 177 miscreants have been arrested. In the 10 days before April 10, about a hundred criminals were caught.

Tamil Nadu’s knitwear sector hit hard amid Covid surge

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

When Europe gets cold Tamil Nadu sneezes. The adage has been proved again as countries like Germany, France and Britain announced lock down due to Covid-19 pandemic leaving nearly one thousand knitwear units in Tirupur gasping for breath.

Despite the Centre’s announcements about various financial packages as part of the Atmanirbhar schemes for the resuscitation of the gloomy industrial sector in the State, the knitwear exporters are yet to come out of the abyss to which they have fallen since the breaking out of the pandemic all over the world. The textile materials manufactured in Tirupur stand out in the global market because of quality and craftsmanship. But that has not been successful in reviving the cash liquidity faced by the European end users of Tirupur’s knitwear products, according to Raja M Shanmugham, president, Tirupur Exporters’ Association (TEA).

Shanmugham, a real Raja of the knitwear industry, says the fortunes of the industry could be turned for the better by a few measures which could be ordered by Nirmala Sitaraman, the country’s finance minister. “The second lockdown promulgated in major countries like Germany, France and UK from November, has

lead us, mainly MSMEs into a liquidity crisis. In addition to this we are facing another shock in the form of ever increasing price of yarn, our important raw material due to business dynamics. These factors have eroded the competitiveness of the knitwear industry,” Shanmugham, known for his fighting spirits, told The Pioneer with uncertainty written all over his face.

He said measures like Interest Equalisation Scheme which was announced for a brief period of three months, if extended to a period of two years would help in soothing the pain being suffered by the industry. “This will help us to tide over the financial crunch we are facing due to lock down and high yarn prices and also in sustaining the global competitiveness of Brand Tirupur,” said the TEA president.

The TEA in a memorandum to the minister has pointed out that the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RODTEP) announced in January 2021 to replace the ROSCTL (Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies) has not been operationalised which has put the exporters and MSMEs between deep sea and devil.

“The MSMEs are not receiving the reimbursement of the embedded taxes including electricity tax, Mandi tax, GST on petro-products. The non-disbursement of RODTEP is causing severe liquidity crisis,” said the TEA plea.

Maha logs 63,729 new cases

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra breached another grim Covid-19 landmark on Friday, as it recorded a staggering 63,729 infections thus crossing a total of 37 lakh infections, even as alarming 398 more people succumbed to the pandemic in various parts of the state.

A day after the pandemic claimed 349 lives and left 61,695 more infected in the state, the daily tally of infections rose by 2034 while the daily Covid-19 went up 49.

With 63729 fresh cases, the total infections climbed from 36,39,855 to 36,03,584. Similarly, with 398 new deaths, the total Covid-19 toll rose from 59,153 to 59,551.

As 45,335 patients were discharged from the hospitals across the state after full recovery, the total number of people discharged from the hospitals since the second week of March last year went up to 39,04,391. The recovery rate in the state for the first time in several days dropped from 81.3 per cent to 81.12 per cent.

The number of ‘active cases’ total cases in the state rose from 6,20,060 to 6,38,034.. The fatality rate in the state dropped from 1.63 per cent to 1.61 per cent.

With 53 fresh deaths, the Covid-19 toll in Mumbai rose from 12,197 to 12,250, while the infected cases went up by 8803 to trigger a jump in the infections from 5,53,404 to 5,62,207.

While Pune accounted for a maximum 1,16,665 ‘active cases’ in the state, Mumbai stood second with 84,378 active cases, followed

by Thane (84038), Nagpur (71539), Nashik (49,925), Aurangabad (13,630), Ahmednagar (18,049), Nanded (13,134), Bhandara (13987), Jalgaon (11,570), Latur (14033), Solapur (11051), Satara (10551), Parbhani (10,336), Beed (7922), Nandurbar (7330), Chandrapur (10,144) and Gondia (7336).

3 MVA Mins indicate fresh curbs

Mumbai: With the continued surge in the Covid-19 cases in Maharashtra, three Ministers in the MVA Government on Friday indicated that the State Government would enforce more stringent restrictions to break the chain of fast spreading infections.

Talking separately to media persons, State Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil, public health and family welfare minister Rajesh Tope and relief and rehabilitation minister Vijay Wadettiwar said that the state government was looking at ways to make the Covid-19 protocols more stringent in view of the increasing number of infections and deaths across the state.

“If people do not cooperate with the government in implementing the Covid-19 norms, we may have to strengthen the restrictions,” Walse-Patil said. Wadettiwar said that to save the lives of people the government might have to announce new curbs. “The state may announce curbs on supply of fuel (petrol and diesel)...people are still using local trains even though they are not in essential services,” he said.

10,031 new cases in Kerala, 8,449 in TN

KOCHI/CHENNAI: Kerala, once claimed as inaccessible to the pandemic by political masters, tested 10,031 new Covid-19 patients in the 12 hours that ended at 6 PM on Friday. The State also registered 21 deaths and a Test Positivity Ratio of 14.8 which has accorded the status of Covid-19 epicenter to Kerala, according to a Department of Health physician in Ernakulam.

Situation is alarming in neighboring Tamil Nadu which diagnosed 8,449 new cases and recorded 33 deaths by Friday evening. The figures in both the States are likely to see a surge for the next few weeks, according to doctors in the Government doctors. V P Joy, chief secretary of Kerala, made it clear that the impact of the restrictions announced on Thursday would be known only after ten days.

Though the Kerala Government had declared that more than 2.5 lakh persons would be tested on Friday and Saturday, as part of its test, track and isolate mission, the State has tested only 67,000 persons till Friday 5 pm.

Released by Maoists, CRPF commando gets heroic welcome on return

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A CRPF CoBRA Commando Rakeshwar Singh Manhas, abducted and later released by the Maoists in Bijapur area of Chhattisgarh last week, received a hero’s welcome on his arrival here in Jammu on Friday.

Accompanied by social workers who played a key role towards ensuring his safe release from the custody of Maoists on April 8, Manhas landed at Jammu airport where his five year daughter received him along with her mother and cheerful relatives amid patriotic chants hailing ‘Mother India’.

From the airport Manhas was escorted in a cavalcade to a famous resort where he was accorded a red carpet welcome too. He was warmly hugged by his family members and close friends at the main entrance of the resort. His mother and Wife along with hundreds of close relatives and well



wishers garlanded him and performed special prayers before escorting him inside the hall.

“I am very happy today. I hugged my father and kissed him when he took me in his arms after landing at the Jammu airport”, the five year old daughter told reporters wearing a big smile on her face.

Meenu Chib, wife of Rakeshwar Singh Manhas was jubilant after meeting her husband. “I am very happy. All our prayers were answered and every one in the government at all levels played their role at the centre and state level to ensure safe release

of my husband”. “I also thank CRPF officials and the entire media fraternity for all their support and help” she added.

Rakeshwar Singh in his brief interaction told large gathering of reporters, “I am feeling happy in the company of my family”. He said all the jawans who were part of the operation in Bijapur fought bravely before attaining martyrdom. He said, “when i was in their captivity i had no clue what was happening as i had no tools of communication available with me”. He once again thanked all those social activists and local media persons from Chhattisgarh who ensured his safe return.

Uncle of Rakeshwar Singh Manhas, on behalf of the family made a brief statement thanking all those involved and responsible for ensuring safe return of the CRPF commando. The family also paid rich tributes in the memory of CRPF jawans martyred in the Maoist attack in Bijapur area of Chhattisgarh.



Visitors stand outside the closed gate of Victoria Memorial, amid rise in coronavirus cases across the country, in Kolkata on Friday

PTI

Bumpy road ahead

To avoid having a comatose economy now, we must bear the cross of our earlier negligence

India is hunkering down again to battle the second and more virulent wave of the Coronavirus outbreak. It would have been much better for us had we sincerely stuck to the COVID-19 protocols when the numbers were down and, who knows, we might have been rid of this pesky virus by now! While the average citizen decided that it was “okay” to return to the crowded restaurants, malls, airports and bus and railway stations without masks or social distancing, our short-sighted politicians postponed the all-important Board exams but considered it imperative to hold political rallies and road shows brimming with nonchalant people ahead of the Assembly elections, because their future depended on it. The religious leaders found it exigent



for us to wash away our sins by bathing in the millions in the holy Ganga. Now, here's the result of our collective endeavours: The Coronavirus cases across the country hit a record 2,17,353 fresh infections in the last 24 hours, the eighth record daily increase in the last nine days. In the same period, 1,185 people lost their lives due to the viral disease. The numbers coming out of the Health Ministry say that India registered a steady increase in the number of active Corona cases for the 36th day in a row. Now, we are scrambling to control the damage. The Home Ministry has asked its officers up to the level of Under-Secretary to avail the WFH

option while the Deputy Secretary and above-ranking officials have been asked to attend office regularly with the option to stagger timings between 9 AM and 10 AM.

Various States, including the Capital, have also come up with local-level restrictions — ranging from shutting of malls, gyms, swimming pools and auditoriums, prohibiting dining at restaurants, besides imposing a weekend lockdown and night curfew. The Government has assured the citizenry that the “test, trace, treat” and vaccination drive will continue unabated and that the national drug controller will take just three days to process applications of the foreign-made vaccines once they've been approved for emergency use in India. One can only hope that this time around, the Government grits its teeth and stands by the Prime Minister's words that “we must learn to live with the virus”. No matter how many restrictions are placed on recreation and how many weekends are spent imprisoned indoors, the nation's economy must not be shut down again. The first wave gave us many lessons on how to identify hotspots, impose local lockdowns and create containment zones in order to keep the wheels of the industry churning. We have to ensure that our march towards a self-reliant, New India continues; our ailing economy that was just beginning to revive cannot be delivered another body blow in the form of a hard lockdown. Else, we risk having a comatose economy in our hands. So, the nation would do well to gird up its loins and prepare for a bumpy road ahead, but the wheels of the economy cannot stop, no matter what.

PICTALK



Smoke billows from a forest fire at the Ketti area in Shimla

PTI

Good omen

It's time for the CJI's wish for a woman judge to head the nation's top court to come true

Chief Justice of India SA Bobde deserves nothing less than the nation's applause and compliments for recently stating unequivocally that the time has come when a woman should head the top court. Hinting that the apex court was already moving along the right path on the issue, he underscored that there was “no need for a change of attitude” of the Collegium to ensure greater representation of women in the judiciary. Hearing a plea by a women lawyers' body seeking consideration of the “meritorious” lot among them for appointment as judges in the High Courts, a Bench comprising Chief Justice Bobde and Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Surya Kant said: “Why only higher judiciary? We think the time has come when a woman should be the Chief Justice of India.” At this juncture, it would be pertinent to mention that currently there are only 81 female judges in the 25 High Courts across the country against 1,078 male judges. Among them, the Madras High Court tops the list with 13 female judges, followed by Punjab and Haryana with



11, and the Delhi and Bombay High Courts have eight women judges each.

Interestingly, while the Supreme Court's emphasis on gender issues is to be lauded, it would truly have credibility and value if its own actions were consistent on this subject. Consider this: There is only one female judge among the 34 positions that currently constitute the Supreme Court. With Justice Indu Malhotra's retirement last month, the Collegium is considering a few women judges for elevation. The nation's top court has had only eight women judges since it came into existence on January 26, 1950. The first one, Fathima Beevi, made it to the elite club only as late as in October 1989. Not a single woman judge has figured in the list of 48 CJs since its inception. It would perhaps not be out of the context here to mention that the Supreme Court had recently pointed to the delay in giving women permanent commission in the military, blaming it on the “systemic bias” within the Ministry of Defence. While there certainly seems to be some truth in what it said, it is a complicated issue, especially the impact of women in combat roles. That said, in either case, there's no denying that women are up to performing any professional job with panache while balancing with finesse their roles as mother, daughter, sister, wife and homemaker.

India's flaming forests play havoc

Natural causes and human intervention are to blame for the rising number of conflagrations not only in India, but the world over

The surge of forest fires in Uttarakhand once again underlines the growing incidence of the phenomenon in India. There has been a series of these this year in Himachal Pradesh, the Nagaland-Manipur border, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. According to the *India State of Forest Report 2019* (ISFR) — the latest in the line of such reports — released by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, over 30,000 forest fires were reported in the country in 2019. The report identified nearly 21.67 per cent (7,12,249 sq km) of the country's land area as forested. Another 2.89 per cent (95,027 sq km) was under tree cover.

The report identified 2,77,758 forest fire points across the country, and stated that about 21.40 per cent of India's forests are prone to fires. Of this, 3.89 per cent belonged to the category of extremely fire-prone, 6.01 per cent very highly fire-prone and 11.50 per cent highly fire-prone.

The forests in Assam, Mizoram and Tripura are “extremely prone” to conflagrations. According to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) annual report for 2020-21, the States with large forest areas and falling under the “very highly fire-prone” category — including Andhra Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Maharashtra, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh — were turning into “extremely fire-prone” hotspots; so were regions like western Maharashtra, southern Chhattisgarh and areas of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, along with central Odisha. Areas under the “highly prone” and “moderately prone” categories make up about 26.2 per cent of the total forest cover — a staggering 1,72,374 sq km.

A State prone to forest fires is Haryana which suffered at least 540 of these from 2016 to 2020. Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh are witness to the most frequent forest fires annually. According to the National Forest Inventory under the MoEFCC, the fires severely affect almost 10



per cent of the country's forest area while mildly affecting about 54 per cent, which makes about two-third of India's forests vulnerable to fires.

The question is: Why is it so? Lightning is the most important natural cause. Another is the spontaneous combustion of dried-up leaves and sticks. The one that has been an increasingly potent factor, and is set to become even more so, is global warming. It dries up the leaves and shrubbery on the ground, making them highly inflammable. It also dries up the soil. Thus, the lack of soil moisture as a result of rainfall deficiency during monsoons — less than 18 per cent and 20 per cent in 2019 and 2020, respectively — has been an important factor in this year's Uttarakhand fires. In fact, it has been a cause not only in many other parts of India but the entire world — the blazes bedeviling Australia, California in the US and the Amazon rainforests in Brazil are examples.

Human activity, however, is responsible for the overwhelming majority of forest fires the world over. In India, these blazes are mainly caused by the slash-and-burn method of shifting agriculture, known

“FOREST FIRES ARE AS OLD AS FORESTS AND WILL CONTINUE TO OCCUR AS LONG AS FORESTS EXIST. ONE, HOWEVER, CAN LIMIT THEIR INCIDENCE AND ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES BY FIRMLY DEALING WITH THE TIMBER, BUILDER AND MINING MAFIA, AND THE POACHERS

as *jhum* in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura and Assam, where it is practised over about 15,000 sq km of forest land. The blazes are also set off to clear the ground for mining, timber felling and the construction of human settlements and industrial units, besides warding off the wild animals.

People burn dry leaves and shrubbery on forest grounds, believing that it would lead to the sprouting of new and healthier grass. Poachers light fires on three sides to corner fleeing wild animals in one area as their concentrated presence helps killing. People visiting forests are often careless and leave behind lighted butts of cigarettes or *bidis*, besides inflammable material.

Things are made worse by the fact that it is difficult to extinguish forest fires. The absence of roads prevents fire tenders from reaching the sites and high winds carry the sparks to new areas. Helicopters are pressed into service — as in Uttarakhand recently where two Indian Air Force helicopters, each with a 5,000-litre water tank, were deployed. There are, however, limits to the number of helicopters that can be used

and the availability of large lakes or rivers from which these can draw water.

Forest fires wreak havoc in India every year. They destroy forests, cause pollution, turn streams dry or adversely affect their water quality, damage soil nutrients and increase the risk of soil erosion. They kill wildlife and insects, including endangered species, and destroy their habitats, damage national parks and sanctuaries, driving the wild animals like tigers, leopards and elephants towards human settlements, thus aggravating the human-animal conflict. And, of course, they kill humans and destroy their property.

The question is: What is to be done? Forest fires are as old as forests and will continue to occur as long as forests exist. One, however, can limit their incidence by firmly dealing with the timber, builder and mining mafia, and the poachers, and simultaneously enlightening people not to carelessly leave incendiary material in forests. The Central and State Governments will have to launch sustained campaigns to this end. The consequences of not doing so will be severe.

(The author is Consulting Editor, *The Pioneer*. The views expressed are personal.)



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NEGLECTANCE RESPONSIBLE FOR SITUATION

Sir — Instead of getting stunned by the rising number of COVID cases in the country, we must admit the fact that we are not moving towards a second wave but are actually in its grip. As the demand for Remdesivir surges, the Centre has fast-tracked applications from companies to manufacture the critical anti-viral drug in order to ensure its smooth availability. Night curfews and partial lockdowns are being imposed in many parts of the country as a measure to control the deadly virus. Amid the rising cases, the Centre has announced the cancellation of the CBSE Board exams for Class 10 and has deferred Class 12 exams.

On the other hand, lakhs of devotees have been taking a holy dip in the Ganga on the occasion of the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar, flouting the COVID norms. It is however ironic that while the Government has no compunction about cancelling the Board examinations, elections in the country are continuing as if nothing has happened. These fears have been magnified all the more with the dismal disregard shown by various State Governments to clamping down on mass public events and gatherings. While a proactive approach to control and manage the crowds when it comes to stonewalling the widely contagious virus, is a remedy to the problem, the complete disregard shown towards the basic safety precautions is indeed perplexing!

Pachu Menon | Goa

TROOP WITHDRAWAL WILL CREATE VACUUM

Sir — The US' decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan is not good at the present moment as the situation on the ground is far from satisfactory. The Taliban is still controlling parts of Afghanistan and there is considerable influence of Pakistan and support from China, too. The chances of disintegration of Afghanistan are quite high. The withdrawal of the US troops might create a vacuum which, if acquired by the disruptive forces, will push the country into turmoil. President Joe Biden has said the US troops will be withdrawn from

Politicisation of vaccines



Politics over the anti-Coronavirus vaccine started the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced free jabs to the people of Bihar in the run-up to the Assembly elections in October-November last year. The vaccine policy suffered from the play of politics and one-upmanship. Besides, appalling naivety in assessing the demand during the second wave, differing norms for affording authorisation for use, inertia in augmenting in-house capacity, exports as a policy and imports in fetters together impacted the availability of vaccines in the country. After the

authorisation of the Oxford-assisted Covishield and the indigenously-developed Covaxin for emergency use, the authorities soft-pedalled on giving authorisation and import/production licence(s) to other popular vaccine candidates in the world. According to the *Lancet*, Russia's vaccine Sputnik V had the efficacy of 91.6 per cent. While the chronic shortage was being felt, the Government allowed the exports to showcase India as a powerhouse of vaccines. To draw an analogy, the US has accumulated stocks which could vaccinate its entire population.

In fact, the possibility of a furious second wave was overlooked. India's daily COVID count has crossed 2 lakh now. This surge must be viewed against the overloaded hospitals, shortage in oxygen supply, inadequacy in life-saving ventilators and shortfalls in vaccines and medicines. There is an urgent need to reassess the situation carefully and honestly to mount a multipronged action to crush the climbing curve and augment treatment facilities.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

Afghanistan beginning May 1 and the process will be completed by September 11. For his part, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said he spoke to Biden and that his country respects the US decision.

Maybe the US troops might be shifted to some other regions of the world. The US is also facing domestic problems and is ravaged by the COVID pandemic. Washington needs a war to run its economy. The weapons industry needs insecurity among the countries to sell weapons and make profits. In my opinion, the US troops will be shifted to another war. Let's wait and watch till the withdrawal in September.

Sunil Pradhan | Odisha

BAN SUPER-SPREADER EVENTS

Sir — It refers to the editorial 'Matters of faith' (April 16). At a time when the Government has done away with bridging trials for foreign-made vaccines for

COVID-19 to facilitate acceleration in vaccination, it should seriously think about banning religious events like the Kumbh Mela which has become a super-spreader. In just five days, 1,701 people have tested positive for COVID-19 in the Kumbh Mela area. The Uttarakhand Police was unable to impose the standard operating procedures (SOPs) on the seers of *akhadas* and the ash-smearing ascetics crowding the Har Ki Pauri on the two *shahi snans* because of time constraints. Now Niranjani Akhada, one of the 13 *akhadas* of seers participating in the Kumbh, has decided to return from the event in the wake of the deteriorating COVID-19 situation. But it is too late as the damage has already been done.

Bal Govind | Noida

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUNDBITE

Being a tourist State, if we impose night curfew, it will create a spin-off effect. People should remain alert. We have issued an advisory. We are continuing to create awareness.



Goa Chief Minister
— Pramod Savant



If we were to lift the border restrictions, you would see these cases increase and Australians would have to become used to dealing with 1,000 cases or more a week.

Australian Prime Minister
— Scott Morrison

I would love to sing in films that I am going to be a part of, as well as for others, as a playback singer.

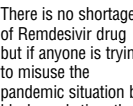


Actor
— Adarsh Gourav



He is not the MS Dhoni which he used to be probably four or five years back, where he could just come in and start taking on the bowlers from the word go.

Former cricketer
— Gautam Gambhir




There is no shortage of Remdesivir drug but if anyone is trying to misuse the pandemic situation by black-marketing, then all those will be punished severely.

Karnataka Home Minister
— Basavaraj Bommai


FIRST COLUMN

THE NEW REALTY FOR INDIANS



SONAM CHANDWANI

The pall of gloom over the real estate industry on account of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light several unconventional methods being applied to keep the dreams of property buyers alive, while developers strive to stay afloat. A growing number of Indians are acquiring slices of rent-yielding residential and commercial properties in a way that is comparable to investing in the stocks of a company. Fractional real estate, as the concept is known, allows investors to buy, say, one per cent of a vacation home for a minimum amount and use it whenever they want, while earning rental income, too. While weekend properties are neither essential nor urgent, the outbreak has changed this perception. Such a realty ownership concept has arisen predominantly from the Work-From-Home (WFH) culture and the work-vacation culture, attracting NRIs and domestic buyers alike. Such a property acts like an asset, attracting a plethora of investors, in the end becoming a potential Special Purpose Vehicle-related investment. From the taxation standpoint, the fractional ownership of a property opens up such owners to a plethora of taxable liabilities, when comparing the yearly taxation related costs of such interests, prospective buyers or their counsel/advisors need to be sure of the usage arrangement, location, ownership size, basic amenities and other items.



A unicorn investment refers to a startup avenue/venture, occupying less than \$1 billion of the industry share. Considering the fact that this sort of timeshare arrangement is a novel arena of investment for Indians, the value of such investment could possibly render the whole idea as a potential cash cow for real estate developers adapting to such forms of investment. With the pandemic having rendered the traditional and conventional real estate an under-yielding area of investment in the markets currently, fractional ownership might just pave way for a steady boom in the real estate sector. While fractional ownership may appear to be an inexpensive mode of investment to potential investors, it has its pros and cons. Procedures involving the investment in such ventures could involve detailed due diligences and legal red-tapism. Not paying attention to such procedures could end up putting stressed properties in the hands of lesser advised investors.

Moreover, expenses considering maintenance and management of the property and any such costs could essentially tip the scales against the owners should they not be able to actually utilise the property within their arrangements. Having said that, the benefits accruing out of part ownership of vacation properties, while not accounting monumentally in financial terms, are manifold where it comes to utilisation. Such a property allows the investors to change their workspace surroundings and choose rather inexpensive modes of vacation and even earn some money out of renting it out to other vacationers. Though fractional ownership could lead to a real estate investment boom the sector so gravely yearns for, the legal procedures involved might turn off a certain class of investors. Moreover, a relatively-new arena of investment always ends up taking a lot more time in yielding benefits, even if the time-value of money is rather unaccountable, since the property provides more leisurely than commercial benefits. Timeshare investments, while popular in the West, are considered to be a nascent area of investment, particularly while fractional ownership is considered. However, given the correct legal framework and taxation incentives, the current status of such investment could be elevated to providing the work-vacation culture the stability that the recent short-lived boom is testament to.

(The writer is Managing Partner KS Legal and Associates. The views expressed are personal.)

Time to turn Nocebo to Placebo in India

We must widely propagate the positives of getting inoculated, underplay the negatives and whole-heartedly support the Govt’s initiatives towards massive vaccination drives

The pandemic and its prevalence have taught us many lessons in perseverance and patience. We have raced from one decision to the next, hoping that the latest one will make everything normal again. While the scientists have been working relentlessly to understand the virus and come up with increasingly promising vaccine candidates, the virus has been playing truant and evolving in new forms to ditch human efforts and survive as more robust variants. In the wake of the ever-changing variants, efficacy statistics and reported side effects, the so-called ultimate solution to end the pandemic, the anti-Corona vaccine, doesn't appear to be so attractive anymore. People are hesitant to take the shot, confirming the 'Nocebo Effect' to the perceived solution of the pandemic that doesn't seem to be getting anywhere close to its end. The hesitancy is spread across the globe. Some think they will never get the disease while others believe the virus is on its way out. Social media has been most instrumental in spreading the hesitancy due to varied opinions of people who have wide social media presence and have contributed to turning the solution from placebo to nocebo.

Understanding and addressing vaccine hesitancy has become very important in the drive towards normalising life, avoiding deaths and allowing the economy to run to its full capacity. These were the very reasons why a COVID-19 vaccine was needed in the first place. What made the long wait for a solution turn into vaccine hesitancy needs serious thought. As per the World Health Organisation (WHO), vaccine hesitancy is the delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite their availability. Medical practitioners and scientists have been making all out efforts to discuss and address the common causes of concern. Fear and hesitancy come from the unknown, hence the awareness needs to rise. This has led to a negative mindset against the vaccine. The hesitancy has also been triggered by the side effects reported in some cases as a result of administering the vaccine. The directions to continue with the safety measures and stay with COVID-appropriate behaviour along with reporting of positive cases in some vaccinated individuals have amplified the vaccine hesitancy.

With many cases of blood clotting reported as a side effect of the AstraZeneca jab and discontinuation of the vaccine thereafter in at least a dozen European countries before resuming them again, doubts have grown more than ever. The latest news that Denmark has totally stopped the use of the AstraZeneca jab in its inoculation drive is not helping the cause and instilling confidence in people.

While Governments across the globe have rolled out the vaccine and invited people to get vaccinated at the earliest, the vaccination centres report a different story. Dealing with vaccine hesitancy has become the next big challenge, even in a country like India, which is now the second-most badly hit nation in the world after the US.

In order to build trust and confidence in the jab, a multi-pronged strategy is required with transparent communication as the key. With the second wave already in full swing and numerous variants of the original virus here, the danger is far from over. Herd immunity, as it was being perceived, is nowhere in sight as there are people who have reported a second infection. The diversity of the disease is unfathomable.



WHILE THE RUSSIAN VACCINE SPUTNIK V HAS BEEN GIVEN THE GO AHEAD AND WILL HIT THE MARKET SOON AFTER SHORT TRIALS HERE, THE CENTRE IS ALSO LOOKING AT FAST APPROVALS FOR VACCINES FROM OTHER NATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY THE WHO FOR EMERGENCY USE. IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME AND THE SHORTAGE WILL BE A THING OF THE PAST. BUT THE BIG QUESTION IS WILL VACCINE HESITANCY, TOO, BE GONE SOON?

The writer is Registrar, IIT Delhi. The views expressed are personal.



Attitudes towards the COVID-19 vaccines have changed overtime and varied greatly. The theory of developing antibodies on being infected has also led to a decrease in the relevance of the vaccine. Infected individuals feel they have developed antibodies and are immunised against the disease, so they do not need a shot. However, the protective abilities of antibodies in sero-surveys is unknown and their effectiveness in preventing reinfection is still to be studied. The belief that the vaccine is rushed and has not been tested properly is another setback.

That some of the scientists have been supporting this belief has also given boost to hesitancy. It is also assumed that the efficacy of the vaccine is being underplayed so that people do not become lax in observing COVID-appropriate behaviour. Another view being expressed is that the immunity after vaccination lasts for only six months, which wrongly implies that the shot is not effective. People also think that if the survival and recovery rate is 99.6 per cent, why even bother getting a jab.

All these supposed opinions and views have stopped people from getting vaccinated. Giving compensation for getting vaccinated has always backfired as people think that they are being paid because there is something to hide. The only groups that have justifiable concerns are the elderly, people with co-morbidities, pregnant women and those with high allergic reactions to vaccines. Also,

there is no vaccine to protect our children, as of now. Though getting vaccinated is a personal choice, the most successful inoculation drives have been built on knowledge exchange, accessibility and successful stories of those getting vaccinated.

Sherita Hill Golden, vice-president, chief diversity officer and a Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins Medicine talks of 12 things you need to know in the wake of the current vaccine hesitancy. The facts and insights into making a personal choice to get inoculated include the following: Getting vaccinated can protect you from getting COVID as your body will be ready to fight the Coronavirus if you are exposed to it; the people of colour are especially vulnerable to severe COVID-19 and its risk factors; getting inoculated helps others in the community, more so when people have chronic medical conditions; more vaccinations mean a chance to return to normal after having to experience closures, cancellations and postponements; though the vaccine development was fast, no steps were skipped while testing for safety and efficacy; diversity in vaccine testing helped assess safety and effectiveness; side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine are sparse and temporary, mainly limited to a sore arm, mild fever or body aches; it is possible to get the shot despite allergies except if you have severe allergic reactions to vaccines; the vaccine is safe for breastfeeding mothers, though pregnant women

should discuss it with their doctors as the vaccine have not been tested in pregnant women; the jab can give you extra protection, if you already had COVID-19; waiting too long allows the virus to spread in the community, hence, time is of the essence for the vaccine; the pandemic can only be shortened if the vaccine is well-received.

Hence, people have been advised to do their own research from reliable sources and take an informed decision regarding getting vaccinated. Where the issue of the shortage of the vaccine in the country is concerned, the Government is doing all it can to ensure that the needs of the people are met at the earliest. While the Russian vaccine Sputnik V has been given the go ahead and will hit the market soon after short trials here, the Centre is also looking at fast approvals for vaccines from other nations that have been approved by the WHO for emergency use. It is only a matter of time and the shortage will be a thing of the past. But the big question is will vaccine hesitancy, too, be gone soon?

It is time to put resolve into widely propagating the positives of getting vaccinated, underplaying the sparse negatives and whole-heartedly supporting the Government's initiatives towards massive vaccination drives so that the pandemic situation can be controlled, the economic downturn can be lifted and normalcy restored. Its time we turned this nocebo to a placebo and support humanity.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

IF CENTRAL ARMED FORCES ARE ATTACKED THEN SHOTS SHOULD BE FIRED. IT DOES NOT MATTER WHO DIES OR LIVES. —BJP LEADER RAHUL SINHA



HE HAS UNMASKED THE TRUE FACE OF THE BJP. PEOPLE WILL GIVE THEM A BEFITTING REPLY. —TMC SPOKESPERSON KUNAL GHOSH

The Maha Kumbh of COVID and environmental risks

The Govt is not ignorant of the health costs of these events during the ongoing second wave of the outbreak but populist measures are the top priority during elections

The Kumbh Mela was first mentioned in the accounts of Hiuen Tsang, the famous Chinese traveller who visited India in the seventh century. The grand event, with a 2,000-year-old history, commenced this year in January and will continue till the end of April. Currently, at over two lakh new cases, India accounts for one in six of all new COVID infections globally. But these rather grim facts did not deter nearly 13.5 lakh devotees, including the members of the 13 Akharas from taking the holy dip or the *Shahi Snan* on April 13.

The consequences of the ongoing Maha Kumbh upon public health have been devastating, to say the least. In the last 24 hours, Haridwar has reported over 1,000 fresh Corona positive cases. With the Indian Railways running



KOTA SRIRAJ

The writer is an environmental journalist. The views expressed are personal.

25 special trains to ferry the pilgrims across the country, the Maha Kumbh is all set to become a "Maha COVID-19 super-spreader." The situation looks hopeless unless either the event is immediately terminated or social distancing norms are strictly adhered to. But nothing significant seems to have been done by the Government regarding it.

Health risks aside, the Kumbh Mela is also not something that is known for environment friendliness. The Maha Kumbh is held at four locations — Nashik, Haridwar, Prayagraj and Ujjain — on a rotational basis after an interval of 12 years.

While the Kumbh, in general, is celebrated four times over the course of 12 years, with the site of the observance rotating between

four pilgrimage places on the four sacred rivers, namely, at Haridwar on the Ganga, at Ujjain on the Shipra, at Nashik on the Godavari and at Prayagraj at the confluence of the Ganga, the Jamuna, and the mythical Sarasvati.

The Nashik Kumbh Mela held in 2015 resulted in 25,000 tonnes of solid waste and faecal sludge that crept into the groundwater table from 33,000 hastily set-up mobile toilets without any effective waste disposal mechanism. It took an international outcry triggered by media coverage and the eventual intervention of the Bombay High Court to clean up the Nashik Kumbh Mela mess and rescue the environment. The event also caused a spike in river pollution making it unfit for bathing and other purposes. The



maximum permissible Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) for safe bathing is 3.0 milligrams (mg) per litre but it ranged between 3.4-8.5 mg per litre during the event. Meanwhile bacterial coliform ranged between 3,300 and 39,000 Most Probable Number (MPN) per 100 ml while the permissible limit is 500 MPN per 100 ml for human

bathing. The Maha Kumbh at Haridwar, too, is no different either in terms of the colossal health risk it poses or the ecological collateral damage it brings.

In the run-up to the Haridwar Maha Kumbh, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has been working tirelessly to prevent ecological damage and as a part of its efforts, the NMCG has diverted one of the biggest local sewage drains — the Kassawan nullah — to a sewage treatment plant. But it should have been done a year ago. This nullah has emptied its effluents into the Ganga for years.

A recent study by the Doon University on the pollution levels in the Ganga establishes that in the stretch from Rishikesh to Haridwar the river was high on pollutants due to the pilgrim

bathing load and urban waste effluent flow.

The study also revealed that the overall concentration of Polypropylene Copolymer (PPCP), a form of plastic pollutant in the Ganga was found to be up to 1,104.84 nanograms per litre. Further, the presence of chemicals was also found to be high in the river water samples.

The election season, too, symbolised by huge political rallies, coupled with unrestrained religious gatherings are in total defiance of COVID-appropriate behaviour and protocol. Surely the Government is not ignorant of the health costs of these unabated events during the ongoing second wave of the Coronavirus pandemic, but populist measures and appeasement tactics are the top priorities during elections and they seem to score over

environmental and health concerns.

This is not surprising, but what is unfortunately startling is the inaction on the behalf of the judiciary which could have taken a *suo motu* initiative to shorten the duration of the Kumbh Mela, thereby, saving lives and the environment. In the absence of this, the Non-Government Organisations working in the field of environment protection and other individuals could have filed a Public Interest Litigation to this effect, but unfortunately, that also did not happen yet.

It is a classic case of who will bell the cat? Sadly, the reluctance of people to take on what is obviously a communally-sensitive issue will cost the environment and the health and economy of the country dearly. Where are the true nationalists now?

Myanmar coup foes tout minority-backed shadow Govt



Police security forces stand by inside a police vehicle and on the sidewalk of Hledan Road in Kamayut township in Yangon, Myanmar on Friday

AP ■ YANGON

Opponents of Myanmar's ruling junta went on the political offensive on Friday, declaring they have formed an interim national unity government with members of Aung San Suu Kyi's ousted Cabinet and major ethnic minority groups.

The move comes on the eve of a diplomatic initiative to solve Myanmar's crisis by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which is expected to hold a summit next week.

A violent crackdown by the junta has failed to stem opposition to the coup, and as the Army has spread the fight to ethnic minorities in border areas, some ASEAN members believe the crisis threatens regional stability.

Opponents of the coup have been seeking an alliance with ethnic minority groups as a way of strengthening their resistance. The minorities for decades have kept up on-again, off-again armed struggles for



A woman lights a candle while others flash the three-fingered sign of resistance during a candlelight vigil to remember those who died in the military junta's violent response to anti-coup demonstrations in Yangon, Myanmar on Friday

greater autonomy in the borderlands.

While it was not clear if the minority political organisations had formally joined an alliance, the appointment of prominent personalities from their ranks showed a commitment to a joint struggle against the military, which is certain to boost morale to the anti-coup

cause.

Security forces have killed at least 726 protesters and bystanders since the Feb. 1 military takeover, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, which monitors casualties and arrests. The protests and the killings have been continuing on a daily basis.

The National Unity Government is nominally an upgrade from what had been called the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, which was formed shortly after the coup by elected lawmakers who were barred by the army from taking their seats.

The CRPH sought international recognition as Myanmar's sole legitimate government body, but won only popular support from those opposed to military rule.

The junta declared the CRPH an illegal organisation, and issued arrest warrants for its leading members.

A video posted Friday on social media showed veteran activist Min Ko Naing announcing the formation of the new body. He was a leader of the failed 1988 uprising against a previous military dictatorship and is one of the country's most respected political figures aside from Suu Kyi. He went quickly underground after the coup and

apparently has been active in political organizing against the junta since then.

"Please support the National Unity Government for the future of our citizens and our younger generation," he said. "The people are the decision makers and the people will fight the final battle. Victory is coming. We must win our revolution."

More details were provided in a statement on social media by Dr. Sasa, a physician and philanthropist who though in hiding has been the online public face of the CRPH.

"Today, at the end of Thingyan on the eve of Myanmar's new year, we are proud to announce the formation of a new National Unity Government and the dawn of a new era for the people of Myanmar," said Sasa.

"For the first time in our history, Myanmar has a unity government that will reflect one of our nation's greatest strengths — the diversity of our people."

AFTER SLAPPING SANCTIONS

Joe Biden proposes strategic stability dialogue with Russia

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Hours after expelling 10 Russian diplomats in connection with interference in last year's US presidential elections, President Joe Biden has proposed a strategic stability dialogue with Moscow, as officials of the two countries discussed the possibility of a summit meeting in Europe this summer.

The US on Thursday announced the expulsion of 10 Russian diplomats and slapped sanctions on over 30 individuals and key financial institutions as it held Kremlin accountable for interference in last year's presidential election and the hacking of American federal agencies.

Hours after signing the executive order imposing sanctions on its erstwhile cold war rival, Biden told reporters at the White House that during a telephonic conversation with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, he had proposed that they meet in person this summer in Europe for a summit to address a range of issues facing both the countries.



"Our teams are discussing that possibility right now. And if that summit were to occur, and I believe it will, the United States and Russia could launch a strategic stability dialogue to pursue cooperation in arms control and security," Biden said.

"We can address critical global challenges that require Russia and the United States to work together, including reining in nuclear threats from Iran and North Korea, ending this pandemic globally, and meeting the existential crisis of climate change," he said.

During the phone call, Biden said he expressed concern on Russia's military build up on the Ukraine border and in Crimea.

Russia to expel 10 US diplomats in response to Washington

Moscow: Russia on Friday responded in kind to a barrage of new US sanctions, saying it would expel 10 US diplomats and take other retaliatory moves in a tense showdown with Washington.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov also said Moscow will add eight US officials to its sanctions list and move to restrict and stop the activities of US nongovernmental organizations from interfering in Russia's politics.

He said the Kremlin suggested that US Ambassador John Sullivan follow the example of his Russian counterpart and head home for consultations. Russia will also move to deny the US Embassy the possibility to hire personnel from Russia and third countries as support staff.

The moves follow the sanctions on Russia announced this week by the Biden administration. While the U.S. Wields the power to cripple the Russian economy, Moscow lacks levers to respond in kind, although it potentially could hurt American interests in many other ways around the globe.

Lavrov noted that while Russia could take "painful measures" against American business

interests in Russia, it wouldn't immediately move to do that.

Russia has denied interfering in the 2020 US Presidential election and involvement in the SolarWind hack of federal agencies — the activities punished by the latest U.S. Sanctions. The Russian Foreign Ministry warned of an "inevitable" retaliation, charging that "Washington should realize that it will have to pay a price for the degradation of bilateral ties."

The U.S. On Thursday ordered 10 Russian diplomats expelled, targeted dozens of companies and people, and imposed new curbs on Russia's ability to borrow money. Pundits had predicted that while Moscow would respond in kind to the expulsions, it would refrain from any other significant moves to avoid a further escalation.

Russia's economic potential and its global reach are limited compared with the Soviet Union that competed with the U.S. for international influence during the Cold War. Still, Russia's nuclear arsenal and its leverage in many parts of the world make it a power that Washington needs to reckon with.

US says Russia was given Trump campaign polling data in 2016

Washington: It was one of the more tantalizing, yet unresolved, questions of the investigation into possible connections between Russia and Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign: Why was a business associate of campaign chairman Paul Manafort given internal polling data — and what did he do with it?

A Treasury Department statement Thursday offered a potentially significant clue, asserting that Konstantin Kilimnik, a Russian and Ukrainian political consultant, had shared sensitive campaign and polling information with Russian intelligence services.

Kilimnik has long been alleged by U.S. officials to have ties to Russian intelligence. But the statement in a broader Treasury Department sanctions announcement was the first time the U.S. government had so directly drawn a connection from the Trump campaign to the Kremlin's intelligence services. The revelation was all the more startling because it went beyond any allegation made in either special counsel Robert Mueller's 2019 report or in an even more damning and detailed document released last year by the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Pak suspends services of social media platforms

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Friday temporarily suspended the services of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp to stop their use to organise demonstrations following violent protests by a radical religious group that has now been banned by the Government.

The Government banned Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) on Thursday following three days of violent protest by it to force the government to expel the French ambassador over a blasphemous caricature published in France last year.

The TLP had launched the country-wide protest on Monday after the arrest of its chief Saad Hussain Rizvi.

The TLP supporters clashed with the law enforcement agencies in several towns and cities earlier this week, leaving seven persons dead and over 300 policemen injured.

To stop the protests after Friday prayers, the Interior Ministry directed the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to suspend social media services for four hours from 11 am to 3 pm.

The PTA said in a notification that "complete access to social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and Telegram) may be blocked".



Supporters of Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan, a radical Islamist political party, chant slogans during a sit-in protest against the arrest of their party leader Saad Rizvi and demanding to expel the French envoy from the country, in Lahore on Friday

But this time only social media has been particularly targeted as the TLP was reportedly using it effectively against the government action.

On Thursday, Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed warned the TLP against using YouTube to upload propaganda videos. The TLP came to prominence in November 2017 when it staged a sit-in at the Faizabad interchange near Islamabad and cut off the capital from the old international airport.

Suspension of internet and mobile phone services is a common practice in Pakistan to forestall protests and acts of terrorism.

US to continue to push Pak on backing diplomatic efforts to ensure peace in Af: Burns

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US will continue to push Pakistan hard on supporting the diplomatic efforts to ensure peace in Afghanistan as it has an interest over the longer term in avoiding insecurity and instability in the war-torn neighbouring country that can spill over and affect its own interest, CIA Director William Burns has said.

Burns was responding to a question from Congressman Adam Schiff, who is the Chairman of the powerful House Intelligence Committee.

"Our withdrawal from Afghanistan, what impact do you think that will have on the Pakistani relationship with the Taliban, the Pakistani intelligence, ISI

relationship with the Haqqani network or others? How do you see that changing without a US military presence there?" Schiff asked during the meeting on Thursday.

"Pakistan today is playing a constructive role in support of the diplomatic efforts, at least that the United States and other countries are making to try to bridge what is, at the moment, a pretty severe gap between the government of Afghanistan and the Taliban," Burns responded.

The CIA Director told lawmakers that Pakistan has an interest over the longer term in avoiding the kind of insecurity and instability in Afghanistan that can spill over and affect its own interest.

China poses single biggest geopolitical test for US in 21st century: CIA Director

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

China poses the single biggest geopolitical test for the US in the 21st century, CIA Director William Burns has said, stressing that this threat is more serious than those from Russia during the Cold War.

Burns made the remarks to members of the House Select Committee on Intelligence during a Congressional hearing on worldwide threats on Thursday.

"I think China poses the single biggest geopolitical test for the United States as far out into the 21st century as I can see," Burns said.

"What distinguishes that challenge from an increasingly adversarial Chinese Communist Party from, for example, the challenge we faced with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, is that this challenge unfolds across a whole range of areas from military to ideological in terms of our values, economic and especially at its core competition and technology as well," Burns said.

The US and China are at odds over a range of issues from trade to human rights in Tibet, Hong Kong and China's western Xinjiang region, as well as over Taiwan, Beijing's assertiveness in the South China Sea and the coronavirus pandemic.

Beijing says US 'too negative' toward China

AP ■ BEIJING

A top Chinese diplomat said Friday that US policy toward China is "too negative" and that cooperation could be critically important as the Biden administration focuses on combatting Covid-19 and promoting economic recovery.

The US appears to be highlighting confrontation and playing down cooperation, Vice Foreign Minister Le Yucheng said in a wide-ranging interview with The Associated Press.

Hong Kong democracy leaders given jail terms amid crackdown

AP ■ HONG KONG

A Hong Kong court on Friday sentenced five leading pro-democracy advocates, including media tycoon Jimmy Lai, to up to 18 months in prison for organising and participating in a massive march during 2019 anti-government protests that triggered an overwhelming crackdown from Beijing.

A total of nine advocates were given jail terms, but four of them, including 82-year-old lawyer and former lawmaker Martin Lee, had their sentences suspended after their age and accomplishments were taken into consideration.

They were found guilty earlier this month of organiz-

ing and participating in a massive protest in August 2019, where an estimated 1.7 million people marched in opposition to a bill that would have allowed suspects to be extradited to mainland China. The march was not authorized by the police.

Their convictions and sentencing are another blow to the city's flagging democracy movement, which is facing an unprecedented crackdown by Beijing and Hong Kong authorities. The sentences were swiftly met with international criticism.

The court suspended the 11-month prison sentence of Lee, who is known for his advocacy for human rights and democracy, for two years because of his age.

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E-Tendering/Tender Notice

Letter No. 1197 / 613 / 88 Date: 15.04.2021

Name of Work :- Pipe Line & All Other Work

Name of Scheme	Estimated cost	Period of completion of work
1 Dhoomkhara GOV W/S Scheme	Rs. 80.96 Lakh	06 months
2 Pipaliya GOV W/S Scheme	Rs. 86.82 Lakh	06 months
3 Kumrah GOV W/S Scheme	Rs. 80.38 Lakh	06 months

Key Dates-

4 Date of Online Publication	17.04.2021 at 17:00 hrs.
5 Document Download : Start Date	18.04.2021 at 10:00 hrs.
6 Document download : End Date	01.05.2021 at 17:00 hrs
7 Pre Bid Meeting	22.04.2021 at 14:00 hrs.
8 Bid Submission : Start Date	18.04.2021 at 10:00 hrs.
9 Bid Submission : End Date	01.05.2021 at 17:00 hrs.
10 Offline Submission of Document (Cost of bidding document, Bid Security, Original Affidavits & all the Supporting Documents in support of qualification)	02.05.2021 upto 17:00 hrs.
11 Date of Technical Bid Opening	03.05.2021 at 11:00 hrs
12 Date of Financial Bid Opening	To be announced Later
13 Details of tender, corrigendum or cancellation etc. may be obtained at web site: www.uktenders.gov.in	Superintending Engineer

Iran starts enriching uranium to 60%, its highest level ever

AP ■ DUBAI

Iran began enriching uranium Friday to its highest level ever, edging closer to weapons-grade levels to pressure talks in Vienna aimed at restoring its nuclear deal with world powers after an attack on its main atomic site.

A top official said only a few grams an hour of uranium gas would be enriched up to 60 per cent purity — triple the level it once did but at a rate far slower than what Tehran could produce. International inspectors already said Iran planned to do so above-ground at its Natanz nuclear site, not deep within its underground halls hardened to withstand airstrikes.

The move is likely to raise tensions even as Iran negotiates in Vienna over a way to allow the US



back into the agreement and lift the crushing economic sanctions it faces. However, its scope also provides Iran with a way to quickly de-escalate if it chose.

The announcement also marks a significant escalation after the attack that damaged centrifuges at Natanz, an attack this past weekend suspected of having been carried out by Israel. While Israel has yet to claim it, it comes amid a long-running shadow war between the two

Mideast rivals.

Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, Iran's parliament speaker, announced the move in a Twitter post later acknowledged by Iranian state television.

"The young and God-believing Iranian scientists managed to achieve a 60 per cent enriched uranium product," Qalibaf said. "I congratulate the brave nation of Islamic Iran on this success. The Iranian nation's willpower is miraculous and can defeat any conspiracy."

The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, the country's civilian nuclear arm, later acknowledged the move to 60 per cent, according to state TV. Ali Akbar Salehi said the centrifuges now produce 9 grams an hour, but that would drop to 5 grams an hour in the coming days.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that this girl (depicted in the photo) namely: **Siddiq Parveen** D/o **Md. Istiyak R/o H.No. G-140, Tagore Gali, Jagatpuri, Delhi-51**, has been missing/kidnapped from her shop at A-110/1, Gali No. 9, Jagatpuri, Delhi-51 since 31.03.2021 at 04:15 PM. In this regard DD No. 109A Dated 31.03.2021 has been registered at **PS, Jagatpuri, Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far.

Her physical description is as under:-
Sex: Female, **Age:** 20 years, **Height:** 5'1" Ft., **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Long, **Injury Mark:** An Old Burn Mark on Left Toe, **Wearing:** Black Colour Suit & Light Blue Jeans, Cream colour Juti in foot.

Any person is having information or clue about this missing/kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> **PS Jagat Puri, Delhi**
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in **Ph. No.:** 011-22420362, 22420364,
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 **Mob:** 7065036023
Fax No.: 011-24368639 **DP/428/SHD/2021**

Residential realty get \$234 mn PE investments in Jan-March

PI ■ MUMBAI

A mid revival in housing demand, the residential segment witnessed private equity (PE) investments worth \$234 million in Q1 2021 which was 64 per cent of that witnessed during the entire 2020, said a Knight Frank India report.

It noted that in terms of the number of deals, the investment activity touched 100 per cent of 2020 levels and 39 per cent of 2019 levels in the first three months of 2021.

The report titled 'Investments in Real Estate - Trends in PE Investment (Q1 2021 update)' said that Indian real estate attracted private equity (debt and equity) investments (\$3.24 billion) across 19 deals in Q1 2021 (January - March) period.

In the first quarter of 2021, the investment in the sector has grown by 16 times compared to \$199 million in Q1 2020.

The investments in Q1 2021 in value terms were 80 per

cent of that witnessed in full year 2020 and 48 per cent of full year 2019. The strong momentum in Q1 2021 was predominantly driven by two major factors, spillover of certain deals from 2020 and the rise in investor confidence due to the drop in Covid-19 infections during early parts of Q1 2021, which had created some ripples of positivity in the economy, it said.

The sustainability of this momentum in investors' sentiments will therefore depend on how soon the second wave of infection subsides and also the pace of vaccination, as per the Knight Frank India.

Out of the total PE investments in real estate, the office segment attracted 71 per cent share, followed by retail at 15 per cent, residential and warehousing with 7 per cent each respectively.

Shishir Bajjal, Chairman and Managing Director, Knight Frank India said: "The deal street market of Indian real estate witnessed an impressive

surge in both value and volume of private equity investments in the first quarter of 2021, when compared to the entire year of 2020."

He said that office assets continue to be the preferred segment attracting over 70 per cent of PE investments Q1 2021 as the segment moves towards maturity which includes sustained demand, stability in rental income and change in ownership profile over long-term. Investors are expecting demand to recuperate faster as the pace of vaccination increases.

"While Q1 2021 has been an encouraging quarter for PE investments, however, the upward trajectory can be impacted by the rising second wave of Covid-19 infections in India which started in the month of April 2021. The sustainability of revival in investor sentiments will therefore depend on how soon the second wave of infection subsides and the pace of vaccination," Bajjal said.

Forex reserves surge by USD 4.34 bn to USD 581.21 bn

PTI ■ MUMBAI

After declining for two consecutive quarters, the country's foreign exchange (forex) reserves surged by USD 4.34 billion to USD 581.21 billion in the week ended April 9, according to the latest RBI data.

In the previous week ended April 2, the reserves had dipped by USD 2.42 billion to USD 576.28 billion. It had dropped by USD 2.99 billion to USD 579.28 billion in the week ended March 26, 2021.

The reserves had touched a lifetime high of USD 590.18 billion in the week ended January 29, 2021.

In the reporting week ended April 9, 2021, the increase in forex reserves was on account of a rise in foreign currency assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves.

FCA rose USD 3.02 billion to USD 539.45 billion, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) weekly data showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like euro, pound and yen held in the forex reserves.

The gold reserves increased by USD 1.30 billion to USD 35.32 billion in the reporting week, the RBI data showed.

The special drawing rights (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) rose USD 6 million to USD 1.49 billion in the reporting week.

The country's reserve position with the IMF rose USD 24 million to USD 4.95 billion in the reporting week, the data showed.

Jet fuel price cut by 1 pc

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Jet fuel price on Friday was cut by 1 per cent, the second reduction in rates this month following softening international crude oil prices.

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was reduced by Rs 568.88 per kilolitre, or 0.9 per cent, to Rs 57,805.28 per kl in the national capital, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. This is the second reduction in rates this month.

Earlier, prices were cut by 3 per cent on April 1.

These price cuts were the first in six months.

Meanwhile, petrol and diesel prices remained unchanged after the fourth reduction in three weeks on Thursday.

Petrol price on Thursday was cut by 16 paise per litre and diesel by 14 paise.

Petrol now costs Rs 90.40 per litre in Delhi, while a litre of diesel comes for Rs 80.73.

Benchmarks eke out slim gains; close lower for the week

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Sensex and Nifty ticked higher for the third session on the trot on Friday but could not wipe off weekly losses amid a resurgence in Covid-19 cases. A strong recovery in the rupee, which zoomed 58 paise, and a bullish trend in global equities supported the bourses on Friday, traders said.

After a choppy session, the 30-share BSE Sensex closed 28.35 points or 0.06 per cent higher at 48,832.03.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty rose 36.40 points or 0.25 per cent to 14,617.85.

Asian Paints was the top performer among the Sensex components, surging 3.07 per cent, followed by UltraTech

Cement, ONGC, M&M, Sun Pharma, HCL Tech, Tech Mahindra and Nestle India.

On the other hand, ICICI Bank, L&T, Bajaj Finance, TCS, SBI, Infosys and Reliance Industries were among the losers, declining up to 1.55 per cent.

During the holiday-truncated week, the Sensex sank 759.29 points or 1.53 per cent, while the Nifty tumbled 217 points or 1.46 per cent.

A continued surge in second wave of COVID-19 cases in the country, which already crossed 2 lakh daily cases, has certainly posed a risk to sustainability of rebound of earnings momentum, said Binod Modi, Head-Strategy at Reliance Securities.

Rupee spurts by 58 paise to over 1-week high on easing US yields

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee on Friday soared by 58 paise to end more than one-week high of 74.35 against the US dollar on easing US bond yields and positive domestic equities.

A weak dollar overseas and foreign fund inflows also supported the rupee. At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 74.76 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 74.28 and a low of 74.76. It finally ended at 74.35 against the American currency, registering its best single-day gain of 58 paise in more than a month. On Thursday, the rupee had settled at 74.93 against the American currency.

'Govt should regulate cryptocurrencies, not ban them'

PI ■ NEW DELHI

As government plans to come up with a Cryptocurrency Bill, sector stakeholders have said that the government should regulate the cryptocurrency ecosystem, rather than banning them.

Experts are of the view that India should formulate regulations in the lines of the development countries which regulate these currencies including the US, UK, Japan, Australia among others.

Nischal Shetty, Founder & CEO, WazirX said: "India's crypto policy should be geared towards fostering innovation, and customer safety. We should be able to prevent bad activities but keep the door to innovation open by allowing everything else to be built."

He said that so far there is no single regulator in a position to regulate the entire crypto sector.

"It's like trying to regulate the Internet with one regulator. We can start breaking down crypto based on its classification as currency, asset, utility, security, and let regulators handle the respective crypto. Eventually, it will become necessary to have a dedicated crypto markets regulator," Shetty said.

He also recommended that the government should ensure that all crypto businesses catering to Indian customers are registered in India and follow KYC and AML policies. "There should also be guidelines for crypto businesses to ensure safety of customer funds," the WazirX CEO said.

Dev Sharma, Regional Manager (Central Asia) for Paxful also said that at a foundational level, India should regulate so that all companies have to implement KYC and AML processes to protect consumers. "There is nothing about cryptocurrencies that make them more appealing to 'bad actors' than fiat currencies. So, cryptocurrencies need to be regulated in similar ways," he said.

In addition, it would be great to see India develop measures to promote innovation in the sector for example with incubators and start-up funds.

NTPC to raise ₹3,996 cr via bonds next week

New Delhi: State-owned power giant NTPC will raise Rs 3,996 crore through issuance of non-convertible bonds on Tuesday. NTPC has decided to issue unsecured non-convertible bonds in the nature of debentures of Rs 3,996 crore on 20 April, 2021, through private placement at a coupon of 6.87 per cent per annum with a door-to-door maturity of 15 years 1 day on 21 April, 2036," a BSE filing said.

The proceeds will be utilized for funding capital expenditure, refinancing of existing loans and other general corporate purposes, it said. **PTI**

IndiGo waives change fees on domestic bookings

PI ■ NEW DELHI

Airline major IndiGo waived-off change fees on new bookings made from April 17, 2021 till April 30, 2021.

Besides, the airline announced that passengers can now do unlimited changes for new bookings made till April 30, 2021 on regular fares under this offer.

"This offer is in line with our philosophy of providing our customers a hassle-free experience, and giving them much needed flexibility, especially in these times," said



Sanjay Kumar, Chief Strategy & Revenue Officer, IndiGo.

Other airlines are expected to announce similar relief measures as the resurgence of Covid and imposition of local lockdowns has started to hamper air passenger traffic.

Coal India incorporates two wholly-owned arms

New Delhi: State-owned CIL on Friday announced incorporation of two wholly-owned arms. The two subsidiaries are CIL Solar PV Ltd and CIL Navikarniya Urja Ltd, Coal India Ltd (CIL) said in a filing to BSE. CIL Solar PV Limited has been incorporated for manufacturing in solar value chain (Ingot-wafer-Cell Module) and CIL Navikarniya Urja Limited for renewable energy, the filing said.

SII CEO urges US to lift raw material export ban to ramp up vaccine production

Mumbai: Serum Institute of India (SII) CEO Adar Poonawalla on Friday said the US needs to lift its embargo on raw material exports to help ramp up vaccine production.

SII is currently manufacturing anti-coronavirus vaccine Covishield, developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University. The vaccine is not only being used in India, but exported to a number of countries. Poonawalla had earlier admitted that SII has been facing problems in sending out required number of batches of vaccines due to the bureaucratic and government-related hurdles.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(SEE SECTION 82 Cr.Pc.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that the accused person (1) **Narender Singh S/o Kripal Singh** (2) **Ritu Singh W/o Narender Singh**, Both **R/o Baljeet Nagar**, Patel Nagar, Delhi and (3) **Kripal Singh S/o Ram Singh H.No. A-940, 4th Floor, Baba Farid Puri, West Patel Nagar**, Delhi have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 543/14, u/s 498A/406/34 IPC, PS Krishna Nagar, Delhi** and it has been returned to warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused person (1) **Narender Singh** (2) **Ritu Singh** and (3) **Kripal Singh** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused (1) **Narender Singh** (2) **Ritu Singh** and (3) **Kripal Singh**, have absconded (or is concealing themselves) to avoid the service of said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said (1) **Narender Singh** (2) **Ritu Singh** and (3) **Kripal Singh** of case **FIR No. 543/14, u/s 498A/406/34 IPC, PS Krishna Nagar, Delhi** are required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **10.06.2021**.

By order
Ms Shruti Chaudhary
MM, Mahila Court-1,
East District, Court No. 14
Karkardooma Court, Delhi

DP/431/SHD/2021

SEARCH FOR MISSING BOY

General public is hereby informed that one boy namely **Gurdeep Singh, S/o Gurcharn Singh, R/o B-3, Gurudwara, Raghuraj Nagar, Delhi**. Height 5', Shallow Complexion, Round face, Normal Built wearing blue pant, chocolate Shirt and sport shoes in feet has been missing since **07.04.2021** from his house.

In this regard a case **DD No. 75-A Dt. 07.04.2021** has been lodged at **PS Khyala, New Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing boy but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this missing boy may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail: **cic@cbi.gov.in**
Fax: **011-23011334**
Ph: **011-23014046**
011-23015218

S.H.O., PS Khyala, New Delhi.
Ph: **8700684171, 9582084096**

DP/402/WD/2021

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public is hereby informed that Smt. Sarla Devi has claimed to be the owner of Plot No. K-100, Area Measuring 75 sq yds, Mustil No. 88, Killa No. 4, Village Hastal Delhi Abadi Uttam Nagar, New Delhi and has agreed to sell it to Sh. Manish Bansal and Smt. Swati Jindal, who has approached the Magma Housing Finance Limited Ltd for loan against mortgage of above said property, if any person has any right, claim, title or interest in any manner over the said property then intimate within 7 days to Vikas Shokeen, Advocate, A-18, Manwari Nagar, Delhi - 110087. Thereafter any kind of claim will not be accepted.

WESTERN RAILWAY

CORRIGENDUM TO E-AUCTION SALE PROGRAM -e Auction Sale Notification No. S III/Auction Programme-1/April-2021

Dated 18/03/2021. "The entire E-Auction Sale Program scheduled to be held in the month of April 2021 for all the Depots and Divisions is cancelled". Please visit Western Railway Website of material Management Department i.e. **www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in** as well as on **www.reps.gov.in** e-auction portal for further information. (No. S III/Auction Programme-2/April-2021 Dated: 15/04/2021) 0027

Follow us on **twitter.com/WesternRly**

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Public at large is hereby informed that Late Sh. Sikandar Lal S/o Late Sh. Shiv Lal Singh R/o 93, Anand Lok, New Delhi-110049 was having residential property, in our project Seven Elements flat no 48HKS-013A-501, measuring 2505 sq.ft. which his legal heirs Sh. Samrat Yadav and Smt. Shabnam Narsing requested the company to be transfer to his son namely Sh. Samrat Yadav.

Any person having any objection on this please may contact the company officer details as under within 15 days after which No Claim would be accepted.

Vatika Limited
A-002, Ground Floor,
Block A, Vatika INXT City Centre,
Sector-83, Gurugram
Haryana, INDIA - 122012

UJVN Limited

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: **www.ujvn.com**

Tender Notice

Letter No: 294 Date: 16.04.2021
Office of the Executive Engineer (Generation), Khodri Power Station, Dakpathar (Dehradun), invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:
Tender No: 01/EE(Gen)/Khodri/2021-22: Replacement/Repairing of AC cooling tower, pipeline, different gate valves with civil works.
Estimated cost : Rs. 910000/- GST extra
Date of availability of bid document on website: 16.04.2021, 17:00 hrs.
Last date for submission of tender : 06.05.2021 up to 16:00 hrs
For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "**www.ujvn.com**".
Executive Engineer (Generation)

"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

MODIFICATION IN FORM G INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

(Published in accordance with Regulation 36A (1) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016.

In modification to the Form G published on March 31, 2021 in Indian Express (Mumbai, Ahmednagar, Shirdi and Nashik) and Pudhari (Mumbai Edition), Pudhari (Ahmednagar, Shirdi, Nashik, The Pioneer (English and Hindi) (Delhi NCR edition) w.r.t. Kopargaoon Ahmednagar Tollways (Phase 1) Private Limited, it shall be noted that the last date for submission of Expression of Interest has been extended from **April 15, 2021 to April 22, 2021**. The revised timelines are mentioned in the modified Form-G uploaded on the website of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India.

Notes:

- The dates mentioned above are subject to grant of extension/ exclusion off from the CIRP period by the Adjudicating Authority.
- The RP / COC shall have discretion to change the criteria for the EOI at any point of time.
- RP / COC reserves the right to cancel or modify the process / application without assigning any reason and without any liability whatsoever.
- Detailed invitation for expression of interest specifying criteria, ineligibility norms under section 29A of Code etc. can be requested through email on **kapti@sumedhamanagement.com**

Sd/-
Mr. Udayraj Patwardhan
Resolution Professional for Kopargaoon Ahmednagar Tollways (Phase I) Private Limited
IP Registration No.: **IBBI/IPA-001/IP-P00024/2016-2017/110057**
Date: Friday, April 16, 2021, Place: Mumbai

Name, Address and e-mail of the resolution professional, as registered with the Board:
Name: Mr. Udayraj Patwardhan
Address: Sumedha Management Solutions Private Limited, C 703, Marathon Innova, Lower Panel West, Mumbai-400013.
Email ID: **udayraj_patwardhan@sumedhamanagement.com**

Address and e-mail to be used for correspondence with the resolution professional:
Address: Sumedha Management Solutions Private Limited, 809-810, 8th Floor, B Wing, Trade World, Kamala Mills Compound, Lower Panel (West), Mumbai-400013
Email ID: **kapti@sumedhamanagement.com**

SALE NOTICE

The under mentioned Assets will be sold through auction on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS"** and **"AS IS WHAT IS BASIS"** for recovery of dues as per court orders, in the following cases:-

Case Details	Asset Details	Reserve Price	EMD
ICICI Bank Limited vs Shishir Dutt Sharma, Case No-Suit No. 1967/17	Vehicle No-DL8CAK6823, Make and Model- FORD FIGO 1.4 EXI, Manu Yr-2015	350000	35000
ICICI Bank Limited vs Sanjay Kumar Pandit, Case No-Suit No. 933/18	Vehicle No-DL1ZA7554, Make and Model- HYUNDAI XCENT BASE 1.2, Manu Yr-2016	180000	18000
ICICI Bank Limited vs Kulvinder Singh, Case No-FAO 213/2015	Vehicle No-Unregistered, Make and Model- MARUTI ERTIGA, Manu Yr-2013	100000	10000
ICICI Bank Limited vs Mehkar Singh, Case No-CM(M) 549/2020 & CM APPL. 27986/2020	Vehicle No-UP16DT4118, Make and Model- CHEVROLET ENJOY, Manu Yr- 2015	144000	14400
ICICI Bank Limited vs Subodh Kumar, Case No-CM(M) 602/2020 & CM APPL. 30659/2020	Vehicle No-UP14F76208, Make and Model- RENAULT LODGY RXE, Manu Yr-2016	162000	16200
ICICI Bank Limited vs Jitendra Chaturvedi, Case No-CM (M) 22/2020	Vehicle No-UP14FT7814, Make and Model- CHEVROLET SAIL LVA LT, Manu Yr-2016	54000	5400
ICICI Bank Limited vs Mohd Asif, Case No-CM(M) 178/2021	Vehicle No-UP14DD5260, Make and Model- MARUTI WAGON R, Manu Yr-2017	81000	8100
ICICI Bank Limited vs Archana Raj, Case No-CM(M) 573/2020 & CM APPL.29273/2020	Vehicle No-UP14ET7203, Make and Model- CHEVROLET ENJOY LT, Manu Yr-2015	54000	5400
ICICI Bank Limited vs Mohammad Arif, Case No-CSSCJ-1871/19	Vehicle No-UP14DD2489, Make and Model- WAGON R LXI CNG, Manu Yr-2017	220000	22000
ICICI Bank Limited vs Vijay Gupta, Case No-Suit No. 1088/2018	Vehicle No-HR29AM0548, Make and Model- WAGON R LXI CNG, Manu Yr-2016	120000	12000

Auction Date and time : 01.05.2021; from 11 am to 2 pm.
Venue: Godara Yard, Khewat No:166/1, Near Atul Kataria Chock, Behind Gyan Devi School, Sec-17, Sukhrali, Gurugram- 122022.
Contact Person -Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/ Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)
EMD: DD/PO of EMD amount to be made in favour of ICICI Bank Limited, payable at Delhi.
And auction of following vehicles will be done at another yard i.e Shriram Automall, Vill-Mamurpur, Plo Maniyari Road Narela, New Delhi

Case Details	Asset Details	Reserve Price	EMD
ICICI Bank Limited vs Rahul Yadav, Case No-CM (M) 222/2020	Vehicle No-UP14ET0642, Make and Model- TATA ACE, Manu Yr-2014	70000	7000

Auction Date: 22.04.2021; from 11 am to 1 PM
Venue: AN Motors, Ranukta, Agra (UP)
Contact Person -Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)
Terms of Sale
The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participant/s are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself / themselves/ itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids. All bidders are required to come at site with original DD/PO of EMD amount along with original KYC proofs to participate in the auction.
Successfully approved bidder shall have to deposit sale amount (Excluding EMD amount) within 5 days from the auction date by the way of pay order/ demand draft/RTGS/NEFT. In case if you fail to make the remaining sale amount within 5 days, your EMD amount will be forfeited.
The intending bidders may visit at ICICI Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, SD Tower, Community Center, Plot no-7, Rohini Sector-8, New Delhi-110085, for details and inspection of the said hypothecated vehicle.



Bollywood
"I hope I can sing and compose music for the films that I am part of in the near future."
—Adarsh Gourav

SHORTCIRCUITS



SUNNY LEONE

"I don't always post workout videos but I thought this was fun. A technique used by fighters who are hit in the head and get dizzy. I'm no fighter but was fun to try this. Thanks Arif. Oh and by the way, it's more difficult to box with a mask on! But safety over comfort at this moment."



GUL PANAG

"I think a lot of us are aware of what kind of an existential crisis the environment faces but we have other fires to fight. And even though we may be willing and maybe interested and wanting to do our best to contribute towards conserving the environment, other emergencies in life take over."



ARJUN BIJLANI

"I don't want to use anything as an excuse to not follow my workout routine even when on a vacation. It is just a medium to rejuvenate myself. I am very particular about my schedule especially when I am in the middle of training for an intense reality show."



NATASHA RASTOGI

"Acting for me will always be a constant journey of learning. To talk about my recent projects, *Pagglait* gave me an opportunity to play a very nuanced character. But I tried to see it as a woman torn between her daughter's well-being and rigid societal norms that she must follow, given the situation."

AMY WALSH

"I loved Michael Praed, who played Tracy's dad Frank in *Emmerdale*. He's a ball of crazy energy. Once he came to the garage with me and pumped my tyres up because I was poorly. Michael is such a caring man, and I was devastated when he left the show. But we're still in touch and he's a friend for life."



ART & CULTURE

CONFLUENCE OF ART AND FILM

Art is inaccessible. It is high brow. It's for the classes. How often have we heard these words thrown around without giving a thought to everyday lived aesthetics? The film, *Contemporary Art within the Visual Cultures of Italy & India*, looks at chipping away many of these assertions by exploring contemporary art in both countries. The curators of the panoramic project, DAVIDE QUADRIO and MYNA MUKHERJEE, brought National Award-Winning filmmaker ONIR as the Director of Photography to ensure that it could take the viewers on a visual journey that is both layered and simplified. In a discussion with SAIMI SATTAR, the trio talk about the project, its reach and the conversations that it can ignite

How was the project conceptualised?

Myna: I had worked with Davide on an exchange programme of ideas and art between Italy and India at the India Art Fair two years back. We enjoyed this cross-cultural exchange tremendously where there were women artists, three each, from Italy and India. What was surprising was the resonance among them. It was a universal and hybrid moment. While the contours of work were specific to the location, there was a shared universality as women artists.

From there came the germ of an idea. As the resonance was big, we wanted to share it with a wider audience. Things quickly fell in place as Davide was invited as a curator to Aartissima, Italy's most pivotal art fairs, for India. As a larger narrative formed, we got more ambitious and wanted to communicate the idea behind the curation. We wanted to share this and a film, because of a wider and diverse audience as well as those who are new to art conversation or aren't art enthusiasts but have an inclination towards it, was considered the best way to do it.

For me, talking about India and its aesthetics can't be separated from the specificity of location. Instead of explaining this to the audience, they get to peek into the aesthetics philosophies, history and the contemporariness of everyday living, landscape, crafts, arts and political situation.

There is poetic resonance in both countries in terms of themes, materiality, form and more. There are several intersections in the intellectual thought process, the time, the duration and the way artists work and the way nature interacts.

Davide: We were at a stage where we could truly have an exchange. There were questions, about our roles as cultural mitiga-

tors and that of culture in the contemporary world, especially in the pandemic. Human beings aren't just consumers or survivors but are cultural beings. This isn't just a journey but also critically thinking about the role of culture and art. There's a strong idea of presenting what it means to be in a cross-cultural environment and presenting your own culture through a contemporary spectacle. The idea isn't to simplify but to make it more layered.

How much does the ruling dispensation and their outlook affect arts?

Onir: For independent filmmakers, censorship has been there for years and we've negotiated different kinds of dos-don'ts. When OTT came, we thought it had more possibilities but now there are new laws. You're always being told to be sensitive about religion and more but somewhere the artiste has disappeared in the scheme of things. However, art is a compulsion that doesn't let you stay quiet as is evident from Iranian cinema. It's about finding a new narrative to tell a story.

D: I think, radicality is happening globally. This situation is conducive to art and culture not being secondary. There's a strong will to find solutions and ways to do things as well as support creativity in people.

M: One of the most interesting things about art, when you're looking at radicality, is the origin of the word. The etymology of radicality is roots. So you're essentially going back to the roots philosophically and symbolically.

I spent 20 years in New York and the burden of representation there was very frustrating. For example, if you were a dancer, suddenly everybody would say this is South Asian dance but we know that there are so many dances in India alone. This



means that if you're leading someone into an exposition of culture, its multiplicity is so enormous, that unless the viewer willingly embraces its complexity, nothing can be understood about culture.

Going from Kashmir to Gujarat, there were so many surprising stories and encounters that there's no fixed way to think about them. The documentary looks into the multiple truths at this particular moment in time. The wonderful thing is that it looks at both references as well as departures from these historical and material references. It hopes to glimpse at multiplicity in all its glory.

D: The overlapping of feelings or relationships is communicated by putting together extreme things or differences. This explodes into an emotional reaction rather than a historical or intellectualised analysis. Onir is extremely important in this as the world he comes from and his way of thinking is very different. It's a journey through feelings, ideas, sketches of ideas, doubts and that is actually what will make the film very appealing as it's not about a linear idea but a complex journey through references and aesthetics of actual-

So, do you think these multiple locations add to the storytelling?

M: Yes, of course. There are similarities and differences between — Gujarat's Maharaja Sayajirao University and Shanti Niketan,

Bengal — the two best-known academic institutions of art. Then there are many smaller ones besides folk and craft traditions, weaving traditions or patterns or references, philosophy, spirituality... there is so much. Even when you're referring to a simple landscape, it is varied across different parts of India.

D: The overlapping of feelings or relationships is communicated by putting together extreme things or differences. This explodes into an emotional reaction rather than a historical or intellectualised analysis. Onir is extremely important in this as the world he comes from and his way of thinking is very different. It's a journey through feelings, ideas, sketches of ideas, doubts and that is actually what will make the film very appealing as it's not about a linear idea but a complex journey through references and aesthetics of actual-

ly connecting or disconnecting India and Italy.

So you would say that multiple locations and multiple artists are adding to these voices of diversity?

M and D: Yes sure.

D: This is of course a point of view and a rhetorical decision. It isn't always about absolute. It's about tentatives, absorbing things and getting back. The idea is to bring all those images and edit them to the minimum and maximum possible.

M: The reason for bringing Onir is that we wanted to bring in an outsider who would also see it from the audience's perspective with fresh eyes. So if it made sense to Onir, it would make sense to the audience. He's an outsider to the process while being a part of the

journey.

Is this an attempt to bridge the gap as art is considered high-brow and inaccessible?

O: When Myna approached me the idea to make it more "accessible" was exciting. This wasn't a technical documentary from the point of view of someone superior talking about things you don't understand but it was the journey of experiencing and understanding the long history of art and contemporary art in the context of nature, culture, tradition and everything else. For me, starting from Kashmir and going to Gujarat changed the way I started seeing form, design and will affect the way I shoot films. To make art accessible needs a small step. This journey helped me take that step and I hope that it does so for other people too.

What were the challenges in bringing everything — the journey from Kashmir to Gujarat and the Italian as well as Indian influences — to one platform?

O: For me, the beauty is in finding threads that are diverse while having a commonality because that is what humanity is all about. It is like poetry, where you are using different languages to convey the same emotion. You see nature, tradition, patterns, forms and colours of Kashmir resonate in Gujarat while being different.

Is the focus more on contemporary artists in the documentary?

O: It is contemporary but comes with thousands of years of history. What's beautiful is that we are talking about the works of contemporary artists and showing the milieu that brought about their art.

D: What's interesting isn't the conflict between past and present but how the present is coming

from history. When you're talking about how tradition is preserved, you also see professionals who build on that tradition. We're going to alphabets of creativity and showing that art is a discourse and a practise which isn't in conflict but a natural consequence even though it might go against tradition.

M: I don't think of history as a progression in a linear way but much more as a continuum. Everything in South Asia is elliptical. What's new today is old tomorrow and what's old tomorrow is also suddenly new. Whether it is the materials, colour, the way it is constructed and used by artists on tempura and frescoes. Similarly, while references to metaphor and myths happen in ancient cultures but are also made by very young contemporary artists today.

What is the audience you are targeting and what should they be looking at?

M: We hope that the film serves as an entry point for someone who is interested in art but never has had an exposure to different conversations or some of the different histories of art. At the same time we want artists to find a resonance with other artists either from their part of the world or other parts of the world. It isn't a historical text but more of symbols and signs that give an entry point into aesthetics. It's a plural history.

D: We want to have a film that goes beyond the intellectual language that contemporary art had in-built globally and to try to create a narrative that talks to people.

O: It provides an experience to someone navigating art but not so familiar with it but at the same time it has layers and subtexts woven in silently which will give a much more refined narrative to artists who are familiar with the discourse.

IMMERSIVE 30 MINUTES

‘Dream hard, work harder’ Gil Green directs Divine’s *Rider*

Choreographer and educator ASHLEY LOBO says nothing can stop a dancer who is motivated, disciplined and hungry for success



IDENTIFY A FAVOURITE DANCE STYLE

When a dancer is serious about pursuing his or her passion as a vocation and a lifelong career, it is important to identify the style they want to specialise in. Ashley cites the example of many young Indian dancers

whose dedication to ballet has won them scholarships and taken them abroad to master the form. He says, "When you clarify just what creative zone you want to specialise, work or teach in, it distills your choices to the essentials and you are able to find options that are suited to you."

GET THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THEORY RIGHT

According to him, to revise, repeat and imbibe the basic theories of a chosen dance form is important. He suggests, "Learn online with a teacher, join an academy remotely if you cannot learn in person and tune your body and mind. Do your own research on how great dancers built their technique, watch acclaimed performances, check what international studios are working on. All this information is out there. Be hungry and relentless. Build your foundation and never stop working on yourself and your craft."

FOCUS ON THE POSITIVES

It is hard to find motivation in tough times but as Ashley says, "One of my favourite quotes that I use repeatedly to inspire myself and my students is, 'My next move must be motivated by dance itself.' This is what it is all about. When you let dance lead you to your next step, the future reveals itself and believe me, it will be beautiful. The world over, dance is getting the respect it deserves through performance-based shows and films. Dancers are beginning to represent India at the global level as performers, teachers and choreographers. And we are all set to make an even bigger splash in the years to come. So dream hard, work harder and you will go places."

Rapper Divine has teamed up with American music video and film director Gil Green for the music video of his new track *Rider*.

The story of the song is inspired by Divine's rags-to-riches tale. It is a love saga between a deprived dreamer, played by Divine, and an affluent boss woman, played by singer Lisa Mishra.

Green has directed over 200 music videos and has collaborated with the likes of Adam Levine, John Legend, Pitbull, Chris Brown, Akon, Lil Wayne, Kanye West, Nicki Minaj, Drake, DJ Khaled, Camila Cabello, Usher, P-Diddy, J Balvin, 50 Cent, Snoop Dogg and Sean Paul.

"I want to send a big shout out to Divine and the Gully Gang for collaborating with me on this video. Being a part of Divine's massive influence in India's hip hop movement is something special to me. The art form is truly universal, and Divine continues to push the hip hop boundaries with his music, lyrics, style and presence," says Green.

The video features Dubai's tourist attractions such as Dubai Opera, Burj Khalifa, Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai World Trade Centre to City Walk, Burj al Arab, Madinat Jumeirah, Palm Jumeirah and features the iconic desert safari.

Divine adds, "*Rider* is a song that is very close to my heart and I feel blessed to have worked with



a legend like Gil and his entire team that fulfilled the vision I had for this music video. Lisa has been an amazing and a fun collaborator to work with, easy to see that her voice and personality together in the video shines right through."

"Last summer, Divine made an Instagram post asking his fans who he should work with on his album. I thought I'd shoot my shot

in the comments and see if I got lucky. And just like that, he messaged me that he had an idea and was going to send it over. When I got the scratch, his verse and the hook had been written and he left the second half empty for me. I loved the message of the song, about an independent woman who he's so comfortable with, it goes beyond just a relationship," says Lisa.

CONVERSATION

I CAN DO IT

Actor and host VISHAL MALHOTRA tells AYUSHI SHARMA that the Season 2 of *Imagine That* will educate children and their parents about the concept of upcycling and being friendly towards the environment along with a good dose of laughter

◆What made you say yes to *Imagine That* Season 2? What's different in this installment?

As you know, I started my relationship with Disney 25 years ago and ever since then, it has been a very fulfilling experience. We have been looking at ways to collaborate with each other for the longest time. So when the channel was kind enough to offer me this show, I grabbed the opportunity. From the time they have announced our collaboration, I have been overwhelmed with the response that I have been receiving from the audience. People are extremely nostalgic with my return and they cannot wait for the show. Besides this, the format of the show intrigued me the most. DIY (Do It Yourself) is an integral part of a lot of kids' lives. It is entertaining and encourages them to grow mentally. In this concept, I connect the audience to the show; I am the voice of the audience through which I aim to bring a lot of joy, laughter and fun and at the same time make sure that the simplest of DIYs to the biggest are amazing.

◆Now people are well-versed with the DIY culture due to easy access to the internet. What new is in it for kids?

For starters, when you normally watch a DIY, there are only said instructions on how to execute it. Whereas, in this show we have got an entire gameplay around it, which has been filled with fun, laughter, entertainment and of course, learning. Besides that, the kind of DIY we are choosing is focussed on the theme of 'upcycling'. We use old material from the previous DIY by upcycling them for the new ones and like that we make sure we do not waste anything. The show is centred on a lot of social relevance that will educate the children and their parents about the concept of upcycling and being friendly towards the environment along with enjoying a good dose of laughter.

◆Why do you think DIY is important? Can we merge the concept with sustainability?

DIYs are extremely important because it encourages a child to



think or motivates them to build new creative things. And this is always something that we should be looking for. This show offers encouragement to the parents and their kids to come together and challenge each other's mind and creativity to build something which is actually going to be useful and is not just a showpiece. Speaking of sustainability — yes! We can merge the concept with DIY. That is exactly what the show is about. The first step to sustainability is no wastage, which is what we absolutely endorse and encourage. We do not waste a single piece of paper, a straw or even a single string. We use every bit again and again and create amazing new things without compromising on the quality of what we are producing.

◆How challenging is it to capture the attention of the children while hosting such shows?

Any TV show to the audience is extremely difficult to captivate, it is not just with the kids. I have had the fortune of hosting shows for kids for the last 25 years and somehow, I have found a very favourable response from my audience. This is because I do not treat them as kids. I do know my audience but I do not treat them on the

basis of the intelligence I think they possess. I, rather, treat them as my friends. I believe this has what resonated with them in a big way. I am confident that the same resonance will come back again be it with the kids or their parents after watching me on the episodes.

◆Given that things are easily accessible today, how do you think the importance of DIY projects can be explained to kids?

Well, that is something we are striving to do but we should not undermine the intelligence of both parents and children. But yes, you are right — everything is easily available and we do bring that up in the show. Certain times on the show I just say, 'Hey, listen, we got to give somebody a gift. Why don't we just order it online?' However, we teach and encourage the audience to build a DIY. Punching in your card numbers to order a gift online is incomparable to the wholesome emotion. The gratitude and the sense of achievement you feel after creating something by spending those 15-20 minutes on it. That gift is far more truly yours than any purchased kind.

(The show will premiere on Disney Channel at 9.30 am on April 18.)

Ajay, Siddharth to produce *Gobar*

Actor-producer Ajay Devgn has announced his new production, a comic drama named *Gobar* along with Siddharth Roy Kapur. The film is to be directed by ad-filmmaker Sabal Shekhawat, who has also penned the script along with Sambhit Mishra. The film's story is about a veterinary doctor who discovers a tangled web of corruption in his state hospital.

Ajay feels that people will love the story. "The story of *Gobar* is at once unique, relatable and incredibly funny as well as gripping and entertaining to the point that I'm confident it will compel people to go to the theatres," he says.

"We are very clear about the impact we want to make. We want viewers to laugh, relax, perhaps think a little bit and be entertained. The standard that Siddharth observes in content creation and filmmaking makes this collaboration very exciting for us," the actor-filmmaker adds.

Kapur says that the film centres around the journey of a common man and comes with a simple message. "*Gobar* is a story that chronicles the seemingly pointless but ultimately heroic journey of a simple citizen who deals with corruption in a way that will bring on many laughs, much adventure and ultimately a simple message about the power of the common

man," says Kapur.

He adds, "What makes the film entertaining and unique is that it is a situational comedy that sheds light on the inner workings of power. To be collaborating with Ajay, someone I have always respected for his creative choices, and his team at Ajay Devgn Films on bringing this film to life is very exciting."

Writer-director Shekhawat says that the film has been written keeping in mind true events.

"*Gobar* is a film that will take viewers back to the charming days of the nineties and the simple life of smalltown living. I wrote this story keeping in mind a few true events that unravelled a gamut of issues, the centre of which is a vet whose love for his cows and animals supersedes everything," says Shekhawat.

"I'm grateful and happy that two esteemed producers like Ajay and Sid showed faith in my vision and offered a sizable canvas to the storyline. Quality cinema has come from both production houses, and I'm sure that the treatment of my directorial will be no different. As a filmmaker, I'm absolutely thrilled!" he says.

Produced under the banners Ajay Devgn Films and Roy Kapur Films, the film will go on floors at the end of the year. The casting of the film is underway. —IANS

STUDIO CHAT

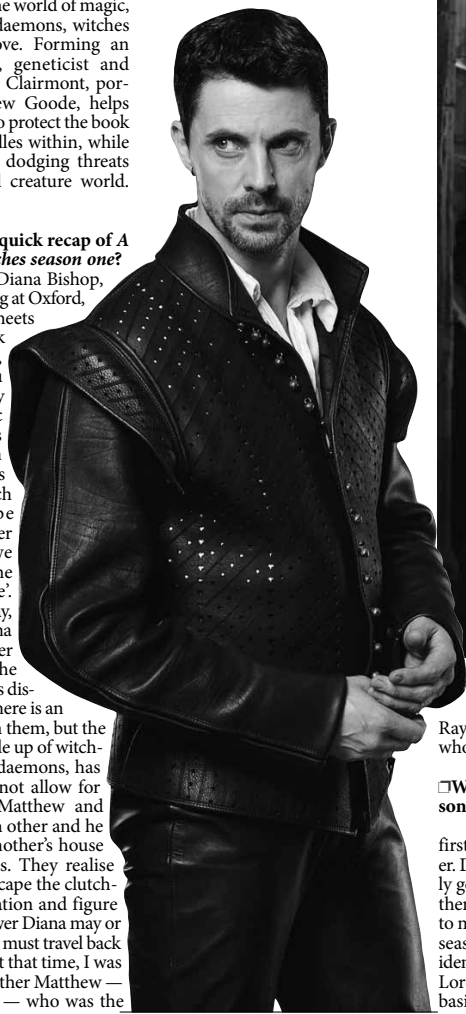
Into the world of magic

Actor MATTHEW GOODE shares that the second season of *A Discovery of Witches* is much darker, full of vampires, daemons, witches and forbidden love. By TEAM VIVA

A Discovery of Witches is a fantasy series based on the similarly-named novel of the 'All Souls' trilogy, written by Deborah Harkness. Teresa Palmer portrays Diana Bishop, a historian who discovers a bewitched manuscript in the Bodleian library. As she attempts to unravel the secrets this book holds about magical creatures, she is forced back into the world of magic, full of vampires, daemons, witches and forbidden love. Forming an unlikely alliance, geneticist and vampire Matthew Clairmont, portrayed by Matthew Goode, helps Diana to attempt to protect the book and solve the riddles within, while at the same time dodging threats from the magical creature world. Excerpts:

□Can you give a quick recap of *A Discovery of Witches* season one?

It starts with Diana Bishop, a professor studying at Oxford, falling over. Her sheets of paper zoom back into her hands. So, as an audience, you know straight away there's some magic involved. She goes to the Bodleian Library and takes out a book, which turns out to be Ashmole 782. Later in the series, we learn this to be 'The Book of Life'. Matthew, who I play, has overheard Diana has the book in her possession, but she doesn't have it as it's disappeared again. There is an attraction between them, but the congregation, made up of witches, vampires and daemons, has set rules that do not allow for species to mix. Matthew and Diana fall for each other and he takes her to his mother's house who hates witches. They realise that in order to escape the clutches of the congregation and figure out how much power Diana may or may not have, they must travel back in time — 1590. At that time, I was in the guise of another Matthew — Matthew Roydon — who was the



head of The School of Night with characters like Walter Rayleigh and Kit Marlowe, both of whom are a big part of season two.

□What is it like being back for season two?

The book is great. You pop the first one down and pick up another. Deb (Deborah) writes fantastically good stories. They are dense and there's a lot of material, so you want to mine that as much as possible. In season two, Matthew reassumes the identity of Matthew Roydon. He was Lord Burghley's right-hand and, basically, 007 for the Queen. It's a

much darker season and I think we start to see Diana's character become stronger, not only with magic, but in a society that's very patriarchal. It's great getting the old gang back together even though we didn't see a lot of them as they were filming the modern part of the story. James North has successfully knocked out a 1590s London town in a place called Plas Machen. Prior to arriving on set, I wondered how they were going to do it, and if it was just going to be a few pots, pans and beggars hanging around some cobbles. □What are the challenges that Matthew and Diana face in season

two and how their relationship develops?

In season one, Diana was a bit of a victim of circumstance. In season two, she's a lot smarter and as a historian, she thrives going back in time. Diana also steps up in the relationship, looking after Matthew mentally because he starts to lose himself. It becomes a proper marriage based on equality.

□Can you explain how Diana is beginning to harness her magic in this season and what she has to go through?

Season two is a journey.

Through the tests they complete in season one, we realise that Diana has all the markers, which is very rare. Most of her magic has been quite fantastical, but she hasn't been able to control it. We eventually learn that this is because she's spellbound. Season two follows her schooling by great witches and realising that she is a weaver.

□Who is Kit Marlowe and why is he important to Matthew?

Kit was a famous playwright in the real world and is still a famous one in the show. He was accused of being a spy and ends up getting stabbed. In the book, he also works for Lord Burghley and is part of a ring of undercover agents and The School of Night. He is Matthew's greatest and closest friend. It goes pear shape because the Matthew of the past hated witches and so Kit, who is a daemon, is wary when he comes back and declares that he has married one. Because of the ups and downs of their relationship and trust issues, he's a great foil for season two. These themes are very apparent in Elizabethan society, a time of skulduggery, theft, murder and darkness.

□What's it like working with Tom Hughes?

It's always been a pleasure. Tom and I have worked together quite a few times now. He's great and northern and looks at things differently. He gives Kit a real sense of other worldliness that is difficult to put one's finger on, but it really is quite mesmerising.

□Explain Philippe and Matthew's relationship?

The relationship between Philippe and Matthew is a tricky one. It was Ysabeau who sired Matthew many moons ago, but Philippe fathered him in a very masculine way. There's a big secret for the audience in season two around what Matthew's history is with Philippe. To talk about their relationship without mentioning the secret is like a lot of father and son relationships nowadays. You hope there's love there but often that love is unclear. That's what parenting is like, but there is a massive love

between them and it's all very moving.

□Philippe's acceptance of Matthew and Diana's relationship is important, what do you think?

Philippe's acceptance of Diana is huge as not only is he from 1590, he also hates witches. It's very bemusing for him. After a while, he does start to twig that this is not the time they're from as he does not recognise Matthew as the son he once knew. It's hugely important in the story that he takes to Diana.

□What does the addition of historical characters bring to the show?

They add that extra layer of history, which is rather wonderful. It gives it great historical context. I think the way Barbara (Marten) plays Elizabeth I in this is fantastic. She plays her without vanity and is slightly in love with Matthew. Probably my favourite portrayal of Elizabeth — up there with (Cate) Blanchett.

□What's it been like having Teresa back?

The show doesn't work without her. Teresa is the shows beating heart. She's my best bud on this and we spend all our time together. If anything happened to her and they said they're going to bring another actor in, it wouldn't work! It's one big travelling caravan of Australian/American love. She came back with the fire to push her character and it's made a big difference.

□Season one is set in modern day and season two is largely a period piece, what's it like to take the show from one period to another?

Everything takes a fraction longer as inaccuracies are not as forgivable. Any period drama does, be it by the costume or the hair. Working on James North's sets transports you as an actor. If those elements weren't nailed, I wouldn't have been able to slip into character as easily. Apart from that, you're also just trying to get your lines and movement right.

(Season two is streaming on SonyLIV.)

