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MOM IS A POSITIVE PERSON: ALAYA 10 VIVACITY



CAPSULE

5 DIE IN FIRECRACKER FACTORY BLAST

Bijnor: Five workers were charred to death after an explosion at a firecracker factory at a village here on Thursday, police said. Police have arrested the operator of the unit, identified as Yusuf. The unit was being run from a house located in an isolated area at Bakshiwala village. Superintendent of Police Dharamvir Singh said the explosion took place after gunpowder caught fire.

DEEP: WAS EXERCISING MY RIGHT AT RED FORT

New Delhi: Actor-activist Deep Sidhu, arrested in connection with the Red Fort violence on the Republic Day, Thursday told a Delhi court that he did not instigate anyone to cause violence and was only exercising his "fundamental right" to protest.

MYANMAR ENVOY LOCKED OUT OF UK EMBASSY

London: The UK Government on Thursday condemned the "bullying actions" of the Myanmar military junta after the country's ambassador, Kyaw Zwar Minn, was refused entry to his own embassy in London and had to spend the night in his car.

SC COLLEGIUM LED BY CJI HOLDS MEETING

New Delhi: The Supreme Court collegium headed by Chief Justice of India SA Bobde on Thursday held its scheduled meeting to discuss possible candidates for appointment of judges in higher judiciary, but it remained inconclusive, sources said.

Test-trace-jab, not lockdown, solution: PM

Covid cases breach 1.31L mark, 802 deaths

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday virtually ruled out imposition of countrywide lockdown despite surging Covid-19 cases and decisions of several States to impose severe restriction on movement of people and opening of business and educational establishments.



People queue up to give samples for RT-PCR Covid-19 test at Turbhe Railway Station in Navi Mumbai on Thursday

The PM chose to put up a brave face even as Covid-19 daily count went past 1.31 lakh cases on Thursday and the day's fatalities stood at 802.

"We need to focus on testing first, we need to be changed and not to take casually by following Covid protocols. We should not take need of testing lightly. Earlier we did not have the infrastructure to deal with the pandemic and we had to use lockdown as a tool...but today we do not need a lockdown. Instead of calling it a night curfew we should call it 'Corona Curfew,' Modi said while chairing a virtual meeting of Chief Ministers of all States to review the Covid-19 situation and status of vaccination.

Micro containment zones in high Covid-19 burden areas, proper testing, tracing and vaccination can control the rising Covid-19 crisis, the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister requested the States for 100 per cent vaccination of 45 plus pop-

ulation in the high focus districts and asked the States to hold Tika Utsav (vaccination festival) from April 11 to April 14.

"We should aim for 100 per cent vaccination of people above 45 years. April 11 is Jyotiba Phule ji's birth anniversary and April 14 is Baba Saheb's birth anniversary, in the meantime let us all celebrate 'Tika Utsav.' Our target should be to test at least 30 contacts in 72 hours per Covid positive patient. The borders of containment zones should be particular and not vague. I want to appeal to all the CMs to go for proactive testing so that we can track asymptomatic patients," he said.

The PM said number of tests being done on daily basis needs to be significantly increased with the aim to reduce positivity to 5 per cent or less, with focused and targeted testing in containment zones and areas where clusters of cases are being reported.

Meanwhile, India's daily caseload reached the 1,31,787 on Thursday, however, Maharashtra's number came down marginally from 59,900 on Wednesday to 56,286 new cases on Thursday. The State recorded 376 fatalities during the last 24 hours.

However, the situation seemed to sharply deteriorate in Uttar Pradesh (8,474 new cases), Delhi (7,437), Chhattisgarh (10,652), Karnataka (6,570) and Madhya Pradesh (4,324 cases).

Continued on Page 2

Delhi registers 7,437 cases, 24 deaths in 24 hrs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded 7,437 fresh Covid-19 cases on Thursday, the highest single-day surge this year, while 24 more people died due to the coronavirus infection, taking the death toll to 11,157, according to the city's Health Department.

The positivity rate mounted to 8.1 per cent from 6.1 per cent the previous day, as the massive spike in cases witnessed over the past few weeks continues. This is also the first time that over 7,000 cases have been reported in a day this year.

WHO rejects SI's plea to extend shelf life of Covishield jabs

New Delhi: The WHO has rejected Serum Institute of India's proposal seeking extension of the shelf life of Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine, Covishield, from six to nine months, citing insufficient data, sources said.

New Zealand halts travel from India for 2 weeks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid surge of Covid-19 cases, New Zealand has banned entry for all travellers from India, including its citizens, from 4pm on April 11 till April 28.

The announcement by New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern came soon after the country reported 23 new positive cases at its border. Among these, 17 were from India. "We are temporarily suspending entry into New Zealand for travellers from India," Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said in a news conference in Auckland.

Health teams would use the time until April 28 to try and plan safer ways to accept travellers from India. But there were no guarantees officials would come up with a better solution, she said.

Ardern said she could not answer whether the halt on arrivals from India would be longer than April 28. "We're seeing surges in other places, but we just don't have the higher number of travellers from those places," Ardern said.

Covid shots out of stock? Vardhan says 'no shortage'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan slammed a few States for playing 'vax politics' and vaccine mismanagement, reports of shortage of vaccine poured in from some parts of the country where people had to be turned away.

So far, over nine crore vaccine doses have been administered across the country, said the Minister even as he ruled out any shortage of the jabs. However, States such as Maharashtra, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have complained of supply deficit amid the second wave of the pandemic.

Stating that there was no shortage of jabs in the country, Harsh Vardhan said 9.1 crore vaccine doses have been utilised, while 2.4 crore are in stock and 1.9 crore vaccines are in the pipeline.

"Hue and cry by certain States about partnership by the Union Government is just a farce, an attempt to hide their



A security officer stands at a vaccination centre, deserted due to the shortage of Covid-19 vaccine, in Mumbai on Thursday

own incompetence. Maharashtra and Rajasthan are 2 of the top 3 States based on allocation of Covid-19 vaccine doses. Both are non-BJP-governed States," Vardhan said in a tweet.

These States have now sent the SOS to the Centre seeking sufficient jabs to inoculate the eligible population.

"Vaccination centres have to close early due to a shortage of supplies," Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope said adding that stocks would run out in three days after the daily injection of over 4,50,000 doses.

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Not intimidated by EC notice: Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Hours after the Election Commission served a show-cause notice on Mamata Banerjee for making alleged communal statements, a defiant Bengal Chief Minister on Thursday said she would not be intimidated by such notices... "let them file tens of such letters on me."

Mamata, who was addressing a rally at Domjur in Howrah, accused the Election Commission of playing a partisan role, saying, "Why don't they serve notices on Narendra Modi, who makes provocative Hindu-Muslim statements every day? Why don't they send letters to the BJP leaders in Nandigram who openly call the local Muslim people Pakistanis in order to divide the electorate? Let them send 10 notices to me. I don't care. My answer to them will remain the same."

Calling upon the people to unite, she said, "I am asking the people to unite so that there is no division of votes among



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee addresses an election rally in support of Ratna Chatterjee and Partha Chatterjee in Kolkata on Thursday

Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians... I ask everyone not to give a single vote to the BJP."

The Commission had earlier issued a notice on Mamata asking her to reply within 48 hours as to why in a rally on April 3 she asked the Muslims to unite asking them not to let their votes get split. She had also allegedly told in a rally that "if the BJP takes all the Hindu votes and CPI(M)-Congress-ISK all the Muslim votes then

what will I get?" The BJP had also complained to the Commission against Mamata's provocative speeches against the Central forces.

The EC is yet to take a decision on that. Mamata had on Tuesday said told the TMC supporters from a rally to "gherao the Central forces if they try to stop you from voting."

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Didi's nephew family earned from illegal coal mining, says ED

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has alleged West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's nephew and TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee's family benefitted from illicit funds obtained from illegal coal mining in the State under a "deep system" of political patronage driven by a "well-oiled" machinery.

The agency made these claims before a special court on Wednesday in a remand note seeking enhanced custody of West Bengal police officer Ashok Kumar Mishra, the Inspector in charge of Bankura police station.

The police officer and TMC youth wing leader Vinay Mishra's brother Vikas Mishra were arrested by the ED in a case which has local trader Anup Majhi, alias Lala, as the prime accused in the case of multi-crore illegal coal mining/pilferage scam.

Continued on Page 2

The ED arrested the inspector on April 3 and the court sent him to custody till Wednesday and later extended his ED remand till April 12.

The ED case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) was filed after taking cognisance of a November, 2020, FIR of the CBI alleging a multi-crore coal pilferage scam related to the Eastern Coalfields Ltd mines in Kunustoria and Kajora areas in and around Asansol district of West Bengal.

In its remand note, the ED alleged that certain illegal mining instances were flourishing in the State under the "patronage" of the political party in power.

The agency connected the policeman to Majhi, Vinay and Vikas Mishra, going up all the way to Banerjee's family.

The TMC MP from Diamond Harbour constituency embroiled in the case has denied these allegations.

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Rafale middleman leaked Def info for pay-off, says Mediapart

French news portal alleges middleman and his aides got several million euros

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Stoking another controversy regarding the Rafale fighter jet deal, the French news portal Mediapart has now claimed Indian businessman Sushen Gupta was paid millions of Euros by Dassault. In turn, Gupta, who acted as a middleman, provided them with confidential information from the Indian Defence Ministry about the ongoing negotiations regarding the deal.

This revelation came days after the same news portal said Gupta was paid one million Euros as a gift after the Rafale deal was inked in 2016. The Government-to-Government deal between India and France is worth over 7.8 billion Euros for 36 Rafale jets.

Incidentally, at least 12 jets have already joined the IAF in the last few months at its



Ambala airbase. Ten more Rafales will land in the next two months. The IAF plans to have two squadrons (one squadron has 18 jets) of Rafale. While one is based at Ambala, the other one is coming up in Hashimara in the east. All the 36 jets will be part of the IAF by 2022.

The latest French media reports on Thursday said Gupta and his intermediaries received "several million Euros" from Dassault and its affiliates. Dassault is the French aerospace conglomerate and manufactures Rafale jet.

In turn, Gupta and his intermediaries "leaked confidential information", including crucial documents of the Indian Defence Ministry about the Indian negotiating team's positions and arguments, it was likely to put forward during the negotiations.

Documents accessed by the French media portal suggest that Gupta allegedly acted as a middleman for Dassault Aviation and its industrial partner Thales, for several years, starting early 2000s. Thales is a Paris-based defence-electronics company in which Dassault and the French Government are stakeholders.

According to the Mediapart report, Thales "paid Sushen Gupta several million Euros in secret commissions to offshore accounts and shell companies, using inflated invoices for software consulting."

Sushen Gupta was reportedly hired by the French side at the beginning of the 2000s, when India started looking to procure 126 Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircrafts (MMRCA). His contract reportedly lasted until the signing of the final agreement between India and France.

Incidentally, Gupta was also accused of laundering money in another controversial deal Agusta Westland for VVIP helicopters. He was arrested in 2019 and released on bail.

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Survey Kashi-Gyanwapi disputed premises: Varanasi court to ASI

Sunni Waqf to challenge order

PNS ■ VARANASI/LUCKNOW

A Varanasi court on Thursday ordered an archaeological survey of the disputed premises, claimed both by the Kashi Vishwanath temple and the Gyanwapi mosque in the holy city.

The order was given by a senior division civil court on a plea pending before it since 2019, petitioner counsel Vijay Shankar Rastogi said.

Meanwhile, Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board has announced to challenge the court order. Board chairman

Zufar Ahmad Faruqi in a statement said, "Our understanding is clear that this case is barred by the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991... Even otherwise, we can say as per legal advice that the order of survey is questionable because technical evidence can only supplement certain foundational facts. No evidence has been produced before the court that suggests that there was a prior existing temple at the site of the mosque," he added.

In his order, a senior civil judge of the fast track court asked the UP Government to get examined the disputed premises by a five-member team of the Archaeological Survey of India at its expense.

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Top court rejects pleas of Maha Govt, Deshmukh against CBI probe order

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a setback to Uddhav Thackeray-led-Maharashtra Government and its former Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, the Supreme Court on Thursday dismissed their pleas challenging the Bombay High Court order directing a CBI probe into allegations of corruption and misconduct levelled against him by former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh.

Terming it as a "matter of public confidence", a Bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Hemant Gupta said, "Dehors the niceties of an elaborate order passed by the High Court, we are of the view that the nature of allegations, the personas involved and the seri-

ousness of the allegations do require an independent agency to enquire into the matter."

The Bench, while refusing to interfere with the High Court order of April 5, said "We may also add that what has been directed is only a preliminary enquiry albeit by an independent agency."

It rejected the submission of senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for the Maharashtra Government, that merely because the Home Minister has resigned after the impugned order would be a factor not to direct enquiry by an independent agency.

It observed that the HC order directing the CBI probe is "not in violation of federal structure."

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Maoists release abducted jawan

ANKIT MISHRA ■ BIJAPUR

After spending five days in Maoist captivity in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region, abducted CRPF trooper Rakeshwar Singh Manhas was released on Thursday at a jungle patch at a crowded 'jan adalat' here.

Manhas, a commando of CRPF's CoBRA (Combined Battalion for Resolute Action), was held hostage by Maoists on April 3 after a deadly Naxalite ambush in Bijapur district that left 22 security personnel dead.

"On April 6 the CPI (Maoist) claimed that the missing CoBRA jawan was in their custody. Since then, efforts were on to bring him back safely," Inspector General of Police (Bastar) Sundarraj P said in a Press release.

He confirmed that around



CoBRA commando Rakeshwar Singh Manhas with social activists while being released by Naxals at a Maoist hideout, in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh on Thursday

4:30 pm Manhas returned back safely to the Tarrem police station here along with the interlocutors who had gone to the jungle along with a team of local journalists to secure his release.

He was admitted to the Basaguda field hospital for intensive medical checkup.

Detained Rohingyas can't be deported sans due process, rules SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday made it clear that Rohingyas, who have been detained in Jammu, shall not be deported to Myanmar unless the procedure prescribed for such deportation is followed by the authorities.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde said it is true that rights guaranteed under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution are available to all the persons who may or may not be citizens but the right not to be deported, is "ancillary or concomitant" to the right to reside or settle in any part of India.

While Article 14 deals with equality before law, Article 21 deals with protection of life and personal liberty.

The Bench, also comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, passed the order on an application seeking release of detained Rohingya refugees and also a direction to the Centre not to deport those who have been detained in the sub-jail in Jammu.

The SC noted two serious allegations have been made in the Centre's reply in the matter which relates to threat to internal security and that agents and touts are providing a safe passage into India for illegal immigrants due to the porous nature of landed borders.

The Bench also noted the Centre's contention that a similar application challenging the deportation of Rohingyas from Assam was dismissed by the top court in October 2018.

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RED FORT VIOLENCE

Was exercising my 'fundamental right' to protest: Sandhu to court

New Delhi: Actor-activist Deep Sandhu, arrested in connection with the Red Fort violence on the Republic Day, Thursday told a Delhi court that he did not instigate anyone to cause violence and was only exercising his "fundamental right" to protest.

Sandhu was arrested on February 9 in connection with the Red Fort violence on the Republic Day during farmers' tractor parade against the Centre's three new agri laws.

His counsel told Special Judge Neelofer Abida Perveen

that Sidhu was rather helping police to pacify the crowd and asking people to come down from the Red Fort.

"There's no question of conspiracy. I (Sandhu) am a popular face, that's why this case. I was at a wrong place at a wrong time. I was there for peaceful protest.

"Right to protest is a fundamental right, that's why I was there. Neither I indulged in violence, nor did I urge anyone to indulge in the violence," Sidhu's counsel said.

The counsel told the court that the protest was called by

various farmers' union and that he did not urge anyone to go to the Red Fort.

"I (accused) am not a member of any farmers' union. No call was given by me for any tractor rally or to go to Red Fort. There is no evidence that I mobilised people.

"I came much later to the Red Fort. I was not present at any of the sites to break the barricade," the counsel for the accused claimed.

The counsel claimed that the accused reached Red Fort only at 12 noon.

"I was at a 'dhaba' at

Murthal till around 12 PM, and I reached at the Red Fort only at 2:05 PM. Huge crowd had already gathered at the Red Fort when I reached there.

"Entire thing - mobile location, route etc. - have been verified. I have not indulged in a single act of violence. I left before the violence broke out," he claimed.

The counsel told the court that Sidhu's implication was a classic case of trial by media and added that the accused left before the violence started.

He also said that the accused should be granted the

relief on the ground of parity, since several other accused in the case has already been granted bail.

"I am the only bread earner in the family," he said.

Prosecution opposed the bail application, alleging that the accused instigated others for violence.

"Hundreds of policemen were injured. Sword, sticks etc. were used. Protesters tried to crush policemen under tractors. All this started only after hoisting of 'Nishan Sahib' at the Red Fort, for which the accused had instigated. It was

only to defame the country in the entire world that the accused persons went to Red Fort. In the name to fundamental rights they created violence," the police said.

The court, however, asked the police to produce the evidence to show that the accused instigated the mob.

The court adjourned the matter for April 12 for further arguments and directed both the parties to file various documents, including transcripts of the videos cited by Delhi police as evidence.

The police had announced

a cash reward of Rs one lakh for information leading to Sidhu's arrest.

After the January 26 violence that had left over 500 security personnel injured and one protester dead, Sidhu was posting videos on social media, police said.

"Deep Sidhu was in contact with a woman friend who lives in California. He used to make videos and send it to her, and she used to upload them on his Facebook account," it said.

On January 26, thousands of protesting farmers who

reached ITO from the Ghazipur border clashed with police, the agency claimed in its FIR registered in connection with the Red Fort violence, adding that many of them driving tractors reached the Red Fort and entered the monument, where a religious flag was also hoisted.

In the FIR, police said two magazines with 20 live cartridges were snatched from two constables by protesters who also damaged vehicles and robbed anti-riot gear.

PTI

Covid shots...

From Page 1

The Odisha Government too echoed similar fears stating that it has supplies left only for two more days and as many as 700 of its vaccination centres had to be shut down due to the scarcity of jabs. In a letter to Harsh Vardhan, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said that as of April 7, Odisha had a stock of 5.34 lakh doses of Covishield - the vaccine produced by the Serum Institute of India - in its inventory.

"With this stock, we will be able to continue vaccination for the next two days," Patnaik said. "By 9th April, there will be stock-out of Covishield vaccine in the entire State. We are vaccinating about 2.5 lakh persons daily."

"Due to shortage of vaccine, we have had to close nearly 700 vaccination centres in the State (out of over 1400 functional sites, only 755 could be made active today [Wednesday])."

A few private hospitals in Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad district have not been vaccinating people since Monday. The hospitals have put up notices informing people that they have run out of doses.

"We don't have vaccine stock since Monday," Dr Alok Gupta, the director of Lyf Hospital in Indirapuram said, according to a news channel.

The Government data showed that Maharashtra got 7.5 lakh doses, Uttar Pradesh 48 lakh, Madhya Pradesh 40 lakh, Gujarat 30 lakh and Haryana 24 lakh doses.

However, while the Centre

and States are at the loggerheads on the vaccine availability, the US-based Duke University's Global Health Innovation Centre has said India has been the largest buyer of Covid jabs in the world with pre-booking of 1.6 billion doses.

The global report said that India had pre-ordered 500 million doses of the Oxford University-AstraZeneca vaccine, one billion from the US company Novavax (to be made at the Serum Institute of India in Pune) and 100 million doses of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine.

According to the global analysis, India was the top Covid-19 vaccine buyer, followed by the European Union (EU) and the US. "Countries with manufacturing capacity, such as India and Brazil, have been successful in negotiating large advance market commitments with leading vaccine candidates as part of the manufacturing agreements," the Duke researchers said in their analysis. They also pointed out that a populous country like India cannot depend on just two local vaccine manufacturers and have to procure and develop pre-booked vaccines in order to vaccinate more and more people across age groups.

India will need to give 36.5 lakh shots per day until the end of July, in order to achieve the target of vaccinating 25 crore people with two doses.

The SII is aiming to expand its capacity by April-end or early May by another 4-5 crore doses. At present, it can produce more than 7 crore doses a month.

Didi's nephew...

From Page 1

The ED said documents seized from Majhi and Singh showed the former had "maintained detailed coded records in the form of payments made to various entities from the proceeds of crime generated from illegal coal mining".

The agency also claimed that an amount to the tune of Rs 1,352 crore has been illegally generated by Majhi through illegal coal mining in a span of less than two years.

"Investigation also revealed a system of political patronage and well-oiled network by which the system was subverted to carry out these illegal activities in a brazen manner," it said. Quoting the recorded statement of an unidentified "close associate" of Majhi, the ED said the alleged kingpin of this coal pilferage scam, Majhi did his "illegal coal mining business smoothly by managing senior functionaries of the political party of West Bengal though Inspector Mishra."



Prime Minister Narendra Modi receives the second dose of Covid vaccine, at AIIMS in New Delhi on Thursday

Detained...

From Page 1

"Therefore, it is not possible to grant the interim relief prayed for. However, it is made clear to the Rohingyas in Jammu, on whose behalf the present application is filed, shall not be deported unless the procedure prescribed for such deportation is followed. Interlocutory application is disposed of accordingly," the bench said in its order.

"It is also true that the

rights guaranteed under Articles 14 and 21 are available to all persons who may or may not be citizens. But the right not to be deported, is ancillary or concomitant to the right to reside or settle in any part of the territory of India guaranteed under Article 19(1)(e), it said.

The bench also noted there is no denial of the fact that India is not a signatory to the refugee convention.

"Therefore, serious objections are raised, whether Article 51(c) of the Constitution can be

individual capacity even though the State Government was represented and he was a Minister at that time.

"For the aforesaid reasons, we are not inclined to interfere with the impugned order(s). The special leave petitions are dismissed," the bench said.

At the outset, the bench told Sibal that it is only a preliminary enquiry and nothing is wrong in it when serious allegations are made by a senior officer against a senior minister.

Sibal contended that oral allegations were made against him without any substance and had no evidentiary value but a CBI probe was ordered without hearing him.

The bench said that two persons involved in the case were the police commissioner and the home minister and they were working together till they fell apart.

Sibal argued that "court has to stay on guard while ordering investigation against a constitutional authority," and there has to be some material on which allegations are made but in this case, it is only hearsay.

Top court...

From Page 1

It also rejected the contention of senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Deshmukh, that even for directing a preliminary enquiry, he is mandatorily entitled to be heard in his

Night curfew in Delhi: Nearly 87K of over 1.19L applications for e-passes rejected

New Delhi: District authorities in Delhi have received over 1.19 lakh applications for e-passes that allow people to travel during night curfew hours and nearly 87,000 of them have been rejected, officials said on Thursday.

Most applications were rejected either because the applicants did not fall in exempted categories or due to wrong entries made by them, they said. The number of pending applications has come down to 20,055 from over 30,000 on Wednesday, official data showed.

A total of 1,19,369 applications were received and only 12,068 were approved. As many as 86,909 applications were rejected, the data showed.

The Delhi government on Tuesday imposed seven hours of night curfew, from 10 PM to

5 AM, with immediate effect for this entire month as an emergency measure for the "wellbeing and safety" of people in view of rising COVID-19 cases in the city.

People require a soft or hard copy of an e-pass to travel during curfew hours. The e-pass can be obtained from the Delhi government website -- www.Delhi.Gov.In.

The highest number of applications were received in New Delhi district at 20,267, followed by 19,646 in South West and 13,025 in West.

New Delhi and South districts saw over 16,000 applications being rejected, the highest across districts.

As many as 9,812 applications were rejected in South West district and 9,706 in West Delhi.

PTI

Test-trace-jab...

From Page 1

With cases on the rise, several States imposed fresh restrictions on the movement of people - from weekend lockdowns to night curfews - have been brought back in several parts of the country.

The UP Government on Thursday announced night curfew in Gautam Budh Nagar and Ghaziabad from 10 pm to 5 am till April 17 while the Madhya Pradesh Government imposed a night curfew in all "urban areas" of the State. The Tamil Nadu Government has barred all religious events and festival-gatherings till further orders.

According to the Union Health Ministry, eight States (Maharashtra, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, and Gujarat) account for 84.44 per cent of the new deaths related to coronavirus.

Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Uttar Pradesh account for 75 per cent of total active cases in the country.

The Chhattisgarh Government has announced a lockdown in Raipur district with effect from April 9 to 19. Fearing another lockdown, many migrant workers and their families have started proceeding to their hometowns.

According to the orders issued by the Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Nagar District Magistrates, the Government offices will operate for five days a week for the next three months. "The movement of essential goods or commodities and medical and other essential services, however, will be exempted from the night curfew restrictions. All Government and private educational institutes (except medical, paramedical and nursing colleges), including coaching centres, shall be barred from

holding physical classes till April 17 in the two districts. All exams, including practicals, however, shall be held according to the schedule and are exempted from this order.

Besides, the UP Government has imposed similar restrictions in Lucknow, Prayagraj, Kanpur and Varanasi from 9 pm to 6 am from April 8 to 16. Government and semi-Government personnel and those with essential services in the private sector will be kept out of it.

The Chandigarh administration has announced a night curfew in the city from 10 pm to 5 am until further notice. Punjab has declared a series of restrictions including night curfew across the whole State - up from the earlier 12 districts - from 9 pm to 5 am. All political, social, cultural or sports gatherings have been banned for now. The MP Government also announced a lockdown in urban areas of all districts on every Sunday till further orders.

The Delhi Government has imposed a seven-hour night curfew from 10 pm to 5 am, till April 30 to curb the spread of coronavirus cases in

the national Capital. People will require a soft or hard copy of the e-pass to travel during curfew hours. The e-pass can be obtained from the Delhi Government's website www.delhi.gov.in. Punjab has extended night curfew across the State till April 30.

The Maharashtra Government has imposed a night curfew from 8 pm to 7 am till April 30. There will also be a weekend lockdown all through the month. All shops, malls and markets, except those selling groceries, medicines and vegetables, will remain closed till April 30. Cinemas, multiplexes, theatres, video parlours, clubs, swimming pools, sports complexes, auditoriums, water parks, salons, beauty parlours and spas will remain shut during the period.

Restaurants and bars will also remain closed except those that are part of a hotel but round-the-clock takeaways have been allowed.

In Gujarat, the Rupani Government has imposed a curfew from 8 pm to 6 am in 20 cities of the State. The restrictions were earlier in force from 9 pm to 6 am in

Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara and Rajkot cities in Gujarat. The cities where the curfew is being imposed are Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot, Jamnagar, Bhavnagar, Junagadh, Gandhinagar, Anand, Nadiad, Mehsana, Morbi, Dahod, Patan, Godhra, Bhuj, Gandhidham, Bharuch, Surendranagar and Amreli. The Government has also banned political or social gatherings till April 30 and has further reduced the number of guests at a marriage ceremony to 100. Government offices will remain closed every Saturday and Sunday in April.

Odisha has extended the night curfew from 10 pm to 5 am in 10 districts which include Sundergarh, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Balangir, Nuapada, Kalahandi, Malkangiri, Koraput and Nabarangpur.

The Ashok Gehlot Government in Rajasthan has also imposed a night curfew and ordered the closure of multiplexes, gymnasiums till April 19.

The night curfew will remain in force from 8 pm to 6 am.

Not intimidated...

From Page 1

She said, "There are reports that the CPF is stopping out voters from voting and influencing the rest of the people to vote for the BJP...this they are doing at the instance of Home Minister Amit Shah... But if they stop you from voting I ask the women to gherao the CPF and the men to go and cast their votes... don't let your votes go waste."

On Thursday too she asked the voters to "register FIR against the Central forces if they intimidate you".

Meanwhile, 16 people were arrested in connection with Wednesday's attack on Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh's convoy at Sitalkuchi in Coochbehar district of North Bengal.

Ghosh got minor injuries and his vehicle was shattered when about a hundred strong TMC men returning from the Chief Minister's rally allegedly attacked the BJP leaders including him with bombs, rods and bricks, Ghosh had earlier complained.

for disbursement of the commissions via front companies registered in Mauritius.

An internal Dassault document published by the French portal shows that the Dassault placed 2 million Euros-worth of orders with IDS in 2004, and planned to place 4.6 million more. "Between 2002 and 2005, IDS transferred 900,000 Euros to Interstellar", Mediapart reported.

Another Singapore-based company Interdev was used to launder money, which according to the report, was floated as a "system integrator for Dassault in Asia", but later identified by Mediapart as a shell company run by "a straw man for the Guptas who is currently on the run in South Africa".

An account spreadsheet, allegedly belonging to Gupta, has been accessed by Mediapart. According to its report, Dassault has been designated with the code 'D' in the spreadsheet.

'D' reportedly paid 14.6 million Euros to Interdev in Singapore over the period 2004-2013, out of which Interdev transferred 2.6 million Euros to IDS, whereas 11.9 million Euros were transferred to Interstellar Mauritius.

of any matter involving them and such entities are represented in the court by what is known as their "next friend".

Rastogi said in his plea he had contended that the Gyanwapi Mosque in Varanasi is a part of Vishveshwar Temple and the court has ordered an ASI survey of the disputed area between the two shrines on this plea.

Faruqi said even in the Ayodhya judgment, the ASI excavation was ultimately of no use. The ASI did not find proof that the Babri Masjid was built upon demolition of a temple. He said the Supreme Court has specifically observed that there was no such evidence.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF
RURAL WORKS, ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR
(E-Mail address - cerw_bbsr@yahoo.com)

O-19
Lr.No.11016 // Dt. 05.04.2021

"e" Procurement Notice for bridge work in Odisha
(Online-01 (Bridge)2021-22 dt. 05.04.2021)

- Name of the work : Construction of bridge work (Balance work)
- Total No. of works : 01 (One) no
- Estimated cost : Rs 1636.00 lakh
- Class of contractor : Super Class
- Period of completion : 24 (Twenty Four) calendar months
- Other details :

Procurement Officer	Bid identification No	No. of bridge works	Availability of tender online for bidding
Chief Engineer (Buildings), Rural Works, Odisha, Bhubaneswar	Online-01(Bridge)/2021-22	01 (One) no	15.04.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 06.05.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.

Other details can be seen in the bidding documents, which is available in website www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Chief Engineer (Buildings), Rural Works, Odisha, Bhubaneswar

OIPR-25123/11/0001/12122

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE FOR ENGINEERING WORKS

Sr. No. (1) E-Tender No.: DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-02-21-22, Date: 05.04.2021. Work: Execution of TRR(P), TTR, Casual renewal of rail and Deep screening of Point and Crossing under the jurisdiction of ADEN/Central/Bilaspur. Tender Value: ₹ 1,85,30,677.00. EMD: 0.00. Completion Period: 12 Months.

Start Date of Submission of Tender: From 11.00 hours on 12.04.2021. Last Date of Submission of Tender: Upto 11.00 hours on 26.04.2021.

The complete information of above e-Tender Notice is available over websites: <http://www.ireps.gov.in> Bids other than e-bids shall not be accepted against above Tender.

Divisional Railway Manager(Engg) CPR/10/02 S.E.C.Rly., Bilaspur.

f South East Central Railway @secentral

Survey Kashi...

From Page 1

The court also stipulated that at least two members of the five-member team of eminent archaeologists should be from the minority community, Rastogi said.

He said the court gave this order on a plea filed by him as the "next friend" of the self-existing Lord Vishveshwar Kashi Vishwanath, in the deity's status as a "legal person" under a doctrine of legal fiction.

According to this legal doctrine, non-living entities including banks, corporations and even deities but not mosques are presumed to be living persons for adjudication

NEW OKHLA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida G.B. Nagar, (UP)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender are invited from eligible contractors/firm for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened / downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <http://etender.up.nic.in> Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/ amendments & corrigendum etc.

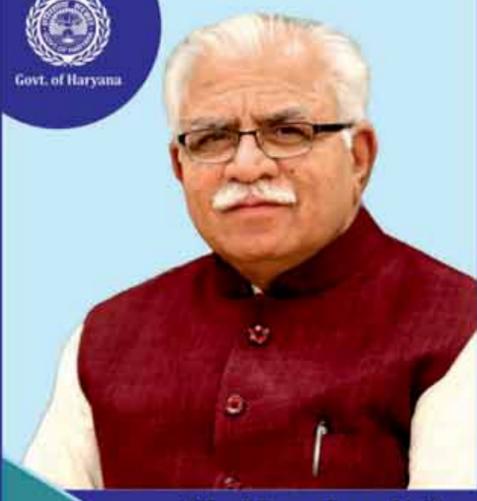
Re-Tender Work

(A) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 15.04.2021 upto 5.00 PM. shall be opened/ downloaded on dated 16.04.2021 at 11.00 AM.

S. No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1	182/GM/Sr. M./E/M-III/2020-21	M/o Street light on road between F & G block and Challera Sabzi Mandi, road between sector-44 & 96 road between sector-96 & 45, road between sector-44 & Amarपाली Group Housing Pocket upto water tank Sadarpur Colony, road between Kashi Ram Awasi Yojna & Amarपाली Group Housing, Noida.	51.87
2	183/GM/Sr. M./E/M-III/2020-21	M/o Park Light (Strengthening/Providing of Park Light pole instead of damage & broken pole in different block park sector-14) Noida.	32.67
3	130/CGM/Sr. M(E/M)-II/2020-21/ET	Supply and fixing of 2 Nos. Foaming Jet Fountain at A & E-Block, Sector-27, Noida.	35.54

Chife General Manager
Noida

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA



Sh. Manohar Lal
Chief Minister, Haryana

Set up Covid jab camps in communities: Govt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has appealed to the Centre to allow setting up vaccination camps in communities to speed up the process of inoculating jabs to everyone.

Health Minister Satyendar Jain said that the Delhi government is taking effective measures to contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We have made certain appeals to the Central Government regarding the vaccine. First, the vaccination should be allowed for everyone, at least adults. Second, is to allow vaccination camps in communities unlike the existing method of inoculating jabs only in healthcare facilities," he said.

Delhi reported 5,506 positive cases on Wednesday. The positivity rate was nearly above



six per cent while in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh, it has been around 25 and 18

per cent respectively. In many other states, the positivity rate is above 10 per cent.

He further added that this peak is witnessing more cases as opposed to earlier peaks in which the highest count stood at around 99,000 cases. The number of fatalities reported was reported at 20 on Wednesday and the case fatality ratio stood at 0.4 per cent. Jain mentioned that the last

peak was reported in November and the case fatality rate was 2-3 per cent. "The mortality ratio, as compared to the last peak, is lesser. The mortality ratio is lesser in this peak as compared to the last ones. This time, the coronavirus is spreading exponentially but the severity of the virus is less, and so are the fatalities," he said.

Responding to the queries

surrounding the vaccination drive in Delhi, Satyendar Jain further added, "The vaccination drive is going well in Delhi, we have received some vials. The vaccination stock is available for 4-5 days with us. We will be receiving it continuously as per our demand. I believe we should fight against the coronavirus altogether without politicizing the issue," he said.

Expedite allocation of flats for slum dwellers: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has directed the officials to expedite the allocation of flats being prepared under the 'Jahan Jhuggi, Wahin Makan' scheme for the families living in slums.

The Chief Minister held a review meeting on Thursday on the progress of the flats being constructed under the 'Jahan Jhuggi, Wahin Makan' scheme for families living in slums and directed the officials to expedite the allocation of flats prepared under the scheme.

During the meeting, Kejriwal said that any problems coming in the implementa-



tion of the scheme should be brought to his notice so that they can be effectively removed and families can be shifted to their new homes and can lead a life of dignity.

Cabinet Minister Satyendra

Jain and senior officials of Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) and Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC) were present in the review meeting.

Under the scheme launched by the Kejriwal Government aimed to give life of dignity to families living in slums and for the purpose 52,344 flats are being built in the first phase by the DUSIB and DSIIDC.

The DUSIB officials informed the chief minister that construction of 18,084 flats was underway. They also said that 34,260 flats are being built by DSIIDC and of these, 17,660 flats are ready while 16,600 flats are under construction.

Apart from this, the officials informed that 4833 flats have been allotted to the homeless families living in slums, while the process of allocation

of 7031 flats is underway and will be completed soon.

At least 89,400 flats are to be built in three phases for the homeless families living in slums under the scheme. These flats will be built on 237 acres of land in various areas of Delhi.

The Delhi government is constructing 52,344 flats in the first phase that will be allotted by 2022. In the second phase about 18,000 flats are to be built.

The remaining flats are to be built in the third phase on the land that will be vacant after shifting homeless families to the flats built in the first two phases. The target is to complete the three phases by 2025.

Fire breaks out at stationery godown in Dilshad Garden

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A fire broke out at a stationery godown in a four-storey building in the Dilshad Garden Industrial area in Delhi on Thursday morning. No casualty has been reported so far and electrical malfunctioning is suspected to be the cause of fire, said the Delhi Fire Service (DFS).

According to Atul Garg, the Director, DFS, the fire department was informed around 8.30 AM about the blaze following which 15 fire-tenders were rushed to the spot.

"Later, 13 more fire tenders were rushed to the spot and the blaze was doused by 2 pm," said Garg. "A fire had broken out in a stationery godown situated on the third floor of a four-storey building in Dilshad Garden Industrial area. No casualty has been reported so far," said Garg.

Police said the fire started at the place where the chemical used in the production of "cello" tape was stored. No one was inside the building when it began. However, people from neighbouring buildings were vacated as a precautionary measure, police said.

The fire, however, did not spread to other floors, police said.

Murder accused held for stealing photographer's cameras

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a 28-year-old man for allegedly decamping with cameras and other belongings of a photographer after hiring the equipment on the pretext of attending functions in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

The accused has been identified as Narendar Kumar, a resident of Madangir. Police said that the accused was an accused in a murder case in Delhi and got interim bail in the case during the COVID-19 pandemic. Police said that he had committed these offences while out of jail.

According to Atul Kumar Thakur, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, South district, an FIR was registered by one Satyam Verma in February in which he alleged that his two cameras and other articles were taken by a person.

"The complainant said that the accused contacted him through social media and booked his camera to attend a function at Jaipur in Rajasthan. He used fake SIM cards to communicate with the victim," said the DCP.

"The accused took the victim. He used a fake number plate on the hired vehicle. The accused took a halt at a restaurant near Dharuhera. When Verma was having lunch, the accused ran away from the spot and also took the cameras and other belongings of the victim," said the DCP.

Prurient teen stalks 20-yr-old woman on Insta, held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has apprehended a Class 12 student for allegedly stalking, threatening and harassing a 20-year-old woman on social media to have a sexual relationship with her.

According to R Sathiyasundaram, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Shahdara district, on the basis of technical inputs, the 17-year-old boy was identified by the police as a resident of Delhi's Krishna Nagar and the case was solved within five

hours of receiving the complaint.

"The matter came to notice on Wednesday when the woman, who is pursuing an air hostess course, approached police with her complaint alleging that she was being stalked by a person on Instagram, who sent her obscene content on the social media portal's messenger and insisted on having a sexual relationship with him," said the DCP.

"After examining the complaint, police found that the accused also sent her an email

using a spoofed email. The girl stated that she was being "extremely harassed" for three to four days by the alleged profile user," said the DCP.

"Based on the complaint, a case was registered under Indian Penal Code Sections 354(D) (stalking), 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation) and 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) at Jagat Puri police station," said the DCP.

"When police team analysed the email ID, it was found that the culprit was

using VPN (Virtual Private Network) for accessing the email account. After examining the collected information with the help of technical surveillance and cyber forensic tools, the identity of the alleged profile user was identified and subsequently he was apprehended," said the DCP.

A mobile phone used for operating the email ID and Instagram account was recovered, the police said, adding that the juvenile was produced before the Juvenile Justice Board.

Woman held for driving car that ran over senior citizen couple in Dwarka

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 28-year-old woman was arrested on Thursday for being behind the wheels of a car that allegedly mowed down an elderly couple in Dwarka four days ago, police said.

The accused has been identified as Nupur Choudhary, they said.

Shanti Swaroop Arora (79) and his wife Anjana Arora (62) were run over by the car on Sunday evening following which police arrested Deepakshi Choudhary (30), the elder sister of Nupur. She was apprehended on charges of rash driving and causing death by negligence. However, police on Wednesday said the victims' family had raised suspicion over who was actually driving the car.

CMO: 50K people to get Covid Jab in industrial area

Gurgaon: The IMT Industrial Association in association with the district Health Department organised a Covid-19 vaccination camp at the office of the association, it was inaugurated by Virender Yadav chief medical officer (CMO), Gurgaon.

Yadav said that the health facilities are targeting to vaccinate to about 50,000 people by running this camp continuously in the coming days in the industrial area.

On the first day, out of 120 people around 100 people were vaccinated. Some people also took the second dose of vaccination who took the first dose a long time ago. The people of the industrial sector looked quite happy seeing this vaccination drive because their time is being saved, they do not need to go far for the Covid Jab.

On this occasion, some Japanese people who work here also got Covid vaccination done.

Pawan Yadav President IMT Industrial Association said that the Health Department has been heavily

involved in the first testing and now the department is taking care of us and the workers of the industries in Covid Vaccination drive.

"There is no bigger thing than serving our people and we thank the health department and the Primary Health Care (PHC) workers for their support and we will run this camp for a long time. It will be an effort that all the workers in the IMT industry area should be covered with the Vaccination" Yadav said.

Apart from this, 78 people vaccinated at GurgaonOne sector 22 locality in Gurgaon.

Col Sanjay Sehgal, General Manager, Operations of Alpha Facility team said "We at AlphaCorp GurgaonOne sector 22 were able to get 78 people vaccinated out of 90 registrations, which included some very senior citizens also (above 75 years of age). The process went very smoothly and the residents were very thankful to the teams for the same. We will also plan the next camp for the 2nd dose as per govt approved timelines." SR

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE

SALUTES THE BRAVEHEARTS OF SARDAR POST ON VALOUR DAY 9th APRIL

THE MARTYRS OF SARDAR POST

Shamsher Singh	Kishore Singh	Gyan Singh	Ganpat Ram	Hari Ram	Sindhveer Pradhan	Kishan Singh

One of the most glorious chapters in the history of Indian Police was scripted by the Bravehearts of CRPF on 9th April 1965 at Sardar Post, Rann of Kutch, Gujarat when only 02 companies of CRPF repulsed the attack of a full-fledged Pakistani Brigade inflicting heavy casualties on them.

www.https://crpf.gov.in @crpfndia CRPF-INDIA crpf.india @CentralReservePolice

Decision to increase all kinds of Social Security Pensions to Rs. 2500 per month

Oldage honorarium

Divyang pension

Pension to widows and destitute women

Dwarf and Eunuch Pension

Information, Public Relations & Languages Department, Haryana

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COVID-19 PM wants tika utsav from April 11 to 14

Asks CMs to concentrate on testing, tracking, treating, more vaccination

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre is in no mood to bring back the spectre of lockdown on the nation despite the surge in the Covid-19 cases. Asserting that there was no need for lockdown, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday urged Chief Ministers to concentrate on "testing, tracking, treating and more vaccination" and suggested to conduct a vaccination festival 'tika utsav' between April 11 to April 14.

Modi asked the Chief Ministers strengthen their efforts for the next 2-3 weeks to check the spread of the virus on a "war-footing". He also said that States must focus on micro-containment zones and not on lockdown methods.

"I propose from 11th April till 14th April, we should make TIKA UTSAV. Aim for 100% vaccination of people above 45 years. April 11 is Jyotiba Phule ji's birth anniversary and April 14 is Baba Saheb's birth anniversary, in the meantime let us all celebrate 'Tika Utsav'. Our target should be to test at least 30 contacts in 72 hours



per covid positive patient. The borders of containment zones should be particular and not vague. I want to appeal to all the CMs to go for pro active testing so that we can track asymptomatic patients.

"We need to focus on testing first. We need to be changed and not to take casually by following covid protocols. We should not take need of testing lightly. Earlier we did not have the infrastructure to deal with the pandemic and we had to use lockdown as a tool...but today we do not need a lockdown. Instead of calling it a night curfew we should call it "Corona Curfew" said Modi.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray in the meeting demanded more supply of vaccines and approval from Centre for vac-

cine production facility in the state to meet the growing demands. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee did not attend the meeting. Union Home Minister Amit Shah was also present in the meeting.

The Prime Minister said that in many States administration was appearing lax. "There is a need to improve the governance system. I understand that because of the one-year battle, the system can experience tiredness there can be laxity, but we must tighten it for 2-3 weeks and strengthen the governance," he said.

Modi emphasised on "Test, Track, Treat", Covid-appropriate behavior and Covid management to contain the pandemic. Along with public participation, our hard-working doctors and health-care staff have helped a lot in handling the situation and are still doing it, he said. "With administration appearing lax in many states, rise in cases has increased problems. To stop the spread of the virus, there is a need to work on a war-footing," he said.

Jabs administered in India crosses 9-crore mark

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In its fight against the global pandemic, India has crossed a landmark milestone under the world's largest vaccination drive, which was launched on 16th January this year. The cumulative number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has crossed 9 crore on Thursday, said the Union Health Ministry.

Cumulatively, 9,01,98,673 vaccine doses have been administered through 13,77,304 sessions in the last 24 hours, as per the Ministry.

These include 89,68,151 HCWs who have taken the 1st dose and 54,18,084 HCWs who have taken the 2nd dose, 97,67,538 FLWs (1stdose), 44,11,609 FLWs (2nddose), 3,63,32,851 1st dose beneficiaries and 11,39,291 2nd dose beneficiaries more than 60 years old and 2,36,94,487 (1st dose) and 4,66,662 (2nd dose) beneficiaries aged 45 to 60 years.

However, cases too continue to surge, breaching 1.35 lakh mark on Thursday, the highest number of daily cases ever since the pandemic began. India is now the third-most affected globally, behind the United States and Brazil.

India's total Active Caseload has reached 9,10,319. It now comprises 7.04% of the country's total Positive Cases. A net incline of 66,846 cases recorded from the total active caseload in the last 24 hours.

Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala cumulatively account for 74.13 per cent of India's total active cases. Maharashtra alone accounts for 55.26% of the total active caseload of the country.

As many as 685 deaths were reported across the country over the past 24 hours, taking the total coronavirus death count in India to 16,68,62. While 59,258 people were discharged, the total active caseload in the country stands at 9,10,319. Around 1,18,51,393 people have recovered so far.

The previous high of 1,03,844 new cases in a single day was reported on 5 April. Total Covid-19 vaccination stands at 9,01,98,673.

Twelve States are displaying an upward trajectory in daily new cases. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) said that a total of 25,26,77,379 samples have been tested for Covid-19, upto 7 April. Of these, 12,37,781 samples were tested on Wednesday.

11th India-China Corps Commanders' meet today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



With the troops pulling back from the face-off site at the Pangong Tso (lake) in February without any hitch, the Corps Commanders of India and China on Friday will hold talks to firm up plan for disengagement from other flash-points at the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh.

It will be the 11th round of talks between the two commanders since the face-offs began at the LAC in May last year and lasted for more than ten months. The forthcoming talks are likely to commence at 10.30 am in Chushul sector of Ladakh, sources said here on Thursday.

The Commanders are expected to focus on disengagement of troops in remaining friction points, they said adding India will insist on early disengagement of troops in Gogra and Hot Springs besides pressing for resolution of pending issues in Depsang plains.

The first breakthrough in the ten-month long face-off at multiple sites at the LAC when the troops of India and China returned to their respective posts from the southern and northern banks of the Pangong Tso. The process lasted more

than ten days and the local level commanders from both the sides constantly monitored the situation.

Incidentally, the first face-off on May 5 also started from the Pangong Tso and troops from both the sides exchanged blows leaving some of them injured.

Soon, more than five points at the LAC in eastern Ladakh saw stand-offs and a bloody brawl on June 15 in the Galwan valley. Twenty Indian soldiers including the commanding officer were killed. More than 40 Chinese soldiers were also killed but the Chinese so far have not officially made the figure public.

This brawl saw India and China ramping up their military presence and at present more than one lakh troops are facing each other on the LAC

in Ladakh. Moreover, both the armies brought forward their long-range artillery guns and armour adding to tension.

As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed withdrawal of troops and weapons from the Pangong lake in line with an agreement on disengagement.

In the subsequent military talks on February 20, India insisted on resolution of outstanding issues including in Depsang, Hot Springs and Gogra.

India has been insisting that peace and tranquility along the border is essential for overall ties between the two countries.

Last week, India hoped that China will work with it to ensure disengagement of troops in remaining areas of eastern Ladakh at the earliest.

It said de-escalation of tension alone will lead to restoration of peace and tranquility in border areas and provide conditions for progress of bilateral ties.

In late March, Army Chief General M M Naravane said the threat to India has only 'abated' following the disengagement in Pangong lake areas but it has not gone away altogether.

Uddhav Govt must quit, 'extortion' total loot: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Charging the Maharashtra Government with running a "Collecting Money from Police (CMP) programme", the BJP on Thursday demanded an immediate resignation of the Uddhav Thackeray Government which is facing heat following the arrest of police officer Sachin Waze. Waze is accused of extorting money at the behest of Ministers in the State Government.

Addressing a Press conference here Union Minister, Prakash Javadekar, said one month back Chief Minister and Shiv Sena spokesperson Sanjay Raut were defending Waze so that he doesn't spill the beans but now since he has sent a letter to the High Court, the tone of Shiv Sena leaders have also changed and have now started attacking Waze.

Javadekar said Waze has accused former State Home Minister Anil Desmukh of seeking extortion of 3 lakh each from 1,650 Mumbai restaurants and bars and similarly another Minister Anil Parab of demanding 750 crore for the 'redevelopment' of Bhindi Bazar and also a protection money of two crore each from 50 contractors.

Javadekar said Gutka racket that should have been busted was again asked to pay



₹100 crore.

"It is a total loot nothing else...aur kuch hai hi nahin...", said Senior BJP leader demanding immediate resignation of the Thackeray-led government.

Javadekar, however, did not attack NCP leaders in the Shiv Sena-led dispensation.

He said Sena had betrayed the mandate given by the people in the assembly polls as the verdict was for the BJP. Sena and not for the current Sena-NCP-Congress government.

"Maharashtra's Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) is actually a 'Maha Vasooli Aghadi', said Javadekar.

"In the last 30 days, such turmoil is happening in Maharashtra, that it is hard to keep track. It is clear that Maharashtra's Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) is actually 'Maha Vasooli Aghadi'. Its common minimum program is to collect money through the police," Javadekar said.

He further said that the controversy "showed the character" of the ruling alliance in

the state. "Shiv Sena and its government need to answer several questions - What is your common minimum program? Apart from loot, what is going on under your governance? The entire Sachin Waze and Home Minister controversy shows the character of the ruling alliance in Maharashtra. They have no right to remain in power. I demand their resignation," said the BJP leader who also hails from Maharashtra.

Waze, a former Assistant Police Inspector in the Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) who was in charge of the Mansukh Hiran death case, is in NIA custody, for his alleged role and involvement in placing the explosives-laden vehicle outside the residence of Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani. Hiran, the owner of the vehicle that was found containing explosives materials outside Anitilia, was found dead on March 5 in Thane.

On the charge that the Centre was not supplying adequate anti-coronavirus vaccine does to the state, Javadekar said the "state has 23 lakh does daily as of now which needs to be distributed across the state...the state government is not doing it's job and blaming us", he said adding "they have already wasted 5 lakh vaccine does."

India, Lanka to work jointly against terrorist groups, share real time intelligence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Sri Lanka on Thursday agreed to work jointly against terrorist groups and fugitives wherever they are present and active and emphasised on sharing real-time intelligence.

In the first delegation-level virtual police chiefs' dialogue, India and Sri Lanka also decided to strengthen the existing cooperation mechanisms, as also designate "nodal points" for timely and effective handling of existing as well as emerging security challenges.

The Indian delegation was led by the Director of Intelligence Bureau Arvind Kumar and the Sri Lankan team was led by C D Wickramaratne, Inspector General of Police. Both sides agreed to work jointly against the terrorist entities including the global terrorist groups and fugitives, wherever they are present and active, said Union Home Ministry in a statement.

While appreciating each other's ongoing action against drug traffickers and other organised criminals exploiting the narrow sea route between the two countries, the two sides emphasised the need for sharing of real-time intelligence and feedback. The institution of police chiefs' dialogue, assisted by the members of other security agencies on both the sides, will further enhance the existing cooperation between the police forces of both countries, the statement said. The first delegation-level virtual meeting was held in an environment of positivity and trust, it added.

Ahmedabad-based firm booked for fraudulently availing credit facilities from Bank of Baroda

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has booked an Ahmedabad-based firm for fraudulently availing credit facilities from Bank of Baroda to the tune of ₹35 crores.

The firm, Hanuman Industries and its partners Bharat Sonpal and Manoj Sonpal besides advocate Udayan Trivedi have been named as accused in the case for criminal conspiracy, cheating and violations of Prevention of Corruption Act.

The firm availed credit facilities to the tune of ₹20 crore from Syndicate Bank before 2012 and the loan account was subsequently taken over by Bank of Baroda and the credit amount rose to ₹35 crore against the existing limit of ₹20 crore as the firm allegedly submitted false title clearance of the factory land in Amreli on the basis of false title clearance certificate.

The firm and the partners mortgaged the total land of the factory premises measuring 8,701 sq m by providing false title clearance and fraudulently availed credit facilities.

The firm deals in processing and export of agricultural products like sesame seeds, groundnuts and raw cotton.

PM promises fitting celebrations on Guru Tegh Bahadur birth anniversary

CHAIRS HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE MEET TO COMMEMORATE ANNIVERSARY

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that a number of activities will be organised to mark the 400th birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru and sought research and documentation on the social service carried out by the Sikhs across the world.

Chairing a meeting of a high-level committee to commemorate the anniversary through year-long events, Modi said these activities should be such that not only the life and teachings of Guru Tegh Bahadur but also of the entire Guru tradition is propagated the world over.

The committee was constituted by the Union Government on October 24, last year, to approve policies, plans and programmes related to the commemoration of the 400th birth anniversary of the Sikh guru along with supervision of the events.

It has 70 members with the Prime Minister as the chairman.

Lauding the social service rendered by the Sikh community and gurdwaras all over the world, Modi said proper research and documentation on this aspect of the Sikh tradition should be done.

The Sikh Guru tradition is a complete life philosophy in itself, he said.

Prime Minister said it is a privilege and good fortune of his government that it has got the opportunity to celebrate the 500th Prakash Purab (birth anniversary) of Guru Nanak Dev, the 400th Prakash Purab of Guru Tegh Bahadur and the 350th Prakash Purab of Guru Gobind Singh.

The occasion of the 400th Prakash Purab of Guru Tegh Bahadur is a spiritual privilege as well as a national duty, Modi said, sharing some of the guru's teachings.



IT IS IMPORTANT, HE SAID, TO MAKE THE YOUNGER GENERATION UNDERSTAND THESE LESSONS, AND ALSO NOTED THAT THROUGH DIGITAL MEANS, IT IS EASIER TO REACH OUT TO THE NEW GENERATION WORLD OVER TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE

It is important, he said, to make the younger generation understand these lessons, and also noted that through digital means, it is easier to reach out to the new generation world over to spread the message.

Former prime minister Manmohan Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh, Leader of Opposition, Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Punjab CM Amarinder Singh and Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot were among those who attended the meeting.

RE-HAB to curb man-elephant conflict across nation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

All States struggling to deal with the man-elephant conflict have something to cheer about. The Centre is likely to ask all of them to implement Khadi and Village Industries Commission's (KVIC) innovative Project RE-HAB, which has significantly reduced elephants' intrusion at several places in Karnataka's Kodagu district.

Minister of MSME Nitin Gadkari has hailed the KVIC Project and said it has yielded very encouraging results in preventing elephants' movement into human territories in Kodagu. He said Project RE-HAB has huge potential and it will be soon replicated in all States affected by elephant attacks like West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. He also emphasised on participation of the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment and Forest for effective implementation of the project across the country.

Project RE-HAB (Reducing Elephant - Human Attacks using Bees) was launched by KVIC Chairman Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena last month at four locations on the periphery of Nagarhole National Park in Kodagu dis-



Elephant freezes after confronting bee box in a forest in Kodagu in Karnataka

trict of Karnataka. It is a unique, cost-effective way of preventing elephant - human conflicts without causing any harm to the animals and the humans.

Under this project, bee boxes are used as a fence to prevent elephants from entering human habitation. Elephants fear that the honey bees might sting them in their eyes and the inner side of the trunk. Also, the buzz of the bees irritates the elephants the most.

Bee fences have reduced the movement of elephants at these points to a great extent, which has come as a big relief for the local farmers. Night vision cameras installed at these locations have not only shown a sharp decline in the movement of elephants in human territories but also cap-

tured amazing footage of elephants' behaviour on seeing bee boxes. A number of elephants are seen returning to the jungles fearing honey bees. Also, no destruction of crops or properties by elephants has been reported in these areas since the bee boxes have been placed on the passageways of elephants.

KVIC Chairman Saxena said implementing Project RE-HAB in other Indian states will save hundreds of human and elephant lives. "KVIC is set to replicate the project in other states too, where a large tribal and rural population is living under the constant threat of wild elephants. Project RE-HAB will have multi-pronged benefits. This will reduce human-elephant conflicts, increase farmers' income

through beekeeping, address climate change, regenerate forest cover and ensure food security for wild animals in their natural habitats," Saxena said.

States like West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Tamil Nadu and Kerala are major elephant - human conflict zones where KVIC is planning to implement Project RE-HAB in a phased manner.

Approximately 2400 people have been killed in conflicts with wild elephants across the country since 2015.

"Through this project, the locals residing in these areas will be trained for beekeeping and will be provided bee boxes which will be used to ward off the wild elephants. Honey produced from these boxes will increase their income and at the same time, honey bees will prevent elephants from entering into their areas," Saxena said. "Earlier state governments have taken several measures like digging up trenches, erecting rail fencing and spiked pillars and putting up electric fences and electric wire curtains to keep elephants away from human territories. Not only all these efforts failed but also ended up killing more elephants in the most tragic ways," he added.

Suvendu Adhikari issued notice for communal speech last month

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission has issued a notice to Suvendu Adhikari, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate from Nandigram in West Bengal, for alleged communal overtones in his speech made last month.

He has been asked to respond to the notice within 24 hours.

The notice said the poll panel received a complaint from Kavita Krishnan of CPI-ML Central Committee in which it was alleged that on March 29 Adhikari delivered a "hate speech" in Nandigram while addressing a public meeting.

The poll body referred to two provisions of the Model Code of Conduct which state that criticism of other political parties, when made, shall be confined to their policies and programmes, past record and work. Criticism of other parties or their workers based on unverified allegations or distortion shall be avoided.

Another provision states that there shall be no appeal to caste or communal feelings for securing votes.

The notice said the poll body has been found to be in violation of certain clauses of the model code. Adhikari is pitted against chief minister and Trinamool Congress leader Mamata Banerjee in Nandigram.

SC collegium led by CJI holds scheduled meeting

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) S A Bobde, on Thursday held its scheduled meeting to discuss possible candidates for appointment of judges in higher judiciary, but it remained inconclusive, sources said.

The brief collegium meeting was attended by all the five senior-most judges including Justice N V Ramana, who has been appointed as the next CJI by President Ram Nath Kovind on April 6, they said.

No decision could be taken, they said and rubbished certain news reports of purported differences among some collegium members.

As per the apex court's website, Justice Ramana did not hold the court on Thursday.

The top court has sanctioned strength of 34 judges and after the retirement of Justice Indu Malhotra recently, the vacancies have gone up to five.

The matter of elevation of Chief Justice Tripura High Court Akil Kureshi and also Karnataka senior woman judge Justice B V Nagarathna to the Supreme Court have been discussed in meeting in past as well, sources said.

CJI Bobde would superannuate on April 23 and Thursday's pre-scheduled meeting assumes significance in the wake of the fact that justice Ramana has been formally appointed as the next CJI.

As per the convention, since the President has issued warrants of appointment for the next CJI, the outgoing prede-



cessor does not make any recommendations to the Centre for appointment of judges in high courts and the apex court.

The collegium meeting was scheduled before the issuance of the notification appointing Justice Ramana as the CJI.

The last collegium meeting had taken place in the third week of March, the sources said.

Besides the CJI, the four others members of the collegium are justices N V Ramana, R F Nariman, U U Lalit and A M Khanwilkar.

The collegium-led by Justice Bobde, who took oath as the CJI on November 18, 2019, has not made any recommendation for appointment of a judge to the apex court so far.

Earlier during the day, a lawyers' body, All India Bar Association (AIBA) through chairman and senior advocate Adish C Aggarwala urged the CJI not to hold the collegium meeting on Thursday saying it would be against "judicial propriety and convention" as the President has already notified the appointment of Justice Ramana.

CRPF commando's family celebrates release news

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Cheerful Meenu Chib, wife of CRPF CoBRA commando, Rakeshwar Singh Manhas on Thursday distributed ladoos and thanked almighty and Prime Minister Narendra Modi soon after receiving the confirmation from the CRPF officials about the release of her husband, six days after he was taken as hostage by the Naxalites from Bijapur area of Chhattisgarh.

We are all waiting eagerly to welcome him, Meenu told reporters assembled in their home after hearing reports of release of CRPF commando by the Naxalites in Chhattisgarh. Jubilant relatives and close relatives greeted each other by chanting patriotic slogans even as senior police officers, local leaders started trickling in to celebrate the occasion. Upbeat Shragvi, five year daughter of CRPF Commando, said "I am waiting to meet my father. I missed him badly. She also delivered a crisp message through TV news channels to her father saying, "Papa jaldi ghar ana" (Papa Come home soon). Thanking media persons, UT administration, Chhattisgarh government and

CRPF authorities Meenu Chib said, "After I received reports that my husband has been held in custody by the Naxals but he is safe in their custody I remained hopeful of his early release." "I never lost hope despite facing tough times. I was a bit anxious because the government was not making any statements. Maybe they were doing it purposefully but we were worried about his safety." Kunti Devi, mother of CRPF commando while thanking the government and all others who worked hard behind the scenes to ensure the release of her son said, "I am very happy today. My son has been set free. I am waiting to see my son returning home soon. I will cook his favorite dishes, she added.

Singur's Nano project: Of lost dreams & faint hope

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ SINGUR

As one drives past the town of Singur, the Nano project area down Durgapur Expressway a dull twinge somewhere within reminds of the shattered dreams that this vast barren tract of 900 acres once stood for. The decade-old memories of how a full-blown gigantic car plant was blown up and bulldozed by the powers that be still linger in the mind of the local people. For many years this land had become a place of tourist interest with travelers whooshing past this national highway linking Mumbai-Chennai and Delhi often asking their drivers to exactly locate where the Nano car plant stood. A furlong past the Nano land you take left turn to enter the Joy Molla village. Past the village a gang of local youth sit on a bamboo platform whiling away time playing cards. As

you stop to ask the way towards Beraberi one of them speaks up. "Presser dada... okay ekhan thekei arohbho korun (my dear brother from the media you start reporting from here) ... look at the new road the panchayat has constructed ... it was 'so well constructed' that the casting had to be done twice in six months as the entire concrete came up within a two months." When asked to explain the reasons an old man bathing at a tube well a few metres away butts in: "there was no mark on the cement bags that were being used to construct the roads ... we knew it was half cement and half clay." Then why did they not raise an issue? "Are you crazy? Who wants to get murdered?" When asked about the shattered Nano plant of them replies: "Birnat bhool hoye geche dada (we did a great mistake)

... Now we are left with nothing. I had two bighas of land here inside the project ... now it is as good as stone ... nothing can grow there. Not in fifty years hence." So what was the movement about: "A big trap ..." the old man says adding "we had told the young boys that 'Tatas are coming here ... lap up the project ... this area will become a second Jamshedpur ... but they were swayed by Didi's apparently simple ways ... and now we are fighting without fate." One of the boys lead you to Purbabara past Pirpukur (a tank) even as he tells you that "this tank was dried up thrice for dredging ... hundreds of days were shown in the 100-day work but not a spade was purchased... all the fund was looted." And then he shows the house of a local panchayat member. "Go and have a dekho of

the house. They will not stop a reporter at least during the elections... This panchayat member constructed his house for more than a crore of rupees and wedded off his daughter spending Rs 18 lakh (which is a huge amount considering this impoverished village)," the youth refusing to get himself identified for obvious reasons says. At Beraberi however the women speak profusely about Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. "Why shouldn't we adore her?" Malati Jana asks. "Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee took away our lands but she restored them back to us ... today she gives us free rice and Rs 2,000. That takes care of our household to some extent." And what about her children? "Two of them are working with a goldsmith in Delhi," she says. Like Malati's husband there were a few hundred farm-

ers who would not part with their land for the Nano factor but the Left Government forcibly acquired them triggering the Singur movement led by Mamata Banerjee. "Out of about 12,500 farmers more than 10,000 had given their land for the factor and their children had even taken industrial training at Tata's various facilities ... we had dreams but all that was shattered due to the politicians... now neither we can cultivate this land nor we can do anything else ... there are snakes and foxes roaming inside the area," says Dipak Hajari a local from Singher Bheri. "What do they want now?" "Today Amit Shah came here. He assured us of an industry here ... let us see whether the BJP Government does it or not..." What makes assures him of a BJP victory and not TMC's or for that matter Left Front's.

UP: Five workers killed in Bijnor cracker factory blast

Bijnor (UP): Five workers were charred to death after an explosion at a firecracker factory at a village here on Thursday, police said. Police have arrested the operator of the unit, identified as Yusuf. The unit was being run from a house located in an isolated area at Bakshiwala village. Superintendent of Police Dharamvir Singh said the explosion took place after gunpowder kept there caught fire. At the time of the incident, nine people were working there, four of whom managed to escape while the five were charred to death, he said. The victims have been identified as nearby Bukhara residents Vedpal, Chintu, Pradeep, Sonu and Brajpal.

The Superintendent of Police said within 20 minutes of the incident, a fire brigade reached the spot and controlled the flames. District Magistrate Ramakant Pandey said that crackers were being made on a valid licence. Meanwhile, an official release in Lucknow said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has expressed grief over the incident. He directed senior officials in the district to rush to the spot immediately and render all possible help to the affected persons, the release said. The chief minister also ordered an inquiry into the mishap and asked the district magistrate and the superintendent of police to submit a joint report. PTI

Kerala CM Vijayan tests positive for Covid-19

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has been diagnosed with Covid-19 on Thursday. Vijayan who has been relaxing at his sprawling personal estate at Pinarayi village in Kannur after the gruelling election campaign is being shifted to Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode late Thursday night. The chief minister who is 77 had taken the first shot of vaccination against the pandemic late March. According to sources in the Chief Minister's Office, Vijayan was cheerful and was enjoying time with his wife and grand children. "It is to ensure fool proof safety that the chief minister is being shifted to the medical college hospital. There is no need of any concern. The chief minister, despite his advanced age is hearty and hail," said an official. Veena Mohammed, daughter of Vijayan was diagnosed with Covid-19 last week and she had cast her vote in a polling booth in Pinarayi wearing personal protective garments. It is said that Vijayan might have contracted the pandemic from Mohammed. Thursday saw 4,353 new patients getting diagnosed with Covid-19 in the State in the second wave of Covid resurgence. Indian Medical Association cautioned the State administration about the ever increasing number of patients afflicted with the pandemic and warned that the next three weeks are highly critical for Kerala. Meanwhile Pinarayi Vijayan getting infected with Covid-19 has given rise to discussion on the efficacy of the vaccine.

TN announces stricter Covid curbs

CHENNAI: As 4,276 new persons were diagnosed with Covid-19 on Thursday across the State, the Tamil Nadu Government reverted to a semi lockdown mode to check the spreading of the pandemic. The 24 hours ending Thursday 6 PM saw the State registering 19 deaths due to Covid-19. On Wednesday evening itself, the State had recorded 3,986 new cases and 17 deaths which made the State administration to convene an emergency meeting on Thursday and revert back to an unofficial lock-down mode. The Chief Secretary vide a special government order declared Koyambedu market in Chennai, the epicentre of the first wave of pandemic attack a no-go area for small traders from April 10. The order states that fruit and vegetable shops, shopping malls, theatres, big time shops and jewellery shops could be operated only with 50 per cent capacity till 11 pm. Hotels and tea stalls could function with 50 per cent capacity while public

functions and crowds would be under the scanner. Marriages could be held with a maximum of 100 guests while only 50 persons would be allowed for death related functions. All temple festivals and religious events stand banned from April 10, said the order. While it is not clear what the Government proposes to do about the functioning of educational institutions like colleges and universities, the Government Order says that social, political, educational, entertainment, sporting and cultural events are allowed in indoor venues with a maximum capacity of 200 persons. Starting from April 10, number of passengers travelling by bus too would be confined to the minimum. No standees would be allowed in bus services. Government medical doctors said that chances of more restrictions were on the anvil and are likely to be announced late evening after the meeting convened by the Prime Minister with the chief ministers of States that top the table with high number of covid patients. PNS

BJP Atrauli's leader dies from corona, 19 infected

Pradeep Saxena ■ Aligarh

BJP's city vice-president of Atrauli died due to corona, while 19 people have been found infected. BJP leader Mrityunjay Rana of Atrauli was admitted to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya joint hospital's covid-19 ward. His condition was critical. CMO Dr. BP Singh Kalyani told that the family was taking him to Jaipur for treatment. He died on the way. Additionally, 19 people have been found infected with the corona virus. 11 people have returned home from the hospital after recovering. The number of active patients in the district has increased to 137.

CPM let loose reign of terror in Kerala: Opp

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Leaders of various Opposition parties complain that the CPI(M) has let loose a reign of terror all over Kerala after the April 6 election to the Legislative Assembly. Two days after the gruesome murder of Manzoor, the Muslim League activist at Kannur allegedly by CPI(M) workers within hours of the conclusion of the election, the police has failed to make any breakthrough in its investigation. Though Manzoor was murdered by a group of 11 persons, the police have so far taken into custody just one of the accused, that too an activist of the CPI(M) nabbed by local people. The Congress-led UDF boycotted the all-party meeting convened by the District

Collector on Thursday to restore peace in the tension filled district. "The police is hand in glove with the CPI(M) and deliberately allowing the murderers of Manzoor escape to safety," said Muslim League leader Abdul Khader Moulavi. He said instead of arresting the killers of Manzoor, what the police have done is to take into custody a 15-year-old boy who was returning home after attending the funeral of Manzoor. This boy, who was to appear in the 10th standard examination on Thursday morning was held back in the station where the cops subjected him to third degree measures," alleged Moulavi. Meanwhile, BJP Kerala Chief K Surendran said that the CPI(M) has let loose a reign of

terror all over the State on BJP workers. "A five-month pregnant woman was kicked around by local CPI(M) leaders at Kattakkada near Thiruvananthapuram for casting her vote for BJP. Her aged mother too was assaulted and their house was damaged beyond repair," said Surendran while speaking to media after visiting the victims on Thursday. He said more than a dozen houses came under attack by the CPI(M) in Kattakkada. "BJP workers across the State have come under attack by the CPI(M). There were instances of even senior citizens being assaulted and manhandled by the CPI(M) activists," he said. Surendran and P K Krishnadas, another BJP leader, alleged that there were massive irregularities in voting through postal ballots across the State.

"Specially trained CPI(M) leaders who work in Government service were deployed to manipulate the postal ballots. The Election Commission should come out with the details of the number of postal ballots printed and the ballots which were used in the election," said Surendran. Congress leader K C Joseph, had warned in early March itself that the CPI(M) would resort to massive frauds in the electoral process. But M V Jayarajan, former secretary in charge of the Chief Minister's Office who was deputed by the party to oversee the assembly election from the northern districts said there was no truth in the Opposition allegations. "Everything is fine and happy in the State. It is the UDF and BJP that are trying to spread falsehood," he said.

Yogi Adityanath promises anti-Romeo squad for Bengal

Kolkata: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday said that should the BJP Government come to power in Bengal it would introduce the anti-Romeo squads in the State to take care of the deviant youth that threatened the women. Wondering about the missing Paribartan (change) that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had promised ten years ago the UP Chief Minister said "When TMC came to power a decade ago it had promised to serve 'maa-maati-manush' (mother, motherland and people) ... they had promised a change but where is the paribartan (change) that Mamata Banerjee had promised to

you?" Alleging that Bengal was not a safe place for the women he said "if BJP comes to power anti-Romeo squads will be formed in Bengal to deal with those who loiter around girls schools. Anti-Romeo squads were introduced in UP to ensure safety of women soon after he came to power in 2017. He also said that the BJP Government would provide free education and journey to the women in the State. Incidentally BJP's star campaigner Mithun Chakrabarty too said that the BJP Government not only would provide free bus tickets and education to the women but also it would provide air-

conditioned general beds in the Government hospitals in the State. He was campaigning at Bally for Baishali Dalmiya the daughter of late BCCI president Jagmohan Dalmiya. Reacting to the UP Chief Minister's statements Bengal TMC MP Sukhendu Shekhar Roy said "he should take care of his own State first where rape is an everyday affair ... UP is number one in atrocities against women." Meanwhile, the BJP supporters agitated at various places in Behala in South Kolkata after the police administration cancelled the permission for a road show of Chakrabarty in support of BJP MLA and film actor Shrawanti Chatterjee. PNS

3 ultras shot, Ansar chief falls in trap

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

After successfully eliminating three terrorists in South Kashmir's Shopian district the joint team of security forces have also managed to trap chief of proscribed terrorist outfit Ansar Ghatwat-Ul-Hind on Thursday. Till the time of filing the report the operation was going on in the Jan Mohalla area of Shopian. The security forces had tightened the cordon in the area to prevent any one from escaping the cordon. Earlier, a police spokesman in a tweet said, three unidentified terrorists were killed in the operation. The operation was launched after confirming the reports about the presence of terrorists inside a house.

CSC propels Bihar's digital revolution, connects panchayats

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PATNA/NEW DELHI

Bihar's rural areas are going through a digital revolution, thanks to the 'Ghar Tak Fibre scheme' of the Central Government which is connecting villages with high-speed optical fibre Internet. Since the scheme was initiated in October last year, in Bihar optical fibre has been laid in 25,866 villages and 8,745 gram panchayats, whereas Fibre to Home (FTTH) connections have been given in 14,741 villages and 10,482 gram panchayats. Around 22,229 connections have been given to government establishments like schools, colleges, Anganwadis, ration shops, post offices, health centres, agriculture offices, gram panchayat and block offices, Jeevika office, electricity department etc, while 2993 connections are to private subscribers. The scheme, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in September 2020, seeks to connect all 45,945 villages of Bihar through the optical fiber Internet, enabling fast Internet connectivity that will enable citizens to access a range of services and opportunities. According to Dr Dinesh Tyagi, Managing Director, CSC SPV: "With the spread of broadband connectivity in vil-



lages of Bihar, online service delivery and various other schemes and initiatives by the government can be availed by citizens with just a click. It is not just the students of the village, the Anganwadi workers, ration dealers and Jeevika workers are also taking advantage of the scheme as their work has become online and their data is readily available at the click of a mouse. As per TRAI report of June 2020, there are only 29.83 rural Internet subscribers per 100 population in the country. Bihar at 21.69 is one of the states having the least number of Internet subscribers per 100 persons. "With Ghar Tak Fibre, children and youth are getting better access to education, villagers are getting affordable healthcare, while farmers are having access to information on agri technology, seeds and weather, all real time at their doorsteps" said Dr Tyagi.

VACCINE DISTRIBUTION ROW Why worst-hit Maha being given only 7.5L dose per week: Health Minister

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A day after Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan debunked Maharashtra's claim about the vaccine shortage in the State, a full-fledged war of words broke between ruling MVA leaders and the Opposition BJP on Thursday over the alleged "step motherly" treatment meted to the State by the Centre in the distribution of vaccines. Tearing into the Union Home Minister's allegation that the issue of vaccination shortage in the State being raised by the MVA Government "was nothing but an attempt to divert attention" from its repeated failures to control the spread of pandemic", Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope reeled out statistics to allege that the Centre was discriminating against the State in distribution of jabs. "As per the latest vaccine release order, Maharashtra is merely getting 7.5 lakh doses per week. As against the supply made to Maharashtra, the Centre gives 48 lakh doses to Uttar Pradesh, 40 lakh doses to Madhya Pradesh, 30 lakh doses to Gujarat and 24 lakh doses to Haryana," Tope said. Though he did not mention that all the four states which he named were BJP-ruled states, Tope indirectly hinted that the Modi government was being partial towards the states governed by the ruling party at the Centre. Tope said that he had brought the discrimination against Maharashtra in the supply of vaccines to the notice of the Union Health Minister who had assured him that he would ask his ministry officials to look into the supply figure to various states and make amends to increase supply to the state. Seeking to explain why there was a

shortage of vaccine in the state, Tope said that while the active cases had crossed the 5 lakh mark and the deaths were around 57,000. "Given that the situation is so grave, will 7.5 lakh doses per week suffice for Maharashtra? We need at least 40 lakh doses per week. In other words, we need at least 1.60 lakh doses in a month. It is only then, we will be able to implement the vaccination programme properly," the state health minister said. Dwelling upon the vaccine shortage in the state, Tope said: "Today, we have stopped vaccination in places like Satara, Sangli and Panvel. In Buldhana, we have one day stock.. We are a state with 50 per cent of the total patients in the entire country. That being the case, why is Maharashtra being given as less as 7.5 lakh doses while other states are being given more?" Meanwhile, former chief minister and senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis hit out at the MVA government for blaming the Centre for vaccine shortage in the state. In a series of tweets put out during the day, Fadnavis said: "Undoubtedly, #COVID19 & vaccination are important issues for our State. But since there is constant criticism on mis-governance of MVA & various exposes in courts lately, it's an Absolute Shame that vaccination politics is being played to divert people's attention!" "It is my earnest request to MVA to STOP such dirty politics and focus on improving the health of our Maharashtra !," Fadnavis tweeted. Seeking to contest Tope's argument of discrimination against Maharashtra in the supply of vaccines by the Centre, Fadnavis tweeted: "Only 3 states have received more than 1 crore vaccine sup-

ply : Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan. Gujarat & Rajasthan have equal populations. Rajasthan has Congress Govt in power. Vaccine supply is not on the basis of population but purely based on State's performance of execution of vaccination process." Maharashtra received 1.06 crore vaccines as mentioned in official StateGovt tweet from DGIPR on 6th April. 91 lakh vaccines got used; means 15 lakh still left with GoM. So why are vaccination centres deliberately shut down today & why peltering (sic) of false news?," Fadnavis asked. "Whichever states have requested for more vaccine supplies or has pendency from allocated quota, such supply is in pipeline and Maharashtra to receive another 19 lakh vaccines between 9th to 12th April," the BJP leader said. "Uttar Pradesh is the largest State & received 92 lakh vaccines. They have used 83 lakh doses and 9 lakh are remaining with them. Even Haryana has not received much vaccine in the first round, but is getting it now," Fadnavis tweeted. "Shri Sharad Pawar ji spoke to Union Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan ji who assured him of all the assistance to the GoM. I also discussed it with the Union Health Minister. He assured that there was never ever any biased approach towards Maharashtra & supplies are smooth," Fadnavis tweeted. "Since day 1 of #Covid19Pandemic, the Government of India, taking all states on board, has taken measures unitedly and in that too Maharashtra has been given maximum assistance. Even today, GoI under the leadership of Hon PM Narendra Modi ji, is providing all support to GoM to serve better, the people of Maharashtra," the former chief minister added.

New letter writing trend has started in Maharashtra to defame and destabilise MVA Govt: Raut

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Defending its Minister Anil Parab over an allegation by incarcerated police officer Sachin Vaze that the Minister had asked him to collect Rs 50 crore to close a preliminary inquiry, the Shiv Sena on Thursday charged that a "new letter writing trend" had started in Maharashtra to "defame" and "destabilise" the MVA Government. In his first reaction to the "letter bomb" hurled by Vaze on the MVA Government, Shiv Sena MP and spokesperson Sanjay Raut charged that "a new letter writing trend" had started in the State to destabilise the MVA Government by writing letters from behind the bars. Indirectly accusing the Opposition BJP to destabilise the MVA government using the recent developments involving the twin cases of SUV planting and the alleged Mansukh Hiran and also State Home Anil Deshmukh's resignation, Raut said: "There has been an attempt to destabilise the MVA government right from the day one. The real face of those trying to destabilise our government is coming out now. They are setting a new trend by enlisting those behind the bars to write letters and create an atmosphere against our government. We have never this kind of cheap in pour state or anywhere in the country so

far". Alluding to Vaze's allegation that Sena's Transport Minister Anil Parab had asked to demand Rs 50 crore to close a preliminary inquiry against Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust (SBUT) and also charges against former Home Minister Anil Deshmukh and deputy chief minister, Raut said: "The names of Parab, Deshmukh and Ajit Pawar have come in a letter written by Vaze. An attempt is being made to project a letter written by an accused behind the bars as proof of irregularity by the ministers. This is nothing but political conspiracy." "I have known Anil Parab for a long time. He does not do such things as is being alleged by Vaze. No Shiv Sainik, who has taken oath in the name of late Balasaheb Thackeray, will indulge in these kind of things. Having the oath of late Balasaheb, Anil Parab has dismissed Vaze's allegation as false, I have full faith in Anil Parab," Raut said. Meanwhile, Maharashtra Transport Minister Anil Parab said: "For the past two days, BJP workers had gone to town saying Anil Parab's name would surface and he would have to resign. How did they know Sachin Vaze will submit a letter to the NIA court? It's clear that there's a plan to defame Maharashtra Ministers"



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Goons in khaki

The civil defence volunteers are acting as if they are law unto themselves

They don the khaki uniform, just like policemen, and can dangerously come in the way of your vehicle, surrounding it from all sides and forcing you to stop. They can even pull out the ignition key of your vehicle. Usually, at the first instance, a Delhi Civil Defence (DCD) "volunteer" will threaten you with a hefty challan if s/he catches you for even the minutest violation or accidental slip of mask. Naturally, one would immediately apologise or offer a genuine reason for the momentary slip-up rather than eagerly and willingly paying the fine. So the volunteer now asks you to pay less than the actual amount to "warm" their hands and let you walk away. All this is done in the name of compliance of the COVID-appropriate behaviour and hapless citizens are at the receiving end of it. No doubt, apart from those who are manufacturing masks, sanitisers and other medical essentials, the pandemic has opened up the opportunity for these civil volunteers to be out on an extortion spree. These "pseudo-policemen" desperately hunt for their prey, particularly those who appear poor, labour class or villagers who often take them to be policemen. Several people have complained that these volunteers often assume the role of traffic police and stop even those who might be wearing a mask but not the helmet or who haven't fastened their seat belt. No wonder, they must be indulging in moral policing, too.

These civil volunteers extort money by threatening people with a jail term in case they fail to pay the fine. Ironically, there is no check on such activities and these continue unabated, with even the real policemen standing by as mute spectators to the deeds of the civil volunteers. Incidents of people clashing with the civil defence personnel are increasing in the Capital. In a recent case, a heated argument between a student and DCD volunteers turned violent at a traffic signal in South Delhi's Hauz Khas and a volunteer allegedly hit the student with a belt in full public view. Thereafter, the DCD personnel were attacked by an irate crowd. These volunteers act like goons in khaki uniform. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal always demands that the police should come under the control of his Government, saying it will help rein in crime. However, such claims are a mere rhetoric and it's hard to believe that a Chief Minister who cannot control the actions of civil defence volunteers will control the crime rate in the Capital. The Delhi Government has imposed night curfew and nobody, except those who are facing an emergency or are deployed in emergency duties or those with valid passes, is allowed to step out. As the police alone cannot handle the situation, the role of civil volunteers becomes indispensable. However, it must be ensured that these men in "uniform" do not overstep the limits of their duty; else we must be ready for something gruesome like the Nirbhaya incident hitting the headlines soon.

PICTALK



Tourists at the Taj Mahal on a hot day

PTI

Shameful

The Assembly polls in West Bengal this year are witnessing a record number of violent incidents

More than 100 years ago, political leader and social reformer Gopal Krishna Gokhale had said: "What Bengal thinks today, India thinks tomorrow." It must have rung true for the "Amar shonar Bangla" of that time and age; sadly, that is no longer the case. The post-Independence Bengal is known more because of its trade unionism, impromptu strikes and election violence, at least since the 1960s. The ongoing Assembly elections in the State are no exception. Of the crucial eight-phase election, the three phases that have already been completed have had their share of bloody arson, mob violence, exploding crude bombs, threats to rival politicians and their followers and brandishing of lathis and iron rods. Quite unlike other States and Union Territories in the country, West Bengal has always reported blood, gore and violence in its elections, be it for a panchayat or Parliament. In the latest round of voting, five candidates, including two women, were assaulted, while clashes between rival political groups during the polling were also reported. The balance of hooliganism seems to be tilted evenly — of the five people arrested for their alleged involvement in the assault of a female candidate, three belonged to the TMC and two to the BJP.

Several candidates in the poll fray have been attacked. There were also allegations of attacks on polling agents in certain constituencies. Along predictable lines, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee alleged the misuse of Central forces deployed on election duty, and the BJP charged the "TMC goons" with running amok and trying to influence the election outcome by intimidating voters. However, what is notably interesting is that the violence surprised neither the citizens nor political pundits. Everybody, it would appear, was in fact waiting for the violence to be unleashed, especially since in this election a resurgent BJP has thrown a direct challenge to the might of Mamata, who herself is a street fighter. The stakes of the Congress and the Left may be considered somewhat limited, but the latter — having ruled the State with an iron hand for more than three decades before surrendering to a feisty Mamata — itself is an old hand in managing violence during successive elections. In toto, democracy in the State can't be termed healthy by any stretch of imagination, which is a sad thing. One can only hope that the upcoming poll phases will witness less of violence and more of the dance of democracy.

Farmers' sympathy for leaders grows

Rakesh Tikait's March campaign, which covered Nandigram to Rajasthan and Punjab to Tamil Nadu, turned heads everywhere



INDRA SHEKHAR SINGH

As the Samyukta Kisan Morcha was blocking roads all across India on March 26 and celebrating Bharat Bandh, the situation in Ahmedabad got out of hand. The Bharatiya Kisan Union's (BKU) Yudhvir Singh was arrested in the middle of a press conference. The arresting officer, with the IPS stars on his shoulder lapel, told the media that the "arrest is being made because no permission was taken". Since when is the Government's permission required to host a press conference? Keep in mind that there was no protest or demonstration at the site, and the press meeting was being attended by only a few people. Still, did the event undermine Prime Minister Narendra Modi?

By arresting Yudhvir, a seasoned leader having a long-term relationship with the Tikait family, the Gujarat Government did him a political favour as a normal press conference turned into national news and the BKU's second-level leadership is now headed towards national fame. The Modi Government may have actually helped Rakesh Tikait's BKU by making Yudhvir a twitter martyr.

But, was the arrest necessary to nullify the press conference? By any measure, no. So, the schemes being hatched in the Modi-Shah mind are unfathomable. Are they trying to divide the Kisan Morcha by playing favourites? By giving the Tikait faction more limelight, they may cause tension among the 40-leader group. This is very much like Modi. Keep in mind, Yudhvir was later released and he participated in the Kisan panchayat in Rajasthan on March 27.

Yudhvir and Rakesh Tikait came out strongly against the "oppression" of the Modi Government at the centre and in Gujarat. They termed it the "Gujarat model of slavery" and said the "people and farmers of Gujarat were not free". These statements are powerful as in Mahatma Gandhi's home State, people are being arrested for



holding a press conference. It looks like a political blunder to detain and release Yudhvir the same day.

But let us consider another possibility — Is Modi actually getting scared of Tikait's tactics and messages? Since the night of January 27, Rakesh has catapulted himself into national politics by gaining huge support from the Jat-dominated belts of Rajasthan to UP. His March campaign, which covered Nandigram to Pipad, Rajasthan, and Punjab to Tamil Nadu, turned heads everywhere. Popular support has swelled from farmers, especially the youth. A recent media survey names him among 100 powerful Indians. And he will soon be a force to reckon with. Hence, the Modi Government is keeping a close watch on him, unnecessarily burning the taxpayer's money for political gains.

As Modi goes on the offensive, the growers' sympathy for their unions grows. Meanwhile, Tikait has been consistent in his appeal to farmers to rebel against unfair prices. Repeatedly across Pipad, Meham, Jaipur and

TIKAIT HAS BEEN CONSISTENT IN HIS APPEAL TO FARMERS TO REBEL AGAINST UNFAIR PRICES. REPEATEDLY ACROSS PIPAD, MEHAM, JAIPUR AND OTHER PLACES, HE STRESSED THAT FARMERS SHOULD BE READY TO ENTER DELHI AND SELL THEIR CROPS OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT

other places, he stressed that farmers should be ready to enter Delhi and sell their crops outside Parliament. This strategy is bold and strikes a chord with the farmers. His appeal is simple: If Modi says that farmers can sell their produce anywhere, why not the DM's or SP's office? By mid-April, the Rabi harvest should be over in most parts of the country. If this campaign works, the Modi Government will have to be ready for a countrywide protest, especially if the prices once again dip below the MSP. Modi will then have a hard time assuring the nation that the "MSP will continue".

The Tikait camp has repeatedly used "Walmartisation" to describe the corporatisation of Indian agriculture and farmers. The same position is being adopted by the RSS-linked Swadeshi Jagran March, which has been very vocal against the FDI and entry of e-retailers like Amazon. So the farmers' movement has been very aware and astute in public campaigns.

A good example was the talk of police reforms. Tikait has emphasised in each rally

the need for better salaries and accommodation for police and security forces' personnel. One really has to see the smiles on the faces of policemen deployed to "maintain peace" at his rallies.

The most earthy message comes from his appeal to the youth: "Go to your land, touch the soil, put it on your forehead and feel the earth." The farm leaders, including Tikait, are offering after half a decade of hate-based propaganda a positive and inclusive message. They have connected the earth, agriculture and rights together and formed the perfect antithesis to the Modi Government. Their methods are feisty yet Gandhian and their political organisation is growing stronger each day.

The Government has been on their back, hence cases have been registered against various farmer leaders. But how will Modi react to this new challenge in the long term, perhaps only Bengal will tell.

(The author writes on agriculture and environment, and is the Director — Green India. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TIME TO TREAD WITH CAUTION

Sir — The surge in the Coronavirus cases calls for doubling our efforts to bring it under control. It is being studied by scientists for its likely connection or correlation with the virus' mutant strains. It is a self-evident truth that the situation has worsened as a result of poor compliance with COVID-appropriate behaviour. Anxious as we are, we wish it to be only a temporary blip. We must mount a robust response for the rate of transmission to decline. It has been told for the umpteenth time that wearing masks and social distancing are simple but highly effective means to contain the pandemic. Still many people do not wear masks or maintain social distancing. Jettisoning these basic prophylactic measures allows the virus to spread at a rapid rate.

Data on the second wave of COVID-19, sometimes called an 'old man's disease, indicate that children and young adults are also vulnerable to the infection. As for the vaccine strategy, it must be flexible enough to deal with the evolving situation. The pandemic hotspots can be given precedence for vaccination with further relaxation in the age limit. It could be done without the inoculation programme elsewhere being affected by increasing the supply of vaccines.

In this situation, time is of the essence. We are still to go far in the mammoth task of inoculating enough people (900 million to 1,000 million) to achieve herd immunity. Meanwhile, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh have spoken about "vaccine shortage" only to be refuted by Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan. Most affected States like Maharashtra, Delhi and Punjab have introduced Covid-19-related curbs tailored to local situations.

G David Milton | Tamil Nadu

CENTRE-STATES SHOULD NOT ENGAGE IN WAR

Sir — India has hit a record of administering four million doses a day — a significant number by global standards —

Jails as hotels, resorts



This refers to the editorial 'Just Deserts' (April 8). I would like to express my gratitude to the article for throwing the much-needed light on the state of our prisons or jails that have been the resort of the politically well-connected criminals, both convicted and undertrials. The don-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari is a classic case. Ansari — a name that is enough to strike fear in people's hearts — treated his prison terms as if they

were vacation to Bali and the Maldives. The pampering he got; one wonders that even if they paid all the money in the world, would one get this much service? One hopes that with the incumbent Yogi Government, which is currently cracking down on his properties, he would get the taste of what prison is like — not as some VVIP but as a regular fugitive of the law. Ansari's case is a classic example of politicians having a nexus with criminals. This was just one case out of many. What about the remaining bunch? What about those who went and happily played badminton with the criminal? Ansari's case is also an example of how law and order, not just in the State but all over the country, is a big fat joke.

Sean Young | New Delhi

NO POLITICAL VIOLENCE, PLEASE

Sir — For some months it was as if Kannur, the most politically volatile district in Kerala, was dozing under a

soothing lullaby and the credit goes to the police department and some punctilious political leaders who were ever alert to ward off any political violence erupting between the bloodthirsty party loyalists of rival groups. The election campaigns, verbal conflicts and the rivalry between various political parties and leaders gathered momentum during the election season and now just after the voting day, this has erupted resulting in widespread political clashes and a bloody murder in Kannur. Kannur is notorious for political clashes and bloodshed and any slight negligence on the part of the police and laxity on the part of the politicians is sure to result in murders, clashes and vandalism.

M Pradyu | Kamur

SOUNDBITE

All those 'arhatiyas' whose commission and labour wage dues have been pending since the last procurement season, would get interest for the delayed amount.

Haryana Chief Minister

— Manohar Lal Khattar



There will be no nationwide lockdown. We will not accept the policy of staying at home. The virus, like others, came to stay and will stay. It is almost impossible to eradicate it.

Brazilian President

— Jair Bolsonaro

Maharashtra is the worst hit with COVID-19 and yet we've received the least vaccine supply. There will be plenty of time to play politics. Now is the time to rise above it.

Actress

— Urmila Matondkar

I am always looking to learn from the best (AB de Villiers and Virat Kohli). They are the best not just in T20 cricket but also world cricket.

Cricketer

— Glenn Maxwell

A new trend of letter-writing by the accused in jails has started, which is a political conspiracy intended to destabilise the MVA Government.

Shiv Sena Spokesperson

— Sanjay Raut

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

DO AWAY WITH FLAWS IN ENERGY POLICY

Load balancing is a key factor for capacity expansion of power generation from renewable sources



SANJIB POHIT

In recent years, India has been increasingly focussing on augmenting its capacity of producing electricity from renewable energy. As of November 27, 2020, 38 per cent of India's installed electricity generation capacity is from renewable sources — 136 gigawatt (GW) out of 373 GW. To some extent, this push is due to Paris Agreement where India has committed to an Intended Nationally Determined Contributions target of achieving 40 per cent of its total electricity generation from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030. However, it is aiming for even more ambitious target of 57 per cent of the total electricity capacity from renewable sources by 2027. The 2022 electrical power targets include achieving 227 GW (earlier 175 GW) of energy from renewable sources — nearly 113 GW through solar power, 66 GW from wind power, 10 GW from biomass, 5GW from small hydro and 31GW from floating solar and offshore wind power.

The grid-connected solar power provides electricity at best for eight-ten hours a day. For grid stability as well as providing power to the consumers for the remaining hours of the day, the electricity author-



ity has to depend on alternative source which needs to be such that switchover is possible in a short span of time. Technically, this is not possible with thermal power plant as it takes more time to build up the load. The ideal candidates are gas-based power plants, wind-based power plants and hydroelectric power plants. Thus in other countries where the emphasis is on producing electricity from renewable sources, solar capacity augmentation goes hand in hand with other sources like wind-based power, hydro power or particularly pumped hydroelectric energy storage (PHES). It has emerged as one of the most important sources of hydroelectric energy storage used by electric power systems for load balancing. The method stores energy in the form of gravitational potential energy of water, pumped from a lower elevation reservoir to a higher elevation. Low-cost surplus off-peak electric power is typically used to run the pumps. During periods of high electrical demand, the stored water is released through turbines to produce electric power. Although the losses of the pumping process make the plant a net consumer of energy overall, the system increases revenue by selling more electricity during periods of peak demand, when electricity prices are highest. Pumped-storage hydroelectricity allows energy from intermittent sources (such as solar, wind) and other renewables, or excess electricity from continuous base-load sources (such as coal or nuclear) to be saved for periods of higher demand. The reservoirs used with pumped storage are quite small when compared to conventional hydroelectric dams of similar power capacity, and generating periods are often less than half a day.

Unlike other countries focusing on renewable energy, PHES does not favour well in India's policy frame. India's power corporation does not insist on power agreement for 24 hours. Instead, they take the burden on themselves to tie up with alternative sources when power from renewable source is not available. They assume that they get a better deal this way from renewable source. However, it may not be so when the cost of buying power from alternative source is included. Moreover, this encourages lopsided capacity augmentation of solar power. This aggravates load balancing situation in India's power system. It is of utmost importance to take into account the load balancing aspect to encourage capacity expansion of electricity generation from renewable sources. Thus, the increase in solar electricity capacity should go in tandem with other renewable electricity sources.

(The writer is a Professor at the NCAER. The views expressed are personal.)



CLETUS D'SOUZA

Goa, the smallest State in India, is blessed with abundant mineral deposits such as iron ore, manganese ore, bauxite and so on. Tourism and mining have been the mainstay of Goa's economy and these two sectors are the major sources of livelihood for the locals. Due to the mining stoppage, the State was already faced with the perilous problem of falling revenue and the same has been exacerbated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to Goa witnessing its worst economic crisis. The State is borrowing extra money to the tune of ₹100 crore every month through the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in the current financial year to bridge the fiscal deficit which will further add to the financial woes and create a debt crisis in the State.

The writer is the Chairman, Mining Engineers' Association of India (MEAI)-Goa Chapter. The views expressed are personal.

Meticulously tweak corporate governance

The regulators and policy-makers have to develop rules and regulations to give more teeth to independent non-executive directors in Indian firms



HIMA BINDU KOTA

Clichéd though it sounds, financial scandals the world over highlight the ever-growing importance of corporate governance. In the backdrop of future scandals, the focus will be on governance issues — especially transparency and disclosure, control and accountability — and upon the most appropriate form of board structure that may be capable of preventing such scandals. The global financial crisis has brought to the fore the relevance of a sound corporate governance system as an essential element of effective risk-management. Though not the only cause, governance failings are significant where boards fail to understand and manage risk. The crisis highlights the need to develop more effective approaches to corporate governance and risk management, as well as the importance of social responsibility in the financial sector; the role that corporate governance can and should play is in restoring trust.

To some extent, shareholders may be criticised for not holding companies accountable, and it is true that bondholders have encouraged companies to ramp up short-term returns through leverage. However, regulators have often not responded decisively on realising that markets were mispricing risk, allowing bank boards to operate with too little capital, excessive leverage, too much liquidity risk and poor mortgage-lending practices. There is an increasing perception that contagion and spill-over effects from the global financial turmoil could undermine the economic achievements of any country. As a result, there has to be an increased interaction between corporate governance and the stability and soundness of the financial system. Hence, corporate governance practices need strengthening, in particular by increasing board competence and responsibility. The board members need to have up-to-date knowledge on financial issues and risk management to fulfill their functions and training should be conducted when necessary. The boards should conduct annual evaluations of their performance and report to shareholders. It is pertinent to explore some issues surrounding corporate governance in the context of the rapidly-emerging economy like India.

The Role of Independent Directors: Empirical evidence on the association between outside independent directors and firm performance is mixed. Two conflicting views are offered by researchers with regard to the effectiveness of corporate board of directors. One of the views is based upon the agency theory and the other is the managerial 'hegemony'. The board of directors is the pivot of good governance practices. Appointed by stockholders and other key stakeholders, the directors are fiduciaries of the shareholders, not the management. Hence, where the objectives of management differ from those of the shareholders, non-executive directors must represent the interests of the ultimate owners and discharge their fiduciary oversight functions. This is why 'independence' has become such a critical issue in determining the composition of any board.

The agency perspective of corporate governance concerns the incentive problems that are created by the separation of management and ownership in corporations. Herein managers have incentives to take actions to increase their utility but not to maximise shareholders returns. As a



IN A STUDY CONDUCTED ON 130 MID-CAP COMPANIES LISTED ON THE NATIONAL STOCK EXCHANGE TAKING TWO-YEAR DATA, THE RESULTS SHOW THAT THE RATIO OF NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS TO THE TOTAL DIRECTORS AND THE PRESENCE OF INDEPENDENT NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AS THE HEAD OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HAS NO SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF THE FIRM. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE HEGEMONY THEORY THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS INCAPABLE OF FULFILLING ITS OVERSEEING ROLE

The writer is Associate Professor at Amity University, Noida. The views expressed are personal.



result of these problems, corporate control mechanisms have evolved as the means by which managers are disciplined to act in the investors' interests. The board of directors, especially independent and non-executive directors, is the apex of the internal governance system and is meant to assist in reducing agency problems through mitigating incentives for managers to act opportunistically. Considerable evidence has been provided in academic literature to illustrate that independent directors protect shareholders when there are agency problems.

The issue of non-executive directors raises questions as to whether this external expertise provides a more solid basis for decisions. Outside directors (unlike inside or executive directors), in addition to providing valuable access to resources and information, also protect shareholders' interests since they do not have the same concerns with their employment or advancement opportunities. Famous researchers in this field of study, Jensen and Meckling, in 1976 identified the shareholders' and directors/managers relationship as one of principal and agent. The shareholders want their wealth maximised, but the managers have less incentive to do so than if they were the owners. By having more non-executive directors on board, this apparent conflict can be reduced.

Researchers such as Mace in 1986 and Herman in 1981 argue

that outside directors are valued for their ability to advise, to solidify business and personal relationships and to send a signal that the company is doing well rather than for their ability to monitor. Mace further argues that in selecting outside directors, the title and prestige of the candidates are the prime consideration. Further, he maintains that the CEOs dominate the director selection process and therefore control the board. This view is supported by some other researchers like Vancil and Waldo, who were also sceptical about the ability of outside directors to make independent judgement on firm performance due to the dominant role played by the CEOs in selecting outside directors. A criticism of the non-executive directors is that they are too busy with other commitments and are only involved with the company business on a part-time basis.

'CEO Duality' structure: Duality occurs when one individual holds the two most powerful posts on the board of directors — namely those of CEO and chairman. The CEO is a full-time post and has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the company as well as setting and implementing corporate strategy. The CEO is also ultimately responsible for the performance of the company. In contrast, the post of the chairman is normally part-time and the main responsibility is to ensure that the board works effectively. The role

therefore involves monitoring and evaluating the performance of the executive directors, including the CEO.

In a study conducted on 130 mid-cap companies listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) taking two-year data, the results show that the ratio of non-executive directors to the total directors and the presence of independent non-executive director as the head of the audit committee has no significant relationship with the performance of the firm. This is in accordance with the hegemony theory that the board of directors is incapable of fulfilling its overseeing role.

It is also found that CEO duality structure contributes positively and significantly to the firm performance in medium-sized companies in India. This is in concordance with the stewardship theory, that the managers are inherently trustworthy and are good stewards of company resources. In family-controlled firms, controlling family members may appoint directors to the boards, and thus the independence of directors may be compromised. In India, CEO duality and small board positively contribute to a firm's performance. However, it appears that non-executive independent directors are failing in their monitoring role. The regulators and policymakers have to take notice of this and develop rules and regulations to give more teeth to independent non-executive directors.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE CRPF IS ASKING THE VOTERS TO VOTE FOR THE BJP. I ASK YOU TO UNITE AND GHERAO THEM WHEREVER YOU FIND THEM.

— WEST BENGAL CM
MAMATA BANERJEE



SHE HAS BECOME NERVOUS AND AGITATED AS SHE IS EXPECTING A DEFEAT. SHE IS TRYING TO INCITE PUBLIC AGAINST THE CENTRAL FORCES.

— BJP LEADER
SISIR BAJORIA

Goa mining impasse needs holistic approach for redressal

It is imperative to take immediate corrective actions to find solutions to the Goa mining crisis and prevent further loss to the State's economy

Goa, the smallest State in India, is blessed with abundant mineral deposits such as iron ore, manganese ore, bauxite and so on. Tourism and mining have been the mainstay of Goa's economy and these two sectors are the major sources of livelihood for the locals.

Due to the mining stoppage, the State was already faced with the perilous problem of falling revenue and the same has been exacerbated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to Goa witnessing its worst economic crisis. The State is borrowing extra money to the tune of ₹100 crore every month through the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in the current financial year to bridge the fiscal deficit which will further add to the financial woes and create a debt crisis in the State.



CLETUS D'SOUZA

Mining has been a very important element in the economic history of modern Goa and played a significant role as foreign exchange earner for the nation. Mining in Goa today is synonymous with iron ore mining, which is entirely with the private sector. It has a long-cherished history of systematic and scientific mining and won accolades from different organisations across the globe.

The exemplary "reclamation and rehabilitation" of mined-out areas carried out in some mines in the State has attracted the attention of the mining world not only in India but also globally and used to be referred to by experts on different platforms. However, the low quality of iron ores, coupled with more removal of huge quantity of waste for every tonne of ore production (excessive

stripping ratio) and comparatively higher transportation charge as compared to the iron and steel plants located on the eastern coast of India, made it economically unviable to compete in domestic markets and thereby left the Goan miners with no option but to look to the overseas markets. Thus iron ores produced from Goa is exported to various countries like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, China and others.

Nevertheless, the iron ore mining in Goa is beset with certain problems/ issues like dumping of mine waste/refuse outside the leasehold — due to limited leasehold area and unavailability of non-mineralised area in the mining lease — and use of existing public transport infrastructure for transportation of the iron ore.



Mining operations have been completely stopped in Goa from March 16, 2018, ever since the Supreme Court cancelled second renewal of 88 mining leases in the State vide its order dated February 7, 2018. It has disrupted not only the mining sector but also the entire ecosystem of allied industries, including individual truck owners, barge workers/owners as well as equipment suppliers,

machinery owners, port workers, small garage owners, tea and refreshment selling stall owners and so on.

On the other hand, tourism, which is another full-fledged industry of the State supporting large section of population, also suffered badly due to the pandemic. During the COVID-19 lockdown and even afterwards, the tourism industry has come to a standstill while complete shutdown of mining in the State continues to create unprecedented employment crisis adversely impacting the livelihood of more than three lakh people. Also, it has a direct bearing on the State revenue, resulting in loss of more than ₹3,500 crore every year as per the State Government estimates.

The State Government has filed a review petition against the order of Supreme

Court regarding cancellation of mining leases while some mining companies have also filed petitions before the apex court with respect to the applicability of the "Abolition Act 1987".

In order to unlock the mining impasse prevailing in Goa, the following multi-pronged strategies are suggested: The Central Government should come forward to resolve the issue of date of applicability of Goa, Daman and Diu Mining Concessions (Abolition and Declaration as Mining Leases) Act 1987 (popularly known as the Abolition Act 1987).

The Bombay High Court had previously held that the Central Government could only recover statutory dues from 1987 onwards that is prospectively under the Abolition Act as against ret-

respectively as was claimed.

The Supreme Court should decide clearly on the matter, any other solution is likely to further muddle the situation and would lead to inordinate delays in mining resumption which is likely to aggravate the precarious financial condition of Goa and its people.

There is little hope of revival of tourism industry in the State till the time COVID-19 pandemic recedes. This makes it imperative to take immediate corrective actions to find a solution to the Goa mining crisis and prevent further loss to the State's economy.

The socio-economic impact of mining ban in Goa may lead to a serious humanitarian crisis if there is any further delay in finding a timely solution to the current stalemate.

Myanmar junta limits internet

Begins confiscating satellite dishes used to access int'l news broadcasts



Anti-coup protesters walk through a market with images of ousted Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi at Kamayut township in Yangon, Myanmar on Thursday

AP ■ YANGON, MYANMAR
An information blackout under Myanmar's military junta worsened Thursday as fiber broadband service, the last legal way for ordinary people to access the internet, became intermittently inaccessible on several networks. Authorities in some areas

net interruptions for at least two service providers, MBT and Infinite Networks, were temporary. MBT said its service was halted by a break in the line between Yangon and Mandalay, the country's two biggest cities, but internet users had been complaining for the past week of major slowdowns in the services.

The junta has gradually throttled internet service since the coup. It initially imposed a largely ineffective block of social media such as Facebook and then cut mobile data service, the most common way of connecting to the internet, but only at night. As the junta increased its use of deadly force against protesters it also imposed a total ban on mobile data use.

At least 598 protesters and bystanders have been killed by security forces since the takeover, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, which monitors casualties and arrests.

UK condemns 'bullying' as envoy locked out of embassy

PTI ■ LONDON

The UK Government on Thursday condemned the "bullying actions" of the Myanmar military junta after the country's ambassador, Kyaw Zwar Minn, was refused entry to his own embassy in London and had to spend the night in his car.

Zwar Minn has been critical of the junta's coup in Myanmar, which has sparked widespread protests and clashes in the region since February, and called for Myanmar's ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi to be released.

He was forced to spend Wednesday night in his car after he was dismissed as the country's representative and staff were asked to leave the



Kyaw Zwar Minn, the Myanmar's ambassador in London stands outside the Myanmar Embassy whilst a statement is read on his behalf in London on Thursday

UK cases drop 60% due to vaccines, lockdown

AP ■ LONDON

The UK's Covid-19 vaccination program is beginning to break the link between infection and serious illness or death, according to the latest results from an ongoing study of the pandemic in England.

Researchers at Imperial College London found that Covid-19 infections dropped about 60% in March as national lockdown measures slowed the spread of the virus. People 65 and older were the least likely to be infected as they benefited most from the vaccination program, which initially focused on older people.

The study also found that the relationship between infections and deaths is diverging, "suggesting that infections may have resulted in fewer hospitalizations and deaths since the start of widespread vaccination."

The positive news came amid renewed scrutiny of vaccinations that followed revised UK Government guidance



Fran Hall draws the last hearts as families bereaved by Covid-19 mark the completion of the approximately 1,50,000 hearts being painted onto the National Covid Memorial Wall, on the Thames Embankment opposite the Houses of Parliament in London on Thursday

Wednesday that it will offer people under 30 an alternative inoculation to the AstraZeneca shot where possible. The change followed studies that the shot may be linked to very rare blood clots.

Oz halts Astra vax for most people under 50

Canberra: Australia on Thursday became the latest country to restrict use of the AstraZeneca vaccine by recommending that it not be given to people under age 50.

The announcement came after drug regulators held a series of urgent meetings earlier in the day. That followed advice from the European Medicines Agency that it had found a possible link between the shot and rare blood clots.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said he'd received a series of recommendations from an advisory group on Thursday night, and that chief among them was that the Pfizer vaccine should now be adopted as the preferred vaccine for people aged under 50.

Morrison said the recommendations were made with an abundance of caution due to the rare but serious side effects, which have mostly been associated with younger people. "We've been taking the necessary precautions based on the best possible medical advice," Morrison said. "It has not been our practice to jump at shadows."

Germany mulls order of Russian vax

AP ■ BERLIN

Germany's health minister said Thursday that the European Union doesn't plan to order Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine but his country will hold talks with Russia on whether an individual order makes sense.

The EU's executive Commission said Wednesday it won't place orders for Sputnik V on member countries' behalf, as it did with other manufacturers, Health Minister Jens Spahn told WDR public radio. Spahn said he told his fellow EU health ministers that Germany, which has strongly backed joint EU orders, "will talk bilaterally to Russia, first of all about when it could come and in what quantities."

Cambodia closes Angkor temples as outbreak grows

Phnom Penh: Cambodia is closing its most famous attraction, the Angkor temple complex, to visitors because of a growing Covid-19 outbreak in the Southeast Asian nation.

Cambodia has confirmed 3,028 cases of infection with the coronavirus, with 23 deaths, since the pandemic began more than a year ago, but the newest outbreak has infected several hundred people. On Thursday, the Health Ministry said 113 cases were reported from local



transmission, with two deaths. The ministry traced the outbreak to a foreign resident

who broke hotel quarantine to visit a nightclub in February. That caused a slew of infections and led the government to close public schools, cinemas, bars and entertainment areas in Phnom Penh.

The closures have been extended as the outbreak grows day by day, a defunct hotel has been converted into a 500-room coronavirus hospital, and authorities are imposing criminal punishments for violating health rules.

CANCELLATION / DIVERSION / RESCHEDULING OF TRAINS DUE TO PRE-NON INTERLOCKING & NON INTERLOCKING WORKS

In order to further strengthen the existing infrastructure, Railways have decided to undertake the Pre-Non-Interlocking and Non-Interlocking work between Kolnurt Potkapalli stations in the Kazipet-Balharshah section of Secunderabad Division for Construction of 3rd Line with Electrification Laying and Linking of track from 11.04.2021 to 24.04.2021. To execute this work following trains will be Cancelled/Diverted/Rescheduled as per the details given below:-

Train No. & Train Name	Date from originating station
02511 Gorakhpur - Kochuveili Raptisagar Exp. Special	11, 15, 16, 18, 22 & 23.04.2021
02512 Kochuveili - Gorakhpur Raptisagar Exp. Special	11, 13, 14, 18, 20 & 21.04.2021
02521 Barauni Jn. - Ernakulam Jn. Express Special	12.04.2021 & 19.04.2021
02522 Ernakulam Jn. - Barauni Jn. Express Special	16.04.2021 & 23.04.2021
06249 Yasvantpur Jn. - Hazrat Nizamuddin Exp. Special	10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21 & 23.04.2021
06250 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Yasvantpur Jn. Exp. Special	10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20 & 22.04.2021
02683 Yasvantpur Jn. - Lucknow Express Special	12.04.2021 & 19.04.2021
02684 Lucknow - Yasvantpur Jn. Express Special	15.04.2021 & 22.04.2021
05023 Gorakhpur - Yasvantpur Jn. Express Special	13.04.2021 & 20.04.2021
05024 Yasvantpur Jn. - Gorakhpur Express Special	15.04.2021 & 22.04.2021
06077 Coimbatore Jn. - Hazrat Nizamuddin Special	11.04.2021 & 18.04.2021
06078 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Coimbatore Jn. Special	14.04.2021 & 21.04.2021
02285 Secunderabad Jn. - Hazrat Nizamuddin Duronto Express Special	22.04.2021
02286 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Secunderabad Jn. Duronto Express Special	23.04.2021
00651 Coimbatore North - Patel Nagar PCET	10.04.2021 & 17.04.2021
00652 Patel Nagar - Coimbatore North PCET	14.04.2021 & 21.04.2021
06151 Chennai Central - Hazrat Nizamuddin Garib Rath Exp. Special	10.04.2021 & 17.04.2021
06152 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Chennai Central Garib Rath Exp. Special	12.04.2021 & 19.04.2021
06787 Tirunelveli - Sh. Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Special	12.04.2021 & 19.04.2021
06788 Sh. Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Tirunelveli Special	15.04.2021 & 22.04.2021
06167 Thiruvananthapuram Central - Hazrat Nizamuddin Exp. Special	13.04.2021 & 20.04.2021
06168 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Thiruvananthapuram Central Exp. Special	16.04.2021 & 23.04.2021

DIVERSION OF SPECIAL TRAINS

Train No. & Train Name	Diverted Route Via	Date (from originating station)
00761 Renigunta Jn. - Hazrat Nizamuddin Doodh Duronto Spl.	Kacheguda-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Pimpal Khuti-Majri Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	11.04.2021 to 24.04.2021
00762 Hazrat Nizamuddin-Renigunta Jn. Doodh Duronto Special	Kacheguda-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Pimpal Khuti-Majri Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	10.04.2021 to 22.04.2021
00763 Renigunta Jn. - Hazrat Nizamuddin Doodh Duronto Spl.	Reniguna Jn.-Raichur Jn.-Secunderabad Jn.-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Pimpal Khuti-Majri Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	12.04.2021 to 23.04.2021
00764 Hazrat Nizamuddin-Renigunta Jn. Doodh Duronto Special	Reniguna Jn.-Raichur Jn.-Secunderabad Jn.-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Pimpal Khuti-Majri Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	11.04.2021 to 23.04.2021
02791 Secunderabad Jn. - Danapur Express Special	Secunderabad Jn.-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Hazur Sahib Nanded-Purna Jn.-Akola Jn.-Khandwa Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	11.04.2021 to 24.04.2021
02792 Danapur - Secunderabad Jn. Express Special	Secunderabad Jn.-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Hazur Sahib Nanded-Purna Jn.-Akola Jn.-Khandwa Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	10.04.2021 to 23.04.2021
02589 Gorakhpur - Secunderabad Jn. Express Special	Secunderabad Jn.-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Hazur Sahib Nanded-Purna Jn.-Akola Jn.-Khandwa Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	14.04.2021 & 21.04.2021
02590 Secunderabad Jn. - Gorakhpur Express Special	Secunderabad Jn.-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Hazur Sahib Nanded-Purna Jn.-Akola Jn.-Khandwa Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	11.04.2021, 15.04.2021 & 22.04.2021
02591 Gorakhpur - Yasvantpur Jn. Express Special	Secunderabad Jn.-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Hazur Sahib Nanded-Purna Jn.-Akola Jn.-Khandwa Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	10.04.2021, 17.04.2021 & 24.04.2021
02592 Yasvantpur Jn. - Gorakhpur Express Special	Secunderabad Jn.-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Hazur Sahib Nanded-Purna Jn.-Akola Jn.-Khandwa Jn.-Itarsi Jn.	08.04.2021, 12.04.2021 & 19.04.2021
02805 Visakhapatnam Jn. - New Delhi AP Express Special	Simhachalam North - Vizianagaram Jn. - Rayagada - Titlagarh Jn. - Rajghat Narora - Nagpur Jn.	10.04.2021 to 23.04.2021
02806 New Delhi - Visakhapatnam Jn. AP Express Special	Simhachalam North - Vizianagaram Jn. - Rayagada - Titlagarh Jn. - Rajghat Narora - Nagpur Jn.	10.04.2021 to 23.04.2021

RESCHEDULING OF SPECIAL TRAINS

02724 New Delhi - Hyderabad Decan Express Special will depart from New Delhi at 18.30 hrs. instead of 16.00 hrs. on 23.04.2021.
02692 Hazrat Nizamuddin - KSR Bengaluru Express Special will depart from Hazrat Nizamuddin at 22.20 hrs. instead of 19.50 hrs. on 23.04.2021.

For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table of stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., must be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

RailMadad Helpline No. 139
Visit RailMadad Website - www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in
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Biden seems ready to extend US troops presence in Afghanistan

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Without coming right out and saying it, President Joe Biden seems ready to let lapse a May 1 deadline for completing a withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan.

Orderly withdrawals take time, and Biden is running out of it. Biden has inched so close to the deadline that his indecision amounts almost to a decision to put off, at least for a number of months, a pullout of the remaining 2,500 troops and continue supporting the Afghan military at the risk of a Taliban backlash.



their equipment in the next three weeks — along with coalition partners who can't get out on their own — would be difficult logistically, as

Biden himself suggested in late March. "It's going to be hard to meet the May 1 deadline," he said. "Just in terms of tactical reasons, it's hard to get those troops out." Tellingly, he added, "And if we leave, we're going to do so in a safe and orderly way."

James Stavridis, a retired Navy admiral who served as NATO's top commander from 2009 to 2013, says it would be unwise at this point to get out quickly.

"Sometimes not making a decision becomes a decision, which seems the case with the May 1 deadline," Stavridis said in an email exchange Wednesday.

US President making new moves on guns, including naming ATF boss

Washington: President Joe Biden, in his first major gun control measures since taking office, is announcing executive actions Thursday aimed at addressing what the White House calls a "gun violence public health epidemic."

Biden also is nominating David Chipman, a former federal agent and adviser at the gun control group Giffords, to be director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

4 MAOIST MINS IN NEPAL RELIEVED OF PARLIAMENT
Kathmandu: Four Ministers in Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli-led Cabinet, who belonged to the CPN-Maoist Centre led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', were relieved of their Parliament membership on Thursday. Energy Minister Top Bahadur Rayamajhi, Industry Minister Lekhranj Bhatta, Urban Development Minister Prabhu Sah and Labour Minister Gaurishankar Chaudhary lost their positions as lawmakers upon the recommendation of their party.

TOP POLISH JUDGE UNDER FIRE FOR TWEET
Warsaw (Poland): Poland's leading opposition party is asking prosecutors to investigate a constitutional court judge who it alleges has endangered a 10-year-old transgender child by identifying the child publicly.

S KOREA'S OPP PARTY WINS 2 KEY LOCAL POLLS
Seoul: South Korea's conservative Opposition party has won sweeping victories in mayoral-by-elections in the country's two biggest cities.

UK's Royal Air Force in op to clear ISIS stronghold in Iraq

London: Missiles and bombs were used to clear a stronghold of the Islamic State (ISIS) terrorist group in northern Iraq as part of a joint operation with ground forces in the region, the UK's Royal Air Force (RAF) said on Thursday.

In an operation lasting 10 days during March, the Iraqi Security Forces ground troops cleared ISIS terrorists from the Makhmur Mountain region, south-west from Erbil, while

RAF and other Global Coalition aircraft carried out a major air offensive in support. The operation began when ISIS extremists were confirmed to be based in a network of caves in the Makhmur mountains and concluded on March 22. "The British Armed Forces, alongside our Iraqi and coalition partners, continue to root out Daesh [ISIS] terrorists from where they hide," said UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace.

Reigning Mrs World, friend held for fracas at Mrs Sri Lanka event

Colombo: The reigning Mrs World, Caroline Jurie, and one of her associates were arrested on Thursday for allegedly causing damage to property and wounding a contestant at a beauty contest held here last week.

Pushpika de Silva was crowned the winner of the Mrs Sri Lanka beauty pageant. Jurie had announced that de Silva is a divorcee and only married women are qualified to become Mrs Sri Lanka. She then forcibly took off the winner's crown from de Silva and placed it on the head of the first runner up, and sashed her as the winner.

महिला सशक्तिकरण एवं बाल विकास विभाग उत्तराखण्ड देहरादून
पत्रांक: 56/अनुसूचक पोषाहार/2020-21 दिनांक 8 अप्रैल 2021
ई-निविदा विज्ञापित
निदेशालय महिला सशक्तिकरण एवं बाल विकास विभाग नंदा की चौकी सुद्धोवाला देहरादून उत्तराखण्ड द्वारा अनुसूचक पोषाहार के अंतर्गत टेक होम राशन (T.H.R) की आपूर्ति हेतु ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। ई-निविदा दिनांक 12 अप्रैल 2021 सायं 4.00 बजे से वेबसाइट <https://www.uktenders.gov.in> पर उपलब्ध होगी।
उप निदेशक

Rupee plunges to near 5-mth low of 74.58 against USD

PTI ■ MUMBAI
The Indian rupee weakened further by 11 paise against the US currency to close at its weakest level in nearly five months on Thursday amid fears that a rapid resurgence of Covid cases in the country can disrupt economic recovery. Logging its fourth straight session loss, the domestic currency settled at 74.58 to the US dollar – the lowest level for the rupee since November 13, 2019. At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 74.38 against the greenback and traded in the range of 74.19 to 74.93 during the day. On Wednesday, the Indian rupee nosedived 105 paise to mark its biggest single-session drop in over 20 months. Over

the past four sessions, the domestic unit has lost 146 paise in its valuation against the US dollar. Jateen Trivedi, Senior Research Analyst at LKP Securities, said, "Government spending keeps increasing on vaccines and health products due to rising COVID-19 cases. INR will be seen in a range of 74.45-75.15 in sessions ahead with a weak trend for the rupee." According to Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities, the rupee drifted further downward on Thursday amid domestic headwinds of slower economic recovery due to rising virus cases and absence of central bank's intervention. India registered a record

single-day spike of 1,26,789 new COVID-19 cases, pushing its infection tally to 1,29,28,574, while the number of active cases too went upwards to breach the nine lakh-mark again, Union Health Ministry data updated on Thursday showed. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.06 per cent to 92.39. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.51 per cent down at USD 62.84 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 84.45 points or 0.17 per cent higher at 49,746.21, while the broader NSE Nifty advanced by 54.75 points or 0.37 per cent to 14,873.80.

Coal India records all-time high capex of ₹13,115 cr in FY'21

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Coal India on Thursday said its capital expenditure (capex) grew more than two-folds to hit an all-time high of ₹13,115 crore in the just concluded fiscal. CIL's original sanctioned capex budget was Rs 10,000 crore for FY'21. "Coal India Ltd (CIL) more than doubled its capital expenditure to an unprecedented high of ₹ 13,115 crore in FY'21... Against the capex of ₹6,270 crore in FY'20, the company clocked 109 per cent growth amid the Covid slump," the company said in a statement. This comes at a time when the Centre had advised CPSEs of the country to scale up their expenditure to boost the economy. The entire capital expen-

diture was funded through internal resources. Capex growth during all the four quarters of FY'21 was significantly higher compared to previous year... CIL said in a statement. The capex included procurement of heavy earth moving machinery at Rs 3,453 crore followed by land at Rs 2,470 crore. "Capex in joint ventures, in proportion to CIL's shareholding, like Talcher Fertilizers Ltd and Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited accounted for ₹2,194 crore. CIL's coal evacuation initiatives which include setting up coal handling plants, silos and constructing sidings accounted for ₹1,398 crore. Construction of rail corridors and railway lines summed up ₹1,166 crore, while the rest was made up by different other heads," the company said.

First purchase of G-secs worth ₹25,000 cr under G-SAP 1.0 on Apr 15: RBI

PTI ■ MUMBAI
The Reserve Bank on Thursday said the first purchase of government securities worth ₹25,000 crore under the G-sec Acquisition Programme (G-SAP 1.0) will be done on April 15 with a view to enabling a stable and orderly evolution of the yield curve. After the Monetary Policy Committee meeting on Wednesday, Governor Shaktikanta Das announced that the RBI will conduct open market purchase of government securities (G-secs) of Rs 1 lakh crore under the G-SAP 1.0 in the first quarter of this financial year. "The first purchase of government securities for an

aggregate amount of Rs 25,000 crore under G-SAP 1.0 will be conducted on April 15, 2021," the central bank said in a statement. On April 15, the RBI will purchase five government securities of different maturities amounting to Rs 25,000 crore. There will be no security-wise notified amount. On Wednesday, the RBI had said it will put in place a secondary market government securities acquisition programme or G-SAP 1.0 for this fiscal to enable an orderly evolution of the yield curve. The central bank said the endeavour through the programme will be to ensure congenial financial conditions for the economic recovery to gain traction.

Equities extend gains for third day; metal, IT stocks sparkle

PTI ■ MUMBAI
The BSE Sensex gave up early gains but managed to close in the green on Thursday as concerns over rising coronavirus infections and resultant restrictions across the country kept investors on the edge. A depreciating trend in the rupee also weighed on risk sentiment, traders said. Rising for the third session on the trot, the 30-share BSE benchmark settled 84.45 points or 0.17 per cent higher at 49,746.21. The broader NSE Nifty advanced 54.75 points or 0.37 per cent to 14,873.80. UltraTech Cement was the top performer among the Sensex constituents, rallying 4.24 per cent, followed by Titan, Tech Mahindra, Nestle India, TCS, Bajaj Finserv and I&T. On the other hand, IndusInd Bank, ONGC, Sun Pharma, Bajaj Auto, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank were among the laggards, slipping up to 1.07 per cent. "Domestic market continued its optimistic rally supported by dovish monetary policy, though it witnessed consolidation during the second half due to selling in banking stocks. Metal stocks led the sectorial rally on a strong outlook supported by rising steel prices and production. Q4 earnings season has started and the market is expected to have a stock-centric rally in the coming days which has a very broad positive view," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Amendments made in copyright rules to ensure smooth compliance: Govt

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Amendments made in the Copyright rules would ensure smooth compliance through adoption of electronic means as the primary mode of communication and working in the Copyright Office, an official statement said on Thursday. The Government notified the Copyright (Amendment) Rules, 2021 in March. The amendments have been introduced with the objective of bringing the existing rules in parity with other relevant legislations, the commerce and industry ministry said. "It aims to ensure smooth and flawless compliance in the light of technological advancement in the digital era by adopting electronic means as the primary mode of commu-

nication and working in the Copyright Office," it added. It further said a new provision regarding publication of a copyrights journal has been incorporated, thereby eliminating the requirement of publication in the Official Gazette. In order to encourage accountability and transparency, new provisions have been introduced to deal with the undistributed royalty amounts and use of electronic and traceable payment methods during collection and distribution of royalties. "The time limit for the Central Government to respond to an application made before it for registration as a copyright society is extended to 180 days, so that the application can be more comprehensively examined," it added.

Finmin requests Health, Home ministries for vaccination of bank employees on priority basis

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The union finance ministry has requested the health and home ministries for issuing instructions for enabling Covid-19 vaccination of employees of banks and National Payments Corporation of India on priority basis. This will go a long way in assuring bank employees about safety of themselves and their families and also boost their morale in continuing to provide their services to customers even in these difficult times when the fresh wave has swept many states, the finance ministry in its recent communication said. Out of total strength of 13.5 lakh employees in the banking sector, about 600 unfortunate deaths due to COVID-19 were recorded, as per the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) data. In percentage terms, 0.04

per cent of total strength lost their lives. The communication to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Home Affairs emphasised important role of bankers during disbursement and withdrawal of benefits transferred under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. Similarly, it said, the reliance on digital mode of payments increased and employees of National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) played critical role in ensuring unhindered services. The IBA in the last month had written a letter addressed to Secretary Health and Family

Welfare for inclusion of bank employees for vaccination on priority basis given their role their important role in running the economy. The association had requested the ministry for free vaccination on priority basis. With the new variant of mutant virus, the risk has increased manifold for those who are not vaccinated, the IBA had said. Quoting observation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, IBA had said the committee appreciated the efforts and pain taken by the banking sector for providing uninterrupted and seamless banking facility during the COVID-19 outbreak. While recognising good work done by the banking sector, the committee emphasised that they be declared COVID-19 warriors, IBA letter to Health Secretary said.

Wheat procurement in Delhi in full swing; 15.8 tonnes procured so far: FCI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Termining 'baseless' the Delhi Government's claim that wheat procurement centres are not operational in the national capital, the Centre's Food Corporation of India (FCI) on Thursday said buying centres are fully functional and so far purchased 15.8 tonnes of wheat at MSP directly from farmers. Normally, wheat procurement is undertaken from three centres in Delhi: Mayapuri, Narela and APMC Najafgarh Mandi. Last year, 27.6 tonnes of wheat was procured from farmers here. Wheat is a major rabi (winter-sown) crop. Harvesting

starts from end of March but picks up pace from April. Wheat is procured at minimum support price (MSP). "It is a baseless allegation by the Delhi govt that procurement centres are not operational. The state govt had requested for opening of wheat procurement centres. We accepted their request and made operational all three centres from April 1," FCI Delhi Region General Manager Sudhir Kumar told PTI. Already, 15.8 tonnes of wheat has been procured so far and payment has been made to farmers, he said, adding that the procurement plan was decided in consultation with the state govt.

On the other hand, IndusInd Bank, ONGC, Sun Pharma, Bajaj Auto, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank were among the laggards, slipping up to 1.07 per cent. "Domestic market continued its optimistic rally supported by dovish monetary policy, though it witnessed consolidation during the second half due to selling in banking stocks. Metal stocks led the sectorial rally on a strong outlook supported by rising steel prices and production. Q4 earnings season has started and the market is expected to have a stock-centric rally in the coming days which has a very broad positive view," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
E-OPEN TENDER
E-Open Tenders are invited for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work: **Sl. No. [1]; Tender No. MW-P-19-Safety Testing-2; Name of the work: Health Checkup of 51 nos. of EOT Cranes in CLW, Chittaranjan; Tender Value (Rupees): 5,25,371.40; Cost of Tender Document (Rupees): 2,000.00; Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees): Nil; Period of completion: 06 months. NOTE: (i) Date of Closing: 28.04.2021 at 13.00 hrs. (ii) Complete details can be seen in the Railway website www.ireps.gov.in. (iii) Tender Calling Authority: Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Plant. (iv) Contact No.: 0341-2525566. (v) E-mail Id: dyemplantclw@yahoo.com**

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION
General public is hereby informed that one male was found dead from Ganda Nala, Behind Sagar Pur Bus Stand, Near PS Sagar Pur, Delhi, PS Hari Nagar, Delhi-64 on 04.03.2021 at about 10.30 AM. In this regard a **DD No. 52A, Dated 04.03.2021**, has been registered at **P.S. Hari Nagar, Delhi**. The dead body has been preserved in Mortuary of DDU Hospital, Hari Nagar, Delhi for 72 hrs. for identification. The description of the dead body is given as under: **Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown R/o: Unknown, Age: about 55 years, Height: 5'8" Feet, Face: Oval, Complexion: Fair, Build: Thin, Hair: Black, White Coloured small beard, Wearing: Black Colour Shirt.** Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the information about the dead male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one is having any information about this dead male please inform the undersigned.
S.H.O P.S. Hari Nagar, Delhi Ph.: 011-28125719, 8750871128
DP/395/WD/2021

Surge in Covid cases may impact NBFCs' fund raising via securitisation: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Fears of stricter lockdown amid the second wave of coronavirus infections may affect asset quality of retail loans, thereby impacting the fund-raising ability of housing finance and non-banking finance companies through the securitisation route, according to a report. Securitisation is the process of pooling and repackaging homogenous illiquid financial assets into marketable securi-

ties that can be sold to investors. Securitisation volume, which stood at ₹85,000-90,000 crore during the financial year 2020-21, is expected to rise by 40-50 per cent year-on-year in the current fiscal (2021-22), Ibra Ratings said in a report. NBFCs and HFCs securitised volume stood at ₹40,000 crore of their loans assets in the fourth quarter of fiscal 2020-21, similar to the corresponding quarter of FY2019-20, it added.

India to resume buying oil from Iran once US sanctions ease

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
India will look to resume buying crude oil from Iran the moment US sanctions are eased, helping it diversify its import basket, a senior Government official said. India stopped importing oil from Iran in mid-2019 following sanctions on the Persian Gulf nation by the Trump administration. The US and other world powers are meeting in Vienna to revive the Iran nuclear deal. "Once the sanctions are lifted, we can look to resume oil imports from Iran," the official, who did not wish to be identified, said. India stopped importing oil from Iran in mid-2019 following sanctions on the Persian Gulf nation by the Trump administration.

UJVN LIMITED
H.O.: 'UJJWAL', Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun - 248006
Tel.: 0135-2763808 Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866 Website: www.ujvn.com
Ref. No.: 269 **Time Extension Notice-II** Dated: 08.04.2021
The dates of "e-Tender No.26/e/EE(G)/CPH/2020-21."Supply of mechanical Tool & Plant items at Chibro Power House" & Tender No 27-e/EE(G)/CPH/2020-21 "Supply of Slip Ring complete with all accessories of 63 MVA, generator at Chibro Power House" due to unavoidable circumstances invited by Executive Engineer (G) Chibro Power House is extended as follows.
Last date of submission of bid in the portal : 15-04-2021 up to 14:00
Last date of submission of hard copy : 16-04-2021 from 17:00 Hrs.
Date of opening of the bid Part-I on website : 19-04-2021 from 10:00
All other condition shall be same as previous. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "<http://uktenders.gov.in>"
EE(G),Chibro
"Avoid Wasteful Use of Electricity"

Metro Railway, Kolkata
Kolkata's Pride
REPLACEMENT OF ESCALATORS AT DIFFERENT STATIONS
Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by **Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway** for the following work : **Name of work : Civil Engineering works for replacement of 10 nos. Escalators at different stations of Metro Railway, Kolkata. Tender Value: ₹ 56,44,046.10. Cost of Tender Document: Nil. Earnest Money: Nil. Completion period: Nine (9) months. Date & Time of closing: 10.05.2021 at 12.00 hrs.** The tender document and other details can be obtained from the website www.ireps.gov.in
Abridged e-Tender Notice No.: Civil-2357-2021 (Open)
FASTER • SAFER • SMOOTHER • CLEANER

WESTERN RAILWAY
REPLACEMENT OF SIGNALING EQUIPMENTS
Tender No.: 216_217_2_52_WA
Dated: 06/04/2021. Department: Signal & Telecom Executive: DY/CE/STEW Work and location : Replacement of overaged indoor & outdoor signaling equipments with Electronic Interlocking at Vedchna & Maroli stations in Mumbai Division Western Railway. Approx. Cost of Work: Rs.7,64,19,661/-
**Particular office where E-tender open: Deputy Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer (Works), Western Railway, Mumbai Central, Mumbai-400 008 EMD Rs.: NIL (Bid security declaration required from Tenderer) Validity of Offers: 45 Days, from the date of opening Type of E-Tender: Open E-Tender Time & Date for closure for submission of E-Tender Documents On 15.00 hrs. on 04/05/2021 Time & Date for opening of E-Tender On 15.30 hrs. on 04/05/2021. The tender can be viewed at web site <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. 0007
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Government of Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER SEWERAGE & DRAINAGE DIVISION No: 1st SULIMAN COMPLEX DALGATE SRINAGAR
Notice Inviting e-Tendering
GIST of e-NIT No: 02 of 2021-22
For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer S&D Division 1st UEED Srinagar invites online e-bids in two (02) cover system from Registered Firms / Agencies having expertise in O&M of STPs, ETPs or WTPs as detailed in the tender document for the following work.
S.No. 1 Name of Work :- Operation routine maintenance and breakdown maintenance of 1000KLD Sewerage Treatment Plant at Super Speciality Hospital Shreen Bagh Srinagar for (One Year)
Cost of work (Rs. In lacs) :- To be quoted by the bidder, Cost of T/doc. (In rupees):- 2000/-, Time of operation & maintenance :- 01 year, Class of Contractor :- Registered Firms / Agencies
IMPORTANT DATES:
1. Date of Publishing :- 08/04/2021
2. Period of downloading of bidding documents :- 08/04/2021 to 28/04/2021 up-to 4:00 PM
3. Bid submission Start Date :- 08/04/2021 from 4:00 PM
4. Bid submission End Date :- 28/04/2021 up-to 4:00 PM
5. Date and Time for Submission of Hard copy of Bids by successful bidder :- Within three days from the date of opening of the tenders.
6. Date of Opening of Bids :- 29/04/2021 at 11:00 AM or any other convenient date.
Tender Receiving Authority :- Executive Engineer S&D Division 1st Sulaiman Complex Dalgate Srinagar
Sd/- Executive Engineer S&D Division 1st Srinagar
No. DIP/K-295/21
Dated: 08.04.2021

SPECIMEN OF ADVERTISEMENT TO BE PUBLISHED PUBLIC NOTICE
TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN
This is to inform the General Public that following share certificate of (Name of Company)
Bajaj Hindustan Sugar Ltd having its Registered Office at Golagokaranath, **Rakhimpur kheri, kheri Distt UP** registered in the name of the following Shareholder/s have been lost by them.

Name Of Share Holders	Awadhesh Shukla
Folio No.	A001962 A001991
Certificate No/s.	5568 5597
Distinctive Number/s	214594294-214595493 214603016-214603815
No. of shares	1200 900

The Public are hereby cautioned against purchasing or dealing in any way with the above referred share certificates.
Any person who has any claim in respect of the said share certificate/s should lodge such claim with the Company or its Registrar and Transfer Agents Link Intime India Private Limited 247 Park, C-101, 1st Floor, L. B. S. Marg, Vikroli (w) Mumbai-400083 within 15 days of publication of this notice after which no claim will be entertained and the Company shall proceed to issue Duplicate Share Certificate/s.
Place New Delhi Name of Legal Claimant: is SANJU SHUKLA. Date 09/4/2021

In the Court of Sh. Shirish Aggarwal: Administrative Civil Judge-cum-ARC (Central) Delhi-110054.
SC-40/2021 N.D.O.H. 14.04.2021
Veena Bhatia Vs. The State & Ors.
To
Veena Bhatia
Aged about 71 years,
W/o Late Shri Hariom Bhatia,
R/o B-90/2, Deeravali Nagar,
North West Delhi, Delhi-110009
.....Petitioner
FOR SUCCESSION CERTIFICATE UNDER INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT, 1925
To
All Concerned
Whereas in the above noted petition the applicant/petitioner has applied for Succession Certificate to the Hon'ble Court Under Section 372 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 in respect of the debt and securities amount of Rs xxx. As per record to be standing in the name of Late **Sh. Hariom Bhatia** deceased.
Whereas the 14.04.2021 at 10'o o'clock in the forenoon has been fixed for hearing or the application notice is hereby given to this concerned.
Given under mv hand and the seal of the court on this 06.04.2021.
Sd/ (Shirish Aggarwal) ACJ/ARC(Central): Delhi

SEARCH FOR MISSING
General public is hereby informed that a boy namely **Salman @ Shera, S/o: Daleep Singh, R/o: H.No.22, Gali No.05, Near Shiv Mandir, Pipal Tree, Kamla Market, Andheri East, Mumbai, Maharashtra** has been missing since **07.04.2014** from **Salam Balak Trust, DDA Community Center, 2nd Floor, Chandi Wali Gali, Paharganj, Delhi**. In this regard **FIR No. 191/2014 dated 07.04.2014 U/s 363 IPC** has been lodged at **Police Station Paharganj, Delhi**. The description of missing boy is as under:
Name: Salman @ Shera, Age: 14 Years, Height: 4'5", Face: Oval, Complexion: Shallow, Build: Normal, Wearing: Red Colour T-Shirt, Blue colour Jeans Pant, Relaxo hawai Chappal in feet.
If anyone has any information about this missing boy please inform **P.S. Paharganj, Delhi**.
Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639 SHO
Police Station, Paharganj, Delhi Ph: 011-8750012525, 8750042525
DP/744/CD/2021

SEARCH FOR MISSING
General Public is hereby informed that a person namely **Rajender Prashad, S/o Desai Prashad, R/o H.No. G 170A, Gali No. 2, Gulshan Chowk near Nepali Mandir, Punjabi Basti, Baljeet Nagar, Anand Parbat, Delhi** Age: 53 years, Height: 5'4", Complexion: Sallow, Face: Long, Build: Thin, Wearing: Green Colour Shirt, Saletti Colour Pant and Black Chappal in his feet has been missing from his house since **31.03.2021** at 9.00 am. In this regard a **DD No. 39A dated 31.03.2021** has been registered at **P.S. Anand Parbat, Delhi**.
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this person please inform undersigned.
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in SHO
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 P.S. Anand Parbat, Delhi
Fax : 011-24368639 Ph. : 011-28762468, 28764807,
DP/742/CD/2021 8750870435

AXIS BANK
Axis Bank Limited, Axis House, Tower-2, 2nd Floor, I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Jaypee Greens, Wash town, Noida (U.P.)-201301
Axis Bank Ltd., 3rd Floor, Gigaplex, NPC 1, TTC Industrial Area, Mughals Road, Airoli, Navi Mumbai 400 708. Registered Office: 'Trishul', 3rd Floor Opp. Samarsheshwar Temple Law Garden, Ellisbridge Ahmedabad 380006.
Corrigendum to Auction Sale Published in "The Pioneer" dated 05 April 2021
This in reference to the Sale Notice Published in this newspaper "The Pioneer" (English & Hindi) dated 05 April 2021 in reference to the Auction Sale of mortgaged property of Mr. Devendra Pal Singh. There is typographical error in respect to EMD deposit date and Auction date which is inadvertently mentioned as 20.04.2020 & 22.04.2020. Kindly treat EMD date as 20.04.2021 and Auction date as 22.04.2021. The rest of Terms & Condition of the Publication of Sale Notice dated 05.04.2021 will be same.
Sd/- Authorized Officer, Axis Bank Ltd. Place: Delhi Date: 9-4-2021

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

SR. NO.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	GURU JAMBHESHWAR UNIVERSITY HISAR	INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR ENGAGEMENT OF FIRE CONSULTANT FOR OBTAINING FIRE & SAFETY CERTIFICATE AT GUSTJ, HISAR (2ND RECALL).	09.04.2021 05.05.2021	1 LAKH	http://www.gjust.ac.in	01662-263105 uwgd@jhuhr@gmail.com
2	HAFED	HAFED HAS INVITED SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTICE FOR PURCHASE OF EMPTY PACKING MATERIAL AND PREMIX OF VITAMIN A & D ON RATE CONTRACT BASIS FOR 6 MONTHS FOR HAFED OIL MILLS. THE DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON HTTPS://ETENDERS.HRY.NIC.IN AND WWW.HAFED.GOV.IN	CLOSING DATE 20.04.2021	ITEM WISE	www.hafed.gov.in	01722585912 hafed@hry.nic.in
3	MAHARANA PARTAP HORTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY	HIRING THE SERVICES OF ONE FCA FOR E-FILING OF INCOME TAX & GST RETURNS OF MHU FOR A PERIOD OF 3 YEARS ON JOB CONTRACT BASIS FOR MHU, KARNAL	08.04.2021 28.04.2021	03.00 LACS	https://mhu.ac.in	9255526255 aog@mhu.ac.in
4	HSVP	BALANCE SCOPE OF WORK IN COUNTRY CLUB HEALTH CLUB AND SWIMMING POOL IN SECTOR 56 GURUGRAM. EXCAVATION OF PIPE LINE BRICK WORK TILE IN FLOORING. POP WORK WOOD WORK AND PARKING INCLUDING PUBLIC HEALTH AMENITIES AND ALL OTHER WORKS CONTINGENT THERETO, INCLUDING 3 YEARS MTC/DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD FREE OF COST. RE INVITE	02.04.2021 26.04.2021	11.11 LACS	www.hsvp.org.in	9999615511 xen1hudaggn@gmail.com
5	HAFED	HAFED INVITED TENDER FOR ENGAGEMENT OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT (PMC)/CONSULTANCY FIRM FOR SETTING UP OF PLANT FOR PRODUCTION OF FORTIFIED RICE KERNELS (FRK) AT HAFED COMPLEX TARAOLI. THE DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON HTTPS://ETENDERS.HRY.NIC.IN .	09.04.2021 22.04.2021	25000/-	www.hafed.gov.in	01722590531 hafed@hry.nic.in
6	CHAUDHARY RANBIR SINGH UNIVERSITY	HIRING OF VEHICLES FOR CHAUDHARY RANBIR SINGH UNIVERSITY JIND	07.04.2021 27.04.2021	7 LACS	www.crsu.ac.in	01681-241033 prof@crsu.ac.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in **RO NO. 2518**



Mom is an extremely positive person: Alaya F

Her mom, actress Pooja Bedi, has never really minced words when it comes to sharing her thoughts. However, budding actress Alaya F says when it comes to sharing knowledge and experiences about the industry, she and her mom have always had positive conversations.

"The one wonderful thing is that she is an extremely positive person. She focusses on telling me the positives. If I ask about it, she will tell me anything I want to know. Most of the conversations related to the industry have been positive," Alaya says.



She adds that her mother never planned to be an actress. "My mother never intended to be an actor. It was never her big dream to be an actor. She kind of fell into it. I don't think there were many heartbreaks with the industry when it came to her," she says.

Meanwhile, the actress, who was seen in her film *Jawaani Jaaneman*, recently starred in a music video called *Aaj Sajeya*. The song has been written, composed and sung by Goldie Sohel.

"My film released and the world went into lockdown, so I lost a year at the start of my career, which is okay! I knew that I wasn't going to have a release coming out super soon. When Punit (Malhotra) came to me, I saw no reason not to do it. I mean Manish Malhotra was doing my clothes and Micky (Contractor) sir was going to do my make up and he (Puneet) was directing it. Everyone else involved was just so wonderful, I was like let's totally do it," she says.

Alaya dons the look of a young bride in the music video. "The concept is fun, young, new, modern bride. It is funny because when I go to a wedding, instead of heels, I wear boots or high sneakers as they are more comfortable. I related to it on a personal level. I loved the whole vibe of it. It was something which my character from *Jawaani Jaaneman* never got. In the film, I got pregnant, but never married. So here I got to get married!" she says.

THE DAWN OF DIGITISATION

Technology has allowed retailing companies to service their customers more effectively through enhanced innovation and R&D, says NILESH GUPTA

The relentless advancements in technology and digital innovation have propelled a new age in the retailing industry. Retailing players are constantly evolving their operational frameworks as new-age technological enhancements continue to redefine the way businesses engage the market and customers. From product formulation to designing and retailing, technology is transforming every aspect of the retail sector. It is imperative for companies to adopt the latest technological systems to improve work productivity and stay at par with international standards and competitors.

Technology has seemingly revolutionised the way businesses operate. Earlier, people would spend hours queuing up at stores and sifting through a wide array of products. Now with the advent of various digital technologies and customers becoming tech-savvy, brick and mortar retail outlets must adapt to the shifting winds and embrace the technological evolution. The customers, too, expect no less from their preferred retailers. While online shopping is certainly gaining vast popularity and is fast becoming a

global trend, a considerable percentage of people still prefer buying goods from offline retail stores. Albeit, in an innovated avatar. Though the pandemic acted as a growth catalyst for the online retail sector, physical retail stores are also witnessing a brisk rise in footfall as things slowly return to normalcy.

Let's see how technology is fast disrupting the industry with the growth of state-of-the-art digital retail software, automated purchasing, electronic transactions, etc.

POS
 A cutting-edge 'Point of Sale' system enables retailers to speedily view a vast surfeit of livestock inventory, commence electronic transactions and extend digital marketing tools like electronic receipts to the customer. A POS system is a must-have for every retailer who aspires to impart a new-age seamless buying experience to customers. The latest POS aids in a smooth and streamlined transaction by instantly collating consumer data and showcasing the entire stock of all the floors. It also allows customers to confirm a transaction from anywhere on-shop and view offerings through hand-

held computers, printers and scanners. This has substantially boosted overall customer experience as before, some people would depart without buying anything due to long queues at the counter.

CONTACT-FREE
 Technological optimisation in the retailing sector has also offshoot the rise of contactless payment mechanisms. These touchless payment modules utilize RFID or NFC technology that allows buyers to view or purchase items directly due to their smartphone devices. This tech upgrade has removed the contingency of passwords or PINs and has made the checkout process way more convenient and smooth. Accelerated transactions through advanced POS and contactless payments naturally translate into increased sales margin for retailing companies.

FRIENDLY SHOPS
 Remember getting exhausted while struggling to reach the transactional counter or not getting the required help during article selection. Technology resolves this predicament through the

arrival of customer-friendly self-help kiosks. These intelligent automated kiosks have shepherded the onset of IT technology in the retail industry. They are highly efficient in enhancing customer satisfaction and bringing down costs simultaneously.

INVENTORY MANAGEMENT
 Manual management of retail inventory has always proven to be a very expensive and tedious process for businesses. With the dawn of digitisation, technology can allow retail keepers to monitor inventory through its procurement cycle while extending hands-on data for official perusal. Managing inventory has become a lot easier and is costing companies quite less due to reduced effort and time. Now, store managers have a better idea of what consumers demand more and which goods the store is running short of. By leveraging technology, store inventory management has become more streamlined and the potential for theft has also reduced.

PRICE AUDIT
 Similar to inventory management, price auditing was also a lengthy and

expensive process for retail companies. Price auditing is an essential business aspect for warranting that companies are not overpricing or underpricing their customers. Technology has transformed this time-consuming process via automatic price checks whenever products are counter-scanned. This leads to better and accurate pricing, saves time and increases brand reputation through enhanced customer service. The use of price auditing technology has proven to be a boon for the retailing industry.

Technology has been the transforming power for countless industries that have boomed phenomenally on its account. It has made business operations far more agile, nimble, seamless and precise. It has allowed retailing companies to service their customers more effectively through enhanced innovation and R&D. The pandemic, too, has further spawned the preference for contactless payment modes and digital buying experiences. Retail players who capitalise on the technological surge would surely benefit massively than those who fail to do so.

(The writer is the Director, Vijay Sales.)

TREND TOOL

The wonders of buttermilk

A common ingredient in ancient India, it has been offering respite from several skin problems, shares MANASVINI PANT

Applying chemical-laden tan removal creams or lotions might help your dry and dull skin in the short run but what about the long run? It's a big no! We adopt and do what serves us in the long run. So, why not go natural and what better than buttermilk (*chaas*)? Here is a list of skin benefits of buttermilk that will, by the end of this article, leave you yearning for a glass of it. And this time not just for drinking but for treating your skin to its many useful properties.



For a glowing skin
 Do not picture fair skin. Please don't be blinded by vacuous advertisements of fairness creams that instill an inferiority complex in your psyche in the name of pampering oneself. Glowing skin refers to the skin that is cleansed deeply and has a natural luster of its own regardless of the skin tone. As far as buttermilk is concerned, it is rich in lactic acid and is a natural pro-biotic too. Lactic acid is found in most of the beauty products on the market. Additionally, being a rich source of natural astringents, the acidic properties of buttermilk help tone your skin to keep it looking clear and youthful.

Deep cleanser
 Just forget all your chemical-laden cleansers as we have a pocket-friendly way to solve this problem. No points for guessing because it's the good old buttermilk. It works

as an excellent cleanser for the skin. It is used to cleanse and nourish skin deeply. Its lactic acid content drives out all the dirt, dust, grime and muck embedded in the innermost pores of your skin. Regular use will give you optimum skin benefits.

For acne scars
 One of the biggest reasons why buttermilk is an excellent remedy against a number of skin problems is due to the presence of natural alpha-hydroxy acids or AHAs in it. This ingredient helps exfoliate and brighten your skin, boosts circulation and prevents acne by eliminating the top layer of dead skin. Regularly using it in your skincare routine eventually has an effect on existing scars as well and delivers absolutely clear and spotless skin.

Say goodbye to sunburns
 No matter how much sunscreen you apply on your face, the threat of

getting burnt or tanned by the sun always stays. If you stayed out in the sun for long, grab a glass of buttermilk and treat your sunburnt skin. It works to cool, relax and soothe your skin. In fact, it works wonders as an anti-tanning agent too. To augment its efficacy, add a sufficient quantity of tomato puree to it.

Skin tightener
 Mix adequate quantity of buttermilk into *besan* (gram flour), turmeric, sandalwood powder and egg white (from an egg) and orange rinds' powder. Keep it on for at least 15 minutes. Your skin will feel tightened (naturally, because the mask is getting dried) but deep inside, not only is your skin's radiance being worked upon to be bright to the forefront but also it is being tightened. Repeat every alternate day for a month and brace yourself for a younger you.
 (The writer is the fashion and beauty creator at Trell.)

Even as the automotive industry recovers from the worst year in living memory, there are some very interesting statistics emerging from the market. The most interesting of which is that one in every three passenger vehicles sold in India between April 2020 and March 2021 was a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV). While small hatchbacks remain the biggest-selling segment, only one in ten vehicles sold in the same time frame was a sedan — the rise and rise of the SUV. Keep in mind that an SUV is a body-style not a description of functionality, is remarkable and when Hyundai came out saying that they had sold a million SUVs in the Indian market, two-thirds of which were the Creta alone, it was a telling statement of how the car market has evolved.

In the 2000s, as the Indian economy began to grow, it was the WagonR and the Santro that defined the aspirations of the Indian car buyer. That evolved in the early-2010s to the sedan or to be more specific, the initially quite aesthetically ugly compact sedan segment, but as car buyers moved to their second and third vehicle purchases, they wanted something bigger and the answer to that was the SUV. Of course, the thinking was that SUVs are required for India's road conditions but the craze coincided with a time when India's urban roads and highways saw a dramatic improvement in overall quality. While one could dismiss the rise of the

THE RISE AND RISE OF THE SUV

Across the world, car buyers are voting with their money and that money wants SUVs



SUV as a function of poor road quality if it was specific to India alone, but it is almost universal across the world. From China to Europe, there has been a dramatic rise in the popularity of the SUV and one major reason for this has been the advancement of manufacturing technologies.

The old utility vehicle was a body mounted to a central frame that provided the vehicle its structural integrity, this made utility vehicles, well, utilitarian and heavy. The modern SUV is much more like a passenger car because it is also of monocoque construction, where the body itself provides the structural integrity of the vehicle. This makes

them a lot cheaper and easier to construct, and also weirdly enough, safer. So much so that the new Land Rover Defender is a monocoque which disproves the notion that an extreme off-road vehicle cannot be a monocoque since that would twist and turn the body and damage the vehicle's structural integrity.

Of course, the average SUV that buyers look at is not designed for 'offroading'. They are mainly described as 'softroaders', able to deal with broken pavement and bad roads, thanks to their higher ground clearance and do so with relative comfort, thanks to softer suspensions. But, of course, they are not as engaging to drive as what

makes them adept at dealing with bad roads means that they suffer from poorer handling dynamics. However, carmakers off late are dealing with that as well with improved software such as electronic stability control.

In India, the dynamics of excise laws designed at an earlier time led to the rise of the sub-compact SUV, vehicles that were under four meters in length, such as Maruti's Vitara Brezza and the extremely successful Korean twins, the Hyundai Venue and Kia Sonet. But the money remains in vehicles around 4.3 meters in length, after all the aspirations of a small car or even a small SUV owner are to buy a bigger car. Hyundai's

runaway success of the Creta and the current success of the Kia Seltos are proof of that. This is why the Skoda-Volkswagen group is betting the house this year on this segment with the forthcoming Skoda Kushaq and Volkswagen Taigun.

And now the Indian market is seeing another relatively unique segment emerge, the 'seven seat' or 'three rows' SUV based on standard SUVs. This started with the Hector Plus from MG Motor, then we had the Tata Safari based on the Tata Safari and now there is the Hyundai Alcazar based on the Creta. Just like compact sedans were puzzling when they first came out to many of us automotive reviewers, part of me is intrigued by this segment because truth be told, the third row not somewhere you would want to be for a long journey. If you really needed a third row, there is the Toyota Innova and Kia Carnival. Personally, I consider these 'extended length' SUVs to be cars with extra luggage space. The fascination with sunroofs in the Indian market has made roof carriers useless, but all these cars have fully foldable third rows, allowing more luggage space and more legroom in the second row.

Time will tell how this rather unique to India segment will do, but if the success of the compact sedan is anything to go by, these vehicles could rock the market. It may not be too long before every second vehicle sold in India is an SUV.

TREND BLAZER



FARHAN SHOOTS FOR MARVEL PROJECT

Actor **FARHAN AKHTAR** has bagged an international project with Marvel Studios. Unconfirmed sources said the actor has started shooting for the project in Bangkok, although when we contacted Disney, who own Marvel, they refused to comment.

"Farhan is currently stationed in Bangkok, along with an International cast and crew for the shoot of a project with Marvel Studios," the source said.

However, the source refrained from giving details about the project.

fairtalk

PANKAJ TRIPATHI



"I feel that parents put all their energies into grooming and teaching their daughters how to behave but when it comes to boys, it's not given the same importance. I think the inclusion of feminism is a must for all boys. They need to learn that no gender is superior or inferior. There was a time when I survived solely on my wife's salary and I see absolutely no harm in doing so."

dailytalk

EMRAAN HASHMI



"With each film I hope I can match up and portray my character well. Every new character, you feel you have to learn all over again that I don't know anything. I still get nervous before the first day of shoot. Things get easier as you continue to shoot. My process of picking a film has remained the same over the years. If you have an interesting story, I am up for it."

MARGOT ROBBIE IS A TEA FANATIC

Actor **MARGOT ROBBIE** has shared that she is a tea fanatic and that she is obsessed with drinking the hot beverage after moving to London from Australia.

"Breakfast is usually porridge, and during the morning I'll have an immunity-boosting smoothie. I'll normally have a chicken salad for lunch, and for dinner I'll tuck into a tuna steak with sweet potato. Throughout the day, I'll sip on tea — I've been obsessed with it ever since I lived in the UK," Robbie said.



LOVE: THE SECRET INGREDIENT

High end culinary skills and aesthetic presentation are essential to create a sumptuous experience, says chef NIKLESH SHARMA

The taste of any dish depends a lot more on how appealing it is for the eyes. Yes, presentation is that important and it is a game-changing element in the culinary industry. Research at Oxford University shows that sound could enhance the sense of taste. By this, it simply means that chef's creative canvas has monstrous wings which know no boundaries to make the dish look more appetizing. It is believed that a part of us, our intensity to make others happy by preparing a meal for them, attention to details, and the most important ingredient, joy makes the food taste even more delicious. Highly detail-oriented chefs would make the process of cooking a divine experience for themselves and for the ones who taste it. Culinary presentation is a journey that leads chefs towards redefining self-learning and successfully brings a balance in the cosmic forces of yin and yang.

CULINARY PRESENTATION IS AN ART
 Cooking or rather the feast is incomplete without an aesthetic presentation. World's famous chefs define presentation as 'a cherry on the cake' and a 'cloud nine experience justified'. It is an angelic ritual of the food and culinary industry. Presentation is both the apple of the chefs' eyes and nourishes customer's souls. In fact, during the lockdown last year, people tried umpteen dishes and recipes while they were locked inside their homes and attempted to plate the dishes in a visually appealing manner. However, very few possess a good understanding of the art of culinary presentation. It won't be wrong to say that it is, indeed, an art and requires creativity and innovation. Let's go through various tips and tricks with reference to the components of the art of culinary presentation.

MICRO STEP MACRO MAGIC

You name it and chefs can bring magic

on the plate served to you at high-end restaurants. They make use of mesmerising factors like plating, colour, shape and size of the plate, its texture and visual appearance with an aim to bring in curiosity among customers. Be it a tiny step of presenting a coconut dessert in the natural coconut shell, serving authentic South Indian food on premium banana leaves, or offering appetizers on the quirky 'plate on wheels', such micro-steps leave a huge impact on the customers visiting restaurants or on the guests you are hosting.

DETAILS MATTER

The flawless formula for converting a dining experience to a divine experience is to work endlessly on your craft. In order to extend the appropriate flavour, you should have an eye for details as well while you are preparing a dish. From a delicious dish, thirst-quenching drinks to toothsome desserts, there is only one magical element that brings the 'x-factor' to the table and it's nothing else than a detail. The creator is the one who never underestimates the power of details on the plate. Perfect choice of plate or glassware, shape and size, texture and the look, colour, and placement of the ingredients, and the right textured garnish to add the best visual appeal, are some of the few ways that can massively enhance the beauty of the feasts. The idea is that there should be a balance between colour and contrast, the height of the food on the plate, usage of right ingredients at the right place, visual appeal, garnishing with a purpose, and a flavour of sauces as all these elements play a very important role in extending the right look, feel and flavoursome taste of the dish.

FOOD CRAFT AND STYLING
 The top-notch chefs of the culinary industry say that the one who cooks the food should style it. The role of chefs in the master kitchen doesn't end with cooking but styling and presentation are the core roles and should be executed by them only. Food stylists shouldn't come to the scene when they haven't cooked the food themselves. However, some chefs have contrary views on this and they say that food stylist are the experts and are thoroughly connected to the industry. They believe that styling and putting art on the plate is not possible without understanding the process of cooking. The food stylist possesses a deep understanding of the whole process of cooking as they know how to assemble the ingredients and present the meals in the pro way. In such cases, inputs from both the chef and the stylist can help in falling the things in the right place on the plate.

THE CHOICE OF PLATE

As a matter of fact, the design, shape, and size of the plate have witnessed a major uplift in the past few years. We've been watching culinary reality shows on national and international channels for many years now and have come across this fact many times. The crockery industry has also seen a good pace of growth along with increasing demands of fascinating serveware and cutlery. High-end restaurants and chefs do choose and use plates and crockery based on the factors like practicality, innovation and durability, which portray the ability of the design and usability. Various creative manufacturers make the culinary industry run smoothly by introducing new designs regularly in the market. Restaurants and chefs do not look far and beyond their own country for procurements. Additionally, the hotels and restaurants also update their crockery frequently to keep abreast with the recent artsy trends in the culinary space and to



extended high-end contemporary culinary experiences to the customers. Hence, it's a win-win for both parties.

SPICING UP THE TASTE BUDS

With the spices entering the kitchen and dishes, it leaves an ever-lasting impression on the cuisine and the one who is savoring it. Spices, dried or fresh, for instance, rosemary, mint, black pepper, coriander, paprika, oregano, etc enhance the plating and this is a golden rule of culinary presentation that can never backfire.

Herbs and spices are lifelines of the culinary industry. If you welcome and treat them well in the kitchen, they do the magic with cooking, plating, and yes, your taste buds as well. Sprinkling spices or herbs around the rim, and incorporating their leaves or branches leave customers awestruck. All the presentation-oriented chefs believe that different dishes should have their own unique garnish that will extend a distinct culinary experience to the customer.

DICED FRUITS AND VEGGIES

Remember the fresh texture of tiny diced fruits and carrots in the drinks? They look lip-smacking, don't they? Beverages look all the more appealing to quench the thirst with twisted ribbons of asparagus and translucent juicy slices of radish. This is, indeed, a tasty and unique way of garnishing. Berries, cherries, and cut fruits not only

extend a splash of colour but enhance the flavour of the food or beverage as well. Taking care of bursts of colours and texture when serving juices and cocktails in a transparent glass makes the efforts worth relishing.

SUMMING UP

In order to extend the sumptuous experience, all one needs is high-end culinary skills and dedication for aesthetic presentation. From choosing the right ingredients to the perfect placement of garnish, chefs do these tasks round-the-clock. Conceptualising, combining the sketch design and executing an idea are a few of the highly significant elements of the culinary industry. In the past few years, chefs have given a lot of attention to the presentation and styling of dishes which successfully brings about huge respect for the chefs and the culinary industry on the whole. It has been recognised and has even gathered a place as a career prospect and stands as a promising field for budding chefs across the globe.

The art of culinary presentation will continue to reach new heights with innovative and creative ideas entering the culinary space on a daily basis and will entice the food story of all the existing and forthcoming cuisines. (The writer is the founder of APCA – Academy of Pastry & Culinary Arts.)

R E C I P E S

SPINACH AND GOAT CHEESE QUICHE

WHAT YOU NEED

- Spinach: 25 gm
 - Goat cheese: 20 gm
 - Olive oil: 2 gm
 - Egg: 400 gm
 - Salt: 10 gm
 - Spiced powder: 3 gm
 - Cream: 1 kg
- For quiche base:**
- Water: 150 gm
 - Salt: 2 gm
 - Flour: 500 gm
 - Butter: 200 gm
 - Dry herbs: 3 gm

METHOD

- For quiche base:**
- Add butter in a mixing bowl and mix it. Add flour, salt, dry herbs and mix at slow speed.
 - Add cold water and mix until the dough is formed.
 - Refrigerate the dough for a couple of hours.
 - Roll out the dough on a light floured surface, cut out the discs according to



the size of the mould.
 ● Make quiche sauce by whisking eggs, cream, spiced powder, salt and pepper in a mixing bowl.
 ● Slice the spinach.
 ● Take the quiche base.
 ● Spread the spinach.
 ● Sprinkle goat cheese on the top of spinach.
 ● Fill it with quiche sauce.
 ● Freeze it for 30 minutes at zero degree. Once fully set, bake it at 180 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes.
 Courtesy: L'Opéra Culinary Head Amit Kumar.

GREEN TEA NOODLES WITH SESAME CHICKEN

WHAT YOU NEED

- Noodles: 100 gm
- Ginger: 5 gm
- Garlic: 10 gm
- Green tea: 30 gm
- Lemongrass: 4 gm
- Kaffir lime: 10 gm
- Lemon juice: 10 gm
- Soy sauce: 20 ml
- Salt: 5 gm
- Sesame oil: 10 gm
- Vinegar: 10 gm
- Sweet chilli sauce: 30 gm
- Red Chilli (dry): 10 gm
- Chicken thigh boneless: 120 gm
- Yaki Nori sheet: 10 pcs
- Cucumber: 25 gm
- Spring onion: 10 gm



● Sesame Seeds: 5 gm
METHOD
 ● Cut the chicken thigh in strips and marinate with salt, pepper and dry chillies.
 ● Dust very little corn flour and flour and keep it aside. Blanch noodles and spread on clean working table to get dry.
 ● Put some oil so that it does not get sticky. Make a green tea stock. Cut juliennes of cucumber, spring onion and nori sheet and keep it aside to use later.

- In a separate bowl, mix soy sauce, vinegar.
- Chop garlic, lemon juice, green tea, sesame oil, salt and black pepper. Mix everything and your dressing will be ready for use.
- Heat oil and deep fry the chicken strips, in a separate pan toss the ginger, garlic chop and add sweet chilli sauce. Add fried chicken and toss it. Season it and finish with sesame seed and oil.
- Toss the noodles in dressing and add julienne vegetables. You can add blanched mushroom if you like.
- Plate the noodles on your serving dish and place the chicken strips on top. Garnish and serve.

Courtesy: Chef Manoj, Partner Chef, The Piano Man.

OREO JALEBI

WHAT YOU NEED

- All purpose flour: 200 gm
 - Urad dal pithi: 50 gm
 - Water: 250 ml
 - Vegetable oil: 2 tsp
 - Oreo cookies: 18
 - Canola oil: 1 litre
- METHOD**
- Freeze 18 oreo cookies for about an hour.
 - Fill a cooking pot with two to three inches of cooking oil and heat to 200 degree celsius.
 - Combine all purpose flour, urad dal pithi, water and two teaspoons vegetable oil in large bowl and whisk until smooth. Keep it aside in a warm



place for 24 hours.
 ● Dip a cookie in the mixture and completely cover it in a way that you can't see through the batter.
 ● Carefully drop the coated cookie(s) in the hot oil and fry on each side until it turns golden brown.
 ● Remove cookie from oil with tongs and dip it in warm sugar syrup.
 ● Then serve it warm.
 Courtesy: Karann Talwar, Managing Director and the Gastronome chef, Kitchen Kraft Luxury Catering.

Office of the Executive Engineer, Construction Division, Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Khatima, District- Udham Singh Nagar
 (E-mail: eecdkhatima@gmail.com) Telephone: 05943-253646

E-Tendering/Tender Notice

Letter No. 689/Nivada/34 Date:- 08 -04-2021

Name of Work :-

- 1 Water supply arrangements in 22 Nos Panchyat Bhawans (Boulder strata) of Block-Khatima, District U.S. Nagar / Estimated cost – Rs. 65.76 Lakh
- 2 Water supply arrangements in 15 Nos Panchyat Bhawans (Ordinary strata) of Block-Khatima, District U.S. Nagar / Estimated cost – Rs. 29.46 Lakh
- 3 Water supply arrangements in 18 Nos Panchyat Bhawans (Boulder strata) of Block-Sitarganj, District U.S. Nagar / Estimated cost – Rs. 54.22 Lakh
- 4 Water supply arrangements in 22 Nos Panchyat Bhawans (Ordinary strata) of Block- Sitarganj, District U.S. Nagar / Estimated cost – Rs. 43.64 Lakh

5 Period of completion of work: - 02 months

Key Dates-

6 Date of Online Publication	09.04.2021 at 17:00 hrs.
7 Document Download : Start Date	10.04.2021 at 10:00 hrs.
8 Document download : End Date	23.04.2021 at 17:00 hrs
9 Pre Bid Meeting	16.04.2021 at 13:00 hrs.
10 Bid Submission : Start Date	10.04.2021 at 10:00 hrs.
11 Bid Submission : End Date	23.04.2021 at 17:00 hrs.
12 Offline Submission of Document (Cost of bidding document, Bid Security, Original Affidavits & all the Supporting Documents in support of qualification)	24.04.2021 upto 17:00 hrs.
13 Date of Technical & Financial Bid Opening	26.04.2021 at 11:00 hrs.
14 Details of tender, corrigendum or cancellation etc. may be obtained at web site: www.uktenders.gov.in	

Executive Engineer

E-TENDER NOTICE

Shree Balaji Sahakari Soot Girani Ltd., Deulgaon Raja, Site At- Mouje Pangari, Tal. Deulgaon Raja, Dist. Buldana. This Spinning Mill construction of Main Factory Building and Allied Works Rs.12,03,54,963/- online percentage rate E- Tenders in B-1 Form are invited from contractors. Detailed E-Tender information with terms & conditions are available at (<https://www.mahatenders.gov.in>) from 09/04/2021.

Pre-Bid meeting will be held on dated: 18/04/2021 at 12.00 p.m. at Soot Girni Office at Deulgaon Raja, Dist. Buldana

Date:- 09/04/2021

Perfect Buildwell (P) Ltd.

ZARA Aavaas-2

Sector – 104, Gurugram (Haryana) Affordable Group Housing Project License No. 96 of 2017

List of defaulters who have not made payment till date in spite of reminder. The successful applicant may deposit their installment along with applicable interest on or before 23rd April, 2021, failing which their allotment shall be cancelled without any further notice and 5% of the Total Cost of the Flat shall be deducted and balance shall be refunded to the applicant without any further claims.

LIST OF DEFAULTERS					
(645.105 sq. ft.)					
21041	23062	23044	22072	22074	21011
23003	21083	21044	21051	21001	21053
21072	20024	22084	21032	21013	21034

Note :-

1. All payments should be made in favour of - PERFECT BUILDWELL PVT. LTD. A/C ZARA AAVAAS 2
2. Please mention your Booking No., Name and Phone No. on the back of Pay Order/Demand Draft.
3. All payment should be made at our Branch Off. 2nd Floor, E-597, Greater Kailash-II, New Delhi-110048.
4. In case of any clarifications you may get in touch at 40641100-88 or you can mail us at E-mail: info@perfectbuildwell.com
5. The above mentioned applicants can ignore the notice if already paid subject to their intimation.

HDB Financial Services Limited Ground Floor, Zenith House, Keshavnagar Khadye Marg, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai -400034
 Tel No.: +91 22 49116300

FINAL AUCTION CUM SALE NOTICE FOR GOLD ORNAMENTS

The borrower(s) (whose details are provided in the table herein below), in particular, and the public, in general, are hereby informed that the below mentioned accounts are overdue, and the borrowers/account holders have not responded/complied with the communication and notices sent by HDB Financial Services Limited (the "Company") requesting the borrower to clear his/her/their dues as per the documents in respect of the below mentioned loan signed/accepted by the borrower(s) (such documents, collectively "loan agreement") and therefore defaulted in terms thereof. The Company has in exercise of its rights as a pledgee, decided to enforce the pledge and therefore hold a public auction of the gold ornaments pledged to the company as security for the loan for the purpose of selling the same and realizing/recovering the dues owned by the borrower(s) to the company. The auction will be conducted on 12-04-2021 at the below mentioned local branch of HDB Financial Services Limited from 11.00 am onwards on the date and branches mentioned in the below table:-

S. No.	Loan No	Customer Name	Date Of Loan	Overdue Amount Rs.	Branch Name
1	9893601	Sarfaraz S	06-Dec-19	120181	Delhi- Bhajanpura
2	10788541	Vivek V	06-Feb-20	118275	Delhi- Bhajanpura
3	7360208	Sajan Shah	25-Apr-19	40858	Delhi- Keshavnagar
4	9947605	Md Nasir Alam	10-Dec-19	4656	Delhi Shahdara
5	5959454	Dharmender Kumar	27-Nov-18	7083	Delhi Shahdara
6	5840893	Mohd Mubassir Kaifi	16-Nov-18	10902	Delhi-Adarsh Nagar
7	9382589	Mohammad Ahsan	25-Oct-19	11278	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
8	9798109	Poonam Jairamdass	26-Nov-19	5812	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
9	6892807	Krishna Devi	13-Mar-19	3824	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
10	6030365	Samjad Beg	07-Dec-18	12480	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
11	6030321	Samjad Beg	07-Dec-18	8912	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
12	11691239	Rahul Jain	25-Jun-20	16312	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
13	12043800	Hitesh Bhardwaj	04-Aug-20	21160	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
14	12734474	Rahul Kumar	09-Oct-20	20220	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
15	12022227	Rekha Devi	31-Jul-20	9268	Delhi-Kamla Nagar
16	6786405	Nadeem Karim	01-Mar-19	4709	Delhi-Laxmi Nagar
17	8531386	Varun Jain	14-Aug-19	22629	Delhi-Laxmi Nagar
18	8082292	Mohd Nafees Khan	30-Jun-19	6988	Delhi-Madipur
19	11528031	Mohd Fahad	09-Jun-20	24628	Delhi-Malviya Nagar
20	11450120	Amar Singh	31-May-20	12470	Delhi-Nai Sadak
21	10703072	Jishan Ali	28-Jan-20	185126	Delhi-Nangloi
22	12711892	Vidvotma Devi	07-Oct-20	43460	Delhi-Nangloi
23	7148302	Sunjeet Singh	05-Apr-19	4513	Delhi-Tilak Nagar
24	11399195	Amit Kumar Garg	21-May-20	45136	Ghaziabad-Navyug Market
25	6627133	Amar Yadav	13-Feb-19	13548	Ghaziabad-Navyug Market
26	11865018	Lalbabu Kumar	14-Jul-20	6292	Ghaziabad-Vasundhara
27	7800940	Naresh Sabu	04-Jun-19	11652	Noida
28	8468233	Vinod Kumar	08-Aug-19	5484	Noida
29	10961957	Sudhir Bhati	20-Feb-20	32703	Noida-Sector 110
30	8548296	Daya Chand	17-Aug-19	7375	Noida-Sector 110
31	8548334	Daya Chand	17-Aug-19	8811	Noida-Sector 110

The auction shall be conducted on an "AS IS WHERE" and "AS IS WHAT IT" basis and the Company is not making and shall not make any representation or warranties as regards the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments. It shall be the sole and absolute responsibility of the potential purchaser to verify, examine and satisfy themselves about the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments prior to placing their bid and for such purpose it shall be open to potential purchasers to examine, at their sole cost and expense, and at the address set out herein above, the gold ornaments whether with or without expert advice 45 minutes prior to the time stipulated for the conduct of the auction. All the bid shall be subjected to such minimum reserve price as the company may deem fit to fix in this regards. The auction process and sale (if any) pursuant to such auction shall be subjected to such further terms and condition as the company may at sole discretion deem fit to impose.

If the borrower(s) mentioned above pays the amount due to the Company in terms of the loan agreement in his individual loan account in full before the auction as mentioned above, the pledged ornaments securing the said loan may be withdrawn from the said auction without further notice. Please note that it is the absolute discretionary power of the undersigned authorized officer of the company, either to postpone or to cancel the auction proceeding without prior notice and without assigning any reason thereof and to reject any or all the bids or offer without assigning any reason for the same.

Place : DELHI
 Date : 09-04-2021

Authorised Officer
 (HDB Financial Services Ltd)

Three-peat on MI mind

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rohit Sharma ended the jinx of winning IPL trophies in odd years after he won record-extending fifth title with Mumbai Indians in 2020 edition, which was held in United Arab Emirates because of Covid-19 pandemic.

And now in 2021, he will aim to make it three in a row when the 14th season of the cash-rich league starts on Friday with his team taking on Virat Kohli's Royal Challengers Bangalore in the season's opener at MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai.

This time there will be no home advantage for any side as the entire 60 match tournament will be played in neutral venues and that too without fans.

The 2021 season will be special in its own way as Mumbai will aim to become the first side to complete hat-trick of IPL titles, Chennai under talismanic Mahendra Singh Dhoni seems ready to pull off a fresh trick after a forgetful season last year, where they finished second from the bottom.

Indian skipper Virat Kohli's under-achievers Royal Challengers Bangalore will hope to change fortunes and step closer to first-ever title and so does renamed Punjab Kings will aim for. Under new name, KL Rahul's side will be the one to watch out for.

While for the likes of Sanju Samson (Rajasthan Royals) and Rishabh Pant (Delhi Capitals), it will be an entirely new experience to lead their respective sides for the first time.

But both Rajasthan Royals and Delhi Capitals suffer a major jolt even before the start, when England pacer Jofra Archer (Royals) and Indian batsman Shreyas Iyer (Capitals) were ruled out of the entire tournament due to injury problems.

Also there is Sunrisers Hyderabad and Kolkata Knight Riders in the fray, which under foreign skippers David Warner and Eoin Morgan will look to add more titles.

If one looks at the bigger picture, the 14th edition of IPL assumes greater significance as it is being held in a T20 World Cup year and that too in the sub-continent.

If Kohli will keep a 'Hawk Eye' on the performances of his probable list of players, it won't be any different for an Eoin Morgan or a Kieron Pollard, who would also be preparing for the mega-event while giving it their all for their respective fran-

chises.

Mumbai Indians, perhaps in the near two decade existence of T20 cricket, is a side that will be remembered for its aura.

If Rohit fails, then Quinton de Kock will certainly succeed. If both fail, Surya Kumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan could scare the daylight out of the opposition.

And if the top-order is blown away, then the indomitable Pandya brothers (Hardik and Krunal) will be on the rivals' case.

On the outfield, Kieron Pollard will save those extra runs apart from the trademark big hits always expected of him and also bring in the change of pace suited for the Chennai track.

Then there's Jasprit Bumrah, ready to lead the MI attack. And to support him there is Trent Boult, with his swing, and Rahul Chahar, with his googlies.

Mumbai Indians can only lose on their bad days and on good days, they are going to be a nightmare as England captain Michael Vaughan has already warned.

Rohit's opposite number is the national captain, who is ready to open once again but the squad composition of RCB doesn't inspire the highest confidence.

Glenn Maxwell has again been picked for big money and New Zealand's Kyle

Jamieson has been made an overnight multi-millionaire by the franchise despite him being untested on Indian dust-bowls.

Devdutt Padikkal will be in his second season with teams analysing him way more and Yuzvendra Chahal seems to have lost his mojo.

Mohammed Siraj and Navdeep Saini do not inspire the highest confidence in white ball cricket at least despite their gutsy performances in Australia early this year.

Amid all this, Dhoni will be quietly smiling and may be planning differently as it will be a placid Wankhede where CSK will be playing Delhi Capitals on Saturday.

The return of seasoned Suresh Raina, which opens up an option to play Imran Tahir in most games, and the presence of Moeen Ali and Sam Curran as floating all-rounders gives CSK a better look than last time.

Dhoni's faith in uncapped Krishnappa Gowtham also needs a bit of validation.

As Dhoni brings on his years of IPL leadership experience, his ardent 'fan' and 'disciple' Rishabh Pant is ready to chart his own destiny as a Delhi Capitals leader

while taking inspiration from his illustrious senior's captaincy.

Pant 2.0 after his Gabba heroics is the most confident man in Indian cricket currently and with a batting line-up that has Shikhar Dhawan, Prithvi Shaw, Marcus Stoinis, Shimron Hetmyer along with the experience of Steve Smith and Ajinkya Rahane, Capitals would like to finish one better than last time.

Kagiso Rababba and Anrich Nortje's contribution will be as important as Ravichandran Ashwin, Amit Mishra and Axar Patel's bowling.

Sunrisers Hyderabad is one of the most low profile teams which has been known for on-field exploits. A superb assortment of foreign players comprising the prolific David Warner in batting and world's best T20 bowler Rashid Khan along with Kane Williamson, Jason Holder, Jonny Bairstow and Jason Roy makes them a contender.

Kolkata Knight Riders would expect that Andre Russell gets his six-hitting prowess back while Varun Chakravathy is more than a one-season wonder.

Eoin Morgan, the best white ball international skipper on view, would look for a settled batting order while praying that Sunil Narine isn't again called for a suspect action.

For Punjab Kings, the owners would hope that change in the name brings about a change in luck but a lot would depend on skipper KL Rahul's performance.

He wouldn't mind another Orange Cap while Mohammed Shami would like to make a roaring

ONE MORE POSITIVE THING ABOUT THIS EDITION LIKE LAST YEAR IS THAT THERE IS NO HOME ADVANTAGE. EVERYONE IS PLAYING AT NEUTRAL VENUES AND THE STRENGTH OF YOUR SQUAD REALLY COMES TO THE FORE

—VIRAT KOHLI



Mumbai expect Chawla to play key role

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Piyush Chawla's skill-set will not only help Mumbai Indians in the pressure situation in this year's IPL but his immense experience will also be useful in mentoring the young spinners in the squad, the defending champions said on Thursday.

Mumbai Indians strengthened their spin department with adding 32-year-old Chawla to the squad at the most recent auction.

"I have played with Piyush



since U-19 days. And I know, he is a very attacking bowler, which is something that we wanted in our spin bowling department," Rohit, who has led MI to record five titles, said in a video posted on side's official Twitter handle.

Mumbai Indians Director of Cricket Operations Zaheer Khan said that Chawla's experience will also help young Rahul Chahar.

"We value his experience very highly. We have Rahul Chahar also in the team, who is an upcoming,

young talent.

The experience of Piyush Chawla is surely going to help him as well," said Zaheer.

"Piyush Chawla is

not only going to bring his game or skill sets to the team, but also his wealth of experience. He has been in pressure situations (and) he has a bigger role to play," added Zaheer.



India batsman and Delhi Capitals Shreyas Iyer on Thursday said he has undergone a successful surgery for a shoulder injury and vowed to return to action at the earliest. "Surgery was a success and with a lion-hearted determination, I'll be back in no time. Thank you for your wishes," tweeted Iyer and posted his picture with it

4 Indian sailors to compete in Tokyo

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a historic first for India, four sailors from the country will compete at this year's Olympics after Vishnu Saravanan and the pair of Ganapathy Chengappa and Varun Thakkar made the cut for Tokyo at the Asian Qualifiers in Oman on Thursday.

This was after Nethra Kumanan on Wednesday became the first Indian woman sailor to qualify for the Olympics in the laser radial event in the Mussanah Open Championship, which is an Asian Olympic qualifying event.

It is also the first time that India will compete in three sailing events in the Olympics.

So far, India had competed in only one event in all the earlier Olympics though two sailors represented the country on four occasions.

"Yes, history has been scripted. Four Indian sailors have qualified for Olympics to compete in three events. It's the maximum number of sailors qualified and also in number of events," Yachting



(From L-R) Indian sailors Ganapathy Chengappa, Nethra Kumanan, Vishnu Saravanan and Varun Thakkar pose for photo

Association of India joint secretary general Capt Jitendra Dixit said.

Tomasz Januszewski, the Indian sailing coach, said it was a result of "years of hard work by sailors, their parents and coaches."

"Sincere congratulations to our champions for creating this historic day and taking Indian sailing to a whole new level," he said

from Oman.

"I personally hope that it is the start of a new era in Indian sailing. Sailors and the community behind them are amazing. It is time for them to become recognised and start shining, locally and internationally," Januszewski added.

On Thursday, Saravanan was the first to qualify for the Tokyo

Games in Laser Standard Class after finishing second in the overall standings.

Later, the duo of Chengappa and Thakkar finished on top of the points table in the 49er Class. The two had won a Bronze medal in the 2018 Asian Games in Indonesia.

Two sailors make a team in the 49er Class while Laser class is a single sailor event.

Also, two sailors qualify for Tokyo Olympics from Laser class events while only one team can do so in the 49er class.

Saravanan was third till the penultimate day on Wednesday but won the medal race on Thursday to jump to second place overall with 53 points and book a Tokyo Olympics quota.

The Indian pipped Thailand's Keerati Bualong (57 points), who was second till Wednesday, for the Tokyo Games spot.

While Kumanan finished sixth in the Laser radial class medal race on Thursday but still ended at second overall with 30 points to confirm the Olympics spot.

SINGLES

FRENCH OPEN DELAYED BY A WEEK
PARIS: The French Open was on Thursday delayed by a week to May 30-June 13 in the hope that heightened Covid-19 restrictions in France will have eased by then to allow the maximum number of fans to attend the event. FFT president Gilles Moretton said the week's delay "will give the health situation more time to improve and should optimise our chances of welcoming spectators at Roland-Garros".

HARENDRA IS US MEN'S HEAD COACH
COLORADO SPRINGS: Former India hockey coach Harendra Singh, who trained both the national men's and women's teams at different stages of his accomplished career, has been appointed as the new head coach of the US men's team. Singh, who was bestowed the Dronacharya award in 2012, served as the chief coach of the senior India men's hockey team from 2017 to 2018. Before that, he was also in charge of the Indian women's team for some time.

WARWICKSHIRE COMPLETE VIHARI SIGNING
BIRMINGHAM: Warwickshire have completed the signing of Hanuma Vihari and the English county side on Thursday said the India all-rounder is likely to feature in the early part of the championship, after undergoing six days of quarantine. Warwickshire is hopeful of the Indian playing in next week's match against Nottinghamshire.

BHUVI NOMINATED FOR ICC MONTHLY AWARD
DUBAI: Experienced India seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar was among the cricketers nominated for the ICC Player of the Month award for March following his standout performances in white ball matches against England. Besides Bhuvneshwar, the others in the men's category included ace leg-spinner Rashid Khan of Afghanistan and Zimbabwe's Sean Williams. The nominees among the women's comprised Rajeshwari Gayakwad of India, South Africa's Lizelle Lee and India's Punam Raut.

RAVINDRA, DUFFY, CONWAY GET NZ CALL-UPS
WELLINGTON: South Africa-born batsman Devon Conway has been named among three uncapped players in the New Zealand team which will play two Tests in England in June. Conway has played T20 and ODIs last year and is included in the Test squad for the first time along with Wellington all-rounder Rachin Ravindra and seamer Jacob Duffy.

CHHETRI TO LEAD BFC IN AFC CUP MATCH
BAMBOLIM: Talismanic India captain Sunil Chhetri has returned to action after recovering from Covid-19 and will lead Bengaluru FC in their AFC Cup preliminary stage two match against Nepalese side Tribhuvan Army FC here on April 14.

INDIA WOMEN SUFFER 1-2 DEFEAT
TASHKENT: The Indian women's football team suffered a 1-2 defeat at the hands of Belarus in its second international friendly here on Thursday. While both the sides played out an even first half, Belarus took the lead through a Shuppo Nastassia penalty in the 66th minute, before Piliipenka Hanna doubled their lead with a 78-minute strike. India's Sangita Basfore pulled one back deep into added time.

RONALDO, DYBALA SCORE IN JUVE WIN
MILAN: Romelu Lukaku powered Inter Milan closer to their first league title in over a decade by scoring and setting up Lautaro Martinez in Wednesday's 2-1 win over Sassuolo that moved his team 11 points clear at the top of Serie A. Champions Juventus are 12 points behind Inter in third after beating Napoli 2-1, as Paulo Dybala scored on his return after nearly three months out with the league's leading scorer Cristiano Ronaldo also on target.

PSG win thriller in Munich

AFP ■ MUNICH

Kylian Mbappe insisted Paris Saint-Germain still have it all to do after he scored twice in a thrilling 3-2 win at holders Bayern Munich in Wednesday's Champions League quarter-final first leg.

Bayern had their 19-match unbeaten run in the Champions League ended in a repeat of last year's final, as the German giants suffered their first European defeat since March 2019.

PSG raced into a 2-0 lead after just 28 minutes behind closed doors at the Allianz Arena as Neymar created goals for Mbappe and Marquinhos.

Bayern, whose top scorer Robert Lewandowski is sidelined by a knee injury, drew level courtesy of headers by Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting and Thomas Mueller.

However, Mbappe showed his class with a superb second goal to give the visitors an advantage for the return leg in Paris.

"We used all our chances and had a bit of luck, but nothing has been decided," Mbappe told Sky, with the second leg to come in Paris on Tuesday.

PSG goalkeeper Keylor Navas played a key role with a string of saves as Bayern peppered his goal with 31 shots compared to the French club's six.

"We have to score a lot more goals,"



Kylian Mbappe celebrates after he scores PSG's opening goal against Bayern Munich

said Mueller. "If it had ended 5-3 or 6-3 for us, no one could have complained based on the chances."

Bayern coach Hansi Flick, who finished on the losing side for the first time in the Champions League, also rued the number of missed chances.

"With the chances we had, we could have got a good result despite conceding three goals," Flick said.

"We don't like to lose, but the way the team played was top."

This was a record 19th appearance in the Champions League quarter-finals for Bayern, but there was little for them to celebrate at the final whistle.

"Kyllian Mbappe made the difference. It's a very positive result for us, but everything is still open," said PSG coach Mauricio Pochettino.

Mount, Chilwell put Chelsea in control

AFP ■ SEVILLE

A classy goal from Mason Mount on Wednesday helped Chelsea to a 2-0 first-leg win over Porto, whose wasteful finishing could have scuppered their hopes of springing another Champions League upset in the quarter-finals.

Mount's slick turn and shot in the first half would have been painful enough for Porto, who were the better side for large spells in Seville but repeatedly lacked the precision to take advantage.

Instead, their misery was compounded by Ben Chilwell capitalising on a mistake at the back to score a late second that gave Chelsea another away goal and leaves them on the brink of the semi-finals.

They were away goals only in name given both these teams were playing in the unfamiliar Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan, where they will meet again next week, just with the home and away roles reversed.

"There is a good atmosphere in the dressing room, we are happy but not too



happy, excited but not too excited," said Chelsea's coach Thomas Tuchel. "We have to have a top mentality and a top performance next Tuesday."

Mount's goal makes him Chelsea's youngest ever scorer in the Champions League at 22 years and 87 days old while Chilwell's second meant the club boasted two English scorers in a Champions League game for the first time since 2012.

"If we take the performance we showed today and bring it to the pitch in Paris, then we'll get the goal chances

again to reach the semifinals. And we have to be there and to score the things. That's our full focus now."