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Oxygen only in air! 22 suffocate in hospital

Hundreds of lives saved with replenishment of oxygen in nick of time; crisis in Delhi persists

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Covid patients continue to have nightmare in the national Capital for want of oxygen. Twenty-one of them died in Jaipur Golden Hospital, while it was touch and go affair for hundreds of others who survived due to replenishment of oxygen in the nick of time.

As oxygen supply began to run out and patients and TV channels screamed the plight of patients and their relatives, Batra Hospital in Delhi's Tughlakabad Institutional Area received emergency oxygen supply from the Delhi Government moments after it exhausted its stock.

Similarly, many other hospitals received supply in the nick of time. The countdown for the next delivery is on.

Delhi's Saroj hospital closed admission to patients on Saturday due to oxygen supply shortage. The Rohini-based hospital started discharging patients amid the crisis and closed new admissions. Doctor Mayur, who is in charge of the Covid ward at the hospital, said the facility has 70 critical patients, and there could be a "big disaster" if the hospital doesn't get oxygen in time.

The crisis turned catastrophic as 20 critically ill patients admitted at Jaipur Golden Hospital at Rohini, died overnight. "The oxygen pressure has dipped as we are running out of stock," Dr DK Baluja, Jaipur Golden Hospital medical director, told PTI.

He said the hospital has over 200 patients and they had only half an hour of oxygen was left at 10:45 am. It received the last refill of oxygen around midnight, after hours of delay. "Nobody has promised anything. Everybody is saying we will do our best," the med-



A man breaks down after loosing his relative at Jaipur Golden hospital, Rohini, New Delhi, on Saturday PTI

ical director said when asked if the hospital received any help from the Government. Dr Baluja said the hospital has over 200 patients and 80 per cent of them are on oxygen support. Around 35 patients are in the ICU, he said.

The hospital was to receive its quota of oxygen at 05:30 pm but the supply did not reach it till midnight. Even then, the hospital just received 40 per cent of its allocated quota and is again in a situation of crisis.

Incidentally, 25 Covid patients had died in elite Sir Ganga Ram Hospital on Friday. Executive Director of Batra Hospital, Sudhanshu Bankata, said the healthcare facility exhausted its oxygen stock at around 9 am.

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6 patients die in Amritsar amid war of words over O₂

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The horror of Oxygen shortage came to haunt a private hospital in Amritsar as six patients died allegedly due to a shortage of the life saving oxygen during the time of Covid pandemic, prompting Punjab Government to order a probe into the incident.

The hospital said five of the six patients were infected with Covid-19. Sunil Devgan, the chairman and managing director of Neelkant hospital where the deaths occurred, alleged that despite the district admin-

istration being repeatedly asked to extend help, no one turned up to do the needful. He said six patients, including two women, died due to the shortage of oxygen.

Punjab Medical Education Minister OP Soni, however, refuted the charge and claimed that no proper information was given by the hospital about any shortage of oxygen. He claimed a mere simple message was dropped in a WhatsApp group to the administration.

As soon as Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh came to know about the inci-

dent, he ordered the Amritsar Deputy Commissioner (DC) to initiate a thorough probe. He also said the hospital prima facie seemed to have flouted orders given to all private hospitals facing oxygen shortage to shift their patients to Government medical colleges.

Devgan claimed that after the death of patients, only five oxygen cylinders were supplied to the hospital. The hospital chairman claimed that three main oxygen suppliers have said that Government hospitals are being prioritised.

Continued on Page 4



Body of one of the Covid-19 positive victims who died due to shortage of oxygen before being handed over to relatives in Amritsar on Saturday PTI

We will hang the person who obstructs oxygen supply: HC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Saturday asked the Centre about the preparedness to deal with the expected Covid-19 second wave peak in mid-May, terming the massive rise in cases as a "Tsunami", and warned it will "hang" any person who tries to obstruct oxygen supplies to hospitals here.

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crisis in various hospitals in Delhi.

The court said the viral disease has a low mortality and those who have a low immunity will eventually die but the problem comes when people who could be saved are also dying. "The mortality rate needs to be reduced."

Referring to a study by a team of scientists from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur, the court noted its assessment that the peak of this COVID wave will come in mid-May.

"We are calling it a wave, it is actually a Tsunami," the court said, and asked the Centre about the preparedness in terms of infrastructure, hospitals, medical staff, medicines, vaccines and oxygen as on date for the peak.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, said there might be a rapid rise in the number of cases in May and June and the country needs



to be ready for the worst. He said the Prime Minister and others are working on it and have decided to import oxygen and are also exploring the remotest possibility of generating oxygen from wherever it is possible.

Continued on Page 4

Amarinder orders shutdown of Punjab's industries to divert O₂ for medical use

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

With many hospitals reporting a shortage of oxygen amid aggravating coronavirus cases, the Punjab Government on Saturday ordered the closure of operations at the State's iron and steel industry to divert oxygen for medical use.

Oxygen along with LPG is used in induction, arc furnaces and rolling mills to cut and shape

the iron and steel items to be used by different industry verticals. Iron and steel units are mostly concentrated in Ludhiana and Mandi Gobindgarh.

Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh also ordered immediate establish-

ment of oxygen control rooms at the State and district-level. Ordering closure of industrial operations at iron and steel plants, said the CM in a statement, adding that the State Government will convey its decision to the Centre.

The move has come hours after six patients died at a private hospital in Amritsar due to oxygen shortage. Taking stock of the situation,

the CM said the current allocation of oxygen to Punjab is not sufficient to meet its needs and said he has already taken up the matter with the Centre, seeking an increase in quota on an urgent basis.

Sudden influx of patients from neighbouring States has put an added burden on the oxygen requirements of Punjab, the CM noted. Capt Amarinder also asked for a feasibility report from the Power Department on the use of thermal plants for providing oxygen for medical use.

Punjab has witnessed a sharp increase in demand for oxygen over the past a few days.

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70% DELHI TRADERS WANT FURTHER EXTENSION IN LOCKDOWN: CTI

New Delhi: Seventy per cent of the city traders are in favour of extending the lockdown beyond April 26 amid the worsening coronavirus crisis in the capital, said the Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) on Saturday. Out of the 700 traders organisations participating in a survey, almost 500 were in the favour of extending the lockdown, it added. The survey included traders from Kashmiri Gate, Chandni Chowk, Chawri Bazar, Sadar Bazar, Khari Baoli, Karol Bagh, Kamla Nagar, Rajouri Garden, Nehru Place, South X and Shahdara.

Villages must shut door on coronavirus again: Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday expressed confidence that rural villages would be able to stop the second wave of the Covid-19 "like they did last year."

Addressing a ceremony of Panchayat Raj Diwas, he said the challenge before the nation posed by the pandemic is "a little more than the last year" and villages should "stop at all cost the entry of the pandemic."

"Is varsh bhi hamare samne jo chumauti hain, vo chumauti pahle se zara zyada hain ki gaon tak is sankraman ko kisi bhi halat main pahuchne nahin dena hain, use rokna hi hain", said Modi.

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Black-marketing makes Remdesivir 6-fold costly

SHEKHAR SINGH/PNS ■ NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW/RANCHI

As the country grapples with the worst-ever health crisis following the surge in Covid cases, the black marketing of the life-saving drug Remdesivir has made life difficult for the patients and their families. The injectable drug, repurposed for Covid-19 treatment, is being sold six times higher than its actual price.

On April 17, the Central Government capped the price of Remdesivir currently manufactured by seven companies in India. A 100-mg vial of the drug manufactured by Cadila now has a maximum retail price of ₹899, Syngene's ₹2,450, Dr Reddy's ₹2,700, Cipla's ₹3,000, Mylan's ₹3,400, Jubilant's ₹3,400, and Hetero's ₹3,490.

But leaving no chance to exploit people and fill their pockets, the pharma supply chains are selling the medica-

tion by charging obscene amounts, with no real guarantees about the genuineness of the drug.

Sneha Lata, a resident of Karawal Nagar, said she bought the Cipla's Remdesivir for ₹20,000, which is six times than the actual price.

"For us now life is important not money. So we were in dire need and did not have any other option but to buy injection from the black market, which was arranged by one of our friends through a distributor", she said.

Several pharma companies across the city are also indulged in black marketing allegedly. A 40-year-old man who did not wish to be named said his uncle, who through a medical shop in Saket, managed to arrange four vials for ₹40,000 but later on he came to know that the vials were sold for ₹55,000 to another person.

A source told The Pioneer



that if anyone wants Remdesivir he should get in touch with his doctor in smaller private hospitals. "The doctors are not taking commissions but they are connecting the needy with distributors or medicines suppliers who take the benefit of the situation, selling these vials at a higher price," he said.

A few days ago, the Crime Branch of Delhi Police had arrested four persons in two

separate incidents for allegedly black-marketing the Remdesivir injections in the national Capital.

According to Monika Bhardwaj, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Crime Branch, two accused, nabbed by the police used to supply the injection across the country through one courier company based at Chandni Chowk, Delhi.

Continued on Page 4

Covaxin to be sold at ₹600 for States, ₹1,200 for pvt hospitals

New Delhi: Bharat Biotech's Covaxin on Saturday late evening unveiled the prices of its Covaxin, which will be available to State Governments at ₹600 a dose and private hospitals at ₹1,200 a dose.

The Hyderabad-based company said, "Following the Govt of India directives, we announce the prices of COV-AXIN vaccines — ₹600 per dose for State hospitals and ₹1,200 per dose for private hospitals." The Covaxin's export price would be between \$15-20 (₹1,123 to ₹1,498 approximately). Pune-based Serum Institute of India, which is the other vaccine maker in the country, has said it will sell its Covishield at ₹400 a shot to States and ₹600 to private hospitals.

PNS

10 BRO workers dead, 29 missing in avalanche

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Ten workers of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) died, seven are injured and 29 are missing following an avalanche in the Indo-China border region in Chamoli district in Uttarakhand on Friday.

The accident occurred in the Sumna area of Niti valley in Chamoli. According to officials, of the seven injured rescued from the site, six are being treated at the army hospital in Joshimath while one has been referred to Dehradun. According to the BRO, its team had reached the site of the avalanche where details of the incident and the persons affected are being ascertained.

The Director General of Police, Ashok Kumar, informed that a total of 430 BRO workers were at two sites when the avalanche occurred. Of these workers, 384 reached the ITBP and army camps safely. The Indo Tibetan Border Police and army camps at Sumna are safe, he added.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat along with State Minister for Disaster Management Dhan Singh Rawat undertook an aerial survey of the affected area on Saturday morning.

The CM told media persons in Chamoli that the army, ITBP, SDRF and NDRF teams are conducting rescue and relief works at the site which had been experiencing con-



Rescue and relief operation underway after a glacier broke off in the Sumna area of Niti Valley near Uttarakhand's Chamoli district on Friday, in Uttarakhand, on Saturday PTI

siderable snowfall. The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) personnel have progressed towards the site along with some teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

While the district administration is actively facilitating rescue and relief efforts, more NDRF teams at Ghaziabad are also on alert mode, said the CM.

Oxygen Express whizzes along with elixir of life

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

With States clamouring for the supply of oxygen, the Indian Railways has chalked out a major plan for unhindered transportation of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) across the key corridors of the country through Oxygen Express trains. During the last 24 hours the Railway Oxygen Expresses delivered nearly 150 tonnes of oxygen to health authorities in Nashik and Lucknow.

An Oxygen Express train carrying three tankers of liquid medical oxygen arrived in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday morning giving a big relief to the State health infrastructure battling a grim phase of the pandemic.

For the movement of the oxygen train, a green corridor was created between Lucknow



Oxygen tankers loaded on a train wagon arrive from Vishakhapatnam via special Oxygen Express in Nashik on Saturday PTI

and Varanasi. The distance of 270 km was covered by the train in 4 hours 20 minutes with an average speed

of 62.35 kmph. "Two trucks of medical oxygen arrived in Lucknow around 6.30 am while one

truck was offloaded in Varanasi. Each truck has a capacity of containing 15,000 liters of medical oxygen"

informed Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi to media.

He said both the trucks may be used for Lucknow and a decision will be taken soon. The train arrived from Bokaro in Jharkhand. Incidentally, Oxygen tankers filled with LMO at Vishakhapatnam and Bokaro are presently being transported through Ro-Ro service of Indian Railways.

"The arrival of two trucks of medical oxygen will meet around half the demand of Lucknow for Saturday. The state capital will now be in a better position," Awasthi said.

The first Oxygen Express train that left Vishakhapatnam on Thursday reached Nagpur in Maharashtra on Friday evening with seven tankers carrying the life-saving medical gas.

Amid the spiralling coronavirus cases in the country and more specifically in affected States like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi, Jharkhand, the demand for medical oxygen has shot up.

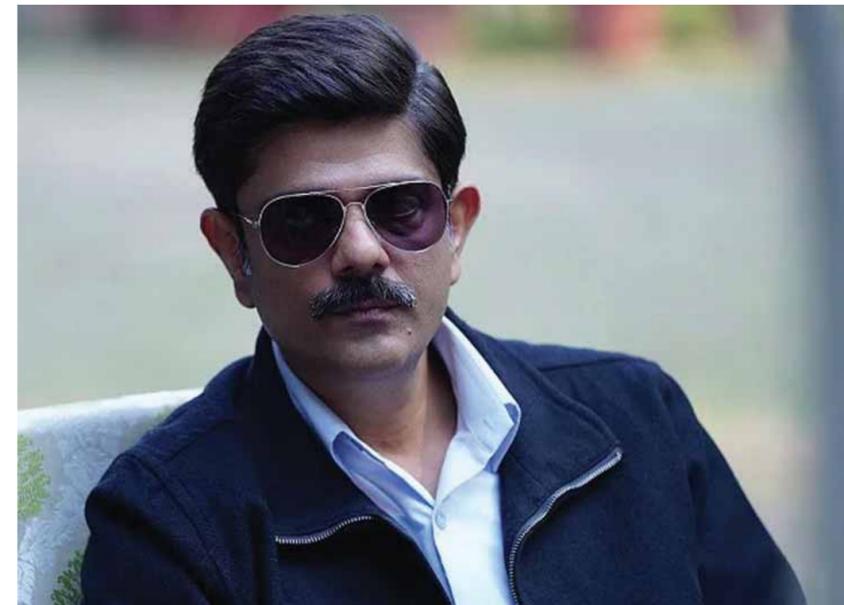
After taking stock of the situation, the Piyush Goyal-led Railway Ministry explored the technical feasibility of transportation of LMO. It was decided that LMO has to be transported through Roll On Roll Off (RO RO) service with road tankers placed on flat wagons and the services of which has begun by creating a "Green Corridor" on the existing railway tracks.

In order to ensure that parameters of transportation are tested, trials were conducted at various locations during the last week.

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HOMETHEATRE

Simple yet taut thriller



KATHMANDU CONNECTION
SonyLiv
Episodes: 6
***ing: Anurag Arora, Amit Sial, Aksha Pardasany**
Rated: 6/10

Crime is fodder for OTT entertainment so there is a veritable glut. However, *Kathmandu Connection* stands tall in competition because it is a tale woven into the backdrop of the Mumbai serial blasts with a whole lot of acumen and comprehensive work.

The tale is put across so simply that there is no scope really to look into padded loopholes in this leisurely paced, but nevertheless taut thriller hopping from Delhi to Dubai to Kathmandu to Hong Kong; from a fugitive from Lucknow, to a news anchor in Delhi to the Delhi Police department's celebrated but tainted officer to, of course, the serial blasts.

With so much happening it would have been a difficult job to keep things uncomplicated but the director needs to be praised for weaving everything together seamlessly.

It all starts with the abduction of a businessman

and goes on to dip into the multinational underbelly of big dreams, quick jobs, merciless hits and conspiracies that keep you hooked for most of the six episodes that this series comes with.

Limiting the episodes to just six is a smart move as those wanting to view it as a film can do so too, with each episode not exceeding 40 minutes. The characters have played to the hilt to keep the story in the forefront and that includes Anurag Arora who plays the cop with family issues. Decorated as an encounter and anti-terror specialist, he gets suspended after an unauthorised visit to Kathmandu where the main baddie plays him into the hands of the police while settling a score with his mentor and sparking a transnational war among criminals.

Playing the intense Om Prakash Agarwal Amit Sial makes his presence felt as a casual menace on the scene. Hailing from Kanpur, he seems to have internalised the UP culture, diction and body language so comes across as a genuine one from Lucknow University.

The series comes in handy for people reeling under the second COVID-19 wave and who are mostly homebound. A must watch.

MAKE WAY FOR NEW TALENT

The biggie of the Punjabi music industry Jaani and Arvind Khaira, who respectively work as songwriters, composers, and singers have recently introduced new talent to the industry. The name of this new and skilled singer is Romaana who is already gathering millions of views on his latest and single debut *Goriyaan Goriyaan*, which has an interesting plot directed by Arvind Khaira, written by Jaani and music composed by B Praak whereas the soothing voice is lent by Romaana himself under the label of Desi Melodies.

The song describes a brown-skinned boy's unfortunate experiences in the real world but things go well for him in the end for which you need to watch the music video. Romaana is seen with Jasmin Bajwa in the video that shows a one-sided love story. *Goriyaan Goriyaan* is a hit debut from Romaana, on the success of which the singer said: "If I had to sum up my whole experience in one word, it will be unbelievable. I am extremely thankful to Jaani and B-Praak for helping me make this project better than I could ever imagine, and Arvind Khaira for directing an amazing video that visualises the whole meaning of the song perfectly. To be honest, I couldn't have asked for more and I hope you guys enjoy listening to it as much as we did making it."

SEERAT FLAUNTS A NEW LOOK

Tollywood's most renowned and skilled actress Seerat Kapoor always has some fancy or simple fashion ideas up her sleeve. Amidst the rising temperature and summer at the door, Seerat Kapoor is giving us some tips for the outing. Seerat Kapoor began her acting profession in Tollywood Industry back in 2014 with the film *Run Raja Run* then later went on to work in films like *Tiger, Columbus, Raju Garl Gadha 2, Maa Vintha Gadha Vinuma, Krishna and His Leela*, and many more, for which she is critically acclaimed throughout the South Industry.

The actress is also known to be a brilliant dancer and classical singer. Seerat Kapoor is not just a brilliant actress but also a diva, the actress's fashion sense is up to the point every single time. This time Seerat Kapoor took to her Instagram to post some adorable pictures of herself. In the very recent pictures, The actress is looking gorgeous in a floral print mini skirt and white top with short umbrella sleeves. The look seems complete with the hair left untied and white sneakers.



WARINA QUILTS SOCIAL MEDIA

Bollywood's young and beautiful, Warina Hussain made a shocking announcement on her social media a few days after treating her fans with fun pictures on her Instagram, the actress now revealed that she will no longer be using social media and will completely quit it. Warina Hussain has a fan following of 1.9 million followers on Instagram, she had always been the kind of person who used social media on and off.

She also took a month off from social media last year, calling it a 'social media detox'. The B-town actress, Warina Hussain has followed the footsteps of superstar Aamir Khan as he gave up social media a day after his birthday, similarly, the actress decided to take a decision of no longer being available personally on social media.

In her interviews she has always mentioned that she does not consider herself to be social media savvy. In past few months She has been seen with simple button phones, which has prompted a flurry of questions from her fans. In her usual quirky style Warina Hussain shared the following post in which she also mentioned Aamir Khan, saying: In Aamir sir's language dropping the pretence. Warina Hussain debuted in Bollywood with the movie *Loveyatri* in 2018, for which she was adored.

Plan Your Stay At Home Sunday

HISTRIONICA 2021

The annual performing arts festival of Shri Ram College of Commerce, Histrionica, organised by The Dramatics Society, SRCC is here yet again this year to make us go bonkers. Being the largest theatre festival of the Delhi University, Histrionica never fails to give you the right dose of excitement, emotions, jubilation, and always lets you feel at home.

And this year it's back with events that will enthrall you even when you are at home.

Presenting to you the events that are going to be held on April 24 and April 25 virtually.

Numaish: This is the event for digital productions. And it includes every form of drama such as Stage Play, Street Play, Audio Play and Short Films.

TVF session: This one is special at Histrionica 2021 as we gonna have the team of the viral mini-series TVF Aspirants with us. Joining us will be Naveen Kasturia, Sunny Hinduja, Abhilash Thapliyal and Namita Dubey!

The Grand Open Mic: Believing in the freedom of speech and expression, we have this event that gives every person a platform to showcase their talents.

Livewire: This music event is there to calm our souls down and just wave to the rhythm of some lovely music. And this year, we have Taba Chake with us to brighten our day!

Histrionica 2021 is gonna be a blast with so many talented artists with us and to witness the charm and enthusiasm that surrounds it, do be there with us to experience it all!

Register here: <https://insider.in/histrionica-2021-apr24-2021/event>.

FRAME AND FAME PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

If you are that person who captures beauty in every little detail and likes to click away and capture moments into beautiful frames, this ES Live photography contest is the platform where you can showcase your talent. Register today to participate and send in your entry whereby you will stand a chance to win and your photograph can be featured in Ei Samay newspaper and ES Live Club's Facebook page on winning. Send us your entry before 28th April with the necessary details and grab your chance to win over the audience with your talent.

Send your ₹249 registration receipt & photographs at



isamaylive@gmail.com

The photograph of the winner will be published in Ei Samay newspaper and ES Live Club Facebook Page.

All the participants will get free annual membership of Ei Samay E-paper, ES Live Club, and Ei Samay Gold.

Registration ends on April 28. Click on the URL below to register: <https://insider.in/frame-and-fame-photography-contest-apr16-2021/event>.

TELLY TALE

JAYA PRADA VISITS INDIAN IDOLS



Sony Entertainment Television most loved show *Indian Idol Season 12* is all set with the upcoming weekend episode where the legendary and charming diva Jaya Prada will be gracing the show. All budding talented voices will be seen performing on astounding songs of Jayaji on the stage. The contestants are super thrilled to have the Bollywood diva on the show. The host Jay Bhanushali, the show judges Vishal Dadlani, Neha Kakkar and Himesh Reshammiya will be seen super delighted to welcome the special guest on the show.

When Bhanushali asked Jaya Prada about the performance of Danish and later requested her to share anecdotes on the same to which the Legendary actress said: "Danish, you have given a spectacular performance. I am feeling blessed to sit over here on this stage and see you singing so well. There is a bright future standing ahead for you, God bless you".

Talking about the song *De De Pyar De*, she adds: "This peppy song was sung by Bappi Da, and there is a story of Amitabhji behind this song. She adds, as this song needed lots of acting but due to this song previous shooting sequence, Amitji got his hand burnt due to firecrackers. But, then Amitabhji who is such a legend knows how to take advantage of the situation and he thought about an idea to keep his hand wrapped under the bandage in his packet and he will use his other hand while performing." To which

Jay Bhanushali who seems to be shocked asked, "*Achaan unkaa haat jalaa thaa? Mujhe lagaa unkaa style thaa*" to which Jayaji exclaimed, "*Haanji, unhonein isko apna style banaa diyaa*".

CENTURY OF CELEBRATIONS

Colors' *Namak Issk Ka* has won millions of hearts with its gripping storytelling and entertaining characters. Beginning with dance, drama, and action, the show went on to soften the otherwise rigid mindsets in the society towards nachaniyas.

The cast and crew of the show celebrated a century on April 23 as they complete 100 episodes of the show. Yug and Kahaani have fallen in love and are finally married. A dramatic tale will unfold on the show, as Gunjan breaks all boundaries to validate her marriage with Yug to get Kahaani out of his life and the house. Aware of Yug and Kahaani's marriage Saroj opts for drastic steps to separate them but has failed till now. The struggle for Kahaani will get real when Iraavati takes over and uses her black magic power to make things difficult for Yug and Kahaani.

An excited Shruti Sharma aka Kahani says: "100 episodes have never felt this



special for any other show. The love and appreciation that the show and my character Kahaani have received from the audience, has made a special place in my heart today. I hope that the show keeps going from strength to strength and we keep celebrating similar milestones!"

Talking about the achievement, Aditya Ojha aka Yug says: "This is a new experience for me. This is my first show on Indian television and the first time I am celebrating 100 episodes. I had goosebumps all over, as we celebrated this occasion. I am grateful for these

positive moments that we get amidst the stress, and I want to thank the viewers for their support!"

GET READY TO WELCOME SIMAR AGAIN
 From creating history in the



television space, becoming a national household name, to keeping the audiences entertained for seven long years, Colors' *Sasural Simar Ka* achieved multiple milestones. A story that chronicled the lives of Simar and Roli is set to return with *Sasural Simar Ka 2* albeit in a new avatar and storyline.

As TV's one of the favorite *bahus*, Simar ruled our hearts as she tackled all odds to keep her family together. Now that the show enters its second edition, new characters will take precedence and the storyline will weave around the lives of new Simar and her family. Actor Dipika Kakar, who remained the soul of the show, will make a comeback on the show and play a titular character.

Talking about her comeback, Dipika Kakar said: "I have always said Simar is a part of me that will always stay with me, and this is the show that has made me what I am today, its the root of my acting journey & also this was the show where I met my real life Prem my husband Shoab, it has been a beautiful six-year-long journey of the show and the connect with my audience, and when I was informed by Rashmi ma'am that we are coming back with a second season I jumped in joy and excitement. In the second season of the show, Simar will be seen in a new avatar, living up to the current times and dealing with challenges in her way. There is a lot in store for the audience and I look forward to this exciting new journey."

'It's the role that chooses you'

MADIRAKSHI MUNDLE, who plays Parvati in SET'S Vighnaharta Ganesh, tells MUSBA HASHMI the attraction of playing mythological characters, challenges faced and how acting happened to her

■ How did you come on board Vighnaharta Ganesh?

I had just concluded work for another project in late 2020 after the lockdown was lifted. That is when I got a call from the casting team at Contiloe Pictures stating that the makers of *Vighnaharta Ganesh* wanting to know if I was interested in playing the role of Goddess Parvati. I screen tested and the team promptly brought me on board as Goddess Parvati. It is a deeply fortunate turn of events since Lord Ganesh is my favourite deity. I do believe that such a character chooses you and not the other way round. So I consider my landing the role as Goddess Parvati's blessings.

■ You have played Sita, Lakshmi and now Parvati, is there a lesson that you learnt while playing such strong characters?

First of all, I feel extremely fortunate to have essayed these Goddesses on the TV screen. Sita, Lakshmi and Parvati are all Goddesses from our epics whose stories of virtue, ennobling qualities, benevolence and deep intrinsic strength we have all grown up with and have deep reverence for. They are often and commonly invoked as role models in everyday discourse. I have said this before; people are attached to them & they are deeply integral to our culture and mythology. So the audience's feelings towards them are of paramount importance when I essay such a role. Plus people have a certain image that they attach with such a character, in their minds.

■ Is it hard to play a mythological character?

Yes it is. What happens in the process of essaying any mythological character is you have the tremendous challenge to bring an image inside the audience's minds and hearts to life. The audience knows and



understands and therefore anticipates in a sense what they see when it comes to characters from mythology. Obviously they are also emotionally attached when it comes to their favourite deities. The costumes, sets, lighting & backdrops are therefore very elaborate since the genre demands grandeur. I also think the dialogues are definitely amongst the toughest you'll hear in the medium given they are in chaste Hindi. Emoting with all this to convey a look and feel that the audience will respond and relate to is by no means easy. It, however, is definitely rewarding when the audience responds to these efforts with

What happens in the process of essaying any mythological character is you have the tremendous challenge to bring an image inside the audience's minds and hearts to life



their wholehearted affection & blessings.

■ What are the challenges of playing such characters?

Preparation wise, I have always tried my best to absorb the creative vision shared with me and blended it with my own understanding of these characters from the stories I've heard & discovered growing up. Preparation always helps and I always try to put in my own effort by reading up or listening time permitting. I have striven to portray the qualities these Goddesses are identified with by our audience through my craft. The audience's love, affection and blessings have been a strong source of motivation to me for all of them.

■ How did acting happen to you?

Quite by accident! I have actually worked for several years as a professional interior designer with commercial and residential projects. I frankly wasn't looking to get into acting but I have endorsed Jewellery & Traditional wear alongside my work as an Interior Designer. Funnily, for over six months I kept not showing up for the screen test for my debut show on TV. When I finally showed up for the screen test, things just took off. We were on floor for my TV debut in under a week after that at Ramoji Rao Film City.

■ Are there any other projects in the pipeline?

Well, I keep getting calls for projects and a few discussions are underway for TV as well as OTT projects. Covid restrictions have led to shooting locations being moved across the country and so I am taking my time to finalise. I hope at this time everyone stays home and safe with their loved ones and takes care in these difficult times. I genuinely hope that we all emerge swiftly and stronger from this pandemic.

FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

Provide oxygen if you have spare, Kejriwal urges States

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Under the deluge of second Covid-19 wave, the national Capital has been struggling to cater to patients requiring oxygen as Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday pleaded other States to help with oxygen if they have spare.

Delhi's hospitals faced acute shortage of oxygen and doctors forced to request patients to go back home amid 20 Covid-19 deaths reported in one hospital.

In health emergency situation, Chief Minister Kejriwal wrote to other states' minister seeking dire help amid the death of oxygen. "I am writing to all CMs requesting them to provide oxygen to Delhi, if they have spare. Though Central govt. is also helping us, the severity of corona is such that all available resources are proving inadequate," Kejriwal tweeted.

Kejriwal said that he would be grateful if the Chief Ministers could provide Delhi with any oxygen, along with tankers, from their state or any organization in their state and requested it to be treated as an SOS, he wrote, "Central Government is also helping us a lot in this regard. However, the intensity of the spread is so severe that it is proving inadequate. Therefore, I would be grateful if you could provide us with any oxygen, along with tankers, from your state or any



"Though Central Government is also helping us, the severity of corona is such that all available resources are proving inadequate"

organization in your state. I would be personally grateful for your support. Delhi does not produce any oxygen. Due to the severe rise in corona cases in the last few days, many Delhi hospitals have run out of oxygen. Daily supplies of oxygen to Delhi are woefully short of our requirements."

While the government faced heat for the ignoring the Centre's recommendation to set up oxygen plants, Delhi's health infra is on the verge of collapse if it does not get 480 metric tonnes of oxygen. While the worrying shortage of medical oxygen is being flagged by several hospitals due to daily caseload of new corona cases registered in thousands, the oxygen shortage caused the death of Covid patients in at least one hospital in Delhi.

According to Delhi government health department, in present circumstances, Delhi needs 700 Metric Tonnes (MT) of oxygen every day.

A senior government official said as against 480 MT of oxygen allocated, only 309 MT

was received by Delhi, which is the main cause behind the crisis in Delhi's hospitals. "This follows a continuous trend where daily oxygen delivered is way short of quota assigned to Delhi. Delhi government has also stated that the root cause of this issue was that in the revised allocation plan devised by Central Government, for the first time ever, 102 MT of supply for Delhi has been allocated to plants far away in Odisha and West Bengal, more than 1000 kms away. This was done without Centre making any corresponding arrangement for tankers to supply this oxygen or any consultative process with Delhi Government," he added.

The official warned there will be still a shortage of 220 MT per day which the government will have to make up for by ensuring proper demand-side management and plugging oxygen consumption wastage and in the time of crisis, oxygen is diverted from low-demand hospitals to high-demand ones.

Last minute O2 supply saves life of Covid patients in hospitals

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The hospitals in the national Capital have been grappling with shortage in oxygen supply amid a huge surge in Covid-19 cases and many times these hospitals receive supply at the very last moment.

Batra Hospital in the national Capital's Tughlakabad Institutional Area received emergency oxygen supply from the Delhi Government moments after it exhausted its stock.

Several hospital authorities said that doctors are feeling so helpless as after every few hours they have another oxygen crisis and the administration started making frantic calls.

Executive Director of Batra Hospital, Sudhanshu Bankata, said the healthcare facility exhausted its oxygen stock at around 9 am.

"Just now, we received an emergency supply from the Delhi Government. It will last another one-and-a-half hours. Our supplier has not been responding to calls," he said.

There are around 350 patients admitted in the hospital, of which 265 are COVID-19 positive and 30 are in the ICU.

In a similar situation, Apollo hospital received supply after UP police created a green corridor for Oxygen carrying vehicle.

"Thank you UP Govt and UP Police for timely assistance and arranging a dedicated green channel for transportation of liquid oxygen for our Covid-19 patients admitted at Indraprastha Apollo Delhi. This will greatly assist us in our fight against the second wave of the pandemic," Apollo Hospital tweeted.

"Sir Ganga Ram Hospital has 29 patients on invasive ventilation. To run ventilators oxygen reservoir should be 3000 cubic meters. We are getting supplies of 500 to 1500 cubic meters only. We have 516 covid patients, 129 in ICU and 29 patients on invasive ventilation. These 29 patients due to less supplies are on manual ventilation since midnight. This can not go for long. Staff is getting exhausted," the hospital said in a statement.

"Today morning, our oxygen had almost finished when they gave 1.5 tons which is now at 0.7 tons, which will last for one hour only. Yesterday it was given in writing that INOX will start giving 9000 cubic meters from midnight. Inspite of being in crisis since 4 am, INOX did not fulfill its commitment and just supplied 1.5 tons at 5:30am," it said.

However, the hospital administration said that it has received supply of 2.5 tonnes of Oxygen which will last for 4 to 5 hrs.

Green corridor created for oxygen tanker

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Saturday created a green corridor and helped Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital in the eastern part of the national Capital to get an oxygen tanker.

According to police, a message and call was received from the government's appointed nodal officer for the hospital for police assistance of the transportation of oxygen tanker from Inox Plant, Modinagar in Ghaziabad.

The details of the tanker and driver were shared. The Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Shahdara immediately contacted DIG Police, Ghaziabad and SP Rural Ghaziabad and started the coordination for swift transportation with police escort.

"Later, a team was dispatched from GTB Enclave police station which met the UP Police team midway and took over the responsibility. They escorted the tanker through the shortest possible route and finally reached the hospital within an hour around 11 am," said a senior police official.

In the north district, police helped Sant Parmanand Hospital by providing 71 oxygen cylinders in quickest time.

According to Anto Alphonse, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), North district, on Friday around 2 PM, the Station House Officer (SHO) of Civil Lines police station received a dis-

stress call from Sant Parmanand Hospital, Sham Nath Marg, Civil Lines that the hospital has run out of the oxygen supply and need immediate help.

"The staff rushed to the hospital. Oxygen supplier of Bawana and Mundka were liaised to provide refilled oxygen cylinders. Thereafter, a team with two vehicles of hospital carrying total 40 empty oxygen cylinders was sent to Bawana refilling centre," said the DCP.

Another vehicle carrying 31 empty cylinders was sent to Mundka refilling centre, police said.

The police escorted the vehicles carrying 71 oxygen cylinders back to the hospital by providing a green corridor, they said.

Similarly, in southeast district, police helped a hospital in Lajpat Nagar to get oxygen cylinders.

"On Thursday, police received information from IBS Hospital regarding scarcity of oxygen cylinders. The lives of 40 COVID patients were at stake. Police arranged six oxygen cylinders from different locations and handed over to the hospital," said R P Meena, the DCP, Southeast district.

Police again on Friday received a PCR call that there was a shortage of oxygen cylinders in IBS Hospital. Once again, police arranged six oxygen cylinders for the hospital. A green corridor was formed by Lajpat Nagar police team from Badarpur Border to IBS Hospital, the DCP added.

SDMC carries out sanitisation drive; containment zones main focus

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A massive sanitisation drive has been carried out around containment zones in all four zones of the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC).

During the drive, nearly 500 public places were sanitised. A senior SDMC official said that focus was given on containment zones, isolation, vaccination and Covid testing centres, hospitals etc.

Also, 15 tankers and 10 jetting machines have been deployed to execute the work, he added.

The official further said that all key roads in the vicinity of containment zones, streets, and houses were sanitized. "The houses of covid positive houses were being sanitized twice in a day with the help of motorized pumps. Safai Sainiks have been ensuring lifting of bio-medical waste properly from the homes of Covid positive patients. Auto tippers are being used for carrying and disposing of bio-medical waste," he added.

The areas covered on Saturday were mainly Sitapuri, Janak Puri, Virender Nagar, Sangam Vihar, Mohan Garden, Raghunagar, Tagore Garden, Pochanpur, Govindpuri, R K Puram, Nanakpura, Kalkaji, Lajpat Nagar, Rajouri Garden, Punjabi Bagh, Palam, Saket, Sangam Vihar, Pushp Vihar, Madangir, Tilak Nagar, Defence Colony, Hari Nagar etc.

Delhi BJP lashes out at CM for not setting up oxygen plants

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Demanding a case of criminal negligence against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday for not setting up the oxygen plants, the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said the current regime has failed to save lives.

Delhi BJP President Adesh Gupta said it is sad that the Kejriwal government learnt no lesson from last year's Covid wave that oxygen plants have a crucial role in the treatment.

"It is a matter of concern that in past one-year Kejriwal government made no effort to set up oxygen plants and also didn't utilise the funds provided by the central government. Five months ago, Kejriwal government got suggestions and funds but ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) neglected the advice thus Delhiites facing hard times today," he added.

Relating the ongoing situation with Uphaar cinema tragedy, he said that a case of criminal negligence should be lodged and prosecution also start.

He further added that it was shocking to learn no official representative was present in the Delhi High Court proceedings over the matter. "Two days ago Delhi's oxygen quota was increased but the Delhi government has made no effort to lift and bring oxygen to Delhi and this forcing the Court to make observations on the matter too," he said.



Covid-19 positive patients outside Covid ward at Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital in New Delhi

Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer



People lining outside the Covid-19 rapid antigen testing booth in a large number on Saturday

Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer

Jeevan Rakshak, digital link between plasma donors, recipients launched

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In view of surge in Covid cases in the national Capital, the Delhi Police has launched Jeevan Rakshak (Saviour of Life) initiative to create a digital data bank interface between plasma donors and needy recipients.

According to Chinmoy Biswal, the Public Relation Officer (PRO) of Delhi Police, a google form has been devised



for this purpose.

"The persons in need of plasma will register their requests for requisition. A designated link is available on the official website of Delhi Police in the name of donate plasma

- save lives," said Biswal.

"On clicking, the viewer goes to "Jeevan Rakshak: An Initiative of Delhi Police" Google doc form showing two separate fields for Plasma Donors & Plasma Recipients.

The person registering his request will choose the concerned field as such. On choosing the field "I am a plasma donor" - a form containing the details of donor, Social Media handles along with his or con-

sent will open. The donor will have to enter the required details in all the fields and submit the form," said Biswal.

Similarly, for plasma seekers, on choosing the field "I am a Plasma Recipient (Patient/caretaker)" - a form containing the required fields like Name of patient, Age, Gender, Mobile number of patient, Name of caretaker, Name of hospital, Patient ID of Hospital, Location of Hospital,

Blood Group, Doctor's prescription will open. The seeker/recipient will have to enter details in all the fields and submit the form, he said.

"All the databank of donors and recipients will be maintained centrally by Delhi Police. Further, a dedicated team will be deputed to check out the requests received for Plasma recipients and on availability of the suitable donor, the information about the recipient and

donor will be shared among them," said the PRO.

Biswal also said that the citizens are requested to come forward in this testing time and register themselves for donating plasma.

"Their contribution will prove vital in saving lives of the needy patients who need plasma therapy to survive from covid. The Google Form link is https://forms.gle/sakJzXtDzQTgFV6Z7," he added.

Social media flooded with Covid SOS

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

In the last few days, following the shortage of beds, oxygen, the drug remdesivir and plasma, several social media platforms including Twitter and WhatsApp are flooded with specific requests from Covid patients, their relatives and friends in the national Capital. Displaying a humane face several people have also come forward on social media platforms to help them within a short span of time.

Frantic posts on these social media reveals the scale of Delhi's Covid crisis as people plead for everything from hospital beds to medicines, CT scans, oxygen, space at crematorium and even food for the elderly in quarantine.

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Telegram are all inundated with messages from distraught family members and friends begging for help.

The desperate pleas, hoping someone will respond with a speedy remedy, offer a



peek into the unfolding tragedy buffeting the National Capital.

Sharad Gupta, a twitter user and a resident of Tri Nagar in Delhi wrote on Twitter, "My sister, her husband, and mother in law are very serious, they are not getting any beds or oxygen."

Even hospitals in Delhi also took to Twitter and Apollo hospital on Saturday wrote that "SOS Call from Apollo Hospital in Delhi. 400 patients on oxygen support,

TWITTER, FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, WHATSAPP AND TELEGRAM ARE ALL INUNDATED WITH MESSAGES FROM DISTRAUGHT FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS BEGGING FOR HELP

Several groups, which were formed recently following the crisis, have also come forward to help the needy.

Arun Bothra, an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, has established a pan-India network of volunteers. Called India Cares, the group has also been helping people out since last year's lockdown, when it had assisted people in getting food and medicines.

A senior journalist, who was in need of the medicine, took to twitter and wrote on Saturday that "Spent the

morning looking for dexamethasone 6 mg tablets in Delhi. This is a steroid recommended by the WHO for severe Covid patients. Two doctors have prescribed it for someone I love. I can't find it And they say India is the pharmacy of the world."

The volunteer of India Cares provided the medicines to her and later on thanked its volunteer Chandrajeet Kumar for arranging and delivering medicines to her.

Janice Sequeira, an anchor, took to twitter and wrote "Guys #Urgent Looking for an #OxygenBed in #Dwarka #Delhi. Patient has already lost her husband. Family is desperately searching for a hospital bed!"

She was replied by several people who shared details of vacant beds in Delhi's Hospital. There were several netizens too who even shared details of beds availability in the hospitals across the city and even those who needed oxygen cylinders were provided by the list of contacts.

Centre pulled up by Delhi HC over re-allocation of Delhi quota of oxygen

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Saturday claimed that the High Court has curtailed the attempt by Central Government to wish away its responsibility from arranging oxygen tankers amid surge in Covid-19. "Centre pulled up by Delhi High Court and asked to immediately examine re-allocating Delhi quota of oxygen from nearby plants," Delhi Government said in a statement.

Illustrating the High Court proceedings, a Delhi Government official said in the court, the Government stated that as against 480 MT of oxygen allocated, only 309 MT was received by Delhi on April 23, which is the main cause behind the crisis in Delhi's hospitals.

"This follows a continuous trend where daily oxygen delivered is way short of quota assigned to Delhi. Delhi government has also stated that the root cause of this issue was that in the revised allocation plan devised by Central

Government, for the first time ever, 102 MT of supply for Delhi has been allocated to plants far away in Odisha and West Bengal, more than 1000 kms away. This was done without Centre making any corresponding arrangement for tankers to supply this oxygen or any consultative process with Delhi Government," quoted a statement from Chief Minister's House (CMO), Delhi.

Notably, according to Delhi government the Delhi High Court directed the Empowered Group of Central government re-examine this plan and to ensure plants closer to Delhi are allocated so that same tankers can make higher number of trips.

It must be noted that in the allocation plan for Delhi before 21.04.2021, one of the suppliers, INOX, was allotted 140 MT from its plants nearby Delhi. On several days earlier (15th and 16th April), INOX supplied even greater than 140 MT and up to 160 MT. However, in the revised plan issued by Central

Government on April 21, 2021 supply from INOX was suddenly curtailed to 100 MT, whereas far way plants that are in no position to supply to Delhi were assigned over 100 MT. This irrational allocation is the chief cause behind the gap between allocated and actual oxygen supplied to Delhi.

Further, Delhi government submitted that as on date, there is a vast shortage of Cryogenic Tankers across the country and Centre is best placed to allocate adequate capacity to each state or if required import more tankers.

"Besides, Delhi being a non-industrial state, it does not have a ready fleet of Cryogenic tankers like many other industrial states. To this, without producing any concrete examples or numbers, Central officials once again evaded any kind of responsibility and said that some States are taking care of their tanker requirements and therefore Delhi should also do so," a Delhi government representative said.

Jagannath Temple to remain closed for devotees till May 15

Puri: Given the surge in Covid-19 cases across Odisha, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) on Saturday decided to stop the entry of devotees into the 12th century shrine till May 15.

However, the age-old daily rituals of the trinity — Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra, and Lord Jagannath — will continue with help of servitors and temple officials, SJTA chief administrator Krishan Kumar said after chairing a meeting attended by representatives of temple servitors, the Puri district collector and superintendent of police, and other stakeholders.

It was also decided that all preparations for the construction of chariots will continue as per traditions. The SJTA will take steps for procurement of masks and sanitisers for use during Chandan (sandalwood) Yatra, Snan (bathing) Yatra, and Ratha Yatra.

The annual Ratha Yatra falls on July 12 this year.

"The grave challenge posed by Covid-19 was discussed in detail. All were of the unanimous view that necessary steps

must be taken to ensure continuity of the Niti-Kanti (rituals) of Mahaprabhu Shree Jagannath," Kumar said.

A decision was also taken to carry out regular screening and testing on families of servitors and temple officials.

The rituals related to the Ratha Yatra will begin from Akashya Tritiya (May 15).

A Covid-19 Care Centre at Neelachal Yatri Niwas will be strengthened as per requirement, he said.

Arrangements will also be made for shifting serious patients to SUM and other hospitals in Bhubaneswar.

The temple administrator (development) will act as the Nodal Officer, an official note said.

Focus will be given on the vaccination of those involved in daily rituals at the shrine and those engaged in the construction of chariots for the Ratha Yatra.

The meeting also resolved that the awareness programme will continue on the use of face masks, sanitisation and hand washing, and the need for maintaining social distancing. **PTI**

Covid-19: TN orders closure of temples, movie theatres

Chennai: With the number of Covid-infected persons increasing in the state, the Tamil Nadu Government has ordered closure of movie theatres, auditoriums, temples for public worship and others from Monday.

The government's new restrictions include closure of recreation clubs, movie theatres, liquor bars, auditoriums, meeting halls, shopping complexes, big format stores and vegetable shops located in malls.

While, standalone vegetable and grocery shops can operate following the safety measures but such shops located in malls are not allowed to open. Besides, barber shops, beauty parlours and spas will also remain closed.

Only takeaways allowed in hotels/restaurants/mess/tea shops. For guests in hotels and lodges food should be served in their rooms, said a government statement.

E-commerce service can function with time limits.

All places of worships closed for public but poojas can be conducted by the staff. Only 50 persons are allowed for weddings, while 25 persons are allowed at funerals.

50 per cent staff of IT and ITES companies should work from home. Sports training centres to be closed except for training for national and international events, the statement added.

Compulsory e-registration for people coming from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and from overseas by air or sea. **IANS**

36.30 per cent sero-positivity found among 10,197 samples chosen from across Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

In its third sero-survey conducted in the backdrop of COVID-19 to determine antibody response in individuals, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has found a staggering 36.30 per cent sero-positivity among 10,197 citizens selected using "anonymous sampling method" from across 24 wards in the metropolis.

Disclosing the findings of the third sero survey, Mumbai Municipal Commissioner I S Chahal said here on Saturday night: "Overall 36.30 per cent sero-positivity is found in 10,197 blood samples collected from citizens from across all 24 wards. While we found an increase in the percentage of sero-positivity in blood samples taken from non-slum areas, we noticed the decline in sero-positivity in the slums areas".

"Based on the survey, we intend to accelerate the vaccination campaign in order to limit the spread of the COVID-19," Chahal said.

The serologic tests measure the antibody response in individuals. Antibodies to COVID-19 are produced over days to weeks after infection with the virus.

The presence of antibodies indicates that a person was infected with the COVID-19 virus, irrespective of whether

the individual had severe or mild disease, or even asymptomatic infection.

Surveillance of antibody sero-positivity in a population allows inferences to be made about the extent of infection and about the cumulative incidence of infection in the population.

Among other things, the use of serology in epidemiology and public health research enables understanding of the occurrence of infection among different populations, how many people have mild or asymptomatic infection, and who may not have been identified by routine disease surveillance, the proportion of fatal infections among those infected and the proportion of the population who may be protected against infection in the future.

The BMC conducted the survey as part of its preventive efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19. "While implementing these measures, it is important to make certain scientific information available regarding the spread of the virus. In this regard, the third sero survey of citizens was conducted in the Greater Mumbai Municipal Corporation area recently," Chahal said.

In the Serologic tests conducted using unlinked Anonymous sampling method, the BMC found IgG antibodies (sero positivity) in 36.30% of 10,197 blood samples.

While the BMC conducted the first sero-survey of the citizens was conducted in three civic wards in July 2020. It conducted the second survey in three other wards in August 2020. Now the BMC has conducted the third sero-survey in 24 wards across the metropolis.

"For the survey, blood samples collected at municipal dispensaries were tested. The survey also included blood samples collected from private medical laboratories. This sero survey was conducted on blood samples collected from individuals who were not vaccinated," Chahal said.

"All blood samples have been tested for antibodies at MCGM's Molecular Biology Laboratory at the Kasturba Hospital.

The findings of the latest sero survey show that there was 35.02 per cent sero-positivity in men, while there was 37.12 per cent sero-positivity among the women.

"During current sero survey, 41.6% sero-positivity is found in the blood samples taken from municipal dispensaries in slum areas. The first survey found 57 per cent sero-positivity in slum areas of 3 wards and during the second sero survey in these 3 ward, sero-positivity was found to be 45 per cent in slums areas," the survey findings revealed.



A volunteer during an awareness campaign during the lockdown amid surge in Covid-19 cases at Badi Chhapra in Jaipur on Saturday **PTI**

'Positivity' helps 103-year-old MP man recover from Covid-19

Betul: A centenarian in Betul in Madhya Pradesh on Saturday said he had beaten back coronavirus infection in the same doughty manner in which he took the British head on in his young days as a freedom fighter.

Birdichand Gothi, who is 103-year-old as per his Aadhaar card which states that he was born on November 2, 1917, had contracted the infection on April 5 and recovered on Friday.

"I did not panic or rush to a hospital. With the same zeal with which I fought the British, I took the virus head on. I remained happy and positive, took a simple vegetarian diet and defeated COVID-19," he told reporters here on Saturday.

"Stay positive, smile, exercise and have a balanced diet," he said when asked for tips to beat the infection. **PTI**

Nagaland stops administering first dose of Covid vaccine due to shortage

Kohima: The Nagaland Government has stopped administering the first dose of Covid-19 vaccines due to a shortage of vials but is continuing the immunisation drive for people who will get the second shot, an official said on Saturday.

The state is currently facing a scarcity of COVID vaccines with around 60,000 doses in stock, Principal Director of Health and Family Welfare Department Dr Kevichusa Medikhru told PTI.

As of Friday, Nagaland has administered a total of 1,79,349 doses of Covishield vaccine to 1,42,715 people, including 46,634 frontline workers and 14,053 health professionals, State Immunisation Officer Dr Ritu Thurr said.

Altogether, 36,634 people have received the second shot of COVID-19 vaccine, the official said.

"Over one lakh people are yet to get the second jab, while the department has a stock of around 60,000 doses. That is why it has decided to stop administering the first dose till the stock level improves," Thurr said.

Dr Medikhru said the state has already sought 3 lakh doses of the vaccine from the Centre. **PTI**

61-year-old Covid patient commits suicide in B'luru

Bengaluru: A 61-year-old Covid patient has committed suicide at a hospital here, the police said on Saturday.

According to the police, the deceased is identified as Ramanna, a resident of Anjana Nagar, Sunkadakatte of Bengaluru.

The police said that the deceased died by hanging in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of private 50-bed Hospital in Vijayanagar which has three ventilators.

The police said that the prima facie investigations reveal that he committed suicide by hanging.

The police claimed they have not recovered any suicide note yet and exact reasons for victim taking such extreme step are still not known.

"The family members claim that

he was depressed, however, hospital staff claim that he 'appeared' to be cheerful before 11.30 p.m. (on Friday) when he was attended last by the hospital staff," the police said.

The police added that when the hospital attendee again approached at around 1 a.m. to administer his health status, the staff found that his room was locked from inside and when it was forced open, he was found hanging.

The police said that the hospital is claiming that he was on a recovery path and responding to the medicines quite well and the hospital had also informed him that he would be shifted from ICU to the general ward on Friday morning or evening. **IANS**

Guj records 14,097 corona cases, highest in one day; 152 fatalities

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Gujarat on Saturday recorded 14,097 Covid-19 cases, its highest one-day rise so far, which took the caseload to 4,81,737.

The state also reported highest one-day death count of 152, which pushed the overall death toll to 6,171, a health department official said.

At least 6,479 patients were discharged from hospitals during the day, raising the count of recoveries to 3,67,972, he added. With this, the state's recovery rate stands at 76.38 per cent.

There are 1,07,594 active cases in the state, 396 of them in a critical condition.

With 5,683 new infections, Ahmedabad reported the highest number of cases, followed by Surat with 2,686, Vadodara with 701, Jamnagar with 639, Rajkot with 500, Mehsana with 430, Bhavnagar with 310 and Banaskantha

with 291.

Surat reported the highest 28 deaths, followed by 25 casualties in Ahmedabad, 14 in Vadodara and 12 in Rajkot.

As per official data, 1,11,70,997 people have received the COVID-19 vaccine in the state so far, with 92,99,215 getting the first dose and 18,71,782 getting the second one.

The tally of infections in the adjoining Union Territory of Daman, Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli rose to 6,481 with 242 new cases, a local official said.

With 118 more patients getting discharged, the total of recovered cases went up to 4,443, he said, adding that four patients have died of the infection in the UT so far.

Gujarat's COVID-19 figures are as follows: Positive cases 4,81,737, new cases 14,097, death toll 6,171, discharged 3,67,972, active cases 1,07,594, people tested so far - figures not released.

Oxygen Express whizzes along with elixir of life

From Page 1

Several States including Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Delhi State Governments approached Ministry of Railways to explore whether liquid medical oxygen (LMO) tankers could be moved by Railways and their supply is likely to be delivered shortly, said a rail official.

Zonal Railways have been alerted on the demands from State Governments. Railway Board has directed concerned General Managers to be fully prepared and proactively assist the State and Central Government Agencies in movement of Oxygen by Rail and has also nominated Nodal Officers in Railway Board.

The Union Health Ministry last Sunday said it has expedited installation of 162 PSA oxygen generation plants in health facilities across the country, while the Indian Railways announced special trains to transport the life-saver and several industry majors pitched in by diverting supply to hospitals.

Under the initiative, empty tankers are being loaded with liquid medical oxygen from Visakhapatnam, Jamshedpur, Rourkela and Bokaro. The need for transportation of oxygen through trains was materialised as trains are faster over long distances as compared to road transport.

Trains can operate 24 hours, while truck drivers would need to take breaks.

The PSA plants manufacture oxygen and help hospitals become self-sufficient in their requirement for medical oxygen, while also reducing the burden on the national grid for its supply of medical oxygen. The country's largest steel-maker SAIL, Tata Steel and ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India are supplying medical oxygen to health facilities. According to the Steel Ministry, 28 oxygen plants located in the steel facilities of both public and private sectors are supplying about 1,500 tonnes of medical oxygen every day. Also, an additional stock of 30,000 MT, including the safety stock, is being made available for medical use.

Villages must shut door on...

From Page 1

Prime Minister said like last year it is the rural regions which would emerge victorious over the pandemic.

He asked Panchayat representatives who he said, now possess knowledge and expertise, to ensure that Covid-19 guidelines be adhered to in the villages and all get vaccinated. On the occasion, Modi launched the distribution of e-property cards under the SWAMITVA scheme. Prime Minister also conferred the National Panchayat Awards 2021 on the occasion.

Chief Ministers of eight States joined the event, held virtually with a large number of local body representatives who connected to the ceremony. Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar also attended the event.

"I have this confidence that if someone is going to emerge victorious first in this fight against the coronavirus, then it is going to be India's villages, the leadership of these villages... The people of the villages will show the way to the country and the world," the Prime Minister said.

As many as 4.09 lakh property owners were given their e-property cards, which also

marked the rolling out of the SWAMITVA scheme for implementation across the country.

The Prime Minister said last year SWAMITVA yojna was implemented in six States and its good impact had started showing-up there. He said under this scheme, entire village land and other properties are surveyed by a drone and owners are given their ownership documents. He said just now four lakh owners in five thousand villages have been allotted their 'e-property cards'.

"SWAMITVA yojna has given a new self-confidence and sense of security to villages", said Modi.

"Gaan ke ghar ka naksha, apni samm-patti ka dastavez jab haath main hota hain to anek prakar ki ashankayen khatm ho jati hain. Isse gaon main zameen-jayezad par hone wale jhagde bhi khatm huain hain", said the Prime Minister.

Modi said Government has given Rs 2.25 lakh crore in the hands of Panchayats for the development of villages, an amount so big was never earmarked for them in the past, he said.

Oxygen only in air! 22 suffocate in...

From Page 1

"We received an emergency supply from the Delhi government during the day. It will last another one-and-a-half hour. Our supplier has not been responding to calls," he said.

There are around 350 patients admitted in the hospital, of which 265 are Covid-19 positive and 30 are in the ICU.

In a similar situation, Apollo hospital received supply after UP police created a green corridor for oxygen carrying vehicle.

"Thank you UP Govt and UP Police for timely assistance and arranging a dedicated green channel for transportation of liquid oxygen for our Covid-19 patients admitted at Indraprastha Apollo Delhi. This will greatly assist us in our fight against the second wave of the pandemic," Apollo Hospital tweeted.

"Sir Ganga Ram Hospital has 29 patients on invasive ventilation. To run ventilators oxygen reservoir should be 3,000 cubic meters. We are getting supplies of 500 to 1,500 cubic meters only. We have 516 covid patients, 129 in ICU and 29 patients on invasive ventilation. These 29 patients due to fewer supplies are on manual ventilation since midnight. This can not go for long. Staff is getting exhausted," the hospital said in a statement.

"Today morning, our oxygen had almost finished when they gave 1.5 tons which is now at 0.7 tonnes, which will last for one hour only. Yesterday it was given in writing that INOX will start giving 9,000 cubic meters from midnight. In spite of being in crisis since 4 am, INOX did not fulfill its commitment and just supplied 1.5 tonnes at 5:30am," it said.

However, the hospital administration said it has received a supply of 2.5 tonnes of oxygen.

We will hang the persons who obstructs oxygen...

From Page 1

The court was hearing submissions by the counsel for Maharaja Agrasen Hospital, Jaipur Golden Hospital, Batra Hospital and Saroj Super Speciality Hospital here over shortage of oxygen for treating seriously-ill COVID patients.

"We will hang that man. We will not spare anyone," the court said while telling the Delhi government to give one instance of any official at the central, state or local administration obstructing the pickup of oxygen supplies. The court told the Delhi government to inform the Centre also about such officials of the local administration so that it could take action against them. It also asked the Centre when the 480 metric tonne (MT) of oxygen per day allocated for Delhi would see the light of the day.

"You (Centre) had assured us (on April 21) that 480 MT per day will reach Delhi. Tell us when will it come? The 480 MT per day is still to see the light of the day."

The query came after the Delhi Government said it was getting only 380 MT oxygen per day over the past few days and it received only around 300 MT on Friday. During the hearing, the court also questioned the Delhi government officers as to what endeavour they have made to secure tankers to get the supply of oxygen allocated to it by the Centre.

6 patients die in Amritsar...

From Page 1

"Heavy police force has been deployed outside the oxygen units to prevent oxygen supply to private hospitals," Devgan alleged. Of the six patients who died at the hospital on Saturday, two were from Gurdaspur, one from Tarn Taran district and the remaining three were from Amritsar.

The DC has set up a two-member committee, comprising a PCS officer, Dr Rajat Oberoi who is also in-charge of the death analysis committee, and a civil surgeon from Amritsar, to probe the matter, an official spokesperson said. The DC said that oxygen was being supplied to private hospitals without any prejudice and that the government hospital here was also running short of oxygen supply on Friday night. He said private hospitals had been told not to admit patients if they do not have oxygen and they should refer patients to Guru Nanak Dev Hospital in Amritsar.

Amarinder orders...

From Page 1

The demand for oxygen currently stands at 250 metric tonnes per day and is further expected to go up to 300 MT in coming days on account of spiralling Covid cases.

Reacting to reports of increase in the price of oxygen by suppliers, Capt Amarinder asked Punjab Small Industries and Export Corporation to discuss, negotiate and settle the pricing with bulk suppliers and inform the Principal Secretary, Medical Education and Research, on the final decision. The CM also ordered Punjab Health Systems Corporation to procure 100 more oxygen concentrators, including 50 approved earlier, in addition to 234 already being used in Covid facilities.

Black-marketing makes Remdesivir...

From Page 1

In another instance, two other accused persons were arrested from near Batra Hospital, MB Road, Delhi, who were trying to sell the injections at exorbitant prices. Ten vials of Remdesivir were recovered from the accused persons.

The accused persons use to sell these injections in black market on higher prices. They had a set network of persons who supply the injections on demand. "A total of 81 vials of Remdesivir injections were recovered in two cases," the police said.

Meanwhile, in Uttar Pradesh the Covid crisis has turned out to be a big business for the hospitals and chemists as life saving drugs has either vanished from the medical store or are available at a premium.

Narendra Nath, a Government employee purchased Remdesivir, a crucial drug for the treatment of Covid-19, at Rs 16,000 per vial whereas its cost is less than Rs 5,000. "I was told that the drug is out of stock. I needed it for my son-in-law. As I had no option I was forced to pay extra," he said.

His son-in-law was admitted to a private hospital. The

doctor called him up to say that he should arrange for 6 vials of the injection. "Initially I purchased two vials at a cost of Rs 12,000 but for the remaining four I was asked to pay Rs 16,000 per vial," he said. "I was told that the dealer has jacked up the price. These people are heartless and are minting money at the time of crisis," Nath said.

This has become a full-fledged business for some and police arrested a group of four, comprising two doctors, at the outskirts of Lucknow.

They purchased the Remdesivir injection at Rs 8,000 per vial and sold it at Rs 20,000 per vial.

There is no limit to this extortion. Ashutosh Sharma, a businessman in Varanasi, contacted a pharma dealer in Lucknow who asked for Rs 25,000 for one injection.

"This is almost five times the market price," he told this reporter.

The Uttar Pradesh police have also launched an extensive drive to check the black-marketing, hoarding, and overcharging of Remdesivir and other drugs used for the treatment of critical Covid-19 patients across the State.

The UP special task force (UP STF) has been pressed into service to track the unscrupulous elements, Addl Chief Secretary, Home, Awanish Kumar Awasthi said.

Besides, police forces of various districts have been conducting rigorous drives all across the state to curb the hoarding, black-marketing and overcharging of essential Covid-19 drugs including Remdesivir, FabiFlu and Tocilizumab.

The Uttar Pradesh police has constituted special teams to keep a strict vigil on the high-load areas to check the sale of fake Remdesivir injections.

Meanwhile, reports from Ranchi said black-marketing and hoarding of life-saving medicines and medical equipment is rampant in the State. Right from portable oxygen cylinders to Remdesivir injection, there are reports of people being forced to pay an exorbitant price.

Middlemen at hospitals are reported to be fleecing critical patients by charging them as much as Rs 1.5 lakh for 6 vials of the injection. They claim that the injection has been smuggled from neigh-

bouring States and countries. However, no buyer or seller is ready to come on record and lodge a complaint with the authorities.

Similarly, equipment like PPE kits and Pulse Oxymeter, etc. are being sold on much higher rates than their MRP. Pharmacists in Ranchi are selling Oxymeters at Rs 2,000-3,000, more than double the price of their MRP.

On a complaint received Ranchi SDM Utkarsh Gupta raided some medical stores on April 23 and found that PPE kits and other equipment were being sold at 4-5 times higher rates than their MRP. It was found that a PPE kit of MRP Rs 210 was being sold at Rs 800.

The Ranchi district administration has issued helpline numbers to complain about black-marketing during the pandemic, but very few people are coming forward to lodge formal complaints for the same.

The situation is worst in rural areas and small towns where the supply of medicines and medical equipment is less and private hospitals and nursing homes are cashing in on the helplessness of people.

Set up makeshift vax hospitals for 18+: Centre to State



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the country gears up for a fresh round of Covid-19 vaccination from May 1, the Centre on Saturday suggested the States to consider setting up of makeshift hospitals with help from Government research agencies like DRDO, CSIR and cooperative entities like NCDC or the private sector to ensure a smooth rollout of the drive under which all adults can take the shot.

The States have also been asked to ensure adequacy in terms of oxygen supported beds, ICU beds and oxygen supplies as well hospital staff to take care of any adverse event.

These were some of the several recommendations offered by the high-level meeting chaired by Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan and Dr R S Sharma, Chairman, Empowered Group on Technology and Data Management to combat Covid-19 here.

Dr Sharma expressed confidence that the CoWIN platform is equipped to handle the

complexities of the new phase of vaccination and asserted that States should upload correct and timely data as any incorrect data would compromise the integrity of the entire system. The registration process on the government platform will begin from April 28.

With regards to the Phase III Vaccination strategy, the States were specifically advised to register additional private Covid Vaccination Centres (CVCs) in mission mode by engaging with private hospitals, hospitals of industrial establishments, industry associations, etc., coordinating with designated appropriate authority, mechanism for applications/requests and their processing and monitoring of pendency of registration.

The State/UTs were guided to co-ordinate with Corporate entities/PSUs/Government Departments for their CSR funds to facilitate setting up makeshift hospitals and temporary Covid care facilities. Cooperation with National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) for re-

Centre silent on higher prices of jabs, says will give free vaccines to States

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Receiving flak over the presumption that people might end up paying far more for a Covid shot from May 1, the Centre on Saturday tried to clarify that vaccines procured by it would be provided free to States. However, the statement by the Centre was silent on the higher prices of jabs sourced by States and private hospitals directly from the manufacturers even though the Serum Institute of India, maker of Covishield, justified the rate saying that it remained "the most affordable Covid-19 vaccine available in the market today."

"It is clarified that the Government of India's procurement price for both Covid-19 vaccines remains ₹150 per dose. GOI procured doses will continue to be provided TOTALLY FREE to states," the Ministry of Health tweeted.



On the other hand, the SII said that Covishield coronavirus vaccine - to be sold at ₹600 per dose to private hospitals, at ₹400 to States and ₹150 to the Centre from May 1, when vaccination opens to everyone over the age of 18 is not costly.

"Only a limited portion of SII's volume will be sold to private hospitals at ₹600 per dose. The price of the vaccine is still lower than a lot of other medical treatment and essentials required to treat Covid-19 and other life-threatening diseases," the SII said in its statement.

"The initial prices (of Covishield) were kept very low globally as it was based on advance funding given by those

countries for at-risk vaccine manufacturing. The initial supply price for all Government immunisation programmes, including India, has been the lowest," the company added.

The company also said that while the current situation is "dire; the virus is constantly mutating while the public remains at risk... we have to ensure sustainability as we must be able to invest in scaling up and expanding our capacity to fight the pandemic and save lives.

There had been reports that at ₹600 a dose, people in India could pay the most, for any other country, for Covishield at private hospitals.

Those getting their shots at state-run hospitals could end up paying the full ₹400 per dose if states decide they cannot absorb the costs of procuring fresh doses directly from the makers, reports had alleged.

posing healthcare facilities for creation of Covid facilities was also advised.

NCDC Managing Director Sundeep Nayak said that his organization is gearing up to the occasion and are in the process

of instructing our 18 regional offices across the country to help the States in their vaccination endeavour.

The States have also been asked to monitor the number of hospitals that have procured

vaccines and have declared stocks and prices on CoWIN and publicise the facility of 'only online registration' for age groups 18-45 year, said an official from the Union Health Ministry.

Stop black-marketing, overpricing of drugs, oxygen, States-UTs told

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As reports of hoarding, a black marketing and overcharging of Covid management drugs—remdesivir, tocilizumab, favipiravir and oxygen cylinder continue to pour from across the States, leaving the patients at the receiving ends, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has finally intervened, asking all State and Union Territory drugs controllers to provide daily update on enforcement activities to check such nefarious activities.

"In light of present pandemic situation in the country, it has been considered necessary to collect the daily information on enforcement activities to prevent black

marketing, overpricing with respect to Remdesivir, Tocilizumab, Favipiravir and oxygen cylinder," said DCGI Dr VG Somani in a letter to all State and UT drugs controllers.

He also asked all zonal, sub zonal offices of DCGI to coordinate with state and UT drugs control authorities in the matter.

With a sharp rise in Covid-19 cases in the country, the demand for drugs like tocilizumab, favipiravir, antiviral medication remdesivir and oxygen cylinders has also increased.

This, in turn, has led to a shortage of these drugs as well as oxygen cylinder and led to black marketing and overcharging.

Tocilizumab, which is

said to reduce Covid deaths, is priced above ₹40,000. There is an acute shortage of the drug across the country as Cipla has run out of the stock while Remdesivir, a drug that is being used in emergency to treat critical Covid-19 patients who are hospitalised is also in short supply across the country.

Antiviral favipiravir too is also in short supply. Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd, its manufacturer has assured that it has ramped up production capacity to ensure continuous supply of the drug across the country. Same is the case with oxygen cylinders which are being sold in black market at huge prices as high as ₹25,000 each unit.

Regarding infrastructure augmentation for effective clinical treatment of the hospitalized Covid patients, States have been advised to review their existing hospital and other Covid treatment infrastructure in light of the daily new case, daily fatality and those that would require hospitalization, said the official.

From May 1, all adults will become eligible for a Covid-19 vaccine and doses can be sold via the market in the government's latest inoculation drive,

although people under the age of 45 will only be able to receive doses once private sales begin or if state governments procure stocks for distribution to these age groups. However, those above 45 will continue to get the job under the Centre's vaccination drive.

"Deploying requisite human resources with proper training and mentoring of doctors and nurses for management of patients and strengthening ambulance services, establishing

sufficient referral linkages for districts with deficit infrastructure through deployment of additional ambulances were some of the recommendations offered to the States," said the official.

They were also advised to use railway coaches for management of mild cases and in the meantime, details of availability of 3,816 such coaches, across 16 Zones of Railways have been shared with the States, said the official.

Centre waives custom duty on oxygen import



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Taking a slew of measures to boost medical oxygen availability in the country amid a surge in Covid-19 cases, the Central Government on Saturday decided to waive basic customs duty and health cess on the import of oxygen and connected equipment for a period of three months with immediate effect.

It was also decided at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to exempt basic customs duty on the import of COVID-19 vaccines with immediate effect for a period of three months, a government statement said.

This will boost availability of these items as well as

make them cheaper, it said, adding that Modi also directed the revenue department to ensure seamless and quick custom clearance of such equipment.

Modi emphasized that there was an immediate need to augment the supply of medical grade oxygen as well as equipment required for patient care both at home and in hospitals and asked all ministries and departments to work in synergy to this effect.

He was told that basic customs duty was exempted on Remdesivir and its API (active pharmaceutical ingredient) recently, and a suggestion was made that the import of equipment related to providing oxygen to patients

CPM bats for full use of ₹35K-cr Covid fund

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Holding the Central Government for its "approach" responsible for leading to chaos across the country, the CPI(M) on Sunday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for full utilisation of the budgeted ₹35,000 crore and PM Cares Fund to control the "tsunami" of Covid pandemic.

"I understand that there may be financial considerations in taking these decisions. Immediately, spend the budgetary allocation of ₹35,000 crores for the vaccination programme. I, implore you to forthwith cancel the



project for the construction of the new Central Vista in Delhi, put on hold all extravagant expenditures and transparently release all the money collected under PM-CARES fund and transfer the same for the supply of oxygen and vaccines," CPI (M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said in his letter to the PM.

"In case you are unable to provide oxygen and vaccines to

our fellow Indians and prevent further deaths, your government will lose its moral authority to continue. This health and humanitarian disaster is preventable and must be averted. This is the basic responsibility your government has to discharge, which it has failed to do so far," added Yechury.

CITU leader Tapan Sen and Kisan Sabha leader Hannan Mollah also urged the Prime Minister to intervene on the current vaccination policy which is "putting profit over the precious lives of people in the wake of the severe health emergency" following the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic.

needs to be expedited, the statement said, announcing the measures.

The items to benefit from the decision include medical grade oxygen, oxygen concentrator along with flow meter, regulator, connectors

and tubing vacuum pressure swing Alabsorption (VPSA) and pressure swing absorption (PSA) oxygen plants, cryogenic oxygen air separation units (ASUs) producing liquid/gaseous oxygen.

Oxygen cannisters, oxygen

filling systems, oxygen storage tanks, oxygen cylinders, including cryogenic cylinders and tanks besides any other device from which oxygen can be generated are among several other items under this category.

Throw open defence hosps for civilian Covid patients: Rajnath



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As an IAF aircraft ferried some much-needed oxygen containers from Singapore on Saturday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday ordered all the defence public sector undertakings and Ordnance factories to throw open their health facilities for civilian Covid patients.

Assuring that the defence ministry will take all steps to help the State Governments in meeting the corona challenge, Rajnath also ordered more beds for the Sardar Patel corona care centre in the national Capital.

Taking these decisions after holding a high-powered review meeting here virtually on Saturday, he also said a 1,000-bed hospital has already become operational in Gujarat. Another hospital with a capacity of more than 500 beds will also start functioning in the next three to four days in Lucknow, he said. Both these hospitals are set up with the help of the defence ministry.

Meanwhile, one C-17 transport aircraft of the IAF left the Hindon airbase near Ghaziabad for Singapore early Saturday morning to airlift four empty cryogenic oxygen containers. These containers were later off-loaded at Panagarh airbase in West Bengal. These filled up con-



tainers will be transported to the designated centres in the country.

Another C-17 aircraft left the Hindon base for Pune to load up two empty cryogenic oxygen container trucks which were then flown to Jamnagar air base. The same aircraft is currently on its second shuttle from Pune to Jamnagar, with a load of 2 more empty containers.

Similarly, one C-17 transported two empty containers from Jodhpur to Jamnagar earlier in the day, IAF officials said here on Saturday. One IAF Chinook helicopter and one An32 transport aircraft took COVID testing equipment from Jammu to Leh and from Jammu to Kargil, respectively. The equipment consisted of Bio Safety cabinets, centrifuges and stabilisers. These machines have been made by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and now given to Ladakh to enhance testing.

In New Delhi, Rajnath during the meeting said the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is adding another 250 beds by Saturday evening at its Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Covid Hospital here.

The minister conducted

the review at a virtual meeting attended by Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat, Army Chief General MM Naravane, Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh and DRDO chairman G Satheesh Reddy, among others.

"All health facilities of Defence PSUs & Ordnance Factory Board have been allowed to provide health services to local COVID-19 affected civilian population. The MoD officials and the three Services are closely monitoring the progress of various initiatives taken by the Ministry," he said in another tweet.

"The Indian Air Force is taking sorties to reduce the transportation time of Oxygen and other critical supplies. One C-17 has reached Changi airport in Singapore today. These containers of cryogenic oxygen tanks will help boosting the oxygen supply in the country," Rajnath's office said.

The Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) has deployed additional doctors, including specialists, super specialists and paramedics, at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (SVP) COVID hospital in Delhi to cater to the current surge in COVID-19 cases.

EC: Slap Covid-compliant behaviour violators with disaster Act provisions

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing concern that the enforcement of Covid-appropriate behaviour in West Bengal has been "less than adequate", the Election Commission on Saturday directed officials to ensure strict action under state and national disaster management laws for Covid-compliant behaviour.

The issues were flagged at a meeting held by Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar with top state government officials to review enforcement of COVID guidelines during campaigning in West Bengal where two remaining phases of assembly elections are to take place next week.

"The Commission noted with concern that during public campaigns for electioneering, the enforcement under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 has been less than adequate," a statement issued by the poll panel said. The meeting was held just a couple of days after the poll panel placed a ban on roadshows and pad-

atras' and placed a cap on the number of persons attending public meetings to 500. The seventh and the last phase of polls will take place on April 26 and 29, respectively.

During the meet, the Commission was informed that besides other essentials, 2,46,88,000 face masks, 17,05,851 face shields and lakhs of sanitiser bottles for polling personnel, and 9,00,00,000 single hand plastic gloves for electors (considering 85 percent turnout), have been procured to ensure COVID safe polls.

The Calcutta High Court has expressed dissatisfaction with the EC over enforcement of COVID-19 health safety norms during the ongoing West Bengal assembly election process, including campaigning.

The Executive Committee of the State Disaster Management Authority, chaired by the state chief secretary, which is tasked with the enforcement of COVID-19 appropriate behaviour under the 2005 law, needs to step up its assigned statutory duty, the EC statement said on Saturday.

Cong launches INC TV to spread party message

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the National Panchayati Raj Day on Saturday, the Congress finally launched its new digital media platform 'INC TV' to help spread its message directly to the people.

Launching the channel virtually on Panchayati Raj Day, an initiative of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, the Congress said the digital platform will help raise the voice of the people by highlighting the problems faced by them, especially the poor and the downtrodden.

On the occasion, AICC General Secretary K C Venugopal alleged that various institutions in the country are under attack from the government and this is not being highlighted in the media.

The 'INC TV' will highlight news which the government does not allow to be published, so as to enable people to know what is happening in the country, AICC secretary Pranav Jha said.

The Congress has been accusing the mainstream media of not showing the party's views, alleging that it is only highlighting the Government's version.

Iran, Kuwait suspend commercial flights from India over Covid surge

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After the United Kingdom, UAE and Hong Kong, now Iran and Kuwait on Saturday suspended all commercial flights from India for an indefinite period with immediate effect amid rising cases of Covid.

In a circular, Kuwait's directorate general of civil aviation said that it had suspended all direct commercial flights coming from India, effective

April 24. All passengers arriving from India either directly or via another country will be banned from entering unless they have spent at least 14 days out of India, it said in a statement on Twitter.

Iran has also decided to bar flights from India. Mohammad Hassan Zibakhsh, spokesman for Iran's Civil Aviation Organization noted there are no routine flights between Iran and India and "flights are operated occasionally."

Free ration process starts

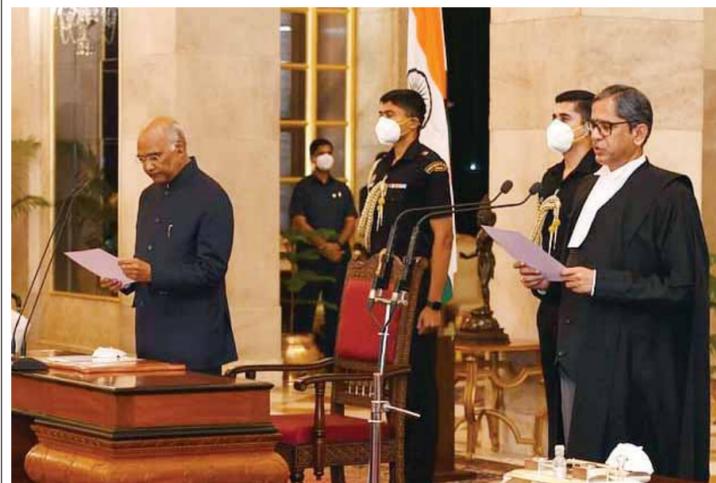
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs on Saturday said it is gearing up for monthly distribution of additional 5 kg of foodgrains for free to 80 crore PDS beneficiaries from May 1, to help the poor tide over the economic hardship in the second wave of the pandemic.

Briefing media, Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey said, "FCI has geared up its machinery of over 2,000 depots to be ready with stocks for

delivery to States. FCI is in touch with states. We will together ensure the supply from FCI to the state government and thereon to fair price shops or ration shops."

He said 80 lakh tonne of foodgrains will be distributed in the next two months costing the exchequer over Rs 26,000 crore. Pandey said pulses are not included under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) via ration shops or Public Distribution System this time.



Justice NV Ramana being sworn in as the 48th Chief Justice of India on Saturday. Justice Ramana will hold the post for 16 months, until August 26, 2022. Agency

Will SC over EC-BJP nexus: Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday threatened to move the Supreme Court after the elections to expose the deep-rooted conspiracy between the Election Commission officials and BJP to "unlawfully" defeat Trinamool Congress in the ongoing Assembly elections.

Referring to the context of some WhatsApp chats among Deputy Election Commissioner Sudip Jain, Police Observer Vivek Dubey and some DM and SPs where they reportedly spoke about arresting "trouble mongers" from the Trinamool Congress, Mamata said she would take up the matter in the Supreme Court.

She said "these officials are giving orders to detain TMC workers so that they cannot take part in voting process ... this cannot be tolerated," Mamata told party

men at Bolpur in Birbhum district adding "after the elections we will move the constitutional bench of the Supreme Court and raise these issues... enough is enough."

Saying that the TMC would continue to act fearlessly she said her party had no problems with the EC working to conduct free and fair elections "but what is it like when you work for a particular party and against the other party ... this biased behaviour is not acceptable ... there is a conspiracy to defeat TMC."

Accusing the EC for ordering the police officers to round up the "trouble mongers in the TMC and keep them in custody till 4 pm," Banerjee said that she had received the contents of the WhatsApp from some BJP workers who did not subscribe to that prejudiced approach.

Alleging that every time there was an election EC ordered Birbhum TMC chief

— a party strongman — Anubrata Mandal to be detained, Banerjee said "every time they put Anubrata under house arrest during the elections which is not fair ... if they do it this time the people give a reply in the EVM machine."

Saying that "despite playing this dirty game the BJP will not be able to win more than 70 seats in Bengal," Banerjee said accused even the State police officers of getting carried away by the BJP propaganda.

"The police too are acting as if the BJP is the ruling party in Bengal ... I will not tell them anything now ... they are being guided by the Commission. But the EC is here for a few more days, after that they will go away and then I will talk to the police officers," Banerjee who had earlier alleged that along with the central forces even the State police officials were also playing a partisan role.

Holding the Commission responsible for the rising num-

ber of corona cases in Bengal the Chief Minister said that she had repeatedly spoken against lengthy 8-phase elections that the EC would not listen to.

"I had repeatedly told that the polls should be held in one or two phases during the pandemic period but they would not listen to this ... they brought more than 2 lakh central forces without testing whether they had already contracted the disease and now the situation in Bengal is taking alarming proportions ... who is responsible for this situation," Banerjee said.

Reacting to Banerjee's statements Bengal BJP vice president Jay Prakash Majumdar said "her threat to move the Supreme Court only shows that she has conceded her defeat in the people's court ... this is a sign of surrender ... now after the defeat she is trying to find an escape route and so she is talking about going to Supreme Court."

Kasaragod locals for use of TATA's Covid-19 hospital

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Within days of the Kerala Government Medical Officers' Association issuing a serious chargesheet against the LDF Government's all-round failure in controlling the Covid-19 pandemic, civil society in Kasaragod, the northern most district has alleged that the State administration is showing step-motherly treatment to people by not utilising the state-of-the-art Covid Hospital built by the Tata Group.

"Though the hospital with more than 500 beds was handed over to the State administration in September 2010, the Department of Health has not bothered to appoint the required number of doctors, nurses, para-medical staff and other employees. This is gross injustice as the district of Kasaragod does not have sufficient hospitals and beds to treat the Covid-19 patients," said Sukumaran Periyachoor, a former principal of Government Higher Secondary School who is a leading social activist.

Though the Tata Group had constructed a hospital with 550 beds, the State Government had not admitted more than 120 patients in this Covid treatment hospital. "The Department of Health had sanctioned 190 new staff including 40 doctors to this hospital. But only 14 doctors have been appointed till now. Doctors are reluctant to join this hospital for want of infrastructure facilities and canteen," said Sukumaran who has been single-handedly knocking at the doors of authorities with a request to speed up the commissioning of this hospital.

M a d h u s o o d a n a n Mattannoor, a resident of Kasaragod, blamed politics and political parties for the delay in making the hospital fully operational. "The tragedy we face is a result of the game of one-upmanship played by the ruling CPI(M). The Government should take decisions instead of waiting for clearance by the party commissars. Health is a priority area while the Marxists in the district want everything

to be staged as per their wishes," said Madhusoodanan.

Kasaragod does not have enough the mandatory hospital to take care of the Covid-19 cases, said P Rajesh, a colleague of Sukumaran. "We are still dependent on hospitals in Mangalore district of Karnataka. The claim of Kerala Government that the State has health care facilities of global standard stands exposed as the KGMOA and IMA disclosed unpleasant facts recently," said Rajesh.

D Sajith Babu, the district collector, sounded a warning to all concerned by stating that hospitalization of Covid-19 patients would be the biggest challenge faced by the district administration as the number of pandemic cases increase in Kasaragod.

The district has 41, 225 Covid-19 patients as on Friday evening, said a release by the Department of Health. K K Shylaja, the minister for health had assured the people in September 2020 that the Tata Hospital would become fully operational in three months.

Corona curfew across J&K till Monday morning

PNS ■ JAMMU

The UT administration of Jammu & Kashmir on Saturday decided to impose corona curfew during the weekend till wee hours of Monday while 2030 fresh cases of coronavirus were reported taking the total tally of active positive cases beyond 18000.

Fifteen more patients succumbed to the virus across J&K taking the death toll due to Covid-19 to 2126.

The UT administration Saturday also announced that COVID-19 vaccination for people in the age group 18-45 years will be cost-free in the UT.

The twitter handle of the office of LG Manoj Sinha said, "It has been decided that COVID-19 vaccination for people in the age group 18-45 years will be cost-free in the UT. The cost of the vaccine will be fully borne by the government of J&K. The health department will constitute a panel to work out the logistics".

BSF fires at Pakistani drones intruding J&K border, forces them to retreat

PNS ■ JAMMU

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Saturday said two Pakistani drones made an intrusion bid along the International border in the Arnia sector of Jammu frontier thereby violating a ceasefire agreement existing between India and Pakistan since February 24-25.

However, the intrusion bid was foiled by the BSF jawans.

S P S SANDHU, DIG BSF in a statement said, "during the early morning hours, two Drones/UAV were observed entering from the Pakistan side and immediately fired upon by vigilant BSF troops which compelled it to retreat back to Pakistan territory".

DIG BSF also claimed the BSF intelligence branch has received inputs about possible use of Drones by Pakistan for ferrying arms and ammunition from Pakistan into Indian side. Accordingly the troops were on high alert and the border domination was exponentially increased.

He said despite the existence of a

ceasefire agreement between Pakistan and India, Pakistani Rangers have not stopped their nefarious activities against India and carried on with their ill motives on the International Border in Jammu.

Before the ceasefire agreement came into picture Pakistan Rangers were regularly violating the International Boundary through Drone intrusions and trying to drop Arms/Ammunition in Indian territory but successfully repulsed by BSF troops on Border. It may be recalled that BSF shot down a Pak Hexa-Copter carrying a huge Cache of Arms/Ammunition on 20 June 2020 at BOP Pansar.

Meanwhile, Budgam police Saturday arrested a terrorist during a joint search operation in village Nagbal of Charar-i-Sharif.

The arrested terrorist has been identified as Gulzar Ahmad Bhat resident of Bathpora Arwani Anantnag.

According to a police spokesman, the arrested terrorist was in close contact with the handlers of the proscribed Al-Badr

across the border in Pakistan and also active terrorists of Al-Badr outfit in South Kashmir.

Arms & ammunition including 01 Chinese Pistol, 01 Pistol Magazine, 14 Pistol rounds, 02 AK Magazine, 58 AK rounds and incriminating materials of proscribed terror outfit Al-Badr were recovered from his possession.

In another operation, a team of Baramulla police arrested three terrorist associates (OGWs) affiliated with LET, namely Rahil Ahmad Parray S/O Bashir Ahmad Parray R/O Kanihama, Arif Ahmad Mir S/O Ghulam Ahmad Mir RIO Mazhama and Naseer Ahmad Bhat S/O Ghulam Mohammad Bhat R/O Singhpora.

According to a police spokesman, "the trio was involved in recent robbery at J&K Bank Khare Sherabad on 22/04/2021 as well as a string of other robberies vis-a-vis Grameen Bank Ogmuna on 12/03/2021, Grameen Bank Panzina on 16/03/2021 and J&K Bank Chandipora on 24/03/2021".

CBI registers FIR against Anil Deshmukh in graft case

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major setback to the ruling NCP in Maharashtra, the CBI has registered an FIR against its senior leader and former State Home Minister Anil Deshmukh under section 7 of the amended Prevention of Corruption Act and section 120-b (conspiracy) of IPC for an "attempt to obtain undue advantage for important and dishonest performance of the public duty".

Having prima facie found "cognisable offences" of corruption and conspiracy against him during a Preliminary Enquiry (PE) conducted by it into the allegations made against him by Mumbai's former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh, the CBI on April 21 registered a regular case against him and other unknown people. It entrusted the investigations in the case to Mukesh Kumar, DSP, AC II, New Delhi.

Three days after it registered an FIR against Deshmukh and others, the CBI on Saturday carried out searches at Deshmukh's Nagpur residence and several locations in Maharashtra linked to him and a few of his associates and questioned him for a few hours once again.

Sporting PPE kits, the CBI teams visited Deshmukh's home and other locations in Mumbai, Thane and Pune.

As part of the Preliminary Enquiry (PE) ordered against him by the Bombay High Court, the CBI had earlier on April 14 questioned Deshmukh for eight-long hours on Wednesday in connection with the allegations of corruption made against him by the former Police Commissioner.

The CBI has based its FIR against Deshmukh and others on the recommendation made by CBI's DSP R. S. Gunjijal who conducted the PE against the former State Home Minister in line with the order passed by the Bombay High

Court on April 5 that a complaint made by one Dr Jaishri Lamanrao Patil.

"The Preliminary Enquiry prima facie revealed that a prima facie offence is made out in the matter, wherein the then Home Minister of Maharashtra Anil Deshmukh and unknown others have attempted to obtain undue advantage for improper and dishonest performance of their public duty," Gunjijal stated in his letter recommending registration of an FIR against Deshmukh and others.

Among other things, Gunjijal also stated in his letter recommending registration of an FIR against Deshmukh and others — which has made part of the FIR — that now suspended and incarcerated police Sachin Vaze, who had earlier been reinstated into the police force after being out of service for more than 15 years, "was entrusted with most sensational and important cases of Mumbai city police and that the then Home Minister was in knowledge of the said fact".

While recommending the registration of an FIR under section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 as amended by the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) of Corruption Act, 2018 and section 120-b (conspiracy) of IPC, Gunjijal quoted the allegation made by the former police commissioner that Deshmukh and others had exercised "undue influence" over the transfers and postings of officials and "thereby exercising undue influence over the performance of official duties by the officials."

It may be recalled that three days after he was shunted and posted in a relatively insignificant post as the Commandant General of Home Guards, Singh had in an eight-page sensational letter written to the chief minister Uddhav Thackeray on March

20 alleged that State Home Minister Deshmukh had asked now arrested and suspended police officer Sachin Vaze last month to "collect" a staggering Rs 100 crore per month from bars, restaurants and other sources.

In the operative part of his much-discussed explosive letter, Singh wrote: "... Sachin Vaze who was heading the Crime Intelligence Unit of the Police Branch of the Mumbai Police was called by Shri Anil Deshmukh, Hon'ble Home Minister, Maharashtra to his official residence Dyaneshwar several times in last few months and repeatedly instructed to assist in collection of funds for the Hon'ble Home Minister," Singh wrote in his letter.

"In and around mid-February and thereafter, the Hon'ble Home Minister had called Shri Vaze to his official residence. At that time, one or two staff members of the Hon'ble Home Minister including his Personal Secretary, Mr. Palande, were also present," Singh stated.

"The Hon'ble Home Minister expressed to Vaze that he had a target to accumulate Rs. 100 crore a month. For achieving the aforesaid target, the Hon'ble Home Minister told Shri Vaze that there are about 1,750 bars, restaurants and other establishments in Mumbai and if a sum of Rs. 2-3 lakhs each was collected from each of 3 them, a monthly collection of Rs. 40-50 crores was achievable. The Hon'ble Home Minister added that the rest of the collection could be made from other sources," the former CP wrote.

"Vaze came to my office the same day and informed me of the above. I was shocked with the above discussion and was mulling over how to deal with the situation," Singh said.

On his part, State Home minister Deshmukh — in a tweet put in the evening — debunked Singh's charge and

said: "The former Commissioner of Police, Param Bir Singh has made false allegations in order to save himself as the involvement of Sachin Vaze in Mukesh Ambani & Mansukh Hirens case is becoming clearer from the investigation carried out so far & threads are leading to Mr. Singh as well".

On April 5, Deshmukh resigned as the State Home Minister within hours after the Bombay High Court ordered a "Preliminary Enquiry" (PE) by the CBI into the serious charges of corruption made against him by Singh.

A HC division bench ordered a PE by the CBI on the ground that "there can be no fair, impartial, unbiased and untainted probe, if the same were entrusted to the State police force", prompting Deshmukh to put in his papers saying that in the wake of high court's order, "it is not morally prudent on my part to continue in the post."

Alluding to a press release issued by Deshmukh suggesting that "he is not averse to facing any inquiry", the HC bench ordered an inquiry and said: "Such preliminary inquiry shall be conducted in accordance with law and concluded as early as possible but preferably within 15 (fifteen) days from receipt of a copy of this order".

"Once the preliminary inquiry is complete, the Director, CBI shall be at liberty to decide on the future course of action, also in accordance with law. Should the Director, CBI see no reason to proceed further, Dr. Patil shall be duly informed of the same," the Judges observed.

"It is needless to observe that the preliminary inquiry and further action, if at all required, would proceed uninfluenced by the fact that this Court has ordered such an action," the HC bench added.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. 13/MYS/2021 of 21.04.2021
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-tenders for the following works:

| Sl. No. | Name of Works | Approx. Value |
|---------|--|--------------------|
| 1. | Mysuru Division: Mysuru - Arsikere section-Through sleeper renewal of existing 52kg PSC sleeper of 1310 density with 60/52 PSC sleeper of 1660 density (Primary-44km/secondary-75km) from km. 0.800 to km.119.800 for a length of 119.00 (By PQRS/Manual/SD) (Two-Packet). | Rs. 14,22,83,478/- |
| 2. | Hassan-Mangaluru: Repairs to steel girder bridges by replacement of Bent End/ Intermediate stiffeners of steel girder bridges between Yedakumari-Mangaluru section. | Rs. 95,31,750/- |

Last date for submission of bids: upto 11:00 hrs. of 13.05.2021
For details log on to: www.irps.gov.in
Divisional Railway Manager (Works) PUNE/S&AM/PBS/SW/2021-22 Mysuru

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

Follow us on www.scrindianrailways.gov.in
Details of the Tender Notices of S.C. Railway can be seen on our website: www.scrindianrailways.gov.in

TENDER NOTICE No.90/2021 dt.23.04.2021
SUPPLY OF STORES ITEMS e-Procurement Tender Notice

The following Tenders have been floated online. Tenderers are requested to visit the website www.irps.gov.in and submit their offers online. The Tender Description, Qty, EMD, SD may be seen in website. Offers submitted manually will not be accepted. Offers by post will not be entertained. Tender Closing time is 14.30 hrs. of the due date of the Tender. "For all indigenous offers, EMD will be accepted only via online system as available on www.irps.gov.in"

| |
|--|
| Tender No.82.21.0238, BRIEF DESC.: ZRC FOR SUPPLY OF PALBOCICLID |
| Tender No.38.21.2060, BRIEF DESC.: FLAP DOOR FRAME |
| Tender No.38.21.2058, BRIEF DESC.: SWING DOOR FRAME |
| Tender No.77.21.1337, BRIEF DESC.: READY MIXED PAINT |
| Tender No.77.21.1252, BRIEF DESC.: PETROLEUM HYDROCARBON |
| Tender No.38.21.1636, BRIEF DESC.: DISTRIBUTOR VALVE |
| Tender No.38.21.2348, BRIEF DESC.: PRESSURE TRANSFORMER |
| Tender No.38.21.2284, BRIEF DESC.: WEDGE 30 DEGREES |

Note: Due dates of Tender opening:
SL.No.01. on dt. 10.05.2021;
SL.No.02 & 03. on dt. 12.05.2021;
SL.No.04 & 05 on dt. 18.05.2021;
SL.No.06 on dt. 20.05.2021;
SL.No.07. on dt. 27.05.2021;
SL.No.08. on dt. 02.06.2021;

Beside above mentioned tenders there are other tenders having value below ₹25 lakhs. For details, please visit Railway website above.

Principal Chief Materials Manager/ A0404 Secunderabad.

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at <http://www.irps.gov.in> or www.scrindianrailways.gov.in

Inmates make 500 masks daily in Aligarh jail

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Against the crisis in corona, the skills of the detainees have taken the lead of security. 15 captives skilled in sewing have been involved in making masks. A double layer mask of cotton fabric is being made, which is re-usable. An average of 500 masks are made daily. In this, two masks are being provided to each prisoner. About eight thousand masks have been prepared. This year, under the supervision of Deputy Jailor Sanjay Shahi, the inmates have made eight thousand masks.

At present there are about 3,600 inmates in the jail. The detainees here have brought glory to the state in creative works such as painting, rangoli making, driving. Last year, in the Corona era, detainees made masks, which were distributed in the city's police stations, courts and other social institutions. Now the same clock has come again. Corona's crisis is growing rapidly. If the masks are bought from the market for detainees, then the price is high. The detainees have started making masks again. There are 15 captives in this work, who are engaged from eight to five in the morning.

Minor domestic help burnt alive in Assam, father and son held

Guwahati: The Assam Police has arrested a man and his son for allegedly burning alive a minor domestic help in Nagaon district, police said on Saturday.

The victim, a 12-year-old tribal girl and an inhabitant of adjoining Karbi Anglong district, was allegedly burnt alive by her employers on Thursday. She was pregnant.

According to police in Guwahati, police from the Raha station in Nagaon district on Friday arrested 70-year-old Prakash Borthakur and his 25-year-old son Nayanmoni Borthakur in connection with the crime following complaints from the local residents.

A police official said that the accused claimed that the girl committed suicide but initial investigation found that the girl was murdered. The body of the girl has been sent for autopsy.

The girl had been working as domestic help with Borthakur's family in Khaighar village for five years and was not allowed to go home in neighbouring Karbi Anglong district. The Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (ASCPCR) in a statement said that according to the neighbours, the victim was physically and mentally abused regularly by Borthakur's family and she was pregnant.

The ASCPCR directed the police and the district administration of Nagaon district to probe the case swiftly and prepare the charge-sheet by incorporating relevant sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, besides the provisions of the Indian Penal Code.

IANS

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR
Tel-0194-2474234 Fax - 2482032 - email - kashflori@rediffmail.com

Gist of e-Tender Notice No. 03 of 2021
Dated: -22/04/2021

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K UT, e-tender is invited from interested parties/persons for **Outsourcing of Entry ticketing system of Mughal Garden Cheshmashahi** of Floriculture Department Kashmir as per details given below: -

The participants have to quote their bid amount in the concerned BOQ -

| S.No. | Period of contract | Reserve Bid (Rs. in Lakhs) | Cost of tender document |
|-------|--|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. | 01 year from the date of award of contract | 1,10,11,000/- | 3000/- in the shape of e-challan |

The bidding document (s) consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, terms and conditions and other details can be seen/downloaded through the Departmental website www.dirflorikmr.in & www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

| | |
|---|--|
| 1. Period of downloading of bidding document | 23.04.2021 from 11:00 AM to 06.05.2021 up to 2:00 PM |
| 2. Bid submission Start Date | 23.04.2021 from 03:00 PM |
| 3. Bid submission End Date | 06.05.2021 up to 2:00 PM |
| 4. Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online) | 08.05.2021 at 2:00 PM |

In case of any eventuality, the date of opening will be considered on any other convenient working day.

No. DIPK-831/21
Dated:- 24-04-2021

Sd/- Accounts Officer (Member secretary)

Facing criticism for not imposing lockdown: Goa CM

PANAJI: Claiming that he was facing criticism for not imposing a lockdown in the State, which is facing a Covid surge, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Saturday said that a lockdown would impede economic activity in the state, which would lead to job losses and a revenue drop.

"I am facing a lot of criticism for not imposing a lockdown, from the opposition and from others. But lockdown is not a solution, as we have to keep economic activity ongoing else people will lose their jobs like last year and the State's revenue drops," Sawant said.

"Instead people should stay at home and not venture out unless necessary," the Chief Minister also said, in his address to the state on the occasion of his birthday.

Sawant also said that the state government was in the process of setting up an oxygen generation plant at Goa's top health facility, the Goa Medical College near Panaji. "The plant will be made operational in 15 days," he added.

IANS

6 die in Maha after consuming sanitiser

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The premise that alcohol-based hand sanitiser is as good as good liquor proved to be fatal. Six persons died in Vani town of Yavatmal district in eastern Maharashtra on Friday night, after they drank hand sanitiser in the absence of normal liquor, sale of which has been banned owing to the pandemic-induced lockdown across the state.

In separate incidents that took place in different parts of Vani town, the persons who consumed hand sanitiser complained of burns in the mouth, stomach, vomiting and giddiness.

Three of the six victims died at local hospitals while the remaining three people died either at their homes or places where they consumed hand sanitiser.

Confirming the development, Yavatmal's Superintendent of Police Dr. Dilip Bhujbal said: "We have lodged accidental deaths in three cases. In three other cases, the victims did not go to hospital but have died. We are investigating the matter".

Based on the assumption that hand sanitiser contains alcohol, they purchased hand-sanitisers from medical shops and drank them thinking that they would get a "kick" out of it as they would get it with normal liquor

The preliminary investigations by the police have revealed that the victims chose to drink hand sanitiser as they could not get liquor from anywhere as all shops were closed in the town because of lockdown.

Based on the assumption that hand sanitiser contains alcohol, they purchased hand-sanitisers from medical shops and drank them thinking that they would get a "kick" out of it as they would get it with normal liquor. Before long, they complained of burns in the mouth, stomach, vomiting and giddiness.

Within a matter of hours, they succumbed to health complications that they developed after drinking hand sanitiser.

Patna hospital logs 62 Covid deaths in 3 days

Patna: The Nalanda Medical College and Hospital (NMCH) in Patna has reported 62 Covid fatalities in the last three days, officials said on Saturday.

The rising number of Covid-related deaths in the state capital has sent the health administration into a tizzy.

The NMCH logged 21 fatalities on Saturday, while 17 and 24 patients died on Thursday and Friday, respectively.

Confirming the development, Mukul Kumar Singh, the nodal officer for Covid-19 at NMCH, said that of the 21 persons who died on Saturday, 16 were from different localities in Patna.

As per the health department's data, Bihar reported 12,672 new Covid cases in the past 24 hours, including 2,801 in Patna alone.

Apart from Patna, Gaya reported 816 cases, followed by Aurangabad (748), Muzaffarpur (704), Saran (617) and Begusarai (607). IANS

Looking forward to work with Modi on energy goals: Biden

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden has said that he wants to make achieving climate and energy goals "a core pillar" of bilateral cooperation with India and is looking forward to work with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the matter.

Biden's remarks came a day after the two countries announced a "US-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership" to create stronger bilateral cooperation on actions in the current decade to meet the goals of the landmark Paris Agreement.

"I'm looking forward to working with India's Prime Minister Modi in a new partnership to achieve our climate and energy goals, making this a core pillar of our bilateral cooperation," Biden said in his address to the two-day virtual summit on climate change on Friday.

The partnership includes deploying 450 gigawatts of renewable power to meet the ambitious 2030 target for cli-

mate action and clean energy. The partnership will proceed along two main tracks -- the Strategic Clean Energy Partnership, co-chaired by Secretary of Energy Granholm, and the Climate Action and Finance Mobilisation Dialogue, co-chaired by Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry, a joint statement said.

Addressing the final session of the virtual climate summit on Friday, Biden said this is about the opportunity that addressing climate change provides.

"It's an opportunity to create millions of good-paying jobs around the world and innovate -- in innovative sectors -- jobs that bring greater quality of life, greater dignity to the people performing those jobs in every nation, he said.

"For a line-worker, electricians, utility workers -- laying transmission lines, connecting battery storage, and making our electric grid more modern. For automotive workers -- building electric cars, trucks, and buses. Skilled work-

ers installing and charging stations to accommodate them throughout our countries," he added.

America is once again stepping into the leadership role, Biden said.

"We will be joining and a partner -- for the nations and efforts to decarbonise critical sectors across the board, including the industrial sector, where we'll join with Sweden and India," Biden said.

Biden also welcomed Russian President Vladimir Putin's call for carbon dioxide removal.

"I'm very heartened by President Putin's call yesterday for the world to collaborate and advanced carbon dioxide removal. And the United States looks forward to working with Russia and other countries in that endeavour," the US president said.

"It has a great promise. This is a moment for all of us to build better economies for our children, our grandchildren, and all of us to thrive not just now, but beyond for the next generations," Biden said.

Chinese official in Xinjiang slams UK genocide declaration

AP ■ URUMQI (CHINA)

A spokesperson for the Xinjiang region called accusations of genocide "counter to the facts" as China came under more pressure this week over its treatment of the Uyghur ethnic group in the remote border area.

The British Parliament approved a nonbinding motion Thursday that said China's policies amounted to genocide and crimes against humanity. Human Right Watch appealed to the U.N. Earlier in the week to investigate the allegations of crimes against humanity.

"The motion adopted by the British side was totally groundless," Xu Guixiang, the deputy director-general of the Communist Party's publicity department in Xinjiang, said Friday.

"The decision was made on the basis of remarks by some politicians, some so-called academic institutes, some so-called experts and scholars and some so-called witnesses."

In recent years, an estimated 1 million people or



more have been confined in camps in Xinjiang, according to foreign governments and researchers. Most are Uyghurs, a largely Muslim ethnic group. Authorities have been accused of imposing forced labor, systematic birth control and torture.

The Chinese government has flatly rejected the allegations. It has characterized the camps, which it says are now closed, as vocational training centers to teach Chinese language, job skills and the law to support economic development and combat extremism. China saw a wave of Xinjiang-related terrorist attacks through 2016.

Xu said that hotels in

Kashgar, a historic Silk Road city in Xinjiang, were empty a few years ago and entrepreneurs unwilling to invest as tourism fell off because of terrorism fears. He said the government's policies have restored a hard-won stability.

The Foreign Ministry labeled the genocide allegations "a monstrous lie concocted by international anti-China forces."

"The UK already faces a number of problems at home. Those British lawmakers should mind their own business and do something tangible for their own constituency," ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said at a daily briefing Friday.

Jerusalem tension triggers Gaza-Israel fire exchange

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip fired some three dozen rockets into Israel overnight Saturday, while the Israeli military struck back at targets operated by the ruling Hamas group. The exchange came as tensions in Jerusalem spilled over into the worst round of cross-border violence in months.

The barrage of rocket fire came as hundreds of Palestinians clashed with Israeli police in east Jerusalem. The clashes, in which at least four police and six protesters were injured, have become a nightly occurrence throughout the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and show no signs of stopping.

The UN envoy to the region, Tor Wennesland, condemned the violence and said the United Nations was working with all sides to restore calm.

"The provocative acts across Jerusalem must cease.

The indiscriminate launching of rockets towards Israeli population centres violates international law and must stop immediately," he said. "I reiterate my call upon all sides to exercise maximum restraint and avoid further escalation, particularly during the Holy month of Ramadan and this politically charged time for all."

The US also appealed for calm, while neighbouring Jordan, which serves as the custodian for Jerusalem's Muslim holy sites, condemned Israel's actions. Jerusalem, home to holy sites sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims, has long been a flashpoint in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In 2014, similar tensions erupted into a 50-day war between Israel and Gaza's ruling Hamas militant group.

The Israeli military said a total of 36 rockets were fired into Israel throughout the night. It said six rockets were intercepted, while most of the others landed in open areas.

Putin: Unfriendly embassies may face Russian hiring bans

AP ■ MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree allowing the country to limit the number of Russians employed at embassies of countries determined to be unfriendly, or to ban their employment entirely.

The measure, announced by the Kremlin on Friday, comes amid a flurry of expulsions of Russian diplomats from the United States and European countries and Moscow's retaliatory expulsions.

The decree directs the government to draw up a list of countries determined to be unfriendly. It would affect not only those countries' embassies, but consular offices and offices of state institutions.

The United States last week expelled 10 Russian diplomats in connection with interference in the 2020 U.S. Presidential election and for involvement in the SolarWind hack of federal agencies.

The Czech Republic last



week expelled 18 Russian envoys they labeled as spies, prompting Russia to send 20 Czech diplomats home. That devastated Czech Embassy operations in Moscow, prompting Czech authorities on Thursday to order 63 more Russian diplomats to leave so that both countries had the same number of staff in their respective embassies.

Poland last week said it was expelling three Russians and Moscow expelled five in retaliation. The Baltic countries of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia ordered a total of four Russian envoys to leave.

Biden to recognise atrocities against Armenians as genocide

AP ■ WASHINGTON

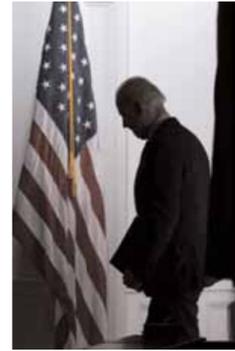
President Joe Biden on Saturday plans to follow through on a campaign pledge to formally recognise that atrocities committed against the Armenian people by the Ottoman Empire more than a century ago in modern-day Turkey were genocide, according to US officials familiar with the President's deliberations.

Biden spoke to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday in anticipation of his plan, in a presidential proclamation to mark Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, to use the term genocide to describe the killings and deportations of hundreds of thousands of Armenians.

US presidents for decades have acknowledged Remembrance Day to mark the events of 1915 to 1923 but have avoided using the term "genocide" to sidestep alienating Turkey.

The US and Turkish governments, in separate statements following Friday's call, made no mention of the Armenian plan to recognise the Armenian genocide.

The White House said



Biden told Erdogan he wants to improve the two countries' relationship and find "effective management of disagreements."

The two also agreed to hold a bilateral meeting at the NATO summit in Brussels in June.

Biden pledged as a candidate to recognise the massacre of Armenians as genocide, arguing that "silence is complicity." Biden wanted to speak with Erdogan before making the formal recognition, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe Biden's deliberations and plans.

Friday's call between the two leaders was their first since Biden took office more than three months ago. The delay had become a worrying sign in Ankara; Erdogan had good rapport with former President Donald Trump and had been hoping for a reset despite past friction with Biden.

Erdogan on Friday reiterated his long-running claims that the US is supporting Kurdish fighters in Syria who are affiliated with the Iraq-based Kurdistan Workers' Party, known as the PKK. In recent years, Turkey has launched military operations against PKK enclaves in northern Iraq and against US-allied Syrian Kurdish fighters. The State Department has designated the PKK a terrorist organisation but has argued with Turkey over the group's ties to the Syrian Kurds.

Erdogan also raised concerns about the presence in the US of cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom Ankara accuses of orchestrating a failed 2016 coup attempt, according to the Turkish government statement. Gulen, who has lived in Pennsylvania since the late 1990s, denies involvement in the coup.

ASEAN leaders meet Myanmar coup leader amid killings

AP ■ JAKARTA

Southeast Asian leaders met Myanmar's top general and coup leader in an emergency summit in Indonesia Saturday, and are expected to press calls for an end to violence by security forces that has left hundreds of protesters dead as well as the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other political detainees.

There is little hope for an immediate breakthrough in the two-hour gathering in Jakarta between Senior Gen Min Aung Hlaing and the six heads of state and three foreign ministers representing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

But his decision to face them offers a rare chance for the 10-nation bloc to directly deal with the general who ousted one of its leaders in a Feb. 1 coup.

"The unfolding tragedy has serious consequences for Myanmar, ASEAN and the region," Singapore's Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan said on the eve of the

summit.

One proposal, which has been discussed in preliminary meetings, is for Brunei Prime Minister Hassanal Bolkiah, the current ASEAN chair, to travel to Myanmar to meet the military leadership and Suu Kyi's camp to encourage dialogue.

He would be accompanied by ASEAN Secretary General Lim Jock Hoi -- also from Brunei -- if the junta agreed, a Southeast Asian diplomat told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to speak to the media.

Another diplomat said humanitarian aid could be offered to Myanmar if conditions improved. The diplomat also spoke to AP on condition of anonymity for lack of authority to discuss such plans publicly.

Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi of Indonesia expressed hopes that "we can reach an agreement on the next steps that can help the people of Myanmar get out of this delicate situation."

Chocolate chip diplomacy: Biden courts Congress with gusto

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The pictures always make it look so Presidential: Joe Biden sitting in a tall-back chair, surrounded by the arrayed members of Congress invited for a meeting at the White House.

But inside the Oval Office, lawmakers tell a different story, of a president so warm, so engaged, so animated -- standing up, sitting down, calling on lawmakers by name, swapping stories about their hometowns -- and so determined to make them get to work and get things done. On their way out the door, they are offered a chocolate chip cookie, that most American of snacks, a to-go boost for the potential partnership between this White House and the Congress.

"It was the day that you will remember, not so much because you were in the Oval Office, but because of the attention the president gave to us -- the personal attention, the commitment, the authenticity," said Rep. Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

COVID-19

US to resume J&J vaccinations despite rare clot risk

AP ■ WASHINGTON

US health officials lifted an 11-day pause on Covid-19 vaccinations using Johnson & Johnson's single-dose shot, after scientific advisers decided its benefits outweigh a rare risk of blood clot.

The Government uncovered 15 vaccine recipients who developed a highly unusual kind of blood clot, out of nearly 8 million people given the J&J shot. All were women, most under age 50. Three died, and seven remain hospitalized.

But ultimately Friday, the Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention decided that J&J's one-and-done vaccine is critical to fight the pandemic -- and that the small clot risk could be handled with warnings to help younger women decide if they should use that shot or an alternative.

"Above all else, health and safety are at the forefront of our decisions," CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said in a statement. "Our vaccine safety systems are working. We identified exceptionally rare events -- out of millions of doses" of the J&J shot and will continue to monitor them.

The US decision -- similar to how European regulators are rolling out J&J's shot -- comes after CDC advisers earlier Friday voted 10-4 to resume vaccinations but panelists made clear that they must come with warnings about the risk. The group debated but ultimately steered

clear of outright age restrictions.

"This is an age group that is most at risk (of the clotting) that is getting vaccine predominantly to save other people's lives and morbidity, not their own. And I think we have a responsibility to be certain that they know this," said Dr. Sarah Long of Drexel University College of Medicine, who voted against the proposal because she felt it did not go far enough in warning women.

The committee members all agreed the J&J vaccine "should be put back into circulation," panel chairman Dr. Jose Romero, Arkansas health secretary, said in an interview after the vote. "The difference was how you convey the risk... It does not absolve us from making sure that people who receive this vaccine, if they are in the risk group, that we inform them of that."

European regulators earlier this week made a similar decision, deciding the clot risk was small enough to allow the rollout of J&J's shot. But how Americans ultimately handle J&J's vaccine will influence other countries that don't have as much access to other vaccination options.

Dr. Paul Stoffels, J&J's chief scientific officer, pledged that the company would work with US and global authorities "to ensure this very rare event can be identified early and treated effectively." J&J already was working with the FDA on a warning label for the shot.

Pak PM expresses solidarity with India over Covid-19 crisis

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Saturday expressed solidarity with the people of India battling the deadly wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, saying "we must fight this global challenge confronting humanity together."

A record single-day rise of 3,46,786 coronavirus cases pushed India's tally of infection to 1,66,10,481, while active cases crossed the 25-lakh mark, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Saturday.

The death toll rose to 1,89,544 with a record 2,624 more fatalities in a day, according to the data.

In a tweet, Khan said: "Our prayers for a speedy recovery go to all those suffering from the pandemic in our neighbourhood and the world."

"I want to express our solidarity with the people of India as they battle a dangerous wave of COVID-19. We must fight this global challenge confronting humanity together," he said on Twitter. His tweet came after Pakistani leaders came amidst some signs of rapprochement in the relations between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir issue.

India's decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 angered Pakistan, which downgraded diplomatic ties with New Delhi and expelled the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad.

beyond political consideration.

"We express our support to the people of India in the wake of the current wave of #COVID19 infections that has hit our region hard. On behalf of the people of Pakistan, I extend our heartfelt sympathies to the affected families in #India," Qureshi tweeted.

Pakistan continues to work with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries to foster cooperation to tackle the pandemic, he said.

Pakistan has reported 157 coronavirus deaths in the last 24 hours, the highest since last year, while the new number of cases recorded were 5,908, the health ministry said on Saturday.

Pakistan's Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry also expressed similar sentiments for the people of India. "In these difficult times our prayers are with people of #India may God be kind and may these difficult times get over soon. #coronavirus," he tweeted.

The tweets from the Pakistani leaders came amidst some signs of rapprochement in the relations between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir issue.

India's decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 angered Pakistan, which downgraded diplomatic ties with New Delhi and expelled the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad.

New and more potent strain of coronavirus detected in Sri Lanka: Immunologist

PTI ■ COLOMBO

A new coronavirus strain that is airborne and more potent than all those found previously in Sri Lanka has been discovered in the island nation, according to a top immunologist here.

The variant, which is highly transmissible, can remain airborne for nearly an hour and is spreading fast, Neelika Malavige, the head of the Department of Immunology and Molecular Sciences of the Sri Jayawardenapura University said.

"This variant of coronavirus is more highly transmissible than all found so far in the island. The new strain is airborne, the droplets can remain airborne for nearly an hour," Malavige said.

Health authorities feared that the new variant is spreading rapidly after last week's New Year celebrations with more younger people getting infected.

"In the next two incubation periods, the disease can progress to a third wave," Upul Rohana, of the Public Health Inspectors said, adding that the real situation would emerge only in the coming 2-3 weeks.

Meanwhile, the ministry of COVID prevention issued new guidelines which would remain in force until May 31.

The guidelines dictate a 50 per cent capacity operation for most institutions with all forms of revelry being banned.

Kuwait suspends all commercial flights from India

PTI ■ DUBAI

Kuwait on Saturday suspended all direct commercial flights coming from India until further notice due to the worsening Covid-19 situation in the country.

The move came after instructions from health authorities.

Kuwait's directorate general of civil aviation said that it had suspended all direct commercial flights coming from India, effective April 24.

All passengers arriving from India either directly or via another country will be banned from entering unless they have spent at least 14 days out of India, it said in a statement on Twitter.

Kuwaiti citizens, their first degree relatives and their domestic workers will be allowed to enter the country.

Operations of freight flights will continue, it said. Over one million Indian community members live in Kuwait, the largest expatriate community in the country, according to the Indian Embassy in Kuwait.

Earlier, the UK, the UAE and Canada announced ban flights from India amid the worsening COVID-19 situation in the country. A record single-day rise of 3,46,786 coronavirus cases pushed India's tally of infection to 1,66,10,481, while active cases crossed the 25-lakh mark, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Saturday.

कार्यालय नगरपरिषद्, बालोतरा (बाड़मेर)

क्रमांक: नया/राजस्/2021/827 दिनांक 16.04.2021

अत्यकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना 2021-22

सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि नगरपरिषद्, बालोतरा द्वारा प्रदूषण जन्म व्यवसाय कर वसूली के कार्यों के लिए केन्द्र एवं राज्य सरकार के अभियांत्रिकी विभागों द्वारा मान्यता प्राप्त/सुदृढ़ एवं सक्षम संवेदकों से ई-टेंडरिंग प्रक्रिया से ऑन लाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।

प्रदूषण जन्म व्यवसाय कर (सेंसर) निविदा प्रपत्र को <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> व कार्यालय की वेबसाइट <http://sg.urban.rajasthan.gov.in/ulbbalotra> व <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> से डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। इन निविदाओं में भाग लेने वाले संवेदकों को निविदा इलेक्ट्रॉनिक फॉरमेट में वेबसाइट <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> पर निविदा जमा करानी होगी।

| क्र. सं. | नाम कर | ठेका अवधि | ठेके की अनुमानित दर | धरोहर राशि | निविदा शुल्क | ई-टेंडरिंग की दिनांक |
|----------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | प्रदूषण जन्म व्यवसाय कर (सेंसर) | कार्यदेश लिपि से 31 मार्च 2022 तक | 3.65 करोड़ प्रतिमाह | 87.60 लाख | 5000.00 रुपये | 20.04.2021 से 04.05.2021 तक |

नोट:- ठेके संबंधी अन्य शर्तें नगर परिषद् कार्यालय में कार्य दिवस में देखी जा सकती हैं।

UBN No- DLB2122SLRC01937

सभापति राज.सं.बां/सी/2021-22/802 आयुक्त

NOTICE

FORM No. URC.2

Advertisement giving notice about registration under Part I of Chapter XXI [Pursuant to section 374(b) of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 4(1) of the companies (Authorised to Register) Rules, 2014]

Notice is hereby given that in pursuance of sub-section (2) of section 366 of the Companies Act, 2013, an application has been made to the Registrar at Central Registration Centre (CPC), that **Initiatix Technologies, a Partnership Firm**, may be registered under Part I of Chapter XXI of the Companies Act 2013, as **Initiatix Technologies Private Limited**, may be registered under Part I of Chapter XXI of the Companies Act 2013, as a company limited by shares.

The principal objects of the company are as follows:-

"To carry on engage in the business at its own in association with any Indian or any foreign agency, individuals, firms, company or government undertaking either in India or abroad and to act as agent for the business of marketing, promoting, advertising, franchising, training, consultancy, video and all related services in all areas of information technology internal and external markets, on digital media or any other online or digital means, but not limited to IT Product and Software Sales, Domain Registration and Hosting Services, System Integrators for Providing Partner Services, Search Engine Optimization, Search Engine Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing, Email Marketing, Programmatic Media Buying for Digital Campaigns, Video Campaigns, on its own or through any sort or nature and to appoint sub-franchisees etc., for any of the above purposes, in India or elsewhere and through online marketing, digital marketing in various sites".

A copy of the draft memorandum and articles of association of the proposed company may be inspected at the office at 311, Tower A, 3rd Floor, ITHUM IT Park, Plot No. A-40, Sector-62, Noida-201301, UP, India.

Notice is hereby given that any person objecting to this application may communicate their objection in writing to the Registrar at Central Registration Centre (CPC), Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), Plot No. 6, 7, 8, Sector 5, IMT Manesar, District - Gurgaon (Haryana), Pin Code - 122050, within twenty days from the date of publication of this notice, with a copy to the company at its registered office.

Dated this 23rd day of April 2021

Name(s) of Applicant

1. Mr. Vipin Kumar

2. Mr. Piyush Jha

Govt waives import duty on Covid vaccine

OXYGEN AS INFECTIONS TOUCH RECORD

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Saturday waived customs duty on the import of Covid vaccines as well as medical grade oxygen and related equipment as the nation battled its worst health crisis with a 'tsunami' of infections setting a new world record for cases for the third consecutive day.

The Centre also directed customs officials to clear all import consignments, including life-saving drugs and oxygen equipment, used in Covid treatment on the highest priority.

In a statement, the finance ministry said 10 per cent basic customs duty on COVID vaccines as well as the duty and health cess on import of oxygen and oxygen-related equipment has been waived for three months.

Medical Oxygen attracts 5

per cent import duty, while the same for vaccines is 10 per cent. India reported a record 346,786 new infections on Saturday, bringing its total to 1.66 crore.

Deaths also rose by a record 2,624 to total 189,544.

The decision to exempt customs duty was taken at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to boost oxygen availability in the country, the Finance Ministry said.

Separately, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said field formations have been directed to clear life saving drugs and oxygen equipment consignments on the highest priority.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal also said in a tweet that in another step towards fighting COVID-19, customs will expedite clearances for import consignments relating to the pandemic to ensure critical equipment and medicine can reach on time.

The government had previously waived customs duty on imported Remdesivir injections and the drug's active



pharmaceutical ingredients (API) to boost supplies.

"In order to augment their production and availability and to meet the rising demand, it was decided to grant full exemption from Basic Customs Duty and health cess on import of the following items related to oxygen and oxygen related equipment for a period of three months with immediate effect," the finance ministry statement said.

It was also decided that basic customs duty on import of Covid vaccines be also exempted with immediate effect for a period of three months, it added.

The 16 oxygen and related equipment on which duty

has been waived include oxygen concentrator along with flow meter, regulator, connectors and tubing, oxygen canister, filling systems, storage tanks, cylinders, including cryogenic cylinders and tanks.

Ventilators (capable of functioning as high-flow devices) with nasal canula; helmets for use with non-invasive ventilation, non-invasive ventilation oronasal and nasal masks for ICU ventilators too have been exempted from the import duty and health cess.

All these items so far attracted basic customs duty in the range of 5-15 per cent and a health cess of 5 per cent.

"This will boost the availability of these items as well as

make them cheaper. The PM directed the Revenue Department to ensure seamless and quick customs clearance of such equipment," the statement said.

The exemption from import duty would help keep low the cost of overseas vaccines that are being eyed to supplement domestically made shots ahead of opening COVID-19 vaccination to all citizens over 18 years of age. Import duty would have made the imported vaccines costlier than the ones made by Serum Institute of India (SII) and Bharat Biotech.

While Russia's Sputnik V vaccines are due to arrive this month or by next month, manufacturers like Moderna and Johnson and Johnson have been urged to seek emergency use approval in India.

Earlier, the government waived import duty on Remdesivir injection, and also banned its export.

The government earlier this month allowed the emergency use of imported vaccines to curb the spread of coronavirus infections.

Indian electronic repair market can create over 5M jobs, says MAIT

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The electronics repair market in India can help generate over five million direct jobs, with a potential to generate revenues of \$20 billion per annum, a new report has emphasised.

According to MAIT, the apex body representing the ICT and electronics manufacturing sector in India, the repair and calibration of electronic subassemblies and products is a \$100 billion industry worldwide.

"High costs of repairing electronic goods in developed countries like the US and Europe are compelling the corporates to send goods overseas, where such repair services are provided at lower prices due to both skills and cost arbitrage," said the report titled 'Electronic Hardware Repair Services Outsourcing' (ERSO) launched at the Electronics and Telecom Manufacturing Summit 2021 (MAIT-ETMS).

The report made recommendations to the Centre to streamline and simplify procedures to make India a repair and refurbishment hub for IT and electronic products.

"The electronics repair industry has the potential of becoming an emerging sector for employment growth in India. With the right regulatory support from the government of India, the domestic repair service sector in India can experience a tremendous boost," said Nitin Kunkolienker, President, MAIT. "It will, thereby, generate valuable Forex revenue as well as create employment, especially during these COVID-19 times, which has made millions of Indians jobless," he added.

The report highlighted background on the regulatory landscape and emphasised bottlenecks and difficulties being faced day to day by the repair units in India, such as various regulatory approvals.

HDFC Bank deploys mobile ATMs across India

Mumbai: HDFC Bank on Saturday said it has deployed mobile ATMs across India to assist customers during the lockdown.

"At restricted, sealed areas, the 'Mobile ATMs' will eliminate the need for general public to move out of their locality to withdraw cash," the bank said in a statement. "During the lockdown last year, HDFC Bank successfully deployed mobile ATMs in over 50 cities and facilitated lakhs of customers in availing cash to meet their exigencies. Accordingly, customers can conduct over 15 types of transactions using the 'Mobile ATM', which will be operational at each location for a specific period. The 'Mobile ATM' will cover 3-4 stops in a day." "We hope our mobile ATM will provide a great support for people who want to avail basic financial services without having to venture far from their neighbourhood," said S. Sampathkumar, Group Head - Liability Products, Third Party Products and Non-Resident Business at HDFC Bank.

PTI

Govt extends time till June 30 for making payment under Vivad Se Vishwas scheme

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Saturday extended the deadline for making payment under the direct tax dispute resolution scheme Vivad Se Vishwas by two months till June 30 to ease hardships faced by taxpayers amid the pandemic.

Also, it has extended the due date for issuance of notice for reopening of assessment by tax officers where income has escaped assessment and sending intimation of processing of Equalisation Levy till June 30.

"It has also been decided that time for payment of amount payable under the Direct Tax Vivad se Vishwas Act, 2020, without an additional amount, shall be further extended to 30th June 2021," Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement.

The deadline for filing declaration under the scheme

The scheme had netted about ₹54,000 crore to the exchequer till early April and more is expected to come in based on the declarations already filed

ended on March 31.

The Vivad Se Vishwas scheme provides for settlement of disputed tax, interest, penalty or fees in relation to an assessment or reassessment order on payment of 100 per cent of the disputed tax and 25 per cent of the disputed penalty or interest or fee.

The taxpayer is granted immunity from levy of interest, penalty and institution of any proceeding for prosecution for any offence under the Income-tax Act in respect of matters covered in the declaration.

CBDT said it had received requests from taxpayers, tax

consultants and other stakeholders to extend time barring dates in view of the severe Covid-19 pandemic raging unabated across the country.

"In the light of several representations received and to address the hardship being faced by various stakeholders, the Central Government has decided to extend the time limits to June 30, 2021, in the following cases where the time limit was earlier extended to April 30, 2021, through various notifications issued under the Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation) and Amendment of Certain Provisions Act, 2020," CBDT said.

The scheme had netted about Rs 54,000 crore to the exchequer till early April and more is expected to come in based on the declarations already filed. The last date for making the payment has now been extended till June 30.

Govt extends tax compliance timelines in light of pandemic

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

In view of the severe Covid-19 pandemic raging requests put forward by taxpayers, tax consultants and other stakeholders, the government has decided to provide further relief to taxpayers by extending various time limits of compliances.

Accordingly, the time limit for passing of any order for assessment or reassessment under the Income-tax Act, 1961 has been extended to June 30, 2021. This time limit was earlier extended to April 30, 2021 through various notifications issued under the Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation) and Amendment of Certain Provisions Act, 2020.

Similarly, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has also extended the time limit for passing an order con-

sequent to direction of DRP under sub-section (13) of section 144C of the Act for three months to June 30, 2021.

The board has also extended the time limit for issuance of notice under section 148 of the Act for reopening the assessment where income has escaped assessment by three months while the same extension has also been given for sending intimation of processing of Equalisation Levy under sub-section (1) of section 168 of the Finance Act 2016.

It has also been decided that time for payment of amount payable under the Direct Tax Vivad se Vishwas Act, 2020, without an additional amount, shall be further extended to June 30, 2021.

A finance ministry statement said that notifications to extend the above dates will be issued in due course.

Karnataka Bank aims to grow at 12 pc in FY22

New Delhi: Karnataka Bank on Saturday said it is targeting to grow its business at 12 per cent to over ₹1.42 lakh crore in the current fiscal year and will gradually increase the share of retail loan in its portfolio.

In a communication to shareholders, the bank said it strives to see 2021-22 as a year of excellence on the back of its healthy business growth, 'Cost-Lite' liability portfolio and strengthened fundamentals.

"For the new Financial Year, the Bank is planning to grow its business at a moderate 12% to take the total business turnover (i.e. Total of Deposits and Advances) to around ₹1,42,500 crore," it said. As a realignment strategy in its advances portfolio, the private sector lender said it has been eyeing credit exposure of minimum 50% to retail, 35% to mid corporates and not more than 15% to large corporates.

FIGHTING THE WAR AGAINST CORONA Northern Railway provides 50 isolation coaches

03 patient admitted at Shakurbasti Covid Care Center
50 Isolation coaches provided at Shakurbasti having 800 beds facility for patients

In view of providing additional healthcare facilities to the people of Delhi NCR, Northern Railway on demand of the State Govt. is providing 50 isolation coaches equivalent

to 800 beds as Covid Care Centers at Shakurbasti. Shakurbasti station has good infrastructure for maintaining these coaches and also proper approach roads for movement of ambulances etc. Sh. Ashutosh Gangal, General Manager Northern Railways informed that 03 patients have been admitted at Shakurbasti Covid Care Center.

Northern Railway is committed to do all kinds of efforts/help to fight the war against Corona.



Rental in Delhi's Khan mkt down 14% in 2020: Report

80% OF HIGH STREET RETAIL MKTS SAW DIP IN RENT

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's upscale Khan Market has witnessed 14 per cent decline in rental during the last year amid the Covid-19 pandemic and is ranked 21st in the most expensive high street retail location in Asia Pacific region, according to Cushman & Wakefield.

Around 80 per cent of Indian high street retail markets experienced declines in rent during this period, the property consultant said in its latest Main Streets report.

The top three most expensive cities for retail remain as Hong Kong, Tokyo and Sydney.

Regionally, among the worst-impacted was Hong Kong's premier shopping district of Causeway Bay, which saw a 43 per cent fall in rent to HK\$ 870 per sq ft per month. "Among Indian high streets, Khan Market saw a 14% decline in 2020 and slipped out of the top 20 most expensive markets in the APAC region," the consultant said.

Khan Market continues to

be the most expensive retail market in India with a rent of USD 195 per sq ft, followed by Connaught Place in the national capital.

Cushman & Wakefield noted that India entered the pandemic on strong form with upward pressure on rents in main streets across the major cities in the country.

However, the start of lockdowns from Q2 2020 stalled the momentum and transactions have declined even as

markets gradually re-opened in H2 2020. The ongoing wave of lockdowns that occurred across the country at different times and for varying lengths resulted in an average decline in rents of around 9 per cent, but this ranged from 18 per cent and 14 per cent in Kolkata and Bengaluru respectively to more benign declines of less than 2% in Chennai and Ahmedabad.

Anshul Jain, Managing Director India and South East Asia said.

Centre gears up for distribution of free foodgrains to 80 cr poor under PMGKAY from May

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Saturday said it is gearing up for monthly distribution of additional 5 kg of foodgrains for free to 80 crore PDS beneficiaries from May 1, to help the poor tide over the economic hardship in the second wave of the pandemic.

Additional grains will be given for two months under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) via ration shops or Public Distribution System.

PMGKAY is being reintroduced amid request from some state governments and after seeing the high level of success last year when sudden lockdown was imposed to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Briefing media, Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey said, "FCI has geared up its machinery of over 2,000 depots

to be ready with stocks for delivery to states. FCI is in touch with states. We will together ensure the supply from FCI to the state government and thereon to fair price shops or ration shops."

He said 80 lakh tonne of foodgrains will be distributed in the next two months, that will cost the exchequer over Rs 26,000 crore.

Pandey said pulses are not included under PMGKAY this time. "Last year it was exceptional that pulses were given for free along with grains. National Food Security Act (NFSA) scheme is all about cereals."

Further, the Secretary said that there is enough stock with the government to meet the demand of grains if PMGKAY scheme is extended beyond June.

"I can assure you, we have sufficient stock to deal with the situation. Since procurement is

going on, more stock is coming. We are comfortable with the stocks," he said.

Asked why the government was limiting distribution of free grains for two months and if this was an indication of lockdown in the coming months, the Secretary said, "The Prime Minister has clearly said there won't be complete lockdown."

The earlier lockdown imposed in 2020 was to prepare the country with resources to face the challenges of COVID-19, he said. "Why (give free grains) for two months only? This is the decision of the government. The government reviews the situation constantly. The government thought it prudent that this time two months' announcement should be made... I am sure the government will be watching the situation continuously," he noted.

Amazon to soon let sellers connect with customers directly

IANS ■ SAN FRANCISCO

Amazon may soon allow sellers to directly connect with customers via emails about new product announcements and sales.

The e-commerce giant is currently testing this new feature called 'Manage Your Customer Engagement' that will help sellers contact Amazon users who have specifically chosen to follow a particular company, reports CNBC.

The new email campaign option is a free service for sellers, but it's only available to brands registered through Amazon's Brand Registry programme.

Launched in 2015, Brand Registry helps businesses curb the sale of counterfeits and more than 350,000 brands have registered to be part of the programme.

"Shoppers' contact information will continue to remain private."

Amazon will give companies aggregate data when they use the tool that shows them how many emails will go out when they decide to share marketing campaigns with their followers," the report mentioned on Friday.

Amazon will tell brands how many customers have opted to receive the emails, along with performance metrics for the campaign.

ICICI Bank profit jumps 3-folds to ₹4,403cr in Jan-Mar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

ICICI Bank on Saturday reported more than three-fold jump in its standalone net profit to ₹4,403 crore for the January-March quarter of 2020-21.

The bank had posted a net profit of ₹1,221 crore in the year ago quarter.

Total income (standalone) of the bank rose to ₹23,953 crore in January-March from ₹23,443.66 crore in the year-ago quarter. ICICI Bank said in a regulatory filing.

On a consolidated basis, the net profit of the private sector lender jumped to ₹4,886 crore in the March quarter from ₹1,251 crore in the last quarter of 2019-20.

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON

General public is hereby informed that a person (depicted in the photo) namely Keshav S/o Hari Singh R/o Jhuggi No. 1, Tagore Garden, Near Rajouri Garden, Delhi Aged : 34 years, has been reported missing from his house since 04.04.2021 at about 02:00 A.M., vide DD No. 031-A Dated 12.04.2021 lodged at Police Station - Rajouri Garden, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-

Complexion : Sallow, **Height :** 5'8", **Face :** Round, **Build :** Thin, **Clothing :** red colour T-shirt, black colour pajama and brown colour hawai chappal in feet.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing person may inform SHO, Rajouri Garden, Delhi at **E-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in** or **Website: http://cbi.nic.in**, **Tele No.:- 24368638/24368641, Fax: 24368639.**

SHO : P.S. Rajouri Garden, New Delhi Ph. : 011-25453990, 25448885

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that one person **Name:** Anil Christopher Tirkey, **S/o:** DN Tirkey, **R/o:** H.No. 556 Ground Floor, Near Oxford School, Vikas Puri, Delhi, **Age:** 50 Years, **Height:** 5'8", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Normal, **Face:** Flat, **Wearing:** Navy Blue T-Shirt and Light Blue Jeans has been missing since 05.03.2021 from his house. In this regard **DD No. 53A, Dated 06.03.2021** has been lodged at **PS, Vikas Puri, 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 anyone have any information about this missing person please inform the undersigned.

Web-site : http://cbi.nic.in
E-Mail ID: cbc@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
DP/414/WD/2021

SHO PS, Vikas Puri, Delhi Ph.: 011-25551213, 25592600

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, (JSD) PHE DIVISION, PULWAMA
E-Mail:- xenpheapulwama@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
E-NIT S. No. 04/PHEP/Fresh of 2020-21

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of UT of J&K e-tenders (Two cover System) are invited on Turn Key basis with maintenance period of Three Years which includes DLP of one year from reputed and resourceful contractors /Firms/companies/joint venture of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/Railways and other state Governments for the following works, which should be uploaded on the Procurement web portal <http://jktenders.gov.in> for the subject work(s) referred below to be received by the **Executive Engineer JSD (PHE) Division Pulwama** and as per the details mentioned in this e-tender notification and to whom all the terms and conditions of detailed e-NIT /Tender Documents/ PWD Form No:- 25 double are accepted. The detailed tender document and Specifications etc. can be downloaded on the e-procurement portal <http://jktenders.gov.in>. The cost of tender documents (Non-refundable/Non-Transferable) should be in the shape of e-Challan or Treasury Challan/Receipt in favour **Executive Engineer JSD (PHE) Division Pulwama.**

S. No 1. Name of Work :- Construction of chowkidar quarter, 0.20 lac gallons RCC S.R., Construction of Chain link fencing, construction of retaining wall/ breast wall, including Anchor Blocks and conc. steps with constructions of sluice chamber, up-gradation / improvements to existing quarter, providing, laying & fitting of pipe network including all electrical/ mechanical works complete job (on turkey basis) for WSS Khanchipora Lajoora under NABARD including maintenance for a period of three years which includes DLP of 12 months

Estimated Cost :- ₹ 148.47 lacs, Cost of Tender Document :- ₹2600/- (Favoring Executive Engineer PHE Division Pulwama under MH 0215), Earnest Money Deposit:- Bid Security Declaration, Time of completion :- 10 months, Tender Opening Authority :- Executive Engineer JSD (PHE) Division Pulwama, Class of Contract :- "A" Class - Reputed and resourceful contractors/ Firms/Companies/Joint Venture of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/ Railways and other state Governments.

Position of Funds:- Available; Major Head of Account: NABARD

The Bidding documents consisting of eligibility criteria, specification, drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q) set of terms & conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the e-procurement Portal "<http://jktenders.gov.in>" as per schedule of dates given below:-

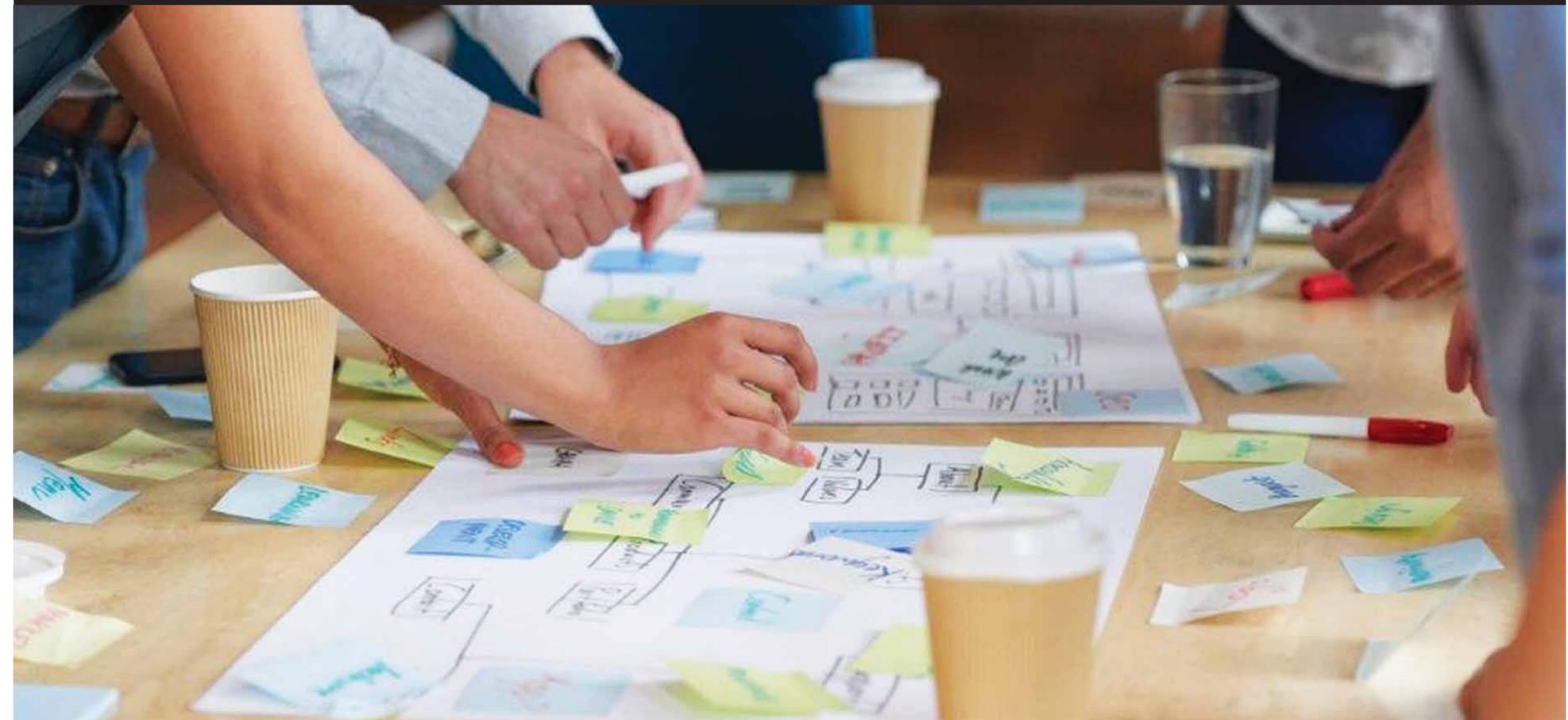
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| 5. Bid opening date (Technical Cover) :- | 19.05.2021 | 1000 Hrs |

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor UT of Jammu & Kashmir
Sd/- Executive Engineer, (JSD) PHE Div, Pulwama

No. D/PC-837/21
Dated: 24-04-2021

UNSHACKLING AGE BARRIER

Today's youth are looking to make a difference. Their minds are behind some of the best business ideas which have made this world a better place to live in. SHALINI SAKSENA catches up with three such changemakers who beat all odds to become successful entrepreneurs



Investment plan for not so rich

SATYAM MEHTA
16 YEARS OLD
FOUNDER, RURAL INVEST & JUNGUARDS

One doesn't expect a student of Class XII to spend most of his time looking for ways to make the world a better place to live. But this is precisely what Satyam Mehta, student of Amity International School, Noida did. Mehta tells you that he has a passion for social entrepreneurship. In his free time, he loves to play tennis.

His entrepreneurial journey became back in 2016. "My brother has a start-up. Through that I got to know everything that there was to know about business. He has an investment company. But I wanted to do something that was for the betterment of the society at large," Mehta says.

The idea to come up with an app to help the poorer sections of the society came to Mehta when he realised that they lacked the ability to manage their finances.

"Usually rural India lacks financial literacy. We intend to introduce financial literacy in all parts of the country by giving them access to information needed for the same. Before I started this venture, I did a lot of research and found that only a small percentage of the population in the country even thought of having a bank account. Our aim is not to make them invest through our app but to inculcate financial lit-

eracy in them so that they can make calculated and intelligent decisions on their own," Mehta tells you.

The problem in the country, according to Mehta, is that they don't believe in savings; they believe in taking loans from informal sources.

"This could be because they don't know how to go about it or don't have access to the banks. We all know that money-lenders charge huge interest trapping the poor into a debt trap from which they can never get out. We all know about farmer suicides. This was another reason that drove us. We wanted people to know that they could take loan from banks," Mehta says.

His interest in wanting to know more about investment was already piqued because of his elder brother. After much deliberation, he realised that a huge percentage of the country's population had no idea about finances. Hence, Rural Invest was born.

"Before the present pandemic hit us, my team had identified certain villages around Noida to find out about their lifestyle and getting to know their needs. But due to the first lockdown, we couldn't visit them personally but held some webinars where we talked about financial literacy. We intend to go visit these villages as and when things normalise a bit. We

intend to target UP first and then slowly move to other States," Mehta tells you. He doesn't anticipate any challenges in trying to convince the people to use the app once they actually get down to meeting them personally. "I am sure that people will be willing to listen to what we have to say and offer. They will understand how easy to use our app is and how they can not only secure their future but also their children's. Once they are introduced to the app, they can invest as low as ₹100. It is a good amount to begin with and see how things work before they start to invest on a more regular basis," Mehta explains. He plans to study abroad. Once he finishes his graduation, he plans to come back and continue to work with Rural Invest.

But his first venture came when he had just finished Class IX; it is Junkguards. The aim is to reduce the e-waste. "I had taken part in a competition when I was in Class IX. We bagged the first place and learnt everything there was to know about e-waste. There was so much e-waste to be collected. We created a platform that connected all the stakeholders involved. This way the waste could be collected in a timely manner and disposed of just as properly," Mehta says.

I AM SURE THAT PEOPLE WILL BE WILLING TO LISTEN TO WHAT WE HAVE TO SAY AND OFFER. THEY WILL UNDERSTAND HOW EASY TO USE OUR APP IS AND HOW THEY CAN NOT ONLY SECURE THEIR BUT THEIR CHILDREN'S FUTURE ALSO



A cup of Boba tea anyone?

HARSHITA JAIN
16 YEARS OLD
FOUNDER, NECESSITEAS

What does a 15-year-old do who goes to the US for her vacations and to listen to what we have to say and offer. They will understand how easy to use our app is and how they can not only secure their future but also their children's. Once they are introduced to the app, they can invest as low as ₹100. It is a good amount to begin with and see how things work before they start to invest on a more regular basis," Mehta explains. He plans to study abroad. Once he finishes his graduation, he plans to come back and continue to work with Rural Invest.

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She has plans to pursue a business degree come fall provided everything falls into place. She is waiting to hear from a few more colleges before she finally makes a final call. A couple of years back, in 2018, she took up a course offered by Young Entrepreneurs Academy. "The idea was not to end up having a business of my own back then. But a part of the course involved us to come up with a business idea. I am born in the US and go there every year. I was having Bubble tea craving. A friend of mine posted a photo of her having it and I too wanted to drink it. It was a very small thing that started me on this weekend venture that I have," Jain says.

For those who don't know what the Bubble tea or Boba tea is, the drink originated in Taiwan in 1980s and soon became a rage the world over. It is a cold, frothy drink made with different flavours, sweeten-



ers and milk with tapioca pearls at the base of the drink. It is a drink that is enjoyed by people of all ages.

"Basically, these pearls are like *sabudana*. The only difference is that these pearls taste really nice. I import my tapioca from Taiwan. There isn't good quality available here in India at present. My company — Necessiteas — believes in delivering quality product to the clients; it is my USP. I try to make Bubble tea. To begin with, it was more tea-based; one was drinking and chewing the pearls at the same time. But now, it has expanded and there are fruit flavours. We have vegan options,

sugar-free options. What stays constant is that you eat and drink at the same time," Jain tells you.

Interestingly, even though she was born in the US, her paternal home is in Delhi. Her maternal home is in the US. Both sides of her family are into business. Her mother's side of the family is into jewellery and her father's side deals in chemicals. So, Jain grew up listening to business and things that are happening in the office and what can be done in case a problem occurred.

"My grandfather started a business on his own. I grew up listening to his stories and real-

ly got inspired. He came from a very small town but built an empire all on his own. The struggle, the hard work and diligence to make it big in life really got me fascinated. That is where I got my initial entrepreneurship from," Jain says.

At present, since she is still in school and has a tight schedule, she makes the tea only over the weekends. Since she makes these teas herself, she can't mass produce; her largest batch has been of 100 bottles. Those interested in buying can go to the company's Insta account and message the order and it is delivered. However, once the school is over for Jain, she plans to expand her business and teach a couple of people how to make the pearls and the drink itself so that even when she is in the US, her business will continue here.

Unfortunately, for her COVID-19 played spoilsport. "I wanted to open a pop-up store but it is now on hold. However, home delivery has worked for me. While I may not be able to deliver huge quantities but whoever has had the drink, they love it. It feels great that people were willing to try new things. It is great that even the older people love it. We also do custom drinks as well — make it with soya milk or sugar-free. Making the pearls is time consuming so I can't make many bottles. The range for the drink is between ₹200-₹250 for 200 ml. We also have a system that if people return the glass bottles, they get a discount. This is to reduce plastic waste," Jain says.

SPREADING HAPPINESS ALL AROUND

NAKSH KOHLI
16 YEARS OLD
CO-FOUNDER, FOUNDER, THE HAPPINESS PROJECT

According to a study conducted by the World Health Organisation (WHO), 10-20 per cent of children and adolescents experience mental disorders worldwide. Half of all mental illnesses begin by the age of 14. If untreated, these conditions severely influence children's development, their educational attainments and their potential to live fulfilling and productive lives. Children with mental disorders face major challenges with stigma, isolation and discrimination.

To address mental disorders two students of Sri Ram School Mousari, Gurugram came together and Happiness Project was born.

One is told that the aim is to work towards the attainment of balanced mental health

amongst children, in accordance with the new Mental Health Care Act 2017, which has come into force from July 7, 2018.

"Our team works with children belonging to disadvantaged categories, with no access to counselors or trained medical practitioners. Through a greater awareness of mental health issues and general social support for such children, the project focuses to achieve effective prevention and assistance," Naksh Kohli, co-founder The Happiness Project explains.

The Class XII student tells you that he always wanted to do something for the society at large and started an ecommerce portal when he is in Class VII. This portal came up after Kohli did a course with Young Entrepreneurs Academy. At the end of it, the idea that he had got him a funding of ₹75,000 and *ethniquemajo.com*, a website that is dedicated to bringing the artisan to the customer was

born. The portal is still live.

"We partnered with Literacy India first. They have a great data of artisans who do wonderful work. We contacted them and developed the website. In Class IX, I saw a lot of cases related to mental health and Apoorvi Bharatram and I decided to do something to improve the situation," Kohli says.

He tells you that that he is lucky that his school has a back-up where students can go but there are so many other students who don't have access to counselors who can help.

"This is when The Happiness Project came in. We focus on students studying in Government schools in Delhi-NCR. Dealing with how intense senior school is, exam anxiety, what career to choose, Where to study? and how to apply? are some of the issues that students face," Kohli says.

Since he is in Class XII, the coming year is going to be intense for him. But he intends to



carry forward the work and he and Bharatram have started and work with as many schools as possible.

Unfortunately, the present pandemic put spanners in their plans but once the lockdown opens and things get a bit normal, he intends to get back to work as well.

"We have a website which makes it easy for students to take the surveys. We get an enormous data which is then analysed and results tabled as a report. This takes time. There a quick checklist for an individual to take a mental health survey. This is what we have been working on for the last one year — to make it more sustainable. So even if there is no one to man it manually, it can still churn out the results," Kohli tells you.

The major work that this project does is the work that they do with schools directly.

"Take an example. I give students unique links that no one else has access to to develop

a comprehensive report about depression, anxiety and cognitive and biological disabilities. This report is given to schools who can then work on the findings. In Government schools, we hold fully funded personalised workshops for teachers with psychologists. The teachers can then help the students where necessary," Kohli says who is planning to study Computer Science in the US.

In the two-and-a-half years since Bharatram and Kohli started there have been many instances, from Government schools, where students have come up and told the duo that till now nobody had ever thought of asking them anything let alone related to mental wellbeing.

"This one of the major reason why we continue with this project in Government schools. We never expected such a fantastic and positive response from the students here," Kohli says.

GAME PLAN 2021

CAPTAIN'S CALL

OUR BOWLERS HAVE BEEN DOING REALLY WELL FOR THE LAST 4-5 MATCHES. THERE ARE MANY OPTIONS FOR ME TO JUGGLE AROUND. REALLY ENJOY CAPTAINING THEM
— SANJU SAMSON



MONEY BANK MORRIS

IPL costliest buy Chris' 4/23, Samson's unbeaten 42 steer Rajasthan to 6-wicket win over KKR

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Chris Morris' four-wicket burst in the death overs and skipper Sanju Samson's measured innings gave Rajasthan Royals a much needed win over Kolkata Knight Riders here on Saturday.

Royals pacers, who were smart with their change of pace, restricted KKR to 133 for nine after Samson opted to bowl first.

Royals lost their openers, Jos Buttler (5) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (22), in the powerplay but they never lost control of the chase and got over the line in 18.5 overs for their second win in five matches.

For KKR, it was their fourth loss in five matches.

Morris, the most expensive player in the IPL auction history, proved his worth with figures of four for 23 in four overs.

The other pacers, Jaydev Unadkat (1/25), Chetan Sakariya (1/31) and Mustafizur Rahman (1/22), also made valuable contributions.

Royals witnessed a nervy moment early in the chase when Buttler received a nasty blow on his helmet as he tried to negotiate a sharp bouncer from Pat Cummins. And soon after, the England cricketer was trapped in front by mystery spinner Varun Chakravarty.

Jaiswal, playing his first game of the



Rajasthan Royals all rounder Chris Morris celebrates after he takes wicket of Kolkata Knight Riders batsman Andre Russell on Saturday

IPL20.com

season, played some exquisite strokes before getting caught in the deep. Royals were 50 for two in the first six overs.

After Jaiswal's dismissal, Samson (42 not out off 41) stitched a 45-run stand with Shivam Dube (22) before getting his team home alongside David Miller (24 not out off 23).

Samson, who is known for his free flowing strokeplay, curbed his natural instinct to anchor the chase.

Earlier, KKR were not able to find rhythm in their underwhelming innings.

The highly rated Shubman Gill (11) disappointed yet again. He was dropped before his uncomfortable stay in the middle finally ended with a run out off a brilliant direct hit from Buttler.

The Royals pacers were impressive with their variations and did not offer

quoteunquote

WE'RE PRIVILEGED TO DO WHAT WE'RE DOING AND WE'VE GOT TO KEEP PEOPLE SMILING

Chris Morris, RR all rounder

the batsmen any freebies in the Powerplay as KKR laboured to 25 for one in six overs.

It became 45 for two in the eighth over when Gill's opening partner Nitish Rana (22) made room to cut a wide ball off Sakariya but the extra bounce led to his downfall as he ended up edging it to the wicketkeeper.

Skipper Eoin Morgan sent Sunil Narine ahead of himself to give the innings a much needed boost but it did

not work with the West Indian departing after hitting one boundary, leaving KKR at 55 for three in 10 overs.

KKR's troubles worsened after Morgan got was run out without facing a ball following a bad mix-up with Rahul Tripathi (36 off 26).

Their most destructive batsman Andre Russell had to wait till the 16th over to get into the middle with the innings not going anywhere at 94 for five.

Dinesh Karthik (25 off 24) came up with some badly needed boundaries in his bid to improve the scoring rate.

Russell smashed a straight six off Morris in the fifth ball he faced but that remained his only big hit of the night.

Morris removed both Russell and Karthik in the same over which allowed Royals to limit KKR to under 140.

SCOREBOARD

| KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS | |
|--|----------|
| Nitish Rana c Samson b Sakariya | 22 |
| Shubman Gill run out (Buttler) | 11 |
| Rahul Tripathi c Parag b Mustafizur | 36 |
| Sunil Narine c Jaiswal b Unadkat | 6 |
| Eoin Morgan run out (Morris) | 0 |
| Dinesh Karthik c Sakariya b Morris | 25 |
| Andre Russell c Miller b Morris | 9 |
| Pat Cummins c Parag b Morris | 10 |
| Shivam Mavi b Morris | 5 |
| Prasidh Krishna not out | 0 |
| Did not bat: Varun Chakravarty | |
| Extras (b 2, lb 1, w 5, nb 1, p 0) | 9 |
| Total (9 wickets, 20 Overs) | 133 |
| Fall of wickets: 24-1 (Shubman Gill, 5.4), 45-2 (Nitish Rana, 8.1), 54-3 (Sunil Narine, 9.5), 61-4 (Eoin Morgan, 10.2), 94-5 (Rahul Tripathi, 15.2), 117-6 (Andre Russell, 17.4), 118-7 (Dinesh Karthik, 17.6), 133-8 (Pat Cummins, 19.2), 133-9 (Shivam Mavi, 19.6) | |
| Bowling | |
| Jaydev Unadkat | 4-0-25-1 |
| Chetan Sakariya | 4-0-31-1 |
| Mustafizur Rahman | 4-0-22-1 |
| Chris Morris | 4-0-23-4 |
| Rahul Tewatia | 3-0-24-0 |
| Shivam Dube | 1-0-5-0 |

| RAJASTHAN ROYALS | |
|---|------------|
| Jos Buttler lbw b Chakravarty | 5 |
| Yashasvi Jaiswal c (sub)K Nagarkoti b Mavi | 22 |
| Sanju Samson not out | 42 |
| Shivam Dube c Prasidh b Chakravarty | 22 |
| Rahul Tewatia c (sub)K Nagarkoti b Prasidh | 5 |
| David Miller not out | 24 |
| Extras (b 2, lb 1, w 5, nb 1, p 0) | 9 |
| Total (9 wickets, 20 Overs) | 133 |
| Fall of wickets: 21-1 (Jos Buttler, 3.2), 40-2 (Yashasvi Jaiswal, 4.5), 85-3 (Shivam Dube, 10.5), 100-4 (Rahul Tewatia, 13.4) | |
| Bowling | |
| Shivam Mavi | 4-0-19-1 |
| Pat Cummins | 3.5-0-36-0 |
| Varun Chakravarty | 4-0-32-2 |
| Sunil Narine | 4-0-20-0 |
| Prasidh Krishna | 3-0-20-1 |

boundarymeter

| | |
|----|-----|
| 4s | 505 |
| 6s | 223 |

| PLAYER | RUNS |
|------------------------|------|
| 1. Shikhar Dhawan (DC) | 231 |
| 2. KL Rahul (PBKS) | 221 |
| 3. Rohit Sharma (MI) | 201 |

| PLAYER | WKTS |
|------------------------|------|
| 1. Harshal Patel (RCB) | 12 |
| 2. Rahul Chahar (MI) | 9 |
| 3. Chris Morris (RR) | 9 |

| MOST SIXES | |
|-------------------------|----|
| 1. Jonny Bairstow (SRH) | 10 |
| 2. KL Rahul (PBKS) | 10 |
| 3. Rohit Sharma (MI) | 9 |

SUMMER SLAM

MOTION PICTURE



Rajasthan Royals players Riyan Parag and Rahul Tewatia celebrates wicket of KKR batsman Pat Cummins

WE'LL COME BACK STRONGLY: SKY
MI batsman Suryakumar Yadav isn't too worried about the team's misfiring middle-order and said it is just a matter of one game and it will make a strong comeback. MI's middle-order, comprising Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya, his brother Krunal, has not been able to perform to its potential in the Chennai leg. But Surya said performance of the middle-order was "not really" a cause of concern for the team. "...They have been working really hard in the nets, every-day, every practice session, it is just a matter of one game, I feel, that we will be coming back into the games," he said.

'HOW DC PLAY RASHID WILL HOLD KEY'
Delhi Capitals assistant coach Mohammad Kaif feels how his team plays star SRH spinner Rashid Khan on a slow Chepauk surface will hold key on Sunday. "The way we play Rashid Khan is going to be the key for us on this pitch," Kaif said. He added that batting on Chennai pitch has been difficult, but the experienced their batting line-up is certainly up for the challenge.

GAVASKAR PRAISES COACH SHASTRI
Effusive in his praise for national cricket coach Ravi Shastri, former India captain Sunil Gavaskar on Saturday called him an "incredible" mentor with an "unbelievable" ability to motivate youngsters even in their lowest phases. "Just 10-15 minutes with Ravi Shastri after a practice session. You know Ravi has got the ability to give so much confidence to youngsters, it's unbelievable," Gavaskar said. "If he (Shastri) believes in their ability and talent, there is no better man than Ravi Shastri to give encouragement to that youngster. He will scold you, tell you off but at the same time, he will tell you what you can do to get better, he will actually demonstrate to you," said Sunny.

'RAVI'S COMMITMENT & FOCUS IS SORTED'
Punjab Kings head coach Anil Kumble was all praise for the team's 20-year-old spinner, Ravi Bishnoi, who flummoxed the Mumbai Indian batsmen and took two crucial scalps in the nine-wicket win on Friday. "Bish (Bishnoi) played all the matches in the last season... when he came here, I thought he was not the same bowler we had seen last year. I worked on his run-up and a few other things because he was drifting down the leg side even in practice games. That's why he didn't start the tournament earlier," said Kumble. "But, I think, over the last week or so, his commitment, his focus is now sorted; he's back. It's wonderful to see him (bowl so well). He's always a competitor; you can see that. And to pick up a couple of wickets in an important game like this is great," the coach added.

KP SURPRISED AT MAXWELL'S SUCCESS
Glenn Maxwell's success at this season's IPL has been surprising considering that he isn't the main man in the RCB which he likes to be in every team he plays with, said former England batsman Kevin Pietersen. "I was sceptical of RCB's purchase of Glenn Maxwell at the beginning of the tournament, partly because he is 'The Big Show' — he likes to be the main man in the teams he plays in. He certainly isn't that here, with Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers at the top of the tree, so it's surprised me that he's done so well," he wrote on his blog on betway.com.

SACHIN RECOVERS FROM COVID-19
Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar on Saturday said he has recovered from Covid-19 and will donate plasma when he is eligible.

Top of the table clash

Virat's unbeaten RCB ready to challenge Dhoni's Super Kings

| KEY PLAYERS | |
|-------------|--|
| | DEEPAK CHAHAR His ability to strike early can pose tough challenge to RCB whose middle order is still untested |
| | DEVDU TT PADIKKAL Back in form with an explosive 101 against Royals, RCB will hope for another good show from Padikkal |

PTI ■ MUMBAI

It would be nothing short of a clash of the titans when Virat Kohli's on-a-roll Royal Challengers Bangalore takes on Mahendra Singh Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings in a top-of-the-table showdown at Wankhede Stadium on Sunday with two points and momentum at stake.

RCB has won all its four matches so far and sits on top of the standings. CSK, on the other hand, has hit back after losing its opener to claim three straight wins for the second spot in the points table.

RCB, boosted by a 10-wicket hammering of Rajasthan Royals, will be keen to continue its winning streak. However, the task is easier said than done as CSK is riding high with three good results of its own.

Kohli and the highly-rated Devdutt Padikkal toyed with the Rajasthan Royals bowling the other day and will look to lay a strong foundation again against a varied CSK bowling attack.

RCB, which has more often not under-performed amid high expectations, has started well. And, Kohli will be aware of the importance of maintaining the intensity in a long league.

The RCB batting appears to be top heavy and reliant on the performances of Kohli, South African maestro AB de Villiers and Australian maverick Glenn Maxwell. Padikkal's good form also augurs well for the team.

However, the RCB batting unit will front up to Deepak Chahar, who is known for his ability to strike early.

It remains to be seen if the team has what it takes to bounce back in case there is loss of wickets early in the innings.

The RCB bowling has done the job so far with Mohammed Siraj being impressive. However, they come up against a formidable CSK which bats deep and the importance of early wickets can't be emphasised enough.

Ruturaj Gaikwad emerged from three failures with an impressive knock against Kolkata Knight Riders and forms a strong opening partnership with Faf du Plessis.

A good start will help their cause

| VENUE: WANKHEDE STADIUM, MUMBAI | |
|--|----|
| HEAD TO HEAD | |
| Matches | 26 |
| Chennai Super Kings | 16 |
| Royal Challengers Bangalore | 09 |
| No Result | 01 |
| LAST YEAR'S MATCHES | |
| Royal Challengers Bangalore defeated Chennai Super Kings by 37 runs in Dubai | |
| Chennai Super Kings beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 8 wickets in Dubai | |

101

Devidutt Padikkal's 100 off 51 balls during his unbeaten 101-run knock against Rajasthan Royals in the previous match was the fastest century by an uncapped player in IPL

199

Suresh Raina with 199 sixes in 192 innings of 197 matches, needs just one six to become seventh batsman to complete a double century of sixes in IPL

Faisal Features

and with an in-form Moeen Ali pencilled in at No 3 and Suresh Raina to follow, CSK has the firepower to strike late as well.

Skipper Dhoni is yet to hit his straps but coach Stephen Fleming believes he would get better with every outing.

While Chahar has been in the thick of things at the start, spinners Ravindra Jadeja and Moeen Ali have also struck crucial blows.

Shardul Thakur has proved expensive at times but is a vital cog in the CSK bowling unit. Add to this the fact that the Wankhede stadium has seen mostly high-scoring games and the team that holds its nerves is likely to come up trumps on a track like this.

DC start favourites against Sunrisers

| KEY PLAYERS | |
|-------------|--|
| | SHIKHAR DHAWAN Dhawan is the leading run getter in the tourney and has top scored in the three matches Delhi won |
| | RASHID KHAN How Delhi batsman performs against Rashid will decide the result of the match |

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Rishabh Pant's brute power will be put to test against Rashid Khan's bagful of tricks in an encounter where Delhi Capitals will start as favourites against SunRisers Hyderabad due to their better bowling resources.

The much-criticised Chepauk track will host its 10th and final IPL game of the season in which both Pant and his opposite number David Warner would pray for a decent surface for their flamboyant batters.

With only a couple of first innings total in excess of 170 across nine games here, the slow and gripping surface at the Chidambaram Stadium tests the skills of the batsmen in a different manner.

Possibly, it's the ability to muscle the ball that will come in handy on this track and hence the DC skipper's role as a batsman will become all the more important.

While Shikhar Dhawan is in good form and Prithvi Shaw in not so great touch after the first game, the willow-wielders, who depend on sheer timing compared to power may struggle.

In fact, Hyderabad, after playing all its four games in Chennai, has only now started to crack the code of a slow track, evident during the team's comfortable victory over Punjab Kings after a hat-trick of defeats.

With Kane Williamson back in the mix, SunRisers seemed to have got a better balance in a set-up which is acutely short of quality India internationals.

With T Natarajan's death bowling unavailable for this season and Manish Pandey only able to manage a strike-rate of 112 odd, bulk of the responsibility is on overseas recruits Warner, Jonny Bairstow, Williamson and Rashid.

The wily Afghan has again been very consistent and his duel with Pant could be one of the most eagerly-awaited match-ups that can send the TRPs soaring.

SRH's weak link is certainly its bowling attack with none among Sandeep Sharma, Siddharth Kaul or all-rounder Vijay Shankar inspiring any sort of confidence whatsoever.

So DC will have 12 overs out of 20 on which they can feast upon if one

| VENUE: CHIDAMBARAM STADIUM, CHENNAI | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| HEAD TO HEAD | |
| Matches | 18 |
| Sunrisers Hyderabad | 11 |
| Delhi Capitals | 07 |

| LAST YEAR'S MATCHES | |
|---|--|
| Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Delhi Capitals by 15 runs in Abu Dhabi | |
| Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Delhi Capitals by 88 runs in Dubai | |
| Delhi Capitals defeated Sunrisers Hyderabad by 17 runs at Abu Dhabi (Qualifier 2) | |

91

David Warner with 3949 runs at an average of 51.28 in 91 innings of as many matches, needs 51 runs to become the first SRH batsman to complete 4000 runs in IPL

5

Shikhar Dhawan with 195 fours in 51 innings of as many matches, needs five more fours to become the second Delhi Capitals batsman after Virender Sehwag (266 fours in 79 innings) to complete a double century of fours in IPL

Faisal Features

takes away the eight bowled by Rashid and the seasoned Bhuvneshwar Kumar.

However, a bit of tweak in their XI also won't be bad even though they had comfortably beaten Mumbai Indians in a low-scoring game here only a few days back.

One area of slight concern will be Ashwin's form as he has been going at 8 runs per over and only a single wicket to show for his efforts. The Chepauk track could just give him some breathing space after mostly flat decks in Mumbai.

POINTS TABLE

| | P | W | L | NRR | PTS | |
|---|------|---|---|-----|--------|---|
| 1 | RCB | 4 | 4 | 0 | +1.009 | 8 |
| 2 | CSK | 4 | 3 | 1 | +1.142 | 6 |
| 3 | DC | 4 | 3 | 1 | +0.426 | 6 |
| 4 | MI | 5 | 2 | 3 | -0.032 | 4 |
| 5 | PBKS | 5 | 2 | 3 | -0.428 | 4 |
| 6 | RR | 5 | 2 | 3 | -0.681 | 4 |
| 7 | SRH | 4 | 1 | 3 | -0.228 | 2 |
| 8 | KKR | 5 | 1 | 4 | -0.675 | 2 |

shortpasses

JUVE NOT AFRAID OF SANCTIONS
TURIN: Juventus coach Andrea Pirlo insisted on Saturday that his team did not fear UEFA sanctions over the failed Super League project, designed to supplant the Champions League. "We are not afraid of this, we are calm and focused on our work," Pirlo told a press conference. "We are convinced that we can finish the season with our goals, we are serene about what UEFA will decide."

PERSEPOLIS FC THRASHED GOA
MARGAO: Starting with as many as eight fresh faces, FC Goa were thrashed 4-0 by Iranian champions Persepolis FC in their return-leg AFC Champions League Group E match on Friday night. Shahriar Moghanlou (24th minute), Mehadi Torabi (43rd), Issa Alkassar (47th) and Kamal Kamyabina (58th) scored for the winners in a completely one-sided match at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. The result saw Persepolis, with 12 points from four games, extending their 100 percent win record while Goa suffered their second consecutive defeat after the 1-2 loss to Yahya Golmohammadi's side on Tuesday.

SCHALKE SEEK PROTECTION
BERLIN: Schalke 04 said on Friday they have asked for police protection at training next week after angry fans attacked the team bus following the club's relegation from the Bundesliga. A large group of furious supporters pelted the team bus with eggs and confronted players on their return to Gelsenkirchen early Wednesday after defeat at Bielefeld saw Schalke relegated after 30 years in Germany's top flight.

WOMEN'S TEAM IN FINAL
GUATEMALA CITY: Recurve women's team of Deepika Kumari, Anika Bhakat and Komalika Bari assured India of its first medal in the Archery World Cup Stage 1 after cruising into the final with a straight-set win over Spain here. However, the men's team, which qualified as third seed, lost in the quarterfinals to its Spanish rivals 26-27 in a shoot-off after both teams were tied 4-4. India are also in the medal hunt in three more events with newlywed Atanu Das and Deepika advancing into the mixed pair Bronze playoff. The duo will also vie for individual medals, having made the last-four in their respective sections.

ANURADHA FINISHES SEVENTH
TASHKENT: P Anuradha finished seventh in the women's 87kg category as the Indian contingent ended its campaign with two medals at the Asian Weightlifting Championship here on Saturday. She lifted 91kg in snatch followed by 110kg in clean and jerk for a total of 201kg in the continental event. The Chinese duo of Wang Zhouyu 286kg (126kg+160kg) and Kang Yue 273kg (118kg+155kg) took home the gold and silver medals respectively. Agencies

Wonder Willock

Arsenal loanee's late strike earn draw for Magpies as Liverpool blow place in the top 4



Newcastle's Joe Willock (No 28) celebrates with his head coach Steve Bruce, left, and his teammates after he scores against Liverpool ©NUFC

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Jürgen Klopp admitted Liverpool are not playing like a side who "deserve" Champions League football next season after blowing the chance to move into the Premier League's top four with a 1-1 draw against Newcastle on Saturday.

Mohamed Salah had opened the scoring after just three minutes, but Liverpool wasted a host of chances to extend their lead and paid in stoppage time.

The Reds even had a reprieve when Callum Wilson's equaliser was ruled out after a VAR review for handball, but still could not hold on as Willock's deflected strike secured a vital point in the Magpies' bid for top flight survival.

Liverpool move up to sixth but are a point behind fourth-placed Chelsea and West Ham.

Two more dropped points is a blow to Liverpool's chances of a place in next season's Champions League after their owners' plans for ensuring they have top level European

football every season without having to earn it on the field collapsed this week.

Liverpool were one of 12 clubs to initially sign up to proposals for a European Super League (ESL) last weekend, only to withdraw within 48 hours after a backlash from their own players and fans.

"If you deserve it, you deserve it," said Klopp, echoing the critics of the ESL as a closed shop for Europe's big clubs.

"I didn't see us today playing like we deserve Champions League next year. We have another five games and we will see. We learn or we don't play Champions League, that's it."

A protest outside Anfield on Saturday was more muted than the ones seen ahead of Chelsea and Arsenal's home matches in recent days, but a number of flags and banners were attached to the gates around the ground calling out the "greed" of the club's American owners Fenway Sports Group (FSG).

John Henry's FSG helped deliver Liverpool's first Premier League

title for 30 years last season. But many of the problems Klopp's men have encountered in

defending their title were in evidence again as they failed to see off Newcastle long before a nervy finale.

The hosts could not have made a better start as a brilliant touch and finish from Salah opened the scoring after just three minutes.

Salah should have had a second but fired too close to Martin Dubravka when clean through on goal, while Sadio Mane also failed to round the Slovakian goalkeeper with a glorious chance.

Dubravka then made a string of fine saves after the break to deny Roberto Firmino, Mane and James Milner.

The tension in the Liverpool players was clear late in the game and Newcastle capitalised after manager Steve Bruce sent on Wilson and Willock.

Wilson bundled home after Alisson had saved his initial effort, but the ball had rebounded off the Brazilian goalkeeper onto the former Bournemouth striker's hand before he stabbed it into an unguarded net.

Seconds later, Liverpool failed to deal with another long ball into their box and it fell for on-loan Arsenal midfielder Willock, whose strike deflected in off Fabinho to leave Alisson helpless.



Arsenal's goalkeeper Bernd Leno, right, reacts at the end of Premier League match between Arsenal and Everton at the Emirates stadium in London

AFP ■ LONDON

Leno's error costs Arsenal

An own-goal from Arsenal goalkeeper Bernd Leno handed Everton a 1-0 win on Friday night as around 2,000 fans protested against Gunners owner Stan Kroenke outside the Emirates Stadium.

With both sides chasing places in Europe next season, it was Carlo Ancelotti's side who came out on top with a first win in seven games.

German keeper Leno turned a Richarlison cross into his own goal in the 76th minute to give the Toffees victory.

The result left Everton in eighth place, three points off the Champions League places after their first league win at Arsenal since 1996. Arsenal are ninth, nine points off the top four.

"It was really important to stay attached to the top of the table," Ancelotti told the BBC.

"The performance was good. It's all good news tonight and this gives us confidence for the next games. Finally I can say we are back."

Watford join Norwich back in PL

AFP ■ LONDON

Watford bounced back to the Premier League at the first time of asking after Saturday's 1-0 win over Millwall sealed promotion.

Brentford's win at Bournemouth earlier in the day meant that only three points would be good enough for Xisco Munoz's men to be promoted alongside Norwich, who came down with them last season.

Ismaila Sarr's early penalty gave Watford the perfect start, but they had to withstand a nervy finale to guarantee their place back in the prestige and riches of the English top-flight.



Prior to Munoz's appointment on December 20, automatic promotion looked unlikely after dip in form under Vladimir Ivic. However, 17 wins in just 24 games under the Spaniard helped amass a 10-point lead over

Brentford, who have just three games left to play.

The Bees are now at least guaranteed a playoff spot with Bournemouth, Barnsley and Swansea almost certain to join them in the battle for the final promotion place.

Barnsley moved nine points clear of seventh-placed Reading with a hard-fought 1-0 win over struggling Rotherham thanks to Carlton Morris's early goal.

A week after securing their promotion, Norwich City closed in on the Championship title with a 3-1 win at Queens Park Rangers to maintain their five-point lead over Watford with two games to go.

Bayern miss chance to secure title PSG reclaim top spot

AFP ■ BERLIN

Bayern Munich blew the chance to clinch the Bundesliga title for a ninth successive season on Saturday as the club world champions crashed to a 2-1 defeat away to Mainz.

First-half goals by Jonathan Burkardt and Robin Quaison sealed Mainz's third straight win, pulling them away from the relegation fight and forcing Bayern to wait to be crowned champions.

On his return from a knee injury, Bayern striker Robert Lewandowski scored just before the end to leave him four short of Gerd Mueller's all-time record of 40 Bundesliga goals in a season.

Bayern can still win the title on Sunday without kicking a ball if second-placed RB Leipzig, who are 10 points behind Munich, lose at home to Stuttgart.

"That was too little from us in the first half, you can't win games like that, in terms of body language and our build up," said Bayern captain Manuel Neuer, who was at



fault for the opening goal. "We created too few chances and were punished for our own mistakes. "We weren't surprised by Mainz, who have been playing well and are fighting to stay up." Mainz had also been 2-0 up at half-time against Bayern at the Allianz Arena in

Haaland netted twice as Borussia Dortmund boosted their hopes of qualifying for the Champions League next season with a 2-0 away win.

Haaland sprinted clear of the defence and fired home from a tight angle with just 12 minutes gone.

Dortmund played with 10 men for the last 31 minutes after 17-year-old England midfielder Jude Bellingham was sent off for a second yellow card.

However, Dortmund doubled their lead when Mahmoud Dahoud won the ball on the edge of his own penalty area and his pass found Haaland.

The 20-year-old raced clear and slotted past Wolfsburg goalkeeper Koen Casteels for his 37th goal in 38 games this season in all competitions.

With three games left, fifth-placed Dortmund are one point from the Champions League places, but have their work cut out with games against RB Leipzig, Mainz and Bayer Leverkusen to come.

AFP ■ PARIS

Kylian Mbappe scored twice for the second game in a row but picked up a thigh injury as Paris Saint-Germain climbed top of Ligue 1 on Saturday with a 3-1 victory at Metz.

The France striker was rested for the midweek cup rout of Angers and returned to bolster PSG's title hopes as he netted either side of Fabien Centonze's equaliser to send the champions above Lille.

However, Mbappe was substituted in the closing minutes with a heavily strapped thigh, a worrying sign for PSG ahead of Wednesday's Champions League semi-final first leg at home to Manchester City.

Mauro Icardi sealed the victory with a penalty a minute from time.

PSG are now two points clear of Lille, who visit fourth-placed Lyon on Sunday while Monaco, the form side in the second half of the season, are four points back ahead of their trip to Angers.

Neymar was restored to the line-up after serving a two-



match ban for his red card against Lille, while Marco Verratti made his first start in over a month following a positive Covid-19 test. Having scored twice in the dramatic 3-2 win over Saint-Etienne last weekend, Mbappe gave PSG the lead inside five minutes as he ran onto Ander

Herrera's chipped pass and fired in via the post.

Centonze tested Keylor Navas as Metz sought to snap a run of nine successive league defeats by PSG, and the full-back levelled early in the second half by heading in Farid Boulaya's cross.

Pape Matar Sarr was then denied by Navas before PSG punished Metz for losing the ball deep in their half, as Mbappe drilled in with the aid of a deflection from 20 yards.

Metz goalkeeper Alexandre Oukidja made a fantastic reflex stop to thwart Leandro Paredes and Herrera rattled the woodwork, with Boulaya then racing back to clear Mbappe's dinked effort off the line.

Mbappe was replaced by Julian Draxler after appearing to hurt his thigh, and Icardi won and converted a late penalty to make it five goals in three games for the Argentine.

On Friday night, Dimitri Payet scored two goals and set up Arkadiusz Milik for another as Marseille came from behind to defeat Reims 3-1 away.

World No 1 Barty in Stuttgart final

AFP ■ STUTTGART

World number one Ashleigh Barty celebrated her 25th birthday by fighting back to beat Elina Svitolina in the semi-finals of the WTA clay-court tournament in Stuttgart on Saturday.

Despite losing the first set in just a over half an hour, Barty hit back to seal a 4-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-2 win over the Ukrainian fourth seed.

The Australian will meet either second-seed Simona Halep or Aryna Sabalenka in Sunday's final.

"It's important to believe. Regardless of the score, I always try and find the right way," said Barty, who also lost the opening set of Friday's quarter-final against Karolina Pliskova.

"She is one of the best competitors on the tour, so I knew it would be a very hard fought match and the margins would decide it," Barty added before being presented with a bouquet of flowers with "Happy Birthday" played over the arena's sound system.

Karunaratne hits maiden double ton against B'desh

AFP ■ PALLEKELE

Dimuth Karunaratne scored his maiden double hundred as Sri Lanka batted through the day without losing a wicket on Saturday to match Bangladesh's 500-plus score in the first Test.

The Sri Lankan captain ended the fourth day on 234 while middle order batsman Dhananjaya de Silva moved to 154 as the home side reached 512 for three at stumps, still 29 runs behind Bangladesh's first innings total.

They have added 322 runs for the fourth wicket, the highest stand at Pallekele for any wicket. The previous best was by Australia's Mike Hussey and Shaun Marsh, who made 258 in 2011, also for the fourth wicket.

Karunaratne passed his career best score of 196, set against Pakistan in 2017, by elegantly driving Taskin Ahmed for four and in the same over reached his first double ton.

The 33-year-old left-hander has now been at the crease for more than 11 hours and faced 419 deliveries, 25 of which have been boundaries.



Dimuth Karunaratne celebrates after scoring his double century AP

2022 WC will be my swansong: Mithali

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian women's ODI captain Mithali Raj on Saturday indicated that the 2022 50-over World Cup in New Zealand will be her "swansong" after 23 illustrious years in International cricket.

The 38-year-old Mithali, arguably, the finest woman cricketer that India has ever produced, also said that she is seriously looking for some good seam bowling options for the lively New Zealand tracks that will be on offer next year.

"It's been 21 years of International cricket and I know 2022 is my swansong. The World Cup," Mithali said.

"The last year is equal to the 20 years of my International cricket," she added.

Mithali, the only women batter with 7000 plus One Day International runs, also spoke about how she had to keep herself motivated during the Covid-19 times which also



Mithali Raj ©BCCI/Women

pushed the global event by one year.

"I know we are in difficult times but it takes a lot out of me to keep working on my fitness. I am not getting any younger, in fact I am getting older and I know the importance of fitness," Mithali said.

"The importance of being in a very good emotional and mental set-up, knowing that there will be very few tours

before the World Cup."

Indian women are set to play four bilateral series — away tours in England, Australia and New Zealand and a home series against West Indies sandwiched in between.

"Every tour (from now on) is important for me as a batter as to how I am going to get the team to regroup and build a team for the World Cup," she said.

"Yeah, I am very optimistic looking at the girls and in the manner they have been working with whatever facilities they have in these times and focus and enthusiasm that a series is coming up."

She admitted that fast bowling is one area that the team needs to improve upon and build a pool looking at the future as Jhulan Goswami also hits the business end of her career.

"We definitely need to look at a few players and prepare them for New Zealand, so yeah."



Rafael Nadal celebrates his victory over Pablo Carreno Busta AP

Nadal in Barcelona final

AFP ■ BARCELONA

Rafael Nadal trounced compatriot Pablo Carreno Busta to reach his 12th Barcelona final where he will face Stefanos Tsitsipas, the Greek star who stunned the great Spaniard from two sets down in this year's Australian Open.

Top seed Nadal, an 11-time champion in Barcelona, eased to a 6-3, 6-2 win over world number 13 Carreno Busta in 90 minutes.

It was Nadal's eighth win in eight meetings against his 29-year-old Davis Cup teammate and his 65th in Barcelona.

Earlier, Tsitsipas winner of his first Masters 1000 event in Monte Carlo last week, booked his place in a second successive final when he beat Italian teenager Jannik Sinner 6-3, 6-3 in his semi-final on Saturday.

"It feels great to be back in the final. I will try to redeem myself from last time," said Tsitsipas.



NO NEED TO PANIC

The second wave of COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc in the country. With this comes a lot of panic and confusion. SUNDAY PIONEER answers some of the most common queries related to the management of the disease

■ I have fever for three days, should I go for RT-PCR/Rapid Antigen Test/CBNAAT?
In the current situation, it is presumed you have Covid-19 infection. Treat accordingly. If available, get RT-PCR test done. Only if RT-PCR test facility is not there, Rapid Antigen Test or CBNAAT may be done.
■ I am running fever for 3 days, and my RT-PCR result for COVID 19 is positive. What all should I do? Which tests and what medicine should I take?
General Care: Strict isolation at home. All positive patients in the same house do not have to remain in different rooms. Monitor your temperature six hourly. If temperature rises above 101, take tab paracetamol 650mg.3. Monitoring blood oxygen level by pulse oximeter, six hourly. If reading 94 per cent or higher, nothing to worry. If reading drops <94 per cent, start deep breathing exercises (*pranayam*). Lie on your tummy (not on your back) for as long as you can; this is likely to improve your oxygen level. If oxygen level not getting better, see if you can do a six-minute walk test.
Note: Please note that the period in which oxygen level may fall is generally from day five to day 11 from the date of onset of first symptom. Lying in prone position or six minute does

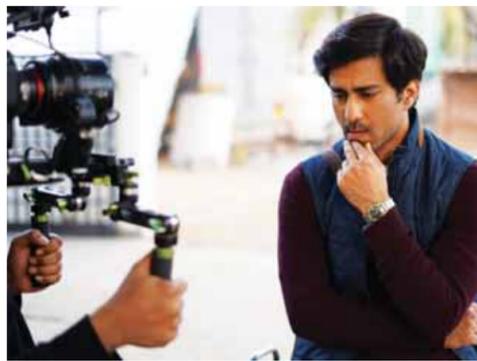
not improve level above 94 per cent, then you need to see a doctor, and you may need supplemental oxygen.
Normal diet (patient with comorbidities need to continue to follow illness specific dietary restrictions). Drink sufficient fluids (patient with comorbidities need to adjust fluid intake as needs to be for each specific comorbidity).
Blood tests: Normally no blood test is needed in mild cases. In those with severe symptoms (high fever, severe diarrhoea, severe fatigue etc.) but good oxygen levels, the following tests may be done (fasting) as baseline: CBC, CRP, LFT.
Treatment: There is no specific treatment for COVID-19 infection. Only, treatment for relief of symptoms is needed. For fever/body pains/headache: Paracetamol SOS. Sore throat: warm saline gargles. Throat irritation, sneezing or running nose: Tab Cetirizine (Zyrtec); One tab once a day. Dry Cough: Tab Montair LC; one tab per day. Wet Cough (with phlegm/sputum): Bro-Zedex Syrup, 1 or 2, teaspoons thrice daily.
Loose motions: Take Electral Oral Rehydration Powder, as many times as needed; in severe diarrhoea, Tab Imodium 2 mg as needed. Also take Curd, at-least once a day.
General immunity boosters: Tab Zinc 50 mg (Tab Zinconia) for 15 days. Those with co-

morbidities such as obesity, Diabetes, high BP, asthma, kidney disease, smokers, chronic chest diseases, history of lung tuberculosis, etc): Continue all medicines already being taken for chronic illnesses like high BP, Diabetes, thyroid illnesses, asthma, cancer, arthritis, etc. You have to go by the advise of your treating doctor. You may be advised to do the following tests by your doctor: Serum Ferritin, LDH, D-Dimer, Interleukin 6. Just to repeat, those above 70, and those with Diabetes and other co-morbidities, go as per your doctor's advise.
Need for HRCT chest: Those with normal (>94) oxygen level do not need HRCT of the chest. It is to be done only if oxygen consistently remains below 94, or there is severe breathlessness. CT score being done these days may have interpretation issues, and hence do not get alarmed. Abnormal blood tests alone is NOT a reason to do CT.
Note: Please do not give/take Fabiflu (Favipiravir) Doxycycline, Ivermectin or Azithromycin. None of these has any proven role. These may harm the patient as all medicines have side effects. Most common side effects of most drugs are nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, loose motions.

Steroids (Medrol/Dexona) are prohibited and dangerous for those having normal oximeter reading. Only those who need more than 3L/min supplemental oxygen support should receive a short course for five days. Early start of steroids (practiced by some) in our opinion, can make the condition worse. Neither Inj Remdesivir nor convalescent plasma is of proven value. So do not worry too much if these cannot be arranged. Neither of these will change the final outcome. Much more important than blood tests or HRCT findings is the oxygen saturation level as seen in the finger oximeter. This is the key to management of Covid-19.
Disclaimer: This is a simplified and basic guidance for patients and their family doctors. It is based on consensus of five AIIMS-trained specialists with over 40 years of practical experience of each. Every patient should take treatment for COVID-19 as per the instructions of a competent doctor.
How to measure oxygen level: Put the oximeter on right (dominant) hand's middle finger. First, cross check functioning of the finger oximeter by test readings on other members of the family/caregiver. Check both at rest and after walking around the room for six minutes. Those who cannot walk for six minutes should try and walk for three minutes at least.

'I want to write fresh, unique and bold content'

Director AMBRISH VERMA, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about his latest project DUDE, how he came up with the name and the reason for releasing it on YouTube



◆ What is DUDE about?
The series is a detective-drama. The tag is: Ode to mothers. The story would not have existed if not for the mother of the protagonist. She goes missing when he was a child. The films stems from here. On the onset is it established that his mother is missing but the major screen part is spent on the case that the detective is trying to solve which is going to be his last case. The backdrop is him looking for his mother. The interesting part is how he goes looking for her which is not the usual conventional method.
◆ So, there are two stories?
There is a plot and a sub-plot. The main plot is him looking for his mother, the sub-plot is how this is his last case where a young couple get a threat letter that their child will be kidnapped if they don't vacant the newly bought house. By the end of it, both stories come together and gives him a closure about his mother.
◆ Why DUDE?
It is actually an acronym for Detective Umesh Dhamija (DUD); he is Dude's father. As you can see there is no E. Initially, in the plot, we had laid a lot of emphasis on the father but the script changed but one thing remained unchanged — the father continued to be concealed. DUDE, Detective Uttam Dhamija, always felt that it was his father who gave himself this acronym and the office people. Then the father retires and Uttam joins the firm, the tag continues.
◆ Why did you choose to release it on YouTube?
There is a reason why I didn't choose a big OTT platform to release it. The trend that has been seen that only those shows make it on big OTTs is when they have established themselves or the film or show is star-studded or backed by a big director or producer. For beginners, this is debilitating. I had written and directed this film and wanted certain freedom. If I had gone to a big OTT, they probably would have said: Who is this director? Let's get another one on board for this project. This is okay since they have a checklist. But I wanted independence so I went with Rusk Media who gave me the freedom I needed.
◆ Were there challenges faced to release it on YouTube?
The biggest problem was not that we had to shoot during the pandemic but the fact that we had to change the script since it was written before the pandemic. The story has no reference to COVID-19. It would appear to be weird to make a show that has no mention of the virus or address. So we set up the set story in 2019. But then came the issue of mask. People everywhere were wearing it. This was a challenge; to shoot and ensure it didn't look it was COVID-19 era.
◆ It started with just a scribble. How did turn into a web series??
It is now five-episode series. When I started, I had just quit my job and started working as a creative producer. When you quit your job and you want to direct, nobody wants to pay you. I wrote DUDE because I knew no one would pay me and produce it like an indie-director. In July 2019, I met the CEO of Rusk Media. We discussed a few things and that is how it went forward.
◆ What are the challenges young directors like yourself are facing?
First, good stories. There is no good content. There are so many hacks being made everywhere. As a director, one ants to work on fresh ideas. The same is true for actors as well. People should get bold when it comes to writing.

The refrigerator is the hero here

SHALINI SAKSENA speaks with Chef VICKY RATNANI about Zee Café's new show Chef Vs Fridge, to be aired today at 8pm and food trends to be seen this year

The present pandemic has made a chef out of many of us. We open the refrigerator and look at the left over and think of ways to modify it and present a totally new dish for the family to enjoy. But what happens when a professional chef opens the fridge and sees the left-overs? What does he do with them and what kind of gourmet dishes does he whip up? Well, Zee Café's new show that goes on air tonight at 8 pm is all this and much more.
The show which is hosted by Gaurav Gera and judged by Chef Vicky, is a competition like never seen before. In every new episode, one will get to see two chefs pitted against each other to come up with dishes where *ab fridge lega sabki class, aur chefs banaenge kuch world class*.
"It is a very different show where the fridge is the hero. The tagline: *Ab fridge lega sab ki class aur chef*



banege kuch world class is totally apt and fits perfectly here. One has two chefs who are cooking against each other. There is a theme as well which is not revealed to them. They are shown the key ingredients first. One has professional chefs cooking. The viewers will see and learn how one can get creative

with ingredients found in one's refrigerator. We see this happening in every household today where people open the fridge and see what they can make in order to reduce wastage," Ratnani explains. He says that whenever there is a chef judging a chef or any other person, there is already a benchmark that has been set and one would expect a certain culinary level keeping in mind how qualified the other person is.
"What I will be looking for is originality, elevation, taste and flavour and presentation and appearance," Ratnani says. The take away lessons here would be how one can whip up good recipes from the ingredients found in the fridge. Since every week one will see different chefs competing, one will see freshness in each episode.
"Each chef here has varied culinary experience and comes from a different background. One is teaching at a culinary school, another is working with a restaurant, some are self-taught and some are working from home. So, all have a strong background," Ratnani says.
The reason why Indian food has gained prominence on the global map is because regional food has become big, micro-cuisine has come out of the closet. "Also, people are travelling. Lot of home chefs are exhibiting their culinary skills. It is good that the importance of Indian food through Indian chefs has gone through the roof. Ten years back it was not considered cool to eat Indian food. Indian restaurants are no longer considered to be just curry houses. They are getting a lot of respect today. The vocal for local has definitely has its plus," Ratnani says. He is quick to point out that fusion of Indian food can lead to a lot of confusion.
"My advice to people which I have given in this show as well, is that a dish is only going to make sense if one has thorough knowledge, authority or the aptitude, understanding and maturity of both the cuisines that are coming together. Confusion can lead to disaster and fusion can sometimes create a genius," Ratnani says.



'Nothing changes overnight'

■ We haven't seen you in a movie for a couple of years. What is keeping you busy?
The last one year, I have been busy building *Nine Rasa*. It took almost all my time, quite literally. One starts with an idea to actually execute it takes a lot of time, effort and money. But it has been worth it.
■ What is app about?
It is the first ever OTT platform that is completely dedicated to theatre and performing arts. It has anything and everything that happens on stage and

will essentially be on this particular platform. It will include full-length plays, one-act plays, skits, stand up, story reading - be it poetry or songs, dance in almost all the Indian languages. To begin with, it will be in Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, English/Hinglish. Going forward, we will be adding more languages to the platform.
■ What about movies?
Once the first lockdown opened. I have been busy shooting for not only Hindi but Marathi films; there are new series in the works. I have been busy with a film *Love You Shankar* directed by Rajeev Ruia who did *My Friend Ganesha* earlier. I did a Marathi film with Mahesh Manjrekar. I am shooting for a movie in Rajasthan titled *Mannu and Munnii Ki Shaadi*; it is 90 per cent complete. Hopefully these films will release once cinema halls open. I am also acting and directing a film — *Sarkar Ke Seva Mein* before the pandemic. We hope to complete the shoot and release it as well.
■ What kind of content will people get to see?
Essentially anything that is creative will find its way on this platform. Theatre is one of the richest and finest entertainment. For a long time, it has stayed limited to auditoriums. Now is the need for theatre to reach out to a lot more people; to every household. The content is completely family-friendly. Usually,

THE YEAR 2020 HAS TAUGHT US MANY IMPORTANT LESSONS AND FORCED US TO GET OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONE AND THINK OUT-OF-THE-BOX. WHAT COMES NEXT IS GOING TO BE INTERESTING. WE CAN NEVER BE READY FOR WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR US. BUT WE NOW HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO FACE THINGS BRAVELY

family and friends come to watch plays. This platform is the same.
■ What is the aim?
The aim intention with which this platform was conceptualised was to help the theatre community and fraternity due to the present pandemic especially during the first lockdown, last year. A lot of theatre friends called asking what could be done under the situation to help out theatre people. That was also when things had started to go online. I felt that if everything was going online, why not theatre. We also released that there is a bigger need to reach out to global audience and started building towards it.
■ There are so many apps. Do you think there is scope for more?
There is place and scope for not only my app but many more apps that are unique. This platform is unique since it is the first of its kind app dedicated to theatre and performing arts. On a lighter vein, there were so many actors before me and there will be so many who will come after me. This app will be no different. If the content is good people would like to see it.
■ Have OTT platforms made it mandatory for actors to reinvent themselves?
There are two things associated with this. When you see some actors on the platform you feel that they are meant to be on it. There is so much raw and hidden talent in them. The new actors one sees here, one wonders where they were. Then there have been actors

who have reinvented themselves and set a precedent which is difficult to top. But this is what we have been taught in theatre - your performance speaks for itself.
■ How has this last one year changed the way industry will operate in the future?
Nothing changes overnight. It takes time but the change has started with OTT coming to the forefront. There are new stars on the block and therefore, this platform is a great level playing field for them.
■ Has content on OTT changed storyline of films as well — realistic cinema taking front seat?
The entire concept of story-telling is changing. People are looking for true and real stories, inspiring stories. Realism, subtly and stories about people from Tier I and II cities are taking front seat. There are so many stories that are waiting to be told and will now be told. Hopefully, my app will also play its role in telling such stories.
■ What next?
The year 2020 has taught us many important lessons. It has given us many opportunities as well and forced us to get out of our comfort zone and think out-of-the-box. What comes next is going to be interesting for me. One can do so many things. However, we can never be ready for what the future holds for us. But we now have the confidence to face things bravely and move forward so that what comes next is bright and good.

Talktime
SHREYAS TALPADE
The Iqbal actor, launched *Nine Rasa*, an OTT platform dedicated to theatre and performing arts. He speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about the aim of this platform, his upcoming projects and how the concept of story-telling is changing

the pioneer agenda

Mellow doesn't always make for a good story, but it makes for a good life
— Anne Hathaway



FROM THE INSIDE

The bitter pill

Pharma appeals to the readers for its lucid style in which Posner shares the evolution & history of global pharmaceutical giants

2



4

The process of learning

In order to get to the ultimate truths of life, the focus of learning must be directed towards the primal source itself



THE SIMPLE GUIDE TO GOOD HEALTH

Diets don't have to be complicated. It is all about right nutrition in the right amount at the right time, write SAPNA PURI & ARPANA MEHRA, as they share tips to staying healthy with proper diet and exercise

With the second big wave of Covid-19 hitting big and swamping the country, the focus on proper food and fitness while staying at home has become even greater. What you eat, eventually revs your metabolism and strengthens your immune system and how you direct your body to move via exercise ensures that you do not accumulate weight due to inactivity and stay fit. While most is common knowledge, we have put together some pointers that will work as a guide to your good health.

COMMON FOOD ISSUES

Most people deal with cravings and food addiction. Its impact on daily life results in yo yo weight gain. If you can reduce your cravings, you can easily solve any obesity-related problems. To deal with cravings, plan meals ahead and keep healthy snacks, like dates, figs, melons, grapes, citrus, berries, raw honey, and smoothies with coconut water, handy. These foods work really well when you feel the need for a sugar fix or caffeine. If you are insulin sensitive, eating cucumber slices or leafy greens along with your fruit (or a green smoothie) will help you avoid the highs or lows.

WEIGHT LOSS ON YOUR MIND

Introduce intermittent fasting and fasted work outs to your routine for good results. Be patient with yourself as the whole process is slow and can take at least four weeks to show results. Narrowing your feeding window is incredible for brain health and weight loss. The meals that you can skip or replace during intermittent fasting are breakfast or dinner. It is best to avoid snacking when fasting other than water. Instead, you can add a squeeze of lemon, have unsweetened coffee (with upto one table spoon of organic cream), unsweetened tea, coconut or MCT oil. Some tips to follow while practicing intermittent fasting are:

- Don't cut any foods out of your normal diet.
- Eat at least seven servings of whole fruits and vegetables.
- Do one fasted-state work out daily.
- Eat at least one omega-3 rich food every day.
- Add one boosting activity each day.

DOPAMINE FOODS

The first step while planning your diet should be to add some of the dopamine-boosting foods. These foods include, fish, lamb, chicken, cheese, almonds, bell peppers, sesame seeds, spinach, sprouts, broccoli, pineapple, papaya, guava, kale, berries, oranges, lentils, kidney beans etc. With these foods you'll be nourishing your mind as well as adding energy-inducing foods to your intake.

FIBRE: THE SECRET INGREDIENT

Foods rich in fibre reduce risk of heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. Fibre is also a key ingredient for losing weight without feeling hungry. Fibre makes you feel full, because it swells in your stomach when it absorbs liquid. Soluble fibre helps the body eliminate fats and lower cholesterol, giving you a steady supply of energy. Some good sources of soluble fiber are Oats, Phyllium husk, and fruits such as kiwi, cherries, and dried figs.

STRESS FREE LIFE

Filling our lives with peace also has a direct effect on good health and weight. Lack of peace increases the stress hormone, Cortisol, in the brain, which tells the body to store fat in the belly. Practices such as meditation, yoga, prayer, listening to music or playing with pets, and enjoying your food help bring peace into your life.

When we stay healthy and vibrant, age does not matter. With a healthy lifestyle and positive outlook aging is but a universal phenomenon. Most longevity diets are based on foods eaten in places having the most centenarians. Most diet advice attributes to eating more fresh vegetables, legumes, whole grains and consuming less meat, dairy products, processed foods, and sugar. We all know this in principle, but the real challenge comes in application. Let's make the right choice.

Control your consumption of animal protein. Processed red meats are exceptionally harmful. From the energy point of view, when we substitute animal protein with more plant protein, there isn't a single amino that can't be obtained by consuming plant-based protein sources. Amino acids are the building blocks for every protein in the human body but consuming too many animal proteins (as meat contains all nine essential amino acids) doesn't come without a cost. On the other hand plant proteins contain decent levels of amino acids, enough to keep us going with reduced blood glucose levels, significantly lower rates of cardiovascular disease and cancers and increased lifespan.

FITNESS GOALS

Beginning of the year is usually a good time for setting goals and committing to new things, particularly health and fitness goals, it is never too late. All you need to do is to stick to your goals and choose the ones that you can work on gradually. Simply put: When you fight against your body, it's going to fight back. Cravings, fatigue, and a scale that won't budge are all signs of your body rebelling. Your body is your home, your anchor. Start to treat it that way. It's totally okay to want to change your body. Whether it's weight loss, getting stronger, gaining weight, you need to include your body in what ever fitness programme you choose.



A STUDY IN THE JOURNAL OF SPORTS & EXERCISE PSYCHOLOGY FOUND THAT HIGHLY ACTIVE PEOPLE WERE MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN THOSE WHO DO LITTLE TO NO ACTIVITY, AND THEY FELT MUCH MORE POSITIVE ABOUT THEIR PHYSICAL ABILITIES

Take sometime to write down one or more goals that are truly for you and only you. For instance, you could pen:

- Improve my mile run time because running makes me feel strong and powerful.
- Go to Cross Fit twice a week because I love how I feel after lifting weights.
- Commit to cooking dinner at home three nights a week because it's healthier than going out and improves my relationship with food.
- Lose 15 pounds to get back to my "healthy, happy weight" because I like how I look and feel at that weight.

Take five minutes and write out what you need to do today to get to your goal tomorrow. It can be as simple as this:

- Breakfast: Protein and Carb
- Lunch: Protein and Vegetables.
- Dinner: Protein, Carb, Wine.
- Work out
- Meditate five minutes.
- Watch The Office

BENEFITS OF EXERCISING

How much our muscles influence our psychological and brain health is unbelievable. Science shows that when you move your body, your muscles release chemicals known as myokines into your blood stream that improve your mood, reduce anxiety and depression, and make your brain more resilient to stress. We call them "Hope Molecules". Regular exercise changes your brain over time and maintains brain health. Studies show that after six weeks of activity, we see functional and structural changes in the brain's reward system that are similar to what you see from the most advance treatments for depression.

CHANGING SCENARIO

With everyone avoiding their local gyms due to Covid-19 concerns, it's only natural that so many new At Home stationary bikes have come up in the market. Interest in cycling has seen a major spike since the start of the pandemic. It is one of the best forms of cardio you can do especially long term. Cycling is non-weight bearing, so it reduces the risk of injuries due to wear and tear on your joints, particularly your knees. On an average, a thirty minutes cycling session can help you burn any where between 200-450 calories, if not more, depending on your weight and speed.

YOGA

Yoga helps you find peace, no matter how crazy life is. When your stress fest is in full force, sleep and breathing become more difficult, which in turn creates more anxiety. Naturally, we prescribe yoga as the fix. The alternate nostril breathing (*Nadi Shodhana Pranayam*) can ease anxiety and calm a busy brain.

Cat/Cow, technically two poses, one is not often done without the other to counter. Its

repetitions relieve any abdominal cramping caused by anxiety, making it a great pose to help with PMS cramps too.

Legs up the wall allows your nervous system to chill, reroutes circulation, grounds you, and brings you back to the present.

Headstand increases the circulation of blood and oxygen to the brain, calming the mind. Whether you are out running or in doing reps, it's shifting your outlook.

DANCING

A single set of exercise can elicit mood improvement. And what gets you in a better mood than dancing? A study in the *Journal of Sports & Exercise Psychology* found that highly active people were more optimistic than those who do little to no activity, and they felt much more positive about their physical abilities.

Whether you are looking to shake up your at-home fitness routine or want to try a workout that doesn't feel like a workout, the African Dance workout founded over two decades ago, has gone viral during the corona virus pandemic and for good reason, because it's fun too. If you usually avoid dance workouts because you're worried about keeping in step or don't think you have much rhythm, African dance's joyful method will quickly change your mind. Plus, the fact that you're moving and grooving from the comfort of your own living room means you truly have no reason to fret if you miss a move or have trouble keeping up.

To add icing to the fitness cake, encourage yourself to discover Pilates and experience the amazing mind and body benefits. The workouts use mat-based Pilates, and are designed to build core strength and mobility while improving muscle definition and posture. A strong core is a foundation for a strong body.

STRENGTH TRAINING

One way to attain the goal to get biologically younger is to make sure that the maximum amount of oxygen your body uses per minute, typically stays stable until age 35 or 40. To really prevent decline in it, the body needs to be pushed close to its peak performance, usually once or twice a week. Add HIIT, sprints, fast paced circuits to your regular weekly cardio. One also needs to build strength. The average adult loses 3 to 8 percent of muscle each decade after age thirty. However, studies have shown that women in their 50s and 60s who did a full body strength work out twice a week effectively made their bodies 15 to 20 years younger in one year.

So which ever way you inspire yourself, make sure to eat consciously and exercise regularly. Most important, stay happy and love yourself.

Puri is a Diet Coach and Mehra is a Lifestyle Change Practitioner. Together, they run Calorie Conscious

THE BITTER PILL

What makes *Pharma: Greed, Lies, and the Poisoning of America* a must read is the lucid style in which Posner shares the evolution & history of global pharmaceutical giants, writes KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

When Gerald Posner, a top US journalist, writes a book, one can be rest assured that what he brings out is the last word on the topic. *Pharma: Greed, Lies, and the Poisoning of America* is the first attempt by Posner to tread in a hitherto unexplored world: the world of pharmaceutical companies.

Everyone in the age group of 50-plus in India has heard of Parke-Davis, Geoffrey Manners, Nicholas Laboratories, Wyeth Lab, Roche, Sandoz or E Merck. The products churned out by these companies range from Anacin, Saridon, Aspro, (pain killers which were the most sought after products once someone is hit with headache or common cold or flu) to Forhans (a tooth-paste created by dentists! That's what the manufacturers claimed) besides other medicines and drugs.

Way back in the 1970s and 1980s, students in B Sc degree classes whose specialisation was Chemistry had dreams of joining these pharma companies as chemists and make a reasonably good life in the corporate world. Nobody among us were aware of the crimes committed by some of the pharma companies to manufacture diseases along with medicines.

It took us years to know that the drug that cured blood pressure made the user a heart patient or a diabetic. The diabetic patient who consumes the medicine for blood sugar ended up as kidney patients and this cyclic process made pharma companies part of a vicious circle. The end of one disease lead to the beginning of another and there was no end in sight to these phenomenon.

Dr B M Hegde, who was honoured by Padma Vibhushan by the president of India and who is described as a cardiologist with a big heart is on record stating that in 2016, more people lost their lives because of drugs that those who succumbed to car accidents, gun violence and AIDS. Should one elaborate on why and how the pharma companies sustain their huge profits year after year and pay huge dividend to the share-holders?



One is reminded of the battle waged by Prof Hegde and Dr C V Krishnaswamy of Chennai (both classmates and colleagues in their battle against pharma companies engaged in under the table dealings) against the drug Statin, a globally banned product (except in India) used in diabetes.

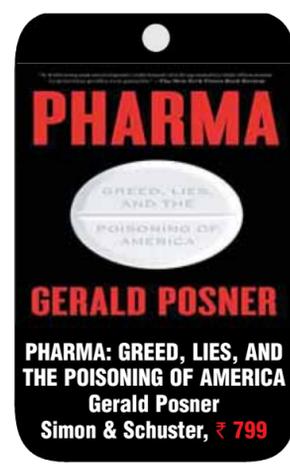
Posner conveys a wonderful message through *Pharma*. All that glitters is not gold and not good. Most of the pharmaceutical companies do not operate in a transparent manner because they are motivated only by the urge to make cash. For that to materialise, they resort

to all kinds of dirty tricks. That's why persons with diabetes end up as cardiovascular patients and speed up the rendezvous with their Makers up in the sky.

Pharmaceutical companies and hospitals have become part of the health care industry and that is the root cause of the state of affairs all over the world. The crave for getting admission in medical colleges is just the tip of the iceberg. Only the monied class could manage medical studies in India as the country faces a severe shortage of physicians and surgeons. Though economy has been liberated from the shackles of controls

and regulation, the education sector is yet to get the freedom it deserves.

What makes *Pharma* a must read is that Posner has told the evolution and history of global pharmaceutical giants in a lucid style. An average person should have knowledge about the pharmaceutical companies which determine our longevity. The author mentions in the preface that it was in January 2016 he sent his editor a proposal with the no-frills working title 'A History of the American Pharmaceutical Industry'. "I had read by then several dozen good books, each about some part of the



story I hoped to cover in its entirety. There were histories of epidemics and pandemics, inspiring accounts of groundbreaking lab discoveries, biographies of storied scientists and pharma executives, even business histories of some companies. There was no single volume that started with the wild anything-goes 19th century era of home-grown wonder remedies to today's sprawling pharma conglomerates that sell a trillion dollars of drugs annually," writes Posner in the preface. It was in the 70 post-war years that pharma transformed into a mega-industry, the author says.

Well, man's (and woman's) greed for longevity too began after the Second World War. Along with this unjustifiable passion, then world saw the evolution of many diseases like cancer, AIDS and cardiovascular complexities. The greed resulted in the market getting filled up with rejuvenating drugs, medicines that offered eternal youth and vitality and ever sustaining beauty. Hundreds of creams, ointments and tablets assuring one eternal youthfulness and vigor are the fall out of this passion for extra life. One has to pay for these demands.

Health and pharma have become commercial products that challenge nature's laws instead of tender, love and care. Did humanity succeed in this race? Posner unravels the instances with classic incidents. One has to read this book from page one till the end to understand the dog-eating-dog world of pharmaceutical companies.

Shady deals, mafiosos and illegal operations with money making as the sole intention form the modern day pharmaceutical industry and health care sector while the Hippocratic Oath is given a silent burial by the same persons who are expected to preserve it.

Interestingly, *Pharma* has a chapter on Swine Flu, a precursor to the Covid-19 devouring the world today. The swine flu scare in US in 1976 and the role played by the media in spreading a scare about a non-existent pandemic forms the core of the chapter. It speaks a lot about the evil designs of the pharma companies that came forward to manufacture vaccines for the pandemic and how the public exchequer was swindled of \$135 million to pay these companies. The political masters of the USA who sanctioned the amount for the development of the vaccine sat in bewilderment as a popular newspaper spread the word that "US calls flu alert on possible return of Epidemic's Virus". Well, the winner, as it turned out, was the Pharma companies...

Spread across 534 pages (excluding the acknowledgement, bibliography and notes), this is a must read for those who are worried over the escalating cost of healthcare in the country as well as the secret behind the craze for MBBS and pharmaceutical courses, the seats for which are still short in supply.

Gerald Posner is certain to win many accolades and awards for this book in years to come. He has hit the world at the right time and with a right book. It is a treasure house of knowledge and information. It is surprising and shocking to see that this book remains inaccessible to review pages despite the fact that each chapter providing scintillating news.

NEW ARRIVALS

A SILENT PLACE
Vinod Kumar Shukla
Translated from the Hindi by Satti Khanna
Eka, ₹399

From the pen of one of the gentlest, most profound writers of our times comes this novel about a woods that has been stunned into silence by grief. A group of children want the woods to overcome its muteness; they want birds to sing and human voices to carry across distances. The schemes they devise and the adventures they embark upon make up the gentle surface of this story. What lies beneath is the deepest human philosophy

THE ORACLE OF KARUTHUPUZZHA: A NOVEL
Manu Bhattathiri
Aleph/Rupa, ₹699

With two cows and four mouths to feed, Nareshan can barely make ends meet selling milk to the inhabitants of Karuthupuzha. That is, until his daughter, Sarasu, is possessed by the demon-god, Chaathan. Now, the faithful from all over Karuthupuzha and beyond visit Nareshan with money and gifts to receive Chaathan's blessings. The sceptics of the town, meanwhile, believe that Nareshan is fooling everyone to make money. However, when one of the leading sceptics in town, Dasappan, member of the Communist Party, rationalist and atheist, loses his mind after loudly proclaiming that Chaathan is a farce, the people's belief in a divine power residing in Sarasu is reinforced. With the number of faithful only growing as each day passes, Nareshan realizes that his daughter's possession might be the best thing to have happened to him. When the rich widow Ponnamma comes to his house to seek help from Chaathan for her son, Nanu, the fate of Nareshan and his family is set to change forever.

In *The Oracle of Karuthupuzha*, Manu Bhattathiri revisits the town of Karuthupuzha that was immortalised in *The Town That Laughed and Savithri's Special Room and Other Stories*

Deep Work in the World of Distraction

Karma Sutras by Debashis Chatterjee decodes the secrets of effective leadership in uncertain times. It is a blueprint for success in the organisational & personal sphere. An edited excerpt:

From the perspective of leadership, there is much more to work than just getting a job. In fact, a significant percentage of those jobs that existed even five years ago would not exist in the next five years. On 20 June 2014, the first 3D-printed metal part, a humble titanium bracket, took to the skies on board a commercial jetliner. With this, aviation history was made by Airbus. Imagine how many design and manufacturing jobs a 3D-printed model aircraft will displace going forward! Not just manufacturing jobs, service sector jobs in legal, medical and other professions will yield ground to digitization and automation. In fact, all jobs that can be broken up into a simple cause-effect relationship will be taken over from a human being by a more efficient device.

A leader's work, fortunately, is deeper than what is demanded by a stereotypical job. Cal Newport's book raises this issue of deep work as the core of a leader's contribution in the age of automation.

To remain valuable in our economy, therefore, you must master the art of quickly learning complicated things. This task requires deep work. If you don't cultivate this ability, you're likely to fall behind as technology advances. (Newport 2016, 13)

Deep work is the ability to focus on a chunk of a job for a sustained length of time without any distraction. If you are able to lend your entire attention to solving a problem in your organization for one hour of uninterrupted time, you will develop the ability to plug into a space of deep attention in your neural structure. This kind of work is difficult to replicate in the machine world. Newport



explains further:

The Deep Work Hypothesis: The ability to perform deep work is becoming increasingly rare and at the exact same time it is becoming increasingly valuable in our economy. ...the few who cultivate this skill, and then make it the core of their working life, will thrive. (Newport 2016, 14) Decoding the history of people who have produced worldclass work such as the biologist Charles Darwin or the author Charles Dickens, researchers have found that they never worked for more than four or five hours a day. However, their work was deep and uninterrupted by the onslaught of modern technology.

Someone aspiring to be a leader will need to set aside specific time to engage in deep work. They have to clear up digital-free time and stay away from smart devices that fragment attention. This will help them not only in doing high-quality work but also more efficient work. In short, deep work will help leaders pro-

duce better work in less time.

Modern Misconceptions about Work

If you were to visualize your world as a limitless field of action, which it is indeed, your work would seem like a narrow, artificial boundary created by you. When you finish a job successfully and exclaim, 'I have done a great job today,' do you realize that your claim to greatness does not acknowledge the role of many other people who have contributed to your triumph? Do you acknowledge, for example, the following contributors to your success: the employer who gave you your job, your college teacher who taught you the skills necessary for it, your mother who brought you into this world, your father who paid your way through school, the compassionate colleague who helped you when you were in distress, the old farmer in South America who produced the breakfast cereal you ate in the

morning and the orange tree in Florida whose fruit nourished you? If you did not acknowledge the role of all these people and many more besides, perhaps your statement, 'I have done a great job,' would be only partially true. Our work is an expression of a universal field of action, yet we create an artificial definition (i.e., making something finite) out of an infinite dimension of our work. From this crisis of vision arises the following misconceptions about our work:

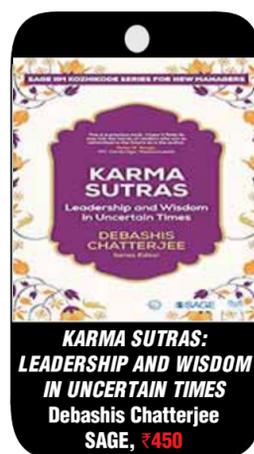
Misconception 1: Our work is equivalent to our qualifications.

Misconception 2: Our work is a 9-to-5 affair.

Misconception 3: Our work is a product, not a process.

Misconception 1: Our Work Is Equivalent to Our Qualifications

In many of my workshops, participants introduce themselves as 'I am an engineer', 'I am an accountant', 'I am an ENT specialist' or some such qualification. To explore the element of



truth implicit in the statement, 'I am an engineer', one may ask the following: 'Am I an engineer, or do I have an engineering qualification? Obviously, my identity as a human being in this world and society is much larger than an engineering degree.' One of the maladies of a highly specialized society is that our world view is often shaped and dominated by our skills at work. Sometimes, our world view shrinks so much that we begin to see ourselves as impersonal cogs in an economic engine.

Misconception 2: Our Work Is a 9-to-5 Affair

A great illusion that we love to hold on to is that our work lasts only from 9 am to 5 pm, after which we go home. The truth is that our entire existence is nothing but work. The very fact of our being alive is ample testimony that we are at work, whether we are breathing in or breathing out, working our muscles or exercising our minds, working for ourselves or in spite

of ourselves. Taking into account the amount of work that nature does to keep us going (e.g., maintaining our heartbeats) should convince us that our work is not temporal but existential.

Misconception 3: Our Work Is a Product, Not a Process

Often, what we do is perceived, defined and measured in terms of a product that is external to our efforts. Yet all significant work is really an intrinsic process of the unfolding of human consciousness. Even the most tangible product of our work is really a process. The men who invented the first hot-air balloon must have hailed their creation as evidence of humanity's final triumph over gravity. Had they lived to see the development of the most sophisticated rocket, they would have readily admitted that their balloon was only a small and visible step in an unending and invisible process of mankind's inner quest for perfection. Neil Armstrong, the first human to set foot on the moon (20 July 1969) said, 'That's one small step for man; one giant leap for mankind.'

So it is with all our work. We become caught up in the product or in the 'idea' of the product so much so that the process remains obscure to our limited vision. The glib, off-heard expression 'mind over matter' exposes the limitation of a vision that sees the conquest of external nature by the mind as the only worthwhile work in this world.

An excerpt from *Karma Sutras: Leadership and Wisdom in Uncertain Times* by Debashis Chatterjee, published under the SAGE IIM-Kozhikode Series for New Managers by SAGE Publications India

Intellectual property rights and web journalism

Internet has transcended all boundaries of humanity. We have reached the pinnacle of never-ending cycle of change. Sadly, this course of human civilisation is irreversible. It is accepted for all that there is no place to hide. We are living in an "age of public". Probably the poetical words of award-winning author Thomas Friedman that "World is Flat" have come true to all of us. Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia) to Alaska (US), Reykjavik (Iceland) to Santiago (Chile) via Antananarivo (Madagascar) could well be reached in seconds with the help of internet. Thus, at an incredible speed, global has become local and local is fast turning into global. The idea, spirit and feel of glocality is more of ubiquitous today.

Web journalism or online journalism or internet journalism is a definite future of creative expressions today. This is a kind of a platform whereby an individual potentially can have instantaneous and global access to all forms of data. And it is so simple and easy that people can communicate virtually with anyone in any part of the world only through a mobile or a tablet or a computer.

Creativity is considered the most treasured act of human beings. True, we are all fast moving towards a "data nation". If you have the data or information, you can simply rule the whole world. Now the pertinent question is that how to protect it and offer dues to the innovators. Often largely unnoticed, this month observes two important days to protect International Copyright Day or also known as World Book and Copyright Day on April 23 and World Intellectual Property Day on April 26. The huge network of counterfeiting and piracy of both tangible and intangible goods directly challenges the protection of IPRs world over.

Impending social changes are revolutionary in nature as we are an integral part of the digital revolution. The shift to digital communication and subsequent technological revolutions are fast breaking the

barriers between traditional media outlets like newspapers and magazines and also between the broader media and communication networks across the globe.

Cyberspace is mass space. We are into it. And so are the criminal elements. Hence, the global counterfeit goods and services are abundant both in demand and supply. Web networks are being widely used to channelise these commodities and ideas from one corner to the other. It is sheer violation of the global framework of IPRs.

It is a wired-up world. The so-called Information Highway is touching all of us. The very field of web journalism is posing a renewed challenge to the protection of IPRs. What we need today is a regulatory mechanism so as to circumvent all efforts to steal IPRs and use web contents as a means to the welfare of all. The new online media is one wherein equality of opportunity and respect for equal distribution of intellectual resources are involved.

So, to negate all efforts by the criminal syndicates, people can remain ever vigilant. Moreover, public offices especially the law-and-order agencies must clamp down serious charges over the defaulters. It must be said the Information Superhighway does not suggest an orderly roadmap. The impact of new technologies and platforms or mediums often leads to chaotic and disruptive situations around the world. Sadly, the networks created by latest technologies are nowhere under the absolute control of the inventors.

Precisely, long before the advent of the superior technologies, the power and authority of the all-powerful State has started eroding. Mega corporations are literally running the day to day affairs of the modern State. The States have only remained a vehicle to run the giant machines of business wherein they have become a partner. Therefore, how to regulate the big corporations, including tech and knowledge behemoths such as the Google, Wikipedia,



Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn have become a vexed question.

At the end, one can rightly say the absolute protection of the IPRs is a misnomer. Whatsoever it may be, the global governance of IPRs, floated both by the WIPO since the 1970s and the historic treaty of Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) of 1995 may not be the final guarantor of IPRs in this digital age.

Therefore, the contents released by web journalism would always be susceptible to stealing and violation by unwanted elements.

At the heart of the narrative is how to stop the abuse or unauthorised use of massive contents that flow through global online journalism. Precisely, IPR is an important aspect of the process of globalisation. Globalisation encompasses many things, including the free flow of ideas, wherein digital media plays the most crucial role. And the understanding is clear today that without adequate protection of creative ideas through the global and national IPR governance systems, the interna-

tional counterfeit conglomerates would simply take away a major chunk of hard work mixed with sheer innovative efforts. It is happening very fast since the explosion of information in the 1990s and it's a huge loss for the global knowledge economy.

Thus, Nobel Laureate Joseph Stiglitz rightly says, "How we regulate and manage the production of knowledge and the right of access to knowledge is at the centre of how well this new economy, the knowledge economy works and who benefits. At stake are matters of both distribution and economy."

Along with this what happens is that both globalised localism and localised globalism accelerate a new process of oppression, exclusion of many-of those who are at the periphery, fast restructuring and general subordination of local conditions.

The process of globalisation of knowledge has a new ground for the growth of neoliberal forms of economic imperialism mostly dominated by huge private information technology corporations like the Google and Facebook.

These and other prominent

knowledge cartels are making us easily read, write, think and probably to recreate creative contents every single day. They are positioning themselves at the centre of production and simply the distribution of knowledge.

Fairly, web journalism is thriving at the back of these giant knowledge machines. The way these platforms are distributing knowledge is definitely at the running the risk of counterfeiting. Globally strengthening governance systems of IPR is a good idea.

However, crystallising the same near equally is more than an uphill task. The reason behind is that this "one size fits all" approach of the global IPR regime launched by the TRIPS Agreement is not feasible for developing and least developed nations. The poor record of implementation of the agreement and inadequate IP governance structure in many of these developing nations are posing a constant threat to protect IPRs.

Again, these nations are facing more pressing issues such as poverty, mal-nutrition, terrorism, political instability and above all corruption in high public offices. So where

is the time to safeguard precious IPRs?

Their combined efforts are mostly directed towards fighting for survival and for basic needs. Many of these developing nations also underline the protection of IPRs a matter of elite concern or something to do with the developed world.

Hence, now more than quarter of a century, since 1995, the strict implementation of the TRIPS Agreement has still remained sporadic, except in Japan, the US, Europe and in some other specific nations.

The concern today is that how to enhance unhindered dissemination of knowledge through online contents without risking the IPRs. Else the innovators and creators will have no incentives left for new creations.

Along with this, the emerging information society needs to address the concerns about widening digital divide and access to knowledge in between the advanced and developing nations.

Despite the concerns of critical constituencies within and outside the global IPR governance system, one of the potential threats to the survival

of the system is China's continued and massive IP theft cases both from the US and other holders of IP. Indeed, America is fighting another Cold War with China on this front.

To conclude, one can say IPRs demand full protection both for the creators and for the welfare of humanity. Hence, the IPR, a hitherto obscure and arcane area of study till the 1990s, now needed to be made a popular discipline starting from the schools to the universities. No need to treat IPRs predominantly as a lawyer's paradise.

Then only the knowledge economy widely growing through web journalism can be safely used. It's the need of the hour. It's a matter of dignity of labour. The creators and innovators who make their work public on online mediums must be respected by paying their dues.

(The writer specialises in globalization, international conflict and global governance. He recently published his book "Globalization and Intellectual Property Rights — A comparative study of the patent Governance Systems of India and the EU")

China's continued and massive IP theft cases both from the US and other holders of IP are an issue of concern. Indeed, America is fighting another Cold War with China on this front. Then only the knowledge economy widely growing through web journalism can be safely used. It's the need of the hour. It's a matter of dignity of labour. The creators and innovators who make their work public on online mediums must be respected by paying their dues



MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE

Gunrunning: A way of life in America?

President Joe Biden has highlighted and interlinked the violence against women and the easy accessibility of assault weapons with their high capacity magazines



MANAN DWIVEDI

Gunrunning is a malady which mars the stability and stolidity of the larger rubric of the United States. The American constitution allows citizens to have legal guns which doesn't border on an automatic firearm. Since the inception of the British colonial rule and the attendant counter-moves through the American revolution and the patriot's activities, the citizens of United States have found firearms to be a part and parcel of their civic entourage and day-to-day life.

With the advent of anarchy and pandemonium in the context of the British rule, bearing guns in an organised fashion became a *nom de plume* for the Americans which persisted even when the Americans gained independence.

Gunrunning challenges the fundamental premise of the USA, both as a civilised nation and as a purveyor of the liberal democracy. On the other side of the fence is the agrarian aggressor, who owns guns, and the derelicts who own advanced weaponry which led to the gunrunning incidents sometimes at an American school or in a mall or in the lobby of a cinema hall. It's much beyond what David Kuresh did to the American disciples a few decades back!

Still, from the time of the American myth, the citizens led by their leaders have sashayed their personal weapons as instruments of pride and protection. Vigilantes as part of the national truth-seeking instruments have always been part of the American myth, wherein, capped cowboys have been avid subjects of cinema and musical performances and presentations in order to man the western crime filled frontiers of the shack towns in the then western



underbelly of a dusty, wind-swept, United States of America. This is how the American nation has acquired its greatness and profundity through example setting, deep-seated and frothing functionalism.

The cowboy mindset of the superhero variant is a central motif of American culture and its existential stature much adhered to by President Donald Trump. A hero has to go gung ho with his steed, crack gun and the horse's hooves, if order has to be restored on the side of the just and the meek's protection. In the cultural-societal mores, it's the figure of Charleston Heston, who runs in the tradition of the gun lobby and the National Rifle Association (NRA) that messages for the masculine and protective veneer of a responsi-

bly restrained American society and the larger life.

Let's delve inside the IInd amendment which legalises gun ownership and not the related violence in the American firmament. It's legal to own a non-assault oriented weapon for personal and familial protection which should not raise much of a question and a poser. Still, what needs to be looked inside is that a few lacunae remain and persist in the gun laws. One of the major issues being a psychological, medical analysis of a prospective gun-owner, who might be mentally unstable or a juvenile delinquent, and thus poses a threat to the lives of other American denizens. Telling issues have been brought forth by the American anti-gun lobby, but what stares them right

in the face is the fact that the anti-gun lobby is not as well organised as the environment lobby or the tobacco lobby, which, makes the functioning of it very difficult in the legal and the financial sense. Still, pitched battles have been fought between the gun-runners and the anti-gun lobbies in the national and state judiciary with promising results for the anti-gun lobbies as they are largely led and funded by the lawyers' guild in the business of things.

One of the cases, which appeared in the US Supreme Court, deals with a January 2019 engagement which details the debate that can the Manhattan gun-owners actually and safely transport the handguns without engendering the chances of violence in New York? The Guardian

reports that, "The conservative-majority US Supreme Court has taken up its biggest gun rights case in nearly a decade, agreeing to hear a challenge backed by the influential National Rifle Association lobby-group to New York City's strict limits on handgun-owners transporting their firearms outside the home. The nine justices reviewed a 2018 lower court ruling upholding the city's restrictions after three gun-owners and the NRA's New York state affiliate sued, claiming the regulations imposed in the largest American city, violated the constitution's second amendment right to "keep and bear arms."

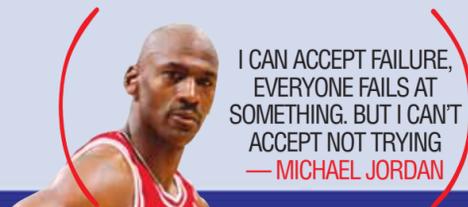
President Joe Biden, too, has announced that gunrunning, gun walking and violence is similar to being an epidemic in the organic whole of the United States. It has been reported in a prominent Indian national daily that, "US President Joe Biden on Thursday announced limited gun control reforms through six actions in the aftermath of three deadly mass shootings, including the killing of Asian Americans in Atlanta and shoppers at a grocery store in Colorado in recent months, calling the divisive issue an "epidemic and an international embarrassment". President Biden has announced new gun control measures in order to belittle the threat of home-made weapons. Joe Biden has contended that America witnesses people dying everyday due to gun-related violence is a blemish on the free, democratic and egalitarian ethos of the United States of America while convening a placatory mass for all the citizens unnecessarily stained in Sandy hook and Stoneman Douglas High school and expressed his angst as, "We are

thoroughly determined to end this menace of gunrunning in the nation," as part of his half a dozen executive actions since his donning the mantle of the American Presidency.

President Biden has highlighted and interlinked the violence against women, and the easy accessibility of assault weapons with their high capacity magazines.

In a recent move, President Biden appointed David Chipman, a guns control consultant at Gifford's, as the head of the Bureau on Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). Though Chipman is a proud gun owner, he has been an actively avid gun control lobbyist since the last twenty-five years. Two themes have emerged of key interest in the international firmament that gun trafficking from the US to the UK has been augmented and the ISIS is also behind the gun trafficking trade in Malaysia. Thus, the global overarch of the menace of gunrunning and gun walking cannot be relegated to the backburner when one refers to gun-related violence in the American homeland. District of Columbia VS Heller in 2008 brought to fore the debate that whether the IInd amendment protects the rights of the American citizens to own weapons in self defense but added the rider, that, gun trade will continue to be regulated and the right to own guns is not unlimited. Thus, eventually, strengthening the hands of those, who, cry foul at the gunrunning crisis in the United States of America.

(The writer teaches at International Relations and International Organisations, IIPA, New Delhi)



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19
 This week you will feel a slight reduction in stress and strain. Things may not be perfect, but they are going to be better than in the recent past. You feel at ease with your BP, stomach related problems. On the career front, some challenges have to be faced this week. You need to put your hundred per cent to get the work done. Things are not as smooth as they seemed to be. Your focus and perseverance will win you the situation this is definite. So, don't give up. Business matters may take time to resolve, be patient and persistent. On the personal front, you need to take time out for your partner/spouse in this week. Spend evenings with close friends and family. The situation may turn around otherwise.
Lucky number 13
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Saturday



LEO July 23-Aug 22
 This week avoid mental tension and anxiety as this can lead to health problems. Balance and moderation are the keys. Ensure you are eating well, sleeping well, playing and working enough. Look at where you might be out of balance and then cure this. Moderation is the way to good health right now. On the career front, mental tension might prevail. Your confidence and energy will be low, you feel demoralised and doubtful about your future. This is the time when you need career counselling. On the relationship front, emotions and sentiments are running high. Married couples will spend quality time with your partner. Expression of your gut feelings and getting closer to your partner/lover is likely.
Lucky number 15
Lucky colour Golden
Lucky day Friday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21
 This week you will have the ability to respond to whatever comes in life. There is happiness in abundance that will add charm on your persona. You spread the smile wherever you go. People around you are impressed and feel motivated and elated in your presence. You are full of energy and vitality with very positive physical and mental wellbeing. On the career front, the scene is outstanding. Your efforts done in the past will pay you rich dividends now. If you have appeared in the interview, you are getting a job call by this week. Those who want to switch their job; it is the time to fulfil your ambitions. Monetary gains are on the cards. In matters of the heart, you will feel lucky, the person you love will reciprocate your feelings.
Lucky number 22
Lucky colour Coral
Lucky day Sunday



TAURUS April 20-May 20
 This week you are in full spirit to set resolutions in terms of your health and follow them rigorously. Planned diet, exercise, adequate rest, and spirituality all being taken care of. Those feeling spiritual discomfort, now is a good time to examine what excites you. Creative pastimes will be satisfying and bring happiness. On the career front, you should take the time to restructure your life according to moral principles. It would be in your best interest to explore other points of view. There may be issues of justice and equality. On the relationship front, it is important to know that you can find someone else with whom you can have a soul-level, happy, meaningful relationship. There is time to find a real soul mate.
Lucky number 19
Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Thursday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22
 This week your health will be good only if you lead a balanced and disciplined life. Don't ignore or even try to compromise on the health front. Fast junk food, pollution, and alcohol could prove bad for your health. Those suffering from serious ailments, need to be under constant observation of the specialist. On the work front, you are likely to decide to leave your job, even if it's a good job because your heart is no longer in it. You are being called to follow your dream, no matter what it is. On the personal front, you need to count your blessings and be contented with what you have. Anything else that comes to you is a bonus. Now is the time to share what you have for some other's benefits.
Lucky number 17
Lucky colour Copper
Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19
 You are sensitive, emotional and temperamental this week. Take care of your mood swings, it may cause harm to your health. Avoid liquor, and any kind of addiction in this week. Positive mindset would help you overcome tough times and without damaging your physical and mental wellbeing. On the career front, you might face the uncertainty and confusion. It feels as if you are going nowhere. Indecisiveness in the sense of course of action will persist at this time. You may come across dilemma this week. On the personal front, stars favour you in managing your most difficult relationships this week. The situation is under your control as of now. You will experience intense and cherishable moments with the loved one.
Lucky number 8
Lucky colour Red
Lucky day Monday



GEMINI May 21-June 20
 This week you are at ease. You will enjoy the freshness, purity and innocent energy of a child. Be sure you know where you're going. Positive thought should come easily to you now. You feel the healing and rejuvenating energy around you. On the career front, you are creative, original, and free from restrictions imposed by ideas. In terms of work, you may be your own worst enemy. How you speak your mind is as important as what you say. There may be some unfairness at play at work. Be sure that your behaviour is impeccable. In terms of love, it's possible that you are tempted to go too far or that someone is pressuring you that way. Either way, communicate as best you can about your boundaries and preferences.
Lucky number 30
Lucky colour Pastel Green
Lucky day Monday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22
 You need to look after your health this week. There are indications that you are either low on energy or face seasonal ailments. Get yourself checked to make sure everything is fine. Create a positive environment around you. Stay away from negative people. On the professional front, some unforeseen may happen. If waiting for positive results, a promotion or acquiring a new status, you are likely to face disappointment as the procedure might get delayed. On the personal front, your determination and honesty will help you to stay connected with your partner. You will forgive the faults and mistakes committed by your partner and accept him/her open-heartedly. You could be a big support to your family too and make them feel proud of you.
Lucky number 2
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Tuesday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18
 This week is a great period for you. You enrich your life and of those around you by sharing your wisdom. It also can mean celebrations of some sort. In general, things should be going well. You can look forward to a fast recovery from an ailment you have been suffering. Workwise, you make professional commitments with sincerity. Career graph rises and you feel proud of your success and achievements. Relationships with friends, seniors, and colleagues will prosper. Realise your potentials and utilise them. On the personal front, you need time and space to analyse your relationship area. You have lost trust with your partner it seems. Don't ignore your gut feelings. If you feel that something in your relationship is unhealthy, it is likely to be correct.
Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Turquoise
Lucky day Friday



CANCER June 21-July 22
 This week, believe in your concerns and stand by yourself. You may need to see a different health care practitioner. Be sure that you are supporting yourself as best as you can. On the work front, you will accomplish a lot in a short period. This is a very positive week for your career. If you are looking for work, a woman will be instrumental in helping you find employment. You may get a promotion or honoured for your accomplishments. On the personal front, relationships will be complicated. Accusation, misunderstandings between the married couples could make life miserable. You can be sluggish in making commitments and taking the emotional relationship seriously.
Lucky number 24
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Saturday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21
 This week you will experience low energy and cope with the heavy workload. Do not exert yourself. You can't afford to take extra load or responsibility. This is the time to take rest to restore your energy and recharge yourself. A positive mindset is a tool for you to grow healthier and stronger. Work-wise, you need to bring balance in your professional and personal areas of life. If you are too occupied with your personal and domestic affairs, you are likely to face a warning by your seniors for a job not being done properly. Follow the rules & regulations of the organisation you are working with. Relationship wise, your efforts in this area may not get fruitful. The time is wasted in tackling moody and difficult people. This may be the time to end your illusions and live-in reality.
Lucky number 14
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Thursday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20
 This week you need to pay close attention to your emotions. Positive thinking and balanced behaviour are very important. Eating right, sleeping enough, getting enough exercise, and drinking fluids are all that you need. On the professional front, a prestigious project brings out your creative potential. Your self-discipline, maturity, learning experience will go a long way in your career. People will admire you and acknowledge your potentials. Your name could be recommended for the higher post. You are in the good list of your seniors. On the personal front, there may be a celebration of childbirth, marriage or get together in the family. This is the time to celebrate, share your experiences and enjoy the union with a loved one.
Lucky number 23
Lucky colour Pastel
Lucky day Wednesday

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The process of learning

A learner having accessed and practised the entire spectrum of known treasures of knowledge qualifies to be termed a "Vipra", a scholar. S/he may still not have a comprehensive understanding about the realities of life. His/her knowledge may be still fractionated, depending on what particular discipline one has explored.
 A stage is then arrived at when a seeker may reflect upon the knowledge treasure already laid down on the table and put them in synergy for the sake of a holistic understanding. Finally, when one becomes conversant with the living realities of life, he/she gets closer to the apex of wisdom. One would then become wise enough to have answer to most of the questions arising in mind or those posed to him/her by a common man.
 Yet, holistic understanding of the dynamics of life cannot be said to have been realised. Bear in mind, the entire expanse of nature is really incomprehensible. It always has in its store, enough of mysteries of life, yet to be explored and known. Many of them would be really beyond the reach of an ordinary seeker. Naturally, many fresh questions beyond the scope of one's acquired knowledge

may keep arising in a seeker's mind. The seeker thus realises the limitations of his mind, intellect, and knowledge base. He is then tempted to move beyond his mind and intellect into unexplored territories.
 However, by the time the above stage is arrived at, a seeker is able to exercise enough of self-control. Following which, if the seeker endeavours to get in tune with the fundal element of consciousness, s/he will be able to move beyond the limitations of mind. For, the consciousness element is something, which emanates from the primal source itself, and which imparts intelligence all through the creation chain. Consciousness element, therefore, is said to be omniscient and all pervading. Once the seeker gets fully tuned to the consciousness element, and then tracks that route, would be able to explore beyond the known, and reach out even the hidden mysteries inlaid with nature. They have been in place ever since the creation chain got excited. With the onset of the creation chain, the design parameters underlying creation immediately would have come into play. Having thus, got fully tuned to the element of consciousness — the substratum of life — the game plan of the larger would be well



understood. Had there been no design driving the phenomenal world, it would not have been doing its round for so long, and in such an orderly manner.
 Naturally, the one travelling the consciousness route is able to strike at and intuitively have realisation of the hidden truths of life, inlaid with nature. It then becomes possible for the seeker to look at things not simply from man's perspective, but even in terms of larger mandate of nature. Having thus understood nature's larger mandate and human being's individualistic concerns, a seeker qualifies to be a *Brahmana*. For, s/he then realises the continuum in nature, and the unity underlying all existences.
 The paradox, however, is that egotistical human mind, bound by its preconditioning, restricts our scope of vision. And with a narrowed vision, it becomes difficult to have holistic realisation of the dynamics of life. That makes it incumbent upon us to expand our vision, and then explore existential truths with an open mind, free from any preconditioning whatsoever. To prepare the seekers for the aforesaid task, they were first made to meditate upon the imagery of Mother Goddess Saraswati. Repeated reflection

on the imagery of Saraswati, supposedly the beholder of knowledge and wisdom, the seeker realises how to pursue the learning process so that they realise truths of life. A detailed look into the imagery will make an interesting reading.
 First the word: "Saraswati". It is made out of the root-syllable, "Saras", which means something flowing smoothly. Her name, therefore, denotes "flow" or "motion". It implies that the imagery offers lessons in how to ensure smooth run of life, individually and collectively. Metaphorically, "She" is perceived as the consort of Lord Brahma, the God personified for creation. Supposedly, this is in acknowledgement of the fact that there has to be a self-evident design component underlying the whole creation process. Evidently, it must have come into play immediately with the onset of creation process. Accordingly, its origin is assigned to the primal source itself. Therefore, in order to get to the ultimate truths of life, the focus of learning has to be directed towards the primal source itself.
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