

OPINION 6
EMPOWERING WOMEN
IN INDIAN MILITARY

MONEY 9
TRAI RECOMMENDS REDUCING
LEVIES ON SATELLITE SERVICES

SPORT 12
SOUTHEE REPLACES
CUMMINS IN KKR

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**EVEN MEN
FEEL PAIN:
ABHISHEK
10 VIVACITY**

CAPSULE

SC GETS 9 NEW JUDGES, FIRST WOMAN CJI IN 2027
New Delhi: Nine new judges, including three women, were on Thursday appointed to the Supreme Court, with Justice BV Nagarathna in line to be the first woman Chief Justice of India (CJI) in September 2027. President Ram Nath Kovind signed their warrants of appointment. With a sanctioned strength of 34 judges, the Supreme Court as of now has 10 vacancies. Once the new judges take oath in the coming days, the top court will have only one vacancy.

CONG ULTIMATUM TO SIDHU: OUST ADVISERS
New Delhi: Navjot Sidhu should dismiss his advisers and if he fails to do so, the party will, senior Congress leader Harish Rawat said on Wednesday. The unambiguous message for the new Punjab Congress chief come after a fresh burst of rebellion against Chief Minister Amarinder Singh after he called out "atrocious and ill-conceived" comments from Mr Sidhu's advisers. Pyare Lal Garg and Malwinder Mali, who recently joined Mr Sidhu's team, made headlines with their comments last week on Pakistan and Kashmir.

NOIDA RAISES ALERT AS 'VIRAL FEVER' CASES RISE
Noida: The Gautam Buddha Nagar administration on Thursday raised an alert about "viral fever" and directed health workers to particularly take note of people running a temperature. This comes amid reports of multiple deaths due to a "viral fever" in parts of western Uttar Pradesh.

72 killed in ISIS attacks on Kabul airport

Over 60 Afghans, 12 US Military officials dead in fidayeen attacks

AP ■ KABUL
Two suicide bombers and gunmen attacked crowds of Afghans flocking to Kabul's airport on Thursday, transforming a scene of desperation into one of horror in the waning days of an airlift for those fleeing the Taliban takeover. At least 60 Afghans and 12 US troops were killed, Afghan and US officials said.

US officials said 11 Marines and one Navy medic were killed. They said another 12 service members were wounded and warned the toll could grow. More than 140 Afghans were wounded, an Afghan official said.

One of the bombers struck people standing knee-deep in a wastewater canal under the sweltering sun, throwing bodies into the fetid water. Those who moments earlier had hoped to get on flights out could be seen carrying the wounded to ambulances in a daze, their own clothes darkened with blood.

A US official said the complex attack was believed to have been carried out by the Islamic State (ISIS) group. The ISIS affiliate in Afghanistan is



Medical and hospital staff bring an injured man on a stretcher for treatment outside the airport in Kabul on Thursday. AFP

far more radical than the Taliban, who recently took control of the country in a lightning blitz and condemned the attack.

Western officials had warned of a major attack, urging people to leave the airport, but that advice went largely unheeded by Afghans desperate to escape the country in the last few days of an American-led evacuation before the US officially ends its 20-year presence on August 31.

Emergency, an Italian charity that operates hospitals in Afghanistan, said it had

received at least 60 patients wounded in the airport attack, in addition to 10 who were dead when they arrived.

"Surgeons will be working into the night," said Marco Puntin, the charity's manager in Afghanistan. The wounded overflowed the triage zone into the physiotherapy area and more beds were being added, he said.

The Afghan official who confirmed the overall Afghan toll spoke on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to brief the media.

Pentagon spokesman John

Kirby said one explosion was near an airport entrance and another was a short distance away by a hotel.

Even as the area was hit, evacuation flights continued to take off from Kabul airport.

Adam Khan was waiting nearby when he saw the first explosion outside what's known as the Abbey gate. The second blast was near Baron Hotel, where many people, including Afghans, Britons and Americans, were told to gather before heading to the airport for evacuation.

Continued on Page 2

India to wait for Af dust to settle to decide on Taliban

Top priority to evacuate Indian citizens, says Govt to Opp

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Termining the situation in Afghanistan as "critical", the Government on Thursday told 31 political parties that India will have to wait to let things "settle down" and be "patient" before deciding its approach towards the Taliban. The Centre also said the Taliban has broken the promises made in the Doha agreement about allowing religious freedom and democracy in Afghanistan.

At present, the top priority is to evacuate all Indian citizens from the strife torn country, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here after briefing an all-party meeting on the situation in Afghanistan.

He said the Government is committed to "full evacuation" of Indians from Afghanistan, where the situation is "critical".



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, with Union Ministers Piyush Goyal and Pralhad Joshi, briefs the all-party panel over the present situation in Afghanistan, during a meeting at Parliament Annex in New Delhi on Thursday. PTI

Asked about the Government's approach towards Taliban and possible engagement with it, he told reporters the situation in Afghanistan has not settled down. "You will have to keep patience: Let the situation settle down." He also said all the parties have similar views and "we approached the issue with spirit of national unity."

Making these assertions, the Minister said, "We have brought back most Indians... not all. Some could not make it for yesterday's (Wednesday) flight. We will definitely try and bring back everyone. We have instituted an e-visa policy and

the Government is strongly committed to ensuring a full evacuation as soon as possible."

He also said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had spoken to German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian President Vladimir Putin. There will be more such high-level calls in the days to come, he said.

"We have undertaken evacuation operations in extremely difficult conditions, especially at the airport. Our immediate concern and task are evacuation, and the long-term interest is the friendship for the Afghan people," he said.

Continued on Page 2

No plans to lower interval between two doses: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Thursday dismissed reports that there is any proposal for a change in the dose gap of Covishield, Covaxin and Sputnik V vaccines. However, it said processes are under way to assess the effectiveness of these Covid vaccines.

"Programmatic data collection processes are on to assess vaccine effectiveness. NTAGI reviewing vaccine effectiveness data on a regular basis. Currently, there's no proposal for change in dose interval of Covishield, Covaxin and Sputnik V vaccines under consideration," NTAGI (National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation in India) chief Dr NK Arora said.

The clarification comes after media reports that the Centre is planning a reduction in the time interval between the two doses of Covishield.

The recommended gap for Covishield was 4-6 weeks at the start of the vaccine drive, it was then increased to 4 to 8 weeks, and finally to 12 to 16 weeks.



The decision to extend the gap to 12 to 16 weeks was met with controversy as it was regarded as an attempt to address the country's vaccination shortage at the time. Experts, on the other hand, claimed the decision was based on new international scientific studies that showed that a longer gap between dosages produced more antibodies.

However, in June, after India lengthened the interval between the two doses, studies claimed that the effectiveness of the first Covishield shot had been overestimated previously.

This was followed by a reduction in the time between the two Covishield dosages in various countries.

SC frowns at trend of sedition cases by new regimes

State of affairs in country sad: Court

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Filing of sedition cases when regimes change is a "disturbing trend", the Supreme Court said on Thursday while granting protection from arrest to the suspended Director of Chhattisgarh Police Academy against whom two criminal cases of sedition and amassing of disproportionate assets have been filed by the State Government.

"State of affairs in the country is sad," said a bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana.

Gurjinder Pal Singh, the 1994-batch IPS officer who had served as the IG of Raipur, Durg and Bilaspur during the earlier BJP rule, was initially booked in the disproportionate assets case following raids at his premises by state's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) and Economic Offences Wing (EOW).

Another case of sedition was invoked against him later



on the grounds of his alleged involvement in promoting enmity and hatching a conspiracy against the Government.

The bench expressed displeasure over the trend of filing of sedition cases just after senior advocate FS Nariman made opening submissions on behalf of Singh, saying "the gentleman has served as the Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) and was acting as the Director of the Police Academy and now the proceedings under section 124A (sedition) of the IPC have been initiated against him".

Continued on Page 2

Shift ex-Unitech bosses to Mumbai for running office from Tihar jail: SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday came down hard on the Tihar jail administration calling it "shameless" for allowing former Unitech promoters to carry out business from an underground office within the jail premises with the connivance of jail staff. The court directed that former Unitech promoters Sanjay Chandra and Ajay Chandra be shifted from Tihar Jail to Mumbai's Arthur Road Jail and Talaja prison in Maharashtra.

The apex court issued shifting from Tihar jail after seeing the Enforcement Directorate's report accusing Chandra brothers of conducting business from jail with the help of jail staff. The top court, which perused two status reports of the ED, said Tihar Jail Superintendent and other staff are "absolutely shameless" for conniving with the Chandra brothers to flout the court orders and undermine its jurisdiction.

A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and M R Shah said the brothers will be lodged separately in Arthur Road and Talaja prisons.

Continued on Page 2

DGCA lifts ban on flying of Boeing 737 Max aircraft

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After almost two and a half years, the Directorate of General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has now lifted the ban on Boeing 737 Max for commercial flight operations. The decision is likely to offer relief to domestic carrier SpiceJet which has 13 Boeing Max aircraft in its fleet.

After the DGCA order, SpiceJet said it "expects to start operations of MAX aircraft around the end of September 2021 subject to regulatory approvals."

The Boeing 737 Max were globally grounded in March 2019 soon after two aircraft crashed within five months. In all 346 died in two crashes.

In its order, the DGCA said that this rescission enables operation of Boeing Company Model 737-8 and Boeing Company Model 737-9 airplanes only upon satisfaction of applicable requirements for return to service.

SpiceJet in the statement also said it expects to start operations of Max planes around the end of September.

Continued on Page 2

CBI registers nine cases in post-poll violence in Bengal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered nine cases related to post-poll violence in West Bengal.

All the four special units of the investigating agency tasked to probe the cases of violence have moved their units from Kolkata to crime scenes across the State. The units are being secured by teams of CRPF personnel, sources said.

They said more cases are under the process of registration.

The CBI has taken over the cases following order by a five-judge bench of the Calcutta High Court that had entrusted the agency with the task of investigating the alleged murder and rape incidents in post-Assembly polls violence in West Bengal earlier this year.

The HC's directives came after a committee of the National Human Rights Commission submitted a report on the violence after declaration of the Assembly poll results on May 2.

The Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress was reelected in bitterly contested eight-phased polls.

In a unanimous judgment

Agency moves units from Kolkata to crime scenes across State



on a batch of PILs seeking an independent probe, the High Court bench also ordered the constitution of an SIT of State police officers to probe all other cases.

The SIT will include Suman Bala Sahoo, Soumen Mitra and Ranveer Kumar, all IPS officers of the West Bengal cadre. The bench will monitor the investigations by both the CBI and the SIT and asked the two agencies to submit status reports to the court within six weeks.

Continued on Page 2

Agra hooch kills 10 people, 3 SHOs, 6 cops suspended

PREETAM SRIVASTAVA ■ LUCKNOW

After ten deaths in Agra due to consumption of illicit liquor, the State Government has finally cracked the whip against officials found primarily "responsible" for the tragedy.

The police have confirmed that four people died after consuming spurious liquor and said the investigation is on to ascertain the reason behind the death of six others. "Nine police personnel, including three SHOs and six constables, have been suspended over the incident. We have also sent a recommendation for action against the guilty excise officers and the policemen to the



Government," Additional Director General of Police, Agra, Rajeev Krishna said.

The viscera report confirmed the cause of the deaths, though the local police had earlier denied that spurious alcohol had killed more than half a dozen villagers under Dauki police station. A team led by ADG zone Rajiv Krishan visited the villages and interacted

with the family members of the deceased.

Divisional Commissioner Amit Gupta and district magistrate PN Singh also visited the affected villages to gather ground reports. Four outlets have already been sealed and samples sent for analysis.

He said, "Reports from Forensic Science Laboratory confirmed the presence of methyl alcohol in four viscera samples sent for testing."

Thus the four men died after consuming spurious liquor, he added. Ten people died in Agra in the past four days after consuming spurious liquor, family members have said.

Continued on Page 2

Delhi most-surveilled city of world

Ahead of NY, London in terms of CCTV installed per sq mile

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Citing a media report, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday said Delhi has left mega cities like New York, London and Shanghai behind in terms of most number of CCTV cameras installed per square mile and congratulated the officers and engineers concerned for achieving the milestone.

Citing a Forbes India report on the most-surveilled cities of the world, which put Delhi on the top with 1,826 CCTV cameras per square mile, followed by London with

1,138, the CM tweeted, "Feel proud to say that Delhi beats cities like Shanghai, NY n London with most CCTV cameras per sq mile. Delhi has 1,826 cameras, London has 1,138 cameras per sq mile."

"My compliments to our officers and engineers who worked in mission mode n achieved it in such a short time."

Chennai secured the third place with 609.9 CCTV cameras and Mumbai occupied the 18th position with 157.4 CCTV cameras per square mile, said the report.



In Delhi, CCTV cameras are being installed by the Public Works Department (PWD).

According to a Government statement, 2.75 lakh cameras were installed in

the first phase and the work is underway for installing 1.4 lakh cameras at public spaces.

"In an analysis of 150 cities across the world, Delhi topped with 1,826 CCTVs per square

mile.... Delhi has 1,826 CCTVs installed per square mile, three times higher than Chennai and 11 times higher than Mumbai," the statement said.

Continued on Page 2

Guj HC rejects plea to modify order on anti-conversion law

Ahmedabad: The Gujarat High Court on Thursday turned down the State Government's plea seeking rectification of its recent order in which it stayed the operation of section 5 of the new anti-conversion law.

Section 5 of the Gujarat Freedom Of Religion (Amendment) Act, 2021 mandates that religious priests must take prior permission from the district magistrate for converting any person from one religion to another.

Moreover, the one who got converted also needs to "send an intimation" to the district magistrate in a prescribed form.

"We do not find reason to make any changes in the order

passed by us on August 19," a division bench of Chief Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Biren Vaishnav after hearing the arguments put forth by state Advocate General Kamal Trivedi. Trivedi, on behalf of the State Government, told the bench that section 5 of the Gujarat Freedom Of Religion (Amendment) Act, 2021 was there ever since the original law was enacted in 2003 and it has nothing to do with marriage per se. He tried to convince the judges that a stay on section 5 would actually stay the application of the entire law itself, and no one would approach the authorities for seeking permission before getting converted.

On August 19, the high court stayed sections 3, 4, 4A to 4C, 5, 6 and 6A of the amended Act pending further hearing, saying they "shall not operate merely because a marriage is solemnised by a person of one religion with a person of another religion without force or by allurement or by fraudulent means and such marriages cannot be termed as marriages for the purposes of unlawful conversion".

Trivedi told the court that section 5 does not use the word "marriage" and it deals with permission from the district magistrate for conversion, either before or after marriage, or even in cases without marriage.



Tourists and local visitors at Mughal Garden Shalimar in Srinagar on Thursday

Former CBI Director US Misra dies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former CBI Director US Misra passed away on Thursday.

Uma Shankar Misra, an IPS officer of Orissa Cadre (1968-batch) took over as Director of CBI on December 6, 2003 and retired on December 6, 2005.

He was the 21st Director of CBI after its formation in 1963.

Misra held important positions in the Orissa Police as well as in the Government of India. He worked in various capacities in the CBI including SP, DIG and Special Director in CBI and went on to head the agency.

Underlining that Misra was a "highly decorated officer with true professional acumen, the CBI in its condolence message said, "The officers and all ranks of Central Bureau of Investigation deeply mourn the demise of US Misra, former Director, CBI and pray to the Almighty to provide the family strength, succour and fortitude to bear with this tragedy."

Agra hooch kills 10 people, 3 SHOs...

From Page 1

Four deaths were reported in Deoria Village and two deaths in Garhi Jahan village in the Shamsabad area of the district.

Four people died in Kaulara Kalan and Barkula villages after consuming spurious liquor, the family members said.

People said spurious liquor was easily available in the villages and urged to administration to crack down on those selling it.

The three Station House Officers (SHOs) against whom the action was taken are Umesh Chandra Tripathi, in-charge of Taj Ganj police station, Ashok Kumar, in-charge of Dauki and Rajkumar Giri, in-charge of Shamsabad, police station.

Meanwhile, the police and excise department are looking to trace the origin of alcohol distribution.

Opposition leaders have demanded financial compensation to the family members of the deceased.

72 killed in ISIS...

From Page 1

A former Royal Marine who runs an animal shelter in Afghanistan says he and his staff were caught up in the aftermath of the blast near the airport. "All of a sudden we heard gunshots and our vehicle was targeted, had our driver not turned around he would have been shot in the head by a man with an AK-47," Paul "Pen" Farthing told Britain's Press Association news agency. Farthing is trying to get staff of his Nowzad charity out of Afghanistan, along with the group's rescued animals.

He is among thousands trying to flee. Over the last week, the airport has been the scene of some of the most searing images of the chaotic end of America's longest war and the Taliban's takeover, as flight after flight took off carrying those who fear a return to the militants' brutal rule. When the Taliban were last in power, they confined women largely to their home and widely imposed draconian restrictions. Already, some countries have ended their

evacuations and begun to withdraw their soldiers and diplomats, signaling the beginning of the end of one of history's largest airlifts.

The Taliban have insisted foreign troops must be out by America's self-imposed deadline of Aug. 31 — and the evacuations must end then. In Washington, U.S. President Joe Biden spent much of the morning in the secure White House Situation Room where he was briefed on the explosions and conferred with his national security team and commanders on the ground in Kabul. Overnight, warnings emerged from Western capitals about a threat from IS, which has seen its ranks boosted by the Taliban's freeing of prisoners during its advance through Afghanistan.

Shortly before the attack, the acting U.S. ambassador to Kabul, Ross Wilson, said the security threat at the Kabul airport overnight was "clearly regarded as credible, as imminent, as compelling." But in an interview with ABC News, he would not give details. Late Wednesday, the U.S. Embassy warned citizens at three airport gates to leave immediately due to an unspecified security threat.

Australia, Britain and New Zealand also

advised their citizens Thursday not to go to the airport.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid denied that any attack was imminent at the airport, where the group's fighters have deployed and occasionally used heavy-handed tactics to control the crowds. After the attack, he appeared to shirk blame, noting the airport is controlled by U.S. troops. Before the blast, the Taliban sprayed a water cannon at those gathered at one airport gate to try to drive the crowd away, as someone launched tear gas canisters elsewhere.

Nadia Sadat, a 27-year-old Afghan, carried her 2-year-old daughter with her outside the airport. She and her husband, who had worked with coalition forces, missed a call from a number they believed was the State Department and were trying to get into the airport without any luck. Her husband had pressed ahead in the crowd to try to get them inside.

"We have to find a way to evacuate because our lives are in danger," Sadat said. "My husband received several threatening messages from unknown sources. We have no

chance except escaping." Aman Karimi, 50, escorted his daughter and her family to the airport, fearful the Taliban would target her because of her husband's work with NATO. "The Taliban have already begun seeking those who have worked with NATO," he said.

"They are looking for them house-by-house at night." The Sunni extremists of IS, with links to the group's more well-known affiliate in Syria and Iraq, have carried out a series of brutal attacks, mainly targeting Afghanistan's Shiite Muslim minority, including a 2020 assault on a maternity hospital in Kabul in which they killed women and infants. The Taliban have fought against Islamic State militants in Afghanistan, where the Taliban have wrested back control nearly 20 years after they were ousted in a U.S.-led invasion.

The Americans went in following the 9/11 attacks, which al-Qaeda orchestrated while being sheltered by the group. Amid the warnings and the pending American withdrawal, Canada ended its evacuations, and European nations halted or prepared to stop their own operations.

CBI registers nine...

From Page 1

Earlier, the CBI had sought details of the cases lodged by the State police.

The HC noted that there are allegations that the complainants are being threatened to withdraw the cases and a number of cases of murder being claimed as natural death without recording FIRs and conducting probes according to the procedure established by law.

The court had also underscored that the West Bengal police had not properly responded to the allegations of inaction and tried to downplay them. "It certainly needs investigation by an independent agency," the bench had ordered, saying three months have lapsed since the matter was taken up by the court, but "no concrete action has been taken by the state, which could inspire confidence except filing affidavits and placing on record thousands of papers."

SC frowns at trend...

From Page 1

"This is a very disturbing trend in the country and the police department is also responsible for this... When a political party is in power, police officials take the side of the particular (ruling) party."

"Then when another new party comes into power, the government initiates action against the police officials. This needs to be stopped," it said. The bench, which also comprised Justice Surya Kant, directed the Congress-led state government not to arrest Singh till further orders in either of the cases.

"Issue notice in both the matters returnable after four weeks. Learned Senior counsel appearing for the State of Chhattisgarh accept and waive formal notice on behalf of the said State. In the meantime, the State is directed not to arrest the petitioner in both the matters until further orders. "The petitioner is directed to participate in the inquiry/investigation and fully cooperate with the investigating agency without fail," the bench said in the order.

The State Government was represented by senior advocates Mukul Rohatgi and Rakesh Dwivedi and lawyer Sumeet Sodhi. At the outset, Nariman said the issue of custodial interrogation of the police officer does not arise as the charge sheet has already been filed.

The officer was once called by the present Chief Minister and asked to help in taking action against the former Chief Minister, he said.

Delhi most-surveilled...

From Page 1

It alleged that despite continuous roadblocks from the Lieutenant Governor and the Centre, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government did not deter in enhancing women's safety in Delhi and even sat on a dharna outside the LG's residence in order to pave the way for the CCTV project.

"The Lieutenant Governor, citing concerns against CCTVs in Delhi, arbitrarily formed a committee on the matter that would, in effect, bypass the people's elected Government. Kejriwal led the Delhi Government to resist this and refused to back down despite all the pressure from the Centre," the statement said. It added that the LG's committee proposed bringing back the "License Raj" in the city and recommended that it be made mandatory to obtain licences to install CCTV cameras -- be it a public body or a private one.

"This would have, in effect, led to red-tapism, which would require citizens to seek licences from the police to put up CCTVs. "It is due to the persistence and penance by the Chief Minister, who sat on a dharna and constantly protested at the LG House against his arbitrary orders, that the way for the execution of the CCTV project could be paved," the statement said.

The Government said the CCTV installation project in Delhi exemplifies "swaraj" (self-governance) as resident welfare associations (RWAs) were involved in surveying the locations where the cameras should be put up. Not just gated colonies but all localities of Delhi, including slums, were covered in the project.

Under the project, each RWA or market association has 30 to 40 cameras to cover their respective areas. The camera feed will only be provided to the authorised users -- the PWD Command Centre in the headquarters of the department at ITO, RWA monitoring rooms and police -- the statement said.

Shift ex-Unitech...

From Page 1

"We are of the view that materials on record indicate that despite the orders of this court, activities are taking place within the premises of Tihar Central Jail, where the two accused are lodged, which have the propensity to undermine the authority of the court, as also to derail the investigations which have been ordered to be done by the ED, including but not confined to the PMLA.

"In the circumstances, we direct that both the accused Ajay Chandra and Sanjay Chandra be shifted from Tihar Central Jail to the premises of Arthur Road Jail, Mumbai and at Talaja Central Jail," the bench said in its order.

During the hearing, the bench told Additional Solicitor General Madhavi Divan, appearing for ED: "Tihar jail officials have actively connived with the accused to flout the orders of this court. We have to say that the Tihar Jail superintendent and his staff are absolutely shameless. But we don't want to miss the wood for the trees."

"All we have to say is that Tihar Jail staff are shameless. Can you imagine it is happening right in the Centre and in the Capital? We will certainly take them to task. We will first shift the accused from this jail". The two ED reports have

raised some "serious and disturbing" issues for consideration and will be dealt with accordingly, the top court said.

The SC also directed the Delhi Police Commissioner to personally hold inquiry forthwith about the conduct of Tihar Jail staff with regard to the Chandras and submit the report to the court within four weeks. The bench said the contents of the ED letter written to Delhi CP raises serious issues and of concern to the court, in particular its effort and jurisdiction are sought to be undermined in complicity with the jail staff.

The ED made a startling revelation that it has unearthed a "secret underground office" here which was being operated by erstwhile Unitech founder Ramesh Chandra and visited by his sons Sanjay and Ajay when on parole or bail. ED, which has been investigating money laundering charges against the Chandras and Unitech Ltd, said in its report that both Sanjay and Ajay have rendered the entire judicial custody meaningless as they have been freely communicating, instructing their officials and disposing of properties from inside the jail in connivance with the prison staff there.

Both Sanjay and Ajay who are in jail since August 2017 are accused of allegedly siphoning off home buyers' money.

DGCA lifts...

From Page 1

"Based on design changes by Boeing Federal Aviation Administration issued an Airworthiness Directive (AD) on November 18, 2020 mandating actions for 737 Max airplanes return to service (RTS). Concurrent with the issuance of the AD, FAA rescinded the emergency order of prohibition. Subsequently, European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) also issued its own AD on February 17, 2021 which has been mandated by DGCA for compliance on the Indian registered fleet," the order said.

"Worldwide 17 regulators have permitted operation of Boeing 737 Max airplane. A sizeable number of airlines (34) with B737 Max airplane (345) are operating currently and have attained 1,22,824 total departures with 2,89,537 cumulative hours since the un-grounding from December 9, 2020, with no untoward reporting," the DGCA order issued on Thursday read.

"A sizeable number of airlines (34) with B737 Max airplane (345) are operating currently and have attained 1,22,824 total departures with 2,89,537 cumulative hours since the un-grounding from December 9, 2020, with no untoward reporting," the DGCA order said.

SpiceJet in the statement also said it expects to start operations of Max planes around the end of September this year, subject to regulatory approvals. "SpiceJet has entered into a settlement with Avolon, a major lessor of Max aircraft, paving the way for the airline's 737 Max aircraft to start to return to service," the low-cost carrier said in the statement. The airline said it hopes to see these MAX aircraft flying again soon. SpiceJet is the only airline in the country to fly the 737 MAX aircraft.

Ethiopian Airlines 737 Max plane crashed on March 10 near Addis Ababa which had left 157 people, including four Indians, dead. In October 2018, 189 were killed as Lion Air's flight ET302 crashed off the coast of Indonesia. Both crashes involved the 737 MAX model. In April that year, Boeing had announced plans to cut back production of the 737 MAX aircraft after several countries grounded the aircraft following the crashes. Nearly 175 countries have allowed the 737 MAX to return to service following a safety ban, with 30 airlines already restarting their MAX aircraft services. Aviation regulators in the US and Europe have already approved the aircraft for flying with extensive fixes.

India to wait for..

From Page 1

On fluid situation in Afghanistan, Jaishankar said, "the Government is very strongly committed to ensuring full evacuation as soon as possible, and also seeing that in terms of any international decisions which are made, any gatherings that are there, that our role is recognised. There will be many more meetings in coming days."

He made this point amidst allegations that India stood isolated in the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan and reportedly told the political leaders that besides Merkel and Putin, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Britain Foreign Minister Dominic Raab were also in touch with India.

On the evacuation of the diplomatic staff, the Government informed the political leaders the decision was taken as the Indian Embassy in the past was attacked twice in Kabul.

The political parties were also informed that the Taliban has broken the promises made in the Doha agreement. Among other things, the Doha pact, inked between the Taliban leaders and the US in February 2020, envisaged religious freedom and democracy, with a Government in Kabul that represented all sections of Afghan society.

The Doha agreement said within the first 135 days of the deal, the US would reduce its forces in Afghanistan to 8,600, with allies also drawing down their forces proportionately.

The deal also included a prisoner swap. Some 5,000 Taliban prisoners and 1,000 Afghan security force prisoners would be exchanged.

The US would also lift sanctions against the Taliban and work with the United Nations to lift its separate sanctions against the group. As per the agreement, the Taliban will also not allow al-Qaeda or any other extremist group to operate in the areas they control.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Minister and leader of the Rajya Sabha Piyush Goyal and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi attended the meeting besides Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge (Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha) and Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury (party chief in the Lok Sabha). Sharad Pawar (NCP), TR Baalu (DMK), and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda were also present in the meeting.

After the meeting Kharge told a news agency his party had also expressed concern over reports that a female Afghan diplomat had been deported.

He said the Government had told him a "mistake" had been made, that "it won't be repeated" and that it would "look into the matter". He was referring to an incident where Rangina Kargar, an Afghan woman MP flew from Istanbul to New Delhi on her diplomatic passport and departed on August 20.

Kharge also expressed broad support for the Government, underlining that the situation in Kabul and the rest of Afghanistan is "the entire country's problem".

"We have to work together in the interests of the people and the nation," he said, adding that the Government had sought patience from the Opposition while it plans the evacuations.

As per the evacuation data shared with the participants, the Government has evacuated -175 Embassy personnel, 263 other Indian nationals, 112 Afghan nationals including Hindus and Sikhs, 15 third country nationals and the total figure stood at 565.

The document also said the Government also facilitated evacuation of Indians by other agencies.

Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla and Indian Ambassador to Kabul Rudrendra Tandon were present during the all party meeting. Nearly 37 leaders from 31 parties took part in the session while 25 of them spoke.

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, भोपाल
 यांत्रिक विभाग (मुख्यालय) गोविंदपुरा (बी.एच.ई.एल.)
निविदा आमंत्रण घोषणा-प्र
 भोपाल, दिनांक 26.08.2021
 क्र.59/यां.वि./2021
 निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु दो लिफाफा पद्धति के अनुसार म.प्र. लोक निर्माण विभाग में केन्द्रीकृत व्यवस्था के अंतर्गत पंजीकृत ठेकेदार परसेन्टेज मोहर बंद निविदाये निर्धारित प्रपत्र पर ऑनलाईन आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र.	ऑनलाईन निविदा क्र.	कार्य का नाम	अनुमानित राशि	घरोर राशि	प्रपत्र राशि	कार्य हेतु निर्धारित एस. ओ. आर.	कार्य की अवधि
1	2021 UAD -156733_1	ANNUAL TENDER WORK FOR CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF ROAD AND ASPHALTING AT VARIOUS PLACES OF BHOPAL CITY ZONE NO 01 TO 19	1,00,00,000/-	1,00,000/-	12500	MP UAD ISSR 2021	12 Month

- निविदा प्रपत्र की निर्धारित राशि एवं घरोर राशि एवं अन्य आवश्यक दस्तावेज ऑनलाईन प्रस्तुत करने होंगे एवं अन्य समस्त विस्तृत जानकारी www.mptenders.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती हैं।
- किसी भी निविदा को स्वीकार अथवा अस्वीकार करने का अधिकार विभाग के पास सुरक्षित होगा।
- Including all taxes Duties: Rate quoted by the bidder should be consider to complete the work in all respect and should include all taxes octroi surcharge ect. The GST will be paid extra @ of 12% on SOR-Item GST Will not be paid on Non-SOR Item.

प्र. मुख्य अभियंता
नगर निगम भोपाल
 नि.क्र. 517/021/022

Government of Odisha
 Office of the Chief Construction Engineer
 CUTTACK (R&B) CIRCLE, CUTTACK
 ('e' - PROCUREMENT NOTICE)
 Bid Identification No.CCE.Ctc.(R&B) 15/2021-22.

- The Chief Construction Engineer, Cuttack (R&B)Circle, Cuttack on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites on Percentage rate basis bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for Building work as mentioned below.
- No. of work :- 2 Nos.
- Nature of work :- Building works.
- Class of contractor :- 'B', 'A' & Special
- Tender paper cost :- Rs.10000/- (online)
- Available of bid documents :- From 13.09.2021 to 16.00 Hours of 28.09.2021 in the web site.
- Date of opening of bid :- Dt.29.09.2021 at 11.00 Hours.
- The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <https://tenders.odisha.gov.in>. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said web site.

Sd/-P.K.Pradhan
 Chief Construction Engineer
 Cuttack(R&B)Circle
 OIPR-34012/11/0023/2122

9 illegal farmhouses razed in G'gram



STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

A joint team of the district forest department and the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) razed nine illegal farmhouses which were built in the Gwal Pahari area and demolished unauthorised constructions in the Ryan Enclave and Shriram Enclave in Gurugram.

On Thursday, a team of the forest department led by Range Officer Karambir Malik and MCG's Assistant Engineer (Enforcement) Sanjog Sharma reached the Gwal Pahari area with three earthmovers and razed nine illegal farmhouses. In one of these farmhouses, a nursery was also being run. The team destroyed the boundary wall and rooms that had been constructed illegally in the



farmhouse. The team demolished the boundary walls and other structures of the farmhouses. Junior Engineers of the MCG Mehboob Ali and Hari Om and Patwari Sunil were also present during the demolition drive.

Apart from this, action against unauthorised constructions continued in Ryan Enclave and Shri Ram Enclave at Bhondsi in Zone-4 area. On the instructions of Joint Commissioner Sumit Kumar, the team demolished five houses, a dozen boundary walls and 15 DPC level unauthorised constructions here.

According to MCG Commissioner Mukesh Kumar Ahuja, continuous action is being taken against unauthorised constructions and illegal encroachments within the limits of the MCG. "Such actions will continue in the future, to stop illegal construction without permission. Different enforcement teams of the department are working in the four zones to take action against illegal constructions without prior approval," the MCG Commissioner said.

Wife of JNU PhD scholar dies; cops suspect suicide

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 26-year-old woman living in the Brahmputra hostel inside the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) campus died under mysterious circumstances here on Thursday morning.

Police suspect it to be a case of suicide and said she allegedly jumped from the second floor of the hostel and died but only a post-mortem examination will ascertain the cause of death.

The deceased identified as Madhuri Kumari was a resident of Buxar in Bihar and she was staying at the Brahmputra hostel along with her husband who is pursuing PhD from the varsity.

No suicide note has been recovered yet, police said, adding an investigation is underway to determine the sequence of events.

"The woman fell from a height and was taken to a nearby hospital where she suc-



cumbed to her injuries. We were then informed by the hospital administration," said a senior police official.

"A detailed enquiry is underway into the matter to ascertain the exact cause of death but we suspect she com-

mitted suicide by jumping from the second floor of the hostel building," he said.

The body has been sent for post-mortem and the exact cause of death will be ascertained through an autopsy report which is awaited.

HCL co-founder shares experiences with schoolchildren



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Students of Delhi Government schools on Thursday interacted with Arjun Malhotra, co-founder of HCL, as part of the Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC).

The students asked many questions related to the challenges Malhotra faced in his journey during the live interaction session. Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia was also present at this interaction. Sharing his experiences, Malhotra, said, "Self-motiva-

'To become a better and successful entrepreneur, it is important how you treat your co-workers. As a team leader, you should always support and encourage your team members.'

Arjun Malhotra

wrong, then the next day apologise to the person concerned, your behaviour will help you move forward."

Giving the mantra of 'Learning Leads Achievement' to the children, he stated that "you must always be ready to learn and keep learning as it will help you to move forward. He said that you can be an expert in any one subject, but apart from that, you should always be ready to learn other things. To grow as an entrepreneur, it is necessary to act as an all-rounder."

Sisodia who also holds the portfolio of Education Minister said, "The Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum will develop a growth mindset in children so that whether they become an entrepreneur or get a job in any company, they will always keep moving forward."

No matter how many degrees you have, but if you do not have an entrepreneurial mindset, then those degrees are of no importance. By studying EMC, children will become job providers instead of job seekers and make developing India, a developed India."

PICTALK



Indian Youth Congress activists during a protest against the National Monetisation Pipeline. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Cow vigilantes seek action against cattle smugglers

Gurugram: Following an attack on cow vigilantes by the cattle smugglers, which left three people seriously injured, hundreds of cow vigilantes staged a protest against cattle smugglers in Gurugram on Thursday and demanded the arrest of the alleged criminals.

The incident took place on Wednesday when three cow vigilantes identified as Sunil Rawat, Rajbeer Singh and Tinku were seriously injured when their car in which they were following suspecting cattle smugglers in Ullawas village in Gurugram was attacked.

The suspects were identified as Sheikh, Pravesh, Balu, Saddam and Balu all residents of the Nuh district of Haryana. Meanwhile, the cow vigilante groups from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh handed over a memorandum to Deputy Commissioner Gurugram Yash Garg on Thursday and sought strict action against unidentified criminals. The group in their memorandum demanded a gun licence be given to one of the group members, free medical aid to the victims and the formation of a Special Task Force (STF) to nab cattle smugglers and to stop the illegal smuggling of beef. "We will forward their demands to the Government of Haryana. Action will be initiated against those guilty," Deputy Commissioner of Gurugram, Yash Garg said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (west), Deepak Saharan who was present with the Deputy Commissioner said, "A team of police is already investigating the matter and we have also received some lead inputs about the absconding criminals they will soon behind bars," he said.

Man held for attempt to extort money from shopkeeper

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police have arrested a 35-year-old man for allegedly demanding ₹ 50,000 at gunpoint from a shopkeeper in the national Capital.

The accused has been identified as Kapil, a resident of Kirari, Suleman Nagar. Police said that he was previously involved in five criminal cases and he was currently out on bail.

According to Parvinder Singh, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Outer district, on Tuesday, Kapil, along with his associate, went to the complainant, Manish in west Delhi's Nangloi area and asked for ₹50,000 at gunpoint.

"When Manish phoned police to report the crime, the two men fled. Manish, a resident of Bahadurgarh in Haryana, runs a silverware shop at Punjabi Basti, Nangloi.



His previous shop was owned by one Jaiveer Godhara, who is related to Kapil," said the DCP adding that Kapil used to visit his shop and developed friendly relations with him.

"Earlier, Kapil had asked for some money for his son's treatment and Manish lent him ₹1,700.

He later asked for more money and the complainant gave him ₹500," said the DCP.

"About three days ago, Kapil had asked him to arrange ₹45,000.

Police have arrested Kapil and recovered a country-made pistol from his possession," said the DCP adding that further investigation is in progress and efforts are underway to trace his associate, who has absconded.

Drunk driver fires at another vehicle, 1 hurt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 27-year-old man driving a car allegedly in an inebriated condition opened fire on a group of friends travelling in another vehicle in the Delhi Cantonment area, injuring one of them. Police said that they suspect the incident as road rage.

The accused, Nitin a resident of Kalkaji, has been arrested. The injured, Sandeep Bhati, is undergoing treatment at a hospital in Noida and is stated to be out of danger.

According to a senior police official, the incident took place early on Wednesday morning and a friend of the victim made a police control room (PCR) call around 5 AM informing police about the incident.

"According to the victim's friends, they were returning from Kholi Baba Dham in Rajasthan's Bhiwadi on

Wednesday morning. Near the Delhi airport, they noticed a blue car being driven with headlights switched off and accelerated their own vehicle," he said.

"The blue car started following them and when they reached the Western Air Command Gate on RTR Marg, the driver of the blue car allegedly fired on them. The bullet shattered the rear glass of the victim's car and hit Sandeep's head. His friends tried to stop the car but the accused fled after hitting their car.

They took Sandeep to Yatharth Super Specialty Hospital in Noida, where he is still in the ICU," he said.

Police checked the CCTV cameras along the Delhi-Gurugram border and identified the accused's vehicle which led to the arrest. Also, an empty cartridge was recovered from the crime spot.

E-vehicle charging point installed at MCG office



Gurugram: To promote e-vehicles, the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) has set up an e-vehicle charging station in the corporation's office located in Sector-42. During an event a trial run was conducted on Thursday.

MCG's Joint Commissioner-3 Sanjeev Singla while addressing the drivers on the occasion said that all possible help is being provided by the MCG to promote e-vehicles in Gurugram. "Charging stations are being set up for charging e-vehicles, where e-vehicle drivers can charge their vehicles. Work is also underway to set up a battery swapping station," Singla told the e-vehicle drivers gathered there.

He said that to promote e-vehicles, work is being done by the civic body to provide the necessary infrastructure. The charging station set up in Sector-42 can charge three e-

vehicles at a time. Thus there is a capacity to charge 30-35 e-vehicles in 24 hours.

The Corporation will soon set up charging stations at the Sector-29 Fire Station, the Sector-27 Community Centre and the Sukhrali Community Centre.

Singla informed that there is also a provision to give subsidy to convert old diesel autos into e-vehicles.

Under this, there is a provision of giving a subsidy of ₹30,000 by the MCG and ₹35,000 by the Government under the Fame India Project. The Joint Commissioner also appealed to the auto drivers to replace the old diesel autos with e-autos or e-rickshaws.

This will increase their income on the one hand and on the other hand they will contribute towards making the environment clean in Gurugram.

Jain inspects Covid ward at LNJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain inspected the ongoing construction work of new Covid wards at the Lok Nayak Jai Prakash (LNJP) Hospital. These wards will be equipped with more than 100 'oxygen beds' and the work will be completed by October 15.

Jain said that these wards at the LNJP Hospital will be equipped with all necessary Covid-19 related medical facilities like oxygen beds, ventilators and ICUs.

After witnessing a surge in October 2020, the Capital reported a deadly winter surge in the Coronavirus cases with a daily caseload of more than

5,000. The Kejriwal Government is ramping up the capacity of all its Government hospitals to ensure that an enhanced effective response is built against the Covid-19 virus.

A panel set up by the National Institute of Disaster Management has recently submitted a report to the Central Government predicting the onset of the third wave in mid-October. The Delhi Government is leaving no stone unturned to ensure that the national Capital is fully prepared to battle the third wave of Covid-19 in Delhi.

The Health Minister also highlighted the efforts being made to enhance the health

infrastructure in the national Capital against the potential outbreak of the third wave of Covid-19.

He further said, "We are closely monitoring the situation in Delhi and all the necessary lessons are taken from previous Covid-19 waves to form appropriate policies in the public interest."

Jain had on Wednesday also visited the Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital to inaugurate the 'Covid-19 Rapid Response Centre' dedicated to the people of Delhi. The newly built 30 bedded facility is designed to act as a buffer zone for treating patients immediately upon arrival to the hospital, omitting the long wait for



admission. The Delhi Government has been working on a war footing to increase the

bed capacity and improve the quality of the services offered at its Government hospitals.

New drone rules announced

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Thursday notified the new drone rules 2021 for drones operation replacing the Unmanned Aircraft System Rules (UAS), 2021. Notified by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), the new rules — which Prime Minister Narendra Modi termed as a “landmark moment” — have a five-time reduction in number of forms to be filled to operate them (from 25 to 5) even as types of fees charged from the operator have been drastically brought down from 72 to just 4. The fees too have been made nominal in nature.



and self-certification approvals, compliance requirements and entry barriers have been significantly reduced,” he said. The Prime Minister said the new rules will tremendously help start-ups and youth working in this sector. “It will open up new possibilities for innovation and business. It will help leverage India’s strengths in innovation, technology and engineering to make India a drone hub,” he mentioned.

As per the new drone rules, the fee has been reduced to nominal levels and de-linked from the size of the drone. The rules have also abolished the requirement of various approvals, including certificate of conformance, certificate of maintenance, import clearance, acceptance of existing drones, operator permit, authorisation of R&D organisation and student remote pilot licence. Other approvals such as unique authorisation number, unique

prototype identification number and certificate of manufacturing and airworthiness have also been abolished.

Drone here means an unmanned aircraft system which has been categorised into five: Nano (weighing less than or equal to 250 grams), Micro (weighing more than 250 grams, but less than or equal to 2 kilograms), Small (weighing more than 2 kilograms, but less than or equal to 25 kilograms), Medium (weighing more than 25 kilograms, but less than or equal to 150 kilograms) and Large (weighing more than 150 kilograms). No person shall operate an unmanned aircraft system in a red zone or yellow zone without prior permission. No prior permission shall be required for operating an unmanned aircraft system in a green zone,” the notification said.

The rules define ‘green zone’ as airspace of up to a vertical distance of 200 feet or 60 metres above the area between a lateral distance of 8 kilometres and 12 kilometres from the perimeter of an operational airport. For other regions, the vertical space could be 400 feet or 120 metres. The airspace above 400 feet or 120 metre in the designated green zone and

the airspace above 200 feet or 60 metre in the area located between the lateral distance of 8 kilometre and 12 kilometres from the perimeter of an operational airport will be designated as ‘yellow zone’.

‘Red zone’ means the airspace of defined dimensions above India’s land areas or territorial waters, or any installation or notified port limits specified by the Central Government beyond the territorial waters of India. Here unmanned aircraft system operations will be permitted only by the Central Government.

No flight permission will be required up to 400 feet in green zones and up to 200 feet in the area between 8 and 12 km from the airport perimeter, it said.

No pilot licence will be required for micro drones (for non-commercial use), nano drones and for R&D (research and development) organisations. Drone corridors will be developed for cargo deliveries and a drone promotion council will be set up to facilitate a drone-friendly regulatory regime in the country, according to the rules.

The rules also stated that there would be no restriction on drone operations by foreign-owned companies registered in India.

Air taxi very much possible in near future: Scindia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India could be a major hub for air taxi services in near future. After announcing the notification of the new drone rules 2021, Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Thursday said that air taxis, that will traverse the airspace instead of roads, will be very much possible in the coming days under the drone rules. “Air taxis are being researched and invented globally and many startups are coming up,” the Minister said during a Press conference here.

“That time is not far when taxis, like the ones of Uber etc that you see on roads, you will see in the air under the drone policy. I believe this is very much possible,” he added.

Worldwide the ‘air taxi’ is an idea starting to garner significant attention. Researchers at IIT-Kanpur are developing functional prototypes of vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) craft, which have the potential to be used as flying taxis.

According to reports, German flying taxi startup Volocopter has said it hopes to have a two-seater flying taxi -

which looks like an oversized drone - in regular service in time for the 2024 Paris Olympics. In June, Hyundai had said it planned to have an air-taxi service in operation as soon as 2025.

The South Korean company is also developing air taxis, to be powered by electric batteries, that can transport five to six people from highly congested urban centres to airports.

According to these rules no security clearance is required before registration or issue of licence for the operation of drones. In addition, fees for these licenses have been reduced significantly. Drone corridors will be developed for cargo deliveries, and coverage of drones has been increased from 300 kg to 500 kg to include heavy payload-carrying drones and drone taxis, or air taxis.

The minister said that the Defence Ministry, the Home Ministry and BCAS (Bureau of Civil Aviation Security) have been working together so that “counter rogue drone technology” can be developed and adopted quickly.

Union Minister Paras seeks Z Plus security, says received threats

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Alleging threat to his life due to “political conspiracy”, Lok Janshakti Party leader and Union Minister Pashupati Kumar Paras has written a letter to Home Minister Amit Shah and urged that he should be given ‘Z Plus’ security, the highest level of security accorded to an individual by the Government.

At a Press conference on Thursday, Paras said that he had received abuses and threats on his personal mobile phone, and has lodged a complaint with the Delhi Police.

Without naming anyone, he said his political rivals have been jolted by the “huge public response” he had drawn on his first visit to his constituency Hajipur in Bihar on August 23 after becoming Union minister, and accused them of resorting to this “murderous politics” as part of a political conspiracy. His cavalcade was shown black flags by a group of people allegedly hired by his rivals and they also threw petrol at it, he noted.

Paras is involved in a messy battle with his nephew and MP Chirag Paswan over the leadership of the Lok Janshakti Party after five of its six MPs



replaced the young leader with him as their leader in Lok Sabha. Chirag Paswan, son of late Dalit leader and LJP founder Ram Vilas Paswan, has been on a tour across Bihar to rally support around his leadership. Paras is the younger brother of Ram Vilas Paswan.

In his letter to Shah, Paras expressed concern over the security provided to him and cited his busy engagements as a minister and the leader of his party. He also referred to the squabble within his party over the change of leadership. Paras told reporters that a few of his party leaders had also received filthy abuses and threat on their mobile phones. He has also written a letter to Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar regarding this. Paras claimed that the Hajipur police was not adequately alert regarding his security. Both the Bihar and the Delhi police should act swiftly and take action against the culprits, he said.

₹106.93 cr in accounts of PC Financial Services seized under FEMA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized an amount of ₹106.93 crore lying in the bank accounts and virtual accounts belonging to PC Financial Services Private Limited (Non-Banking Financial Company) under the provisions of Foreign Exchange Management Act.

The ED is investigating a number of NBFCs and Fintech companies under money laundering for providing instant micro loans using mobile apps and then extorting high rate of interest by using the personal data of the customers illegally and threatening and abusing them through call centres.

During the money laundering investigation, the ED also initiated an investigation under FEMA against PC Financial Services Private Limited (PCFS) that provides instant personal micro loans through its mobile application ‘Cashbean’ for suspicious foreign outward remittances.

The PCFS is a wholly owned subsidiary of Oplay Digital Services, SA de CV, Mexico, which is in turn a subsidiary of Tenspot Pesa Limited, Hong Kong which is owned by Opera Limited (Cayman Islands) and Wisdom Connection I Holding Inc (Cayman Islands), which are ultimately beneficially owned by Chinese National Zhou Yahui.

The original Indian Company PCFS was incorporated in 1995 by Indian nationals and got NBFC license in 2002 and after RBI approval in 2018, the ownership moved to the Chinese controlled company. Investigation further revealed that the foreign parent companies of PCFS brought in FDI worth Rs 173 crore for lending business and within a short span of time, made foreign outward remittances worth Rs 429.29 crore in the name of payments for software services received from related foreign companies.

The PCFS also showed high domestic expenditure of Rs 941 crore. Detailed investigation into the foreign expenses paid by the NBFC revealed that most of the payments were made to foreign companies, which are related and owned by the same Chinese nationals, who own the Opera Group.

All the foreign service providers were chosen by the Chinese owners and the price of the services was also fixed by them.

Prez OK’s appointment of 9 SC judges, including 3 women

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind on Thursday signed the warrant of appointments of nine new judges, including three women, to the Supreme Court, making Justice B V Nagarathna in line to be the first woman Chief Justice of India (CJI) in September 2027. With a sanctioned strength of 34 judges, the Supreme Court as of now has 10 vacancies. Once the new judges take oath on Tuesday, the top court will have only one vacancy. The appointments come after a gap of 21 months as the SC Collegium had not taken a decision in this regard.

In a first, the Supreme Court Collegium had last week recommended for appointment to the apex court three women judges. Besides Justice Nagarathna, the third senior-most judge of the Karnataka High Court, the other women judges who have been appointed to the apex court are Justice Hima Kohli, the Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court, and Justice Bela M Trivedi, the fifth senior-most judge of the Gujarat High Court. Justice Kohli was to retire on September 1 on attaining the age of 62.

While high court judges retire at the age of 62, the retirement age of Supreme Court judges is 65. Besides them, Justice C T

Ravikumar of the Kerala High Court, and Justice M M Sundresh of the Madras High Court have also been appointed to the top court. Senior advocate and former Additional Solicitor General P S Narasimha has become the sixth lawyer to be elevated to the apex court bench directly from the Bar.

The Chief Justices of different high courts who have made it to the Supreme Court are Justices Abhay Shreeniwasi Oka (Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court), Vikram Nath (Chief Justice of the Gujarat High Court), Jitendra Kumar Maheshwari (Chief Justice of the Sikkim High Court).

Justice Nagarathna, born on October 30, 1962, is the daughter of former CJI E S Venkataramiah. She enrolled as an advocate on October 28, 1987 at Bangalore and practised in the fields pertaining to the Constitution, commerce, insurance and service.

She was appointed as an Additional Judge of the High Court of Karnataka on February 18, 2008 and became a permanent judge on February 17, 2010. She will have a tenure as an SC judge till October 29, 2027 and may have a tenure of over one month as the first woman CJI after September 23, 2027.

Born on September 2, 1959 in Delhi, Justice Kohli did her LLB from the Campus Law Centre in

Delhi University and was the standing counsel and legal advisor of the New Delhi Municipal Council in the High Court of Delhi from 1999-2004. She was appointed as an Additional Judge of the High Court of Delhi on May 29, 2006 and took oath as a permanent judge on August 29, 2007 and later became the Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court on January 7, 2021.

Justice Trivedi, born on June 10, 1960, is the judge of the Gujarat High Court since February 9, 2016 and belongs to the judicial service category. Besides Fatima Beevi, who became an apex court judge on October 6, 1989, seven more women judges have been appointed till now. They are Justices Sujata Vasant Manohar, Ruma Pal, Gyan Sudha Mishra, Ranjana Desai, R Bhanumathi, Indu Malhotra and Indira Banerjee. Justice Banerjee would demit office on September 23 next year.

Judicial appointments in the Supreme Court have remained frozen since September 2019. The first of the 10 vacancies in the Supreme Court arose following the retirement of Justice Ranjan Gogoi in November 2019 as the chief justice of India. The latest vacancy was created following the retirement of Justice Navin Sinha on August 18 this year.

Celebrate festivals with caution, warns Govt as Kerala sees Covid surge after Onam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking cue from a high rate of Covid-19 transmission in Kerala following a week-long festival Onam, the Government on Thursday cautioned that next two months — September and October — are crucial in Covid-19 management and warned that festivals should be celebrated with Covid appropriate behaviour as the country is still in the midst of the second wave.

The warning came amid sudden sharp surge in Covid cases in the last 24 hours till 8 am on Thursday which breached 40,000 mark after hovering between 25,000 to 35,000 in the past few days even as 41 districts in the country reported a weekly positivity rate of more than 10 per cent.

“The country is still in the midst of the second wave. The second surge has not yet concluded. It is not over and therefore, we have to maintain all necessary precautions, particularly in light of our experience that after every festival and wherever there has been a gap in following Covid appropriate behaviour, we have seen a rise in cases,” said Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan while addressing media here. The concern comes in the wake of a string of upcoming festivals in the country particularly in North India.

ICMR Director General Balram Bhargava said vaccines are disease modifying and not disease preventing so it is very important to continue the use of masks even after vaccination. India added 46,164 new Covid cases

over the last 24 hours - a 22 per cent jump - while deaths from COVID-19 rose to 607. The country’s overall case-load now stands at 3.25 crore, while total fatalities are at 4.36 lakhs, according to the government.

Kerala reported 31,445 fresh Covid-19, with the test positivity rate (TPR) touching 19 per cent now. This is the first time that the state has reported more than 30,000 fresh cases since May 20 this year, when the second wave was raging.

58.4 per cent of total Covid-19 cases last week were reported from Kerala, added Bhushan. Kerala is the only state reporting over 1 lakh active Covid-19 cases, while four states have 10,000 to 1 lakh active cases. “Kerala has more than 1 lakh active cases. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu & Andhra Pradesh have 10,000 to 1 lakh active cases. Kerala contributes to 51%, Maharashtra 16% & rest of the three states contribute to 4-5% of the cases in the country,” Bhushan said.

Dr Rahul Bhargava, head, Haematology Department in Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurgaon sounded a similar warning, saying that the Coronavirus has gone nowhere. It is here to stay and will become endemic in some regions in the country reporting high number of cases and others comparatively less. So, the solution is to keep the mask on and adopt Covid appropriate behavior.

Speaking on the vaccination coverage in India, the Ministry said that 80 lakh doses of vaccine were administered in the country in the last 24 hours.

Quad nations begin 4-day Malabar exercise off coast of Guam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of China asserting itself in the Indo-Pacific region, the Malabar series of naval exercises involving the Quad nations of India, US, Japan and Australia began on Thursday off the coast of Guam.

A range of complex drills involving warships, aircraft and helicopters will be carried out during the four-day exercise, being hosted by the US Navy in the Western Pacific, officials said.

The US Seventh Fleet, in a statement, said the exercise demonstrated the commitment among the like-minded nations to uphold a rules-based maritime order in the Indo-Pacific.

The Indian Navy has deployed its stealth frigate INS Shivalik, anti-submarine warfare corvette INS Kadmat and a fleet of P-8I maritime surveillance aircraft in the 25th edition of the mega exercise.

The US Pacific Fleet’s Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer

USS Barry, naval special warfare forces, maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft from Task Force 72, and military sealift command’s Henry J Kaiser-class underway replenishment oiler USNS Rappahannock are among the assets deployed by the US Navy in the exercise.

Malabar-21 will witness complex exercises including anti-surface, anti-air and anti-submarine warfare drill, and other manoeuvres and tactical exercises. The exercise will provide an opportunity for participating navies to benefit from each other’s expertise and experiences,” Indian Navy Spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said here.

The US 7th Fleet said the first phase of the exercise is an opportunity for the four Indo-Pacific navies to operate together to strengthen their skills in “combined maritime operations, anti-submarine warfare operations, air warfare operations, live-fire gunnery events, replenishments-at-sea and cross-deck flight operations.”

“Malabar 21 is an excellent

opportunity to conduct multinational training to hone warfighting and maritime security skillsets,” said Capt. Chase Sargeant, Commander, Task Force (CTF) 71 of US 7th Fleet.

In an interactive session at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command Admiral John Aquilino on Wednesday spoke about key challenges facing the Indo-Pacific and delved into China’s rapid military build-up including AP in the maritime domain.

Aquilino also hinted at the possibility of increasing the number of participants at the Malabar naval exercise if leaders of the four participating countries concur with it.

Following India’s invitation, Australia participated in the Malabar exercise last year that effectively made it a drill by all four member nations of the Quad. China objected to it and said the exercise is an effort to militarise the Indo-Pacific region and feels this drill is to contain its influence there.

JD(U) mounts pressure on Modi Govt to hold caste-based census

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP ally and coalition partner in Bihar, Janata Dal (United) continues to put pressure on the Modi-Government to announce a caste-based census (including OBCs). Close on the heels of an all-party delegation from Bihar led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi to demand the census, former Union Minister and currently the Parliamentary Board head of JD(U) Upendra Kushwaha on Thursday sought the Centre to resolve its “inner conflicts” and decide the issue in view of the “popular sentiments”.

All political parties in Bihar are unanimous in favour of a caste-based census in the country. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, a Kurmi by caste and Kushwaha, a koeri, together seek to consolidate Kurmi-Koeri OBC vote bank in the State and are thus backing the caste-based census.

“There is conflict within the BJP over the issue. Some of its leaders are speaking in favour, some are speaking against. They need to set their house in order,” Kushwaha, who was a Union minister under Modi, said. Prior to joining the centre as minister he had briefly parted ways with Kumar and floated the Rashtriya Lok Samata Party.

Senior BJP leader and Rajya Sabha member Sushil Kumar Modi had also called for a caste-based census joining a chorus for it saying

his party has always supported it and been part of the resolution passed in Bihar assembly in its favour.

On August 23, an 11-member delegation from Bihar led by Nitish called on Modi and demanded a caste-based census across the country.

The Centre had until last month stuck to its official policy of not holding caste-based census as it may fuel a demand for Mandal-2 and further complicate reservation arithmetic.

Replying to a written query in the Lok Sabha on July 20 this year, Union minister of state for home Nityanand Rai said that the central government has decided as a matter of policy not to enumerate caste-wise population other than SCs and STs in the census.

Kushwaha asked the Modi-government to respect “public sentiments” and quickly come out with a decision in favour of the caste census.

“What is the problem in this digital age? You just have to insert an additional column of caste.... I do not pay much heed to pointless objections. I am hopeful that the meeting of our CM with the PM will bear fruit and the Centre will do the needful,” said Kushwaha, who is a strong backer of reservation politics and been favouring quotas in the judiciary and the private sector.

Bihar legislature has unanimously passed a resolution for conducting caste-based census.

BJP’s allies from UP and Tamil Nadu Apna Dal and PMK respectively have also sought a caste-based census.

First ever communication portal for hearing, speech impaired launched

New Delhi: Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, Ramdas Athawale, on Thursday launched Lingocap (lingocap.in), a communication portal created by Shivansh Kulshrestha, an 11th grade student. Lingocap is the country’s first ever communication service that specifically caters to the hearing and speech impaired community of India.

The platform is the first to make real time speech captioning available for video communication in five Indian languages and strives to make communication accessible and inclusive for its target group.

Kulshrestha is a student at Delhi Public School, Vasant Kunj. In early 2020, his hearing-impaired grandfather had moved to Jaipur for treatment, leading to difficulties in communicating with him, since none of the modern video-communication maven such as Zoom, Google Meets, or Skype, provided captioning for Indian languages. The young student identified this as a notable gap in the industry and created Lingocap with the aim of providing a service for speakers of Indian languages with hearing impairments to enable effective communication with their loved ones. This service offers a unique point of accessibility and inclusivity to Indians with speech and hearing impairments, who number at approximately 75 Lakhs and more.

The young, enterprising student took on this ambitious project with the goal of creating a tangible change in the lives of a community that has been systematically marginalised in this country. He did so through individual initiative, learning the basics of setting up captioning & video communication software through taking online courses and allowing a drive for social betterment to push his dream forward.

The communication portal solves for accessible communication through live speech captioning in Indian languages and a network of qualified ISL interpreters. Additionally, as a video conferencing platform, it has the availability of all standard features such as breakout rooms, screen sharing, white board communication, and more, placing it at par with other video conferencing giants in terms of features, accessibility, and efficiency.

Lingocap has made a considerable impact in a short time on its 1,350+ users which consists of deaf students & individuals along with their family members.

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1	UHBVN PANCHKULA	PROCUREMENT OF GI HEXAGONAL NUTS AND BOLTS UHBVN & DHBVN	OPENING DATE 13.09.2021	EMD 2 LACS	www.uhbvn.org.in	9023360202 cemm@uhbvn.org.in

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Hold WB bypolls at earliest: TMC to EC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Trinamool Congress on Thursday requested the Election Commission (EC) to hold bypolls at the earliest for the seven vacant assembly seats in West Bengal.

"Our meeting with the Election Commission (EC) was very cordial and the poll body said their purpose is to hold elections and not to withhold the polling process. We told them that the situation is conducive to hold the polls as the number of Covid-19 cases has declined in the State. We have also given them Covid-19 statistics in all the seven constituencies where bypolls are pending. The EC said they will consider our matter and we are hopeful for a fair response from the EC," TMC MP Saugata Roy said addressing a press conference after meeting the EC officials with a party delegation.

The TMC's urgency for the bypolls has to do with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who lost her Nandigram seat in May this year. To continue to run the

state as a Chief Minister she will have to get elected within six months to retain her post. In such a case, bypolls in the vacant Assembly seats must be conducted by November 5, 2021. TMC MLA from Bhawanipur constituency Sovande Chattopadhyay had on May 21 this year vacated his seat to make way for Banerjee.

Recently, Dinhat and Santipur Assembly seats fell vacant after BJP leaders Nisith Pramanik and Jagannath Sarkar resigned as MLAs after winning to retain their Parliament memberships.

Similarly, elections could not be held in Samserganj and Jangipur seats in Murshidabad due to the death of candidates during the recent assembly polls in the state. The Kharda seat also fell vacant in North 24-Parganas district after TMC candidate Kajal Sinha passed away before he could celebrate his victory.

The Gosaba seat also fell vacant after the TMC candidate, Jayanta Naskar, who won the elections, succumbed to Covid-19 in June this year.

Didi can stoop to any level: Ghosh

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day when the Trinamool Congress leadership paid a third visit to the Election Commission of India office asking for early by-elections to seven Assembly seats in Bengal, State BJP president Dilip Ghosh on Thursday called Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee a "power hungry" person who could stoop to any level to power.

Ghosh was reacting to TMC's petition to the ECI seeking early conduct of Assembly by-elections.

"The Trinamool is building pressure on the ECI to conduct early elections because they want to save Mamata Banerjee's Chief Ministerial chair ... because she has entered the State Assembly through back door and become a Chief Minister even after losing the Assembly elections to Suwendu Adhikari and it is mandatory for her to get elected within six months to save her high seat

they are now building pressure on the ECI to hold elections defying the pandemic norms," Ghosh said.

"These are power-hungry people and they cannot leave without power ... they can shed their skins but they cannot shed power ... what is the problem in leaving the CM's chair for some time ... they already have 213 seats and they can easily run the Government ... let her step down and allow anyone to become the CM till a regular election is held ... where is the problem ... but no she will not ... her hunger for power will make her cling to the post." Earlier a team of TMC leaders led by senior parliamentarian Saugato Roy, Derek O'Brien, Mahua Moitra and others met the EC officials demanding early by-elections in seven Assembly seats of the State.

"We told them that while the State elections were held in April-May the daily cases were about 17-18 thousand which has come down to about 830 ...

if elections could be held then there is no reason why it cannot be held now when the situation is far better," Moitra said.

The BJP however said that the TMC was in a hurry to conduct polls in order to save the Chief Minister's chair.

"If the situation is conducive for holding elections then why Mamata Banerjee is not allowing the local trains to run, why the schools and colleges are still closed, why they are still continuing with other restrictions including the night curfews and why the opposition parties are not being allowed to conduct political programmes," Ghosh said adding first Mamata Banerjee should hold civic elections, first she should lift other restrictions before asking the ECI for holding the by-polls."

The TMC leadership reacted saying the "BJP knows that they would be swept away if the elections are held right now ... they do not want to more political humiliation and so they are trying to stonewall the electoral process."

Kerala logs 30,007 new Covid cases; death toll crosses 20 K

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala on Thursday logged 30,007 new Covid-19 cases, according to a release issued by Veena George, Minister of health. The department of health tested 1.66 lakh samples out of which 30,007 tested positive while the Test Positivity Rate stood at 18.03. Though this is lesser than Wednesday's 19,03, there is nothing for the State to feel relaxed. In another development, 162 patients succumbed to the pandemic and this took the death toll to 20,134.

Ernakulam (3872), Kozhikode (3461), Thrissur (3157) and Malappuram (2985) topped the table of districts with highest number of daily cases. There are more than 1.81 lakh Covid-19 patients undergoing treatment across the State as on Thursday.

Minister Veena George blamed the people for the surge in the number of Covid-19 cases in the State. "More than 35 per cent of the Covid-19 patients contract the disease



from their own homes. If one member of the family gets afflicted with Covid-19, other members of the family too get afflicted. This is what the department of health has concluded from the studies," George told mediapersons on Thursday.

The Union Government has asked the Kerala Government to strengthen the surveillance as well as diagnosis process. Health Secretary Rajesh Bhooshan reportedly told the State officials that the situation in Kerala is a matter of concern for the Centre.

Tension in Jaunpur after girl ends life over molestation

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Tension prevailed in Jaunpur after a minor girl ended her life after being fed up with regular harassment and molestation by a youth belonging to the minority community and finding no help from the Jaunpur police despite filing several complaints, on Wednesday.

In her suicide note, the victim requested her father to not let the accused go scot free.

After media focus, the local police have now registered a case on the complaint of the victim's father but have failed to arrest the accused who is said to be on the lam.

As per reports, the 15-year-old victim hanged herself to death in Kamruddinpur village in Sureri police station area of Jaunpur on Wednesday morning.

When the girl's mother went to her room at around 8 am on Wednesday, she found

the door bolted from inside. When the girl did not open the door after knocking for several minutes, she peeped through the window and was shocked to find her daughter's body hanging from the roof.

After the incident came to light, a police team rushed to the site and recovered a suicide note from the room where the teenager hanged herself.

Later, villagers gathered in large numbers outside the Sureri police station and demanded stringent action against the accused youth and the lax police personnel who did not extend any help despite several complaints.

In the suicide note written in Hindi, the girl has mentioned that she was forced to take the extreme step due to regular harassment and molestation by a Muslim youth whom she identified as Rustam Ali. She alleged in the note that

Ali had been repeatedly molesting and harassing her for the last three months.

The victim also urged her father to avenge her death and get the miscreant punished.

The victim's father later lodged a complaint against Rustam Ali, his uncle Gorakhnath and grandfather Ali Raja.

Security has been beefed up in the village to avert any untoward incident.

Meanwhile two more cases of sexual assault were reported from Etawah and Lalitpur respectively.

In Etawah, an 80-year-old occultist was arrested for trying to rape a minor girl who was suffering from jaundice. The accused, identified as Subhash, attempted to rape the 15-year-old girl on the pretext of treatment at a village in Bakewar police station area on Tuesday.

Tiruppur to become men's fashion capital

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Tiruppur, India's knitwear city, is all set to emerge as the fashion capital in gents' wear. A mega programme has been launched by Tiruppur Exporters' Association (the collective of all knitwear manufacturers in the district) in collaboration with the Union Government to train and professionalise youngsters hitherto working as labourers in knitwear units.

"Till now, they were just workers. Our mission is to elevate them as designers and master craftsmen who would be able to design fashionable wears of global standards," Raja M Shanmugham, president, TEA, told *The Pioneer*.

He said lakhs of workers are employed in the knitwear units. "Many unemployed youths make a beeline to Tiruppur to get a job and they end up as working in the assembly line. They use their physical prowess but not their hearts. The programme SAMARTH (Scheme



Raja Shanmugham honours the skilled staff of Tiruppur knitwear units

for Capacity Building in Textile Sector) launched by the Ministry of Textiles intends to train 16,000 workers over the next two years as full time designers, dress makers and craftsmen," explained Shanmugham.

Tuesday evening saw 95 students passing out of the first batch of SAMARTH initiative, a 45-day residential programme with monthly stipend of ₹14,000/- and refreshments. "We have two schemes to mould skilled workers. There is a programme to up-skill and re-skill existing workers while fresh workers are trained under SAMARTH for 300 hours," said S Sakthivel, executive secretary, TEA.

He pointed out that the SAMARTH and up-skill programmes are meant to increase the competitiveness and enhancing the productivity of the workers. "The day is not far off when these trained and up-skilled staff would sit with our buyers and chalk out designs and fashion wears as per the need of the latter," said

Sakthivel.

Jyothi, an 18-year-old girl, who was selling millet soup in Chennaimalai is one of the candidates who underwent the programme under SAMARTH scheme. "I had completed Plus Two but could not pursue higher education because of financial issues. The training programme helped me to know more about designing of fashion wears and formal wears. Now, I can operate automatic machines and design any kind of T-shirts and banians," said Jyothi.

Raja Shanmugham said that casualwears from Tiruppur are establishing as a strong brand in markets in Europe and USA. "With these skilled staff the factories in Tiruppur would emerge as design studios and we will produce fashion and casual wears for the world," said a beaming president.

Tiruppur could be India's answer to Savile Row, according to Sakthivel who points out that skilled labourers are the biggest capital in this kind of industry.

1 more hurt in Assam police encounter

Lakhimpur: One more accused was injured in a police encounter on Thursday when he allegedly tried to attack a constable in Lakhimpur district of Assam.

According to a senior police officer, the person had been arrested on August 22 following a dacoity in a house in Kulabali area under Boginadi police station in Lakhimpur.

"Today we took him to the spot to recreate the crime scene. At that time, he attacked a constable with a blade. Then he tried to flee from there," the officer said.

The law enforcers asked him to stop, but he continued to run, prompting the police to fire at the legs of the accused, the officer said.

"He was immediately taken to Boginadi Model Hospital, from where he was taken to North Lakhimpur Civil Hospital," he added.

With the latest incident, at least 21 suspected militants and criminals have been shot dead and 34 others injured while either trying to snatch service firearms or escape from custody since the Himanta Biswa Sarma government assumed charge in May.

The rising number of police encounters has whipped up a political furore with the opposition alleging that the Assam Police has turned "trigger happy" and is indulging in "open killings" under the second BJP Government in the state.

Unfazed by criticism, Sarma had said in Assam Assembly on July 15 that the state police has "full operational liberty" to fight against criminals within the ambit of law. In the first face-to-face meeting with the officers-in-charge (OCs) of all police stations in the State on July 5, Sarma had said that shooting at criminals "should be the pattern" if they attempt to escape from custody or try to snatch arms from law enforcers. *PTI*

Mumbai DCP, cops booked for extortion

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

Three police officers, including a Deputy Commissioner of Police and dismissed inspector in the Antilia bomb scare case, have been booked by the Mumbai police for allegedly extorting ₹17 lakh from a property dealer.

Identifying the three police personnel named in the extortion case as Deputy Commissioner of Police Akbar Pathan, Police Inspector Chimaji Adhavi and a dismissed inspector Sunil Mane, a senior police official said that three accused police personnel had been booked for allegedly conspiring, intimidating and extorting money from a 50-year-old property dealer.

Earlier, Pathan had been named as one of the accused in the extortion case registered at the Marine Drive police station

in July in which former Mumbai Police commissioner Param Bir Singh is a co-accused.

Mane is currently behind the bars for allegedly planting a gelatine-laden Scorpio car outside Mukesh Ambani's residence and murdering businessman Mansukh Hiren.

In a complaint lodged with the Amboli police station, an Andheri resident Gurusharansingh Chauhan has alleged that between October 20, 2019, and February 29, 2020, the accused three police officers had allegedly extorted ₹17 lakh by threatening him that they would implicate him in a false case if he failed to pay the extortion money.

In his complaint, Chauhan has accused DCP Pathan, Inspector Adhavi and dismissed police officer Mane of cheating, fraud, extortion, threats of

murder, assault.

Chauhan told police that the trio threatened to lodge false cases against him and then demanded ₹17 lakh as extortion money to save him from the consequences.

Chauhan said that when the three accused demanded more money from him, he refused to oblige them, the trio heaped abuses on him and assaulted him at his office in Andheri west. He also alleged that the accused also forced him to sign some blank papers before filing a complaint against him with the MIDC Police Station.

This is the second case registered against Pathan. Earlier he had been booked by the Marine Lines Police in an alleged ₹15 lakh corruption case, along with former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh and others, after a complaint lodged with

them by builder Shyamsunder Agarwal.

Following Chauhan's complaint, the Amboli Police have registered an FIR against DCP Pathan and PI Adhavi and ex-cop Mane under various sections of the Indian Penal Code.

DCP Pathan has earlier been booked by the Marine Lines Police in an alleged corruption case of ₹50 lakh, along with former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh and others, following a complaint by a builder Shyamsunder Agarwal.

Incidentally, Mane is also an accused in the investigations into the sensational case of planting a SUV with 20 gelatin sticks near Mukesh Amani's residence, Antilia.

After his alleged involvement in the bomb scare case and his subsequent arrest, Mane was dismissed from the police force in June this year.

UP Govt makes provision for prompt help to victims of natural calamities

Lucknow: With the aim to provide prompt help to victims of natural calamities like floods, the Uttar Pradesh Government has made provisions for distribution of relief materials and financial assistance for loss of lives and damage to houses. Besides, the state government will also provide compensation to cattle rearers and craftsmen in cases of cattle head casualties or loss of equipment due to the floods.

If any animal dies in a disaster, the Government will provide financial assistance to cattle rearers up to ₹30,000 per animal. Also, craftsmen will be provided with new tools and all possible help if their tools are

damaged or lost in floods. An amount of ₹3,000 will be given to animal owners on the death of small animals like goat, sheep or pig, ₹25,000 for non-milk giving animals (camel, horse, bull) and ₹16,000 for animals like cows and buffaloes.

"Poultry has also been included in this provision. Poultry farmers will be provided assistance of ₹50 per poultry. These provisions are not only for floods but also for calamities including cloud-bursts, fire, drought, cyclones, unseasonal heavy rain, thunderstorm and lightning," a government spokesman said in Lucknow on Thursday. *PNS*

AP Govt fixes school, college fee

PTI ■ AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh School Education Regulatory and Monitoring Commission has fixed the fee structure for schools and intermediate colleges in the State for three academic years beginning 2021-22.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, Commission Chairman Justice (Retd.) R Kanta Rao said it was for the first time that school and college fee was being regulated in AP though several other states have already been doing it.

He said the maximum annual tuition fee for schools in gram panchayats has been fixed at ₹10,000 for primary classes and ₹12,000 for higher classes.

Akhilesh: BJP conspiring to illegally capture democracy

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Hitting out at the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, Samajwadi Party president and former Chief Minister of UP, Akhilesh Yadav, said that the BJP was engaged in a conspiracy to "illegally capture democracy" in the State.

"With lies and deceit, the BJP wants to turn back the clock of development in Uttar Pradesh. The BJP leaders have come to realise that the public is going to remove them from the Government. Samajwadi Party is committed to democracy and socialism and people have to act with utmost vigilance and understanding to save the democracy in the State," Akhilesh said on

Thursday.

In a statement issued in Lucknow on Thursday, the SP chief said that looking at the policy and intentions of the BJP, it seemed that it was bent upon forming the Government akin to East India Company forming a government in India in the 19th century.

"The BJP's agenda is not to remove inequality from society but to widen the chasm between the rich and the poor. They are conspiring to hold the farming sector hostage to multinational companies and to push the future of the youth into uncertainty by eliminating village-based industries and promoting big industrial houses. The BJP does not want to implement socialist system," he alleged.

Akhilesh Yadav further said that the BJP had implemented policies that were detrimental for the farmers and farming community.

"The so-called three agricultural reform laws will ruin the agricultural system. In the midst of elections, the BJP Government has made announcements as a strategy to mislead the voters. The farmers should beware of this misinformation campaign. The present BJP regime has set records in robbery, petty crime and murders. Law and order is at its nadir. Women are living under the shadow of fear," he said.

The SP chief said that the politics of the country was passing through a phase of transition.



Children enjoy the sunset at Dadar beach in Mumbai on Thursday.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Safety net

India is insisting only on e-visas for Afghans who wish to travel abroad to flee the Taliban

The Government has decided to issue only e-visas to Afghan nationals wanting to evacuate to India. This is to prevent mercenaries and terrorists using the chaotic conditions at the Kabul airport to slip into India or any other country as evacuees. For good measure, the Union Home Ministry has also invalidated all visas issued to Afghan nationals currently not in India. That resulted in a woman member of the Afghan Parliament being deported from New Delhi where she had landed from Istanbul. The Government move is necessary and comes after reports that an agency in Kabul was attacked and a bunch of Afghan passports with stamped Indian visas taken away. With all visas now invalid, Afghans will have to apply for e-visas for travelling to India. The Indian Government's decision is a practical one, considering that global intelligence agencies, including from the US and the UK, have already alerted their Governments about plans by the Afghanistan-based terror groups to use the opportunity of a hurried evacuation from Kabul to slip into insurgents, fighters, terrorists and sleeper cell members to various countries for future use. The alarm was originally raised by the Pentagon in the United States that terrorists may have successfully infiltrated the thousands of evacuees from Kabul and some of them may have boarded aircraft for Europe, the US and other countries. Even President Joe Biden on Sunday warned that "terrorists may seek to exploit the situation".

The western media is reporting that close to 100 evacuees could be on intelligence watchlists as persons of interest or persons suspected of links with terror groups like the IS. American and European evacuation flights have begun to stop at the military bases in the Middle East or specific European airports for extensive intelligence checks on the evacuees. The screenings proved successful a few days ago when an evacuee was detained at an airport on the suspicion that he is linked to the Islamic State of Afghanistan. The western media, based on Pentagon briefings, is claiming that nearly 100 evacuees could be on intelligence watchlists as suspected terrorists, with possible ties to the ISIS terrorist group. The British also found six people deemed a "direct threat" to the UK among the evacuees. All these countries now insist on Special Immigrant Visas available only online for those flying out of Kabul. In India's case, the extra caution is more than warranted. In recent times, it has become difficult for trained fighters of mercenary groups or Islamist terror groups to cross over into India to carry out destabilising and violence acts. Security along the borders in Kashmir, Gujarat and Rajasthan has been tightened and modernised. The recent incidents of drone attacks in Jammu have led to a heightened state of alert. The reports of growing instability in Afghanistan in the last few months have alerted intelligence agencies to be prepared for terrorists entering India in the garb of Afghans fleeing the Taliban.

PICTALK



An area submerged in the floodwaters of Mahananda river, in Malda

PTI

Historic move

Karnataka is the first Indian State to launch the NEP but what about others?

Earlier this week, Karnataka became the first State in India to launch the National Education Policy (NEP). Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai managed to successfully achieve what his counterparts in other States have been struggling with for the last two years. Come October 1, schools and colleges in Karnataka would see a tectonic shift in their curriculum and the process of teaching. It is expected that the NEP would revolutionise the education sector. The Chief Minister expressed the hope that the NEP, which has been adapted to suit the convenience of students in the State by the National Committee for the Education Policy headed by Dr K Kasturirangan, former chief of Isro, would make every Kannadiga a knowledgeable person and liberate education from "silos". He also announced the establishment of primary and secondary education councils in the State. Karnataka would have a career guidance and personality development programme at the secondary education level that would realise the goal of creating an equitable society. The councils will also help the teachers and parents to identify the areas of interest of their wards so that they would not end up as square pegs in round holes.

An important point in the NEP is the decision to impart education through one's mother tongue up to Class V. While NEP's implementation has been held up elsewhere due to resistance from the Opposition which alleges that it is a tool to saffronise education, Karnataka seems to have pulled off a consensus. Moreover, the State has no fringe elements opposing Hindi unlike in Tamil Nadu where the Dravidian politicians see red at the mere mention of Hindi. Students should be given an opportunity to learn Hindi, India's official language, because they are capable of excelling in any languages and they should not be denied the chance to learn two or three languages besides the mother tongue. The Tamil Nadu politics has robbed the students of a chance to study in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, a concept school system launched when Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister. Tamil Nadu is the only State in India that does not have Navodaya Vidyalayas, offering public school-level education for free. The Dravidian honchos are wary of Hindi and hence such schools are missing from the State. Poor students are the losers because they are denied the "equal opportunity" as mentioned in the Constitution.

Empowering women in Indian military

With the Supreme Court allowing women to take the NDA exam, their induction gets closer to reality and will add value to the military



DEEPAK SINHA

On August 18, 2021, a Supreme Court Bench of Justices SK Kaul and Hrishikesh Mukherjee passed an interim order allowing women candidates to sit for the National Defence Academy (NDA) entrance exam to be held in the first week of September. They further stated that the "policy decision to bar women from admission to the NDA is based on gender discrimination". This ruling follows the earlier one by the Bench of Justices Chandrachud and Rastogi directing the Government to ensure women Short Service Officers are given permanent commissions in Army, including command postings.

Indeed, while women constitute 48 per cent of our population, their representation in the military is just 0.56 per cent, 1.06 per cent and 6.5 per cent in the Army, Air Force and Navy, respectively. It clearly reflects a patriarchal mindset which, by any standards, is unacceptable in this day and age in a democracy such as ours. In fact, it makes little sense to restrict women's entry mainly to the officer cadre and must indeed be extended to cover Personnel Below Officer Ranks (PBOR) as well.

While the Supreme Court must be commended for its progressive approach, one hopes that our lordships' approach towards the issue spills over to the judiciary as well. After all, it is indeed reprehensible that even after seven decades of Independence, a mere three per cent of our judges in the Supreme Court have been women and we are unlikely to see our first woman Chief Justice till the latter part of this decade, if at all.

Over the past few decades, given that we live in a nuclear armed neighbourhood, the very nature of warfare has undergone a transformation and conflicts rarely cross the threshold into a no-holds-barred conventional war. In such an environment, "Grey Zone" tactics or "Hybrid Warfare" is the norm, creating its own set of complications and challenges. Countering these tactics requires a nuanced approach, which is where gender diversity within the military will give additional flexibility and options to surmount the challenges it faces, especially in large urban settings.



It is a rather sorry reflection on the state of the military leadership, especially of the Army, that continues to remain hidebound and conservative. Its emphasis has been on stalling women's entry into its ranks instead of concentrating on formulating a viable HRD strategy that allows their induction to add value to the organisation. If they had been proactive, they would not have found themselves in this difficult position, browbeaten into adopting shortsighted *ad hoc* measures that will have serious repercussions.

The Army leadership has aggravated the problem by diluting standards that women candidates have to meet to successfully graduate from the Officers Training Academy. As former military veteran and colleague Shivaji Ranjan Ghosh writes in a viral social media post: "There are no gender-neutral battlefields." He adds: "The battlefield is an unforgiving place. It does not understand decency and civilised behaviour, and it does not give consideration to physical or physiological differences. Mountains do not get any less steep, nor does the enemy stop firing because the adversary is not a male like him. Simply because the female



THEIR UTILISATION, WHETHER IN COMBAT, COMBAT SUPPORT, LOGISTICS OR ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE, WILL HAVE TO BE SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED ALONG WITH CAREER PROGRESSION AVENUES AS WELL AS OPPORTUNITIES TO BE SELECTED FOR THE 'GENERAL CADRE'

soldier underwent diluted standards of physical fitness does not give her the right to slow down her comrades nor compromise their safety because she cannot keep pace with them. It does not give her the right to seek privileges or special dispensations on account of her gender, because she has already demanded and been given equality when she demanded her right to enter the battlefield."

This is a reflection of the true state of affairs and not an attempt to belittle women or cast doubts on their courage or capabilities. Throughout our history, there have been innumerable women who have shown courage, resolve and leadership in equal measure. The exploits of Rani Abbaka Chowta of Ullal, who defeated the Portuguese in three major battles before being vanquished, along with the legendary Rani Lakshmbai of Jhansi, Rani Rudamma Devi of Warangal, Rani Chenamma of Kittur and hundreds of women who served in the Rani of Jhansi Regiment of the Azad Hind Fauj (INA) come to mind.

The Army leadership now faces a couple of stark choices. If women are to form an integral part of the organisa-

tion with similar career prospects as available to men, including command of units, then all personnel must be judged from their training onwards by universally applicable criteria with regard to physical standards and service profile, regardless of gender. It then does not matter which training establishment they have graduated from, be it the NDA, IMA or the OTA.

If it is not found to be feasible, then it may be appropriate to raise a women's corps on the lines of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment or the Military Nursing Service, which will have its command, staff and supervisory appointments held by women from within their cadre. Their utilisation, whether in combat, combat support, logistics or administrative role will have to be specifically identified along with career progression avenues, as well as opportunities to be selected for the "General Cadre", if deemed suitable. One thing is clear, *status quo* is not an option.

(The writer is a military veteran, who is a Visiting Fellow with the Observer Research Foundation and Senior Visiting Fellow with The Peninsula Foundation, Chennai. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LEADING ALL THE WAY AT LEEDS

Sir — Cricket is a game of glorious uncertainties and the stakes go up and down with every wicket. On the first day of the third Test at Leeds, India was bundled out for a meagre first innings total of 78. India had earlier collapsed at 36 against Australia in Adelaide as captain Virat Kohli's men recorded their lowest-ever Test score in December last year. But the timely recovery ensured the series win by 2-1 rather convincingly. India should now look forward to saving the Test and the series next.

The Indian side is struggling with the pace and swing of English bowlers. Former England captain Nasser Hussain said that England have exposed the holes in India's batting line-up. It appears that India lost direction after their win at the Lord's and a few bad decisions made matters worse. It is now, therefore, crucial to have a solid opening partnership in the second innings to reduce pressure from the middle order and be less dependent on the tail end. Our inherent weakness should be totally ironed out early or else teams like Australia and England will continue to enjoy our shortcomings on the field.

CK Subramaniam | Mumbai

SECOND WAVE HASN'T RECEDED

Sir — The massive spike of COVID-19 cases in Kerala is an alarm call. While the rest of the country is anticipating a third wave, Kerala has not yet been set loose by the second wave for that matter. It is critical to understand the gravity of the situation in Kerala and strictly prohibit mass gatherings. Kerala reported more than 30,000 fresh cases in a day, which accounts for over 70 per cent of the total cases nationwide. This is certainly not normal. Kerala and Maharashtra are still struggling with Coronavirus. Although, in other Indian States, the second wave has receded to some extent.

Kerala was a successful COVID-19 model for a long time until the number of cases suddenly took off. The Kerala Government blames Onam for the spike

A pencil in God's hand



Yesterday marked the 111th birth anniversary of Mother Teresa. Many leaders paid their homage to the "Saint Teresa of Calcutta". Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal shared on Twitter that he had volunteered at Mother Teresa's *ashram* in Kalighat and had a spiritual experience which inspired him to be of service to humanity.

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN), TS Tirumurti, tweeted photos of the postage stamp of the Nobel Peace Prize winner which were earlier released by the UN. Union Minister Hardeep Puri said: "Mother Teresa dedicated her life to the service of humanity".

Mother Teresa is known for her selfless love and dedication for the poor. She had utmost faith in God and humanity and believed that she served the poor not because they needed her, but because God wanted her to and she was obedient to God's call and her social conscience. She called herself "a pencil in God's hand". Mother Teresa was a beautiful flower who had a never-ending fragrance of love and compassion. She won many awards for her contributions and was herself an award to society. It has been well over two decades since Mother Teresa left her body, but her mission to spread unconditional love and sacrifice continues to remain in homes and centres worldwide.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

but defends the opening of markets during Eid. This minority appeasement policy won't do. It is critical that the cases are confined to Kerala in order to prevent a nationwide spread for now. Kerala's vaccination drive appears good on paper and until the majority of the population is inoculated; social, religious and political gathering must be prohibited.

Yashi Bairagi | Ujjain

DISSENSION WITHIN THE CONGRESS

Sir — As the country's principal Opposition party, the Congress has the burden (and tough challenge) of taking on the BJP. But it has an additional burden to bear — political infighting. The factional fights within the Congress in States where it is in power — Punjab, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan — have not yet reached critical proportions to pose any threat to the Governments or their stability. Matters may come to a head with moves and counter-

moves by the warring factions as in Madhya Pradesh to the party's grief.

It is possible that there is some correlation between the unabated feuds spurred by personal ambitions and the seemingly not-so-assertive party high command. In a strange way, the Gandhis do not seem to be overly concerned about factionalism within the party. Perhaps this is due to the allegiance and loyalty sworn to the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty by all self-seeking factional leaders and the belief that they individually and collectively 'strengthen' the organisation. It is rather difficult to discern if factionalism is really a strength or a weakness of the party. Some even tend to construe 'dissension' as a virtue; for them it is interchangeable with 'inner-party democracy'.

G David Milton | Tamil Nadu

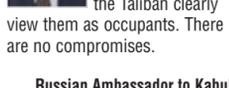
SOUND BITE

By shutting down my Twitter account, they are interfering in our political process. A company is making its business to define our politics.



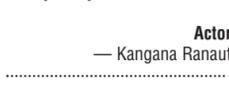
Former Congress president — Rahul Gandhi

I think that the Taliban will be ready to 'poke' Americans because the Taliban clearly view them as occupants. There are no compromises.



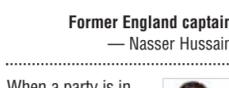
Russian Ambassador to Kabul — Dmitry Zhirnov

What a glorious tribute @sidmalhotra. Congrats to the entire team of 'Shershaah'. It was a big responsibility and you all excelled.



Actor — Kangana Ranaut

There are holes in this India line-up and they were exploited brilliantly by England on another great day of Test cricket.



Former England captain — Nasser Hussain

When a party is in power, police officials side with it; when a new party comes into power, the Government initiates action against those officials.

Chief Justice of India — NV Ramana

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN TREAD CAUTIOUSLY ON AFGHANISTAN

India should reach out to all friendly nations which share a boundary with Afghanistan



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The guns are blazing a thousand kilometres west of Delhi, silencing voices of dissent and terrorizing civilians in what remains of a country called Afghanistan. Global leaders are maintaining an "active silence" on the gross violations to human life, partially as a guilt of past sins and more so to understand the new nature of governance in a country forever torn between conflicting interests and tribes for at least four decades. That is the tricky territory, the new Government in Afghanistan will have to maneuver while trying to integrate with the new global order, averse to terror activities. Taliban, not known for diplomatic skills or the art of negotiation, has to balance pressures within and outside its troubled borders. It may not be easy by any leap of faith. The outside for Afghanistan is defined by Pakistan which has been Taliban's sole sponsor for two decades. Pakistan is elated (as seen in public statements of senior leaders and its open support in multilateral bodies such as UNHRC) by the developments,



as it fulfills a bunch of its strategic targets. First, it gets the sole proprietorship of being the key negotiator for Taliban as the latter aims for international legitimacy. Secondly, with the emergence of a hostile force in Afghanistan, India has nearly cut off its economic and diplomatic relationship with Afghanistan. Thirdly, Pakistan's mentor and key friend in the region, China, gets access to a treasure trove of minerals and tradeable goods besides gaining a strategic infrastructural gold mine in the form of roads to central Asia and land ports. China and Pakistan are not India's allies and are sure to use Taliban-trained non-state actors with access to sophisticated weapons and surveillance devices (left by the US) to create violent disruptions in India. This brings us to the question about India which is calmly handling the situation but acknowledging the threat to its borders.

The current Government has briefed key opposition leaders on Afghanistan and the way ahead. Emerging from a fractured monsoon session of parliament which saw for the first time a coalition of opposition parties unrelenting to let the parliamentary debates take place and a severe rift between ruling and opposition, the Government has clearly sent out a signal of peace on a crucial issue of national security. This has to be balanced and doggedly pursued with international coalition of likeminded allies willing to participate in this treacherous terrain. India has to reach out to all its friendly or neutral countries, which share a land boundary with Afghanistan. Iran has been balancing its approach towards Afghanistan by allowing export of petroleum products (even as the US and international agencies have halted any assistance to the country) while at the same time closing its boundaries to avoid a refugee problem. India has strategic relationship with Iran and the external affairs minister was recently invited for the swearing-in ceremony of the new President where the changing regional order (read Afghanistan) was high on agenda. The other countries which share land borders are the three erstwhile Soviet-ruled central Asian countries with whom India has had a warm relationship in the past. India continues to send high quality medical professional and educators to Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. As of now these countries have closed their boundaries to Afghan refugees but the porous borders will not be able to halt the march of war. India has to carefully play a balancing game in this region by engaging in deep conversations on the future of Afghanistan. This will go in hand with India's strategic choice of aligning with the US on key geo-political considerations in the region.

(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

CORONATING graft in the times of pandemic

The Govt or laws aren't weak and unimaginative to bring down corruption. As people, we are too strong and imaginative to remain corrupt by all means



VK SAXENA

Kautilya sat down to write 'Artha Shastra', one of the first books on economics in human history, some 2,300 years ago. And he ended up writing a whole chapter on 'corruption'. He famously said, 'just like it is impossible not to taste a drop of honey that you find at the edge of the tongue, it is impossible for a King's officer not to eat up a bit of King's revenue'.

Essentially, it means that even as long ago as in 300 BC, we were rampantly corrupt and as a society we exploited whatever individual power we had. Kautilya implied that for Indians, the very human nature it self poses corruption. Time and again it was proved in our history. Kingdoms grew or fell through some strategic corruption of individuals who switched sides at a critical time. Even the British India Company walked over this sub-continent and established the rule of Britain over us, because we could be corrupted easily, and it was so effortless to divide us and rule.

As a society, we indulge in it as a casual act of convenience. And then, we complain about it, make fuss and cry wolf.

Why is it that the Governments cannot absolutely wipe out corruption? In all these 2,500 years, we have had several types of Governments ruling over us - kingdoms, monarchies, dynasties, sultanates, foreign colonisations and democracies. There have been benevolent rulers, autocratic usurpers, people's leaders, men of sword, religious oppressors... you name it. But how come any form of government or system of rule could not bring down corruption through force, legislation, counseling, or any other means for thousands of years? Haven't we punished people enough? Well, the country has historically practiced capital punishment, dismemberment of limbs, jailing, public humiliation, seizing of property and all kinds of punishment for corruption over centuries and millennia. Yet, as a society, we are as corrupt as we have been for thousands of years.

This essentially means that it is not the Government or the Law which is weak and unimaginative in bringing down corruption. It is just that as people, we are too strong and imaginative to remain corrupt by all means. And morally, we do not attach shame or guilt in being corrupt. Corruption is our blood trait.

During these testing times, when a selfless and sincere approach was needed to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, this trait of corruption ruled the roost. A grocery shop owner fleeced customers citing short-supply. A pharmacist hoarded life-saving medicine. A basic equipment like pulse oximeter suddenly disappeared from stores and if available, was sold at a much higher price. Black



THE DEEP-ROOTED CORRUPTION IN HEALTH SERVICES GOES AS DEEP AS KICKBACKS GIVEN TO HEALTH WORKERS TO SECURE BETTER SERVICES, THEFT OF MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS AND MEDICINE FROM HOSPITALS THAT ARE THEN SOLD AT A PREMIUM OUTSIDE. THIS ETHICAL AND MORAL BANKRUPTCY HAS EVEN DRIVEN THEM TO RECYCLING AND SELLING BIO-MEDICAL WASTES FOR A FEW PENNIES

(The writer is Chairman, Khadi & Village Industries Commission. The views expressed are personal.)



marketing of oxygen cylinders wreaked havoc on families in dire need of oxygen. Even a taxi driver would charge hefty sums from passengers.

We have just shown that we could just exploit any opportunity for money or material. And by stooping to this low, we have also defeated all the good works of a large section of people during these difficult times. Individuals, organizations, even political parties, in their own capacities, have been providing free food, medicines, ambulances, oxygen and all possible support to the needy but they were easily eclipsed by the rampant corruption surrounding us.

In the COVID-era, we have seen that corruption has reached the zenith. It is not exaggerating that during the times of the Pandemic, we have 'corona'ted corruption and installed it on the throne. Corruption thrives at the juncture of power. And power need not be political or administrative or of any high order. And if the opportunity is of critical nature, rendering the other one helpless, distressed and weak in some manner, it is easier to exploit the situation. And CORONA has become a golden goose of benefit for the heartless, unscrupulous and ruthless.

People of all statuses - from the rich and resourceful to the ones struggling to meet their ends - had to fight this corruption alongside fighting the deadly virus. It was widely reported that once you reach the hospitals, in the hope of some relief and cure, corruption widened its wings. In fact, finding a hospital bed for the

patient proved to be a Herculean task and in many cases, the hospital beds were hoarded by unscrupulous agents in connivance with the hospitals. News reports of ambulance operators charging ₹20,000 to ₹40,000 for ferrying patients to short distances of a few kilometres describes this moral corruption in the most absolute terms.

In our country, where private infrastructure accounts for nearly 62 per cent of all of India's health infrastructure, it is easier for corruption to thrive at every level of the system. Medical staff were found refilling empty Remdesivir bottles with fake drugs and selling them to patients not only at a premium but also risking their lives, remorselessly. Patients and their families were cheated with fire extinguishers in the name of oxygen cylinders just when they needed oxygen to save the lives of their loved ones.

These instances are just the proverbial tip of the iceberg. The deep-rooted corruption in the health services goes as deep as kickbacks given to health workers to secure better services, theft of medical instruments and medicine from hospitals that are then sold at a premium outside. This ethical and moral bankruptcy have even driven them to the extent of recycling and selling bio-medical wastes like used face masks, PPE kits and gloves for the sake of a few pennies. Hospitals were also found charging exorbitant fees from COVID-19 patients.

And if one thought this face-off with corruption would end

here, a rude shock awaited them. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, who would have ever thought of corruption in the cremation ground? Families of the deceased were charged up to ₹25,000 to ₹30,000 for cremating the bodies which otherwise cost less than ₹5,000 in normal days.

I began this article saying that corruption is a blood trait of people. There is very little that anyone can do to remove this evil from our midst if people act beyond the sanctity of morality. A thing that was never effectively curtailed for centuries will only increase and occupy the centre stage of our lives when people patronize it, benefit from it and silently subscribe to it.

The present Government under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi has effectively shown how a system can be run without corruption. Having served for 20 years as head of Government - in Gujarat and then at the Centre - without even a charge of corruption, Modi has an impeccable, clean character to inspire our generation to adopt honesty as the way of life. Unfortunately, even the high degree of honesty and morality of our Prime Minister failed to influence our society and proved that corruption was indeed our blood trait.

Governments can only help people's will to change. But if they don't want to change, there is no power that can pull us out of the intricate mess that we have created for ourselves. Let us pledge not to exploit humanity with our greed.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

PM NARENDRA MODI SOLD THE COUNTRY'S ASSETS BUILT IN 70 YEARS TO SOME OF HIS INDUSTRIALIST FRIENDS.

— CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



RAHUL GANDHI IS UPSET THAT INDIA WILL MAKE ₹6 LAKH CRORE AND IS THEREFORE TRYING TO TARNISH THE CENTRE'S IMAGE.

— UNION MINISTER SMRITI IRANI

The Mappila Rebellion controversy

Kerala struck by another 'pandemic' created by self-serving politicians and religious fanatics

Swami Vivekananda had described Kerala as a lunatic asylum after watching the casteism and communalism prevailing in God's Own Country. If the monk returns to Kerala today, he would be in for further shock.

Kerala, reeling under the onslaught of COVID-19, has been struck by another 'pandemic' created by self-serving politicians and religious fanatics. The present controversy is over the 1921 Mappila Rebellion, the biggest communal pogrom witnessed in this part of the country.

The riots which erupted on August 21, 1921, claimed lives of over 2000 people who refused to change their religion. The year 2021 marks the centenary of this rebellion.



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)

The Rebellion commenced under the garb of Khilafat Movement patronised by Muslim leaders to express solidarity with the Khalifa of Turkey who had lost his pre-eminent position as the guardian of the Muslim community at the end of the First World War.

Sir C Sankaran Nair, who has been the only Keralite to adorn the presidency of Indian National Congress and who was the member of the Viceroy's Executive Council had alerted the leaders of the Freedom Movement that the Khilafat agitation has no relevance in India. But Mahatma Gandhi chose to support the movement hoping to enlist the support of Muslims in the freedom struggle.

But the Khilafat agitation



took the shape of massive communal pogrom in the Eranadu and Valluvanadu regions of Malabar and saw the slaughter of Hindus who refused to convert to another religion. Congress leaders like late K P Kesava Menon and K Madhavan Nair who questioned the course of the agitation earned the wrath of the rioters and both of them had to make a quick retreat. Both Menon and Nair had in their

memoirs described the agitation as a communal pogrom.

Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, the then deputy collector, Malabar Province, had authored a book Mappila Riots 1921 in which he has chronicled the details. Nair writes with documentary evidences that the riot was blatantly communal.

The ruling CPI(M) claims that the Mappila Riot of 1921 was part of the freedom struggle. But they are evasive when asked why people who refused to convert were butchered.

"The Mappila Riot was accepted as part of the freedom movement only on December 5, 1981 by the Indira Government as part of a political accord between Congress and Muslim League," said Prof C I Issac, eminent historian,

who studied the riots in detail and submitted a report to the Government asking for the removal of the names of nearly 350 persons who have been listed as freedom fighters. "The name of Variamkunnathu Ahmed Haji, had not figured in the list of freedom fighters submitted by the Kerala Government and this was added later," said the professor.

Issac further points out that in 1973, the then home minister had told Parliament that the Mappila Riots were not part of the freedom movement. Meanwhile, the Communists had succeeded in getting the Punnappra-Vayalar workers agitation of October 1946 the status of freedom struggle much to the anguish of historians. It was an uprising by the coir workers of Alappuzha district

demanding hike in pay and was staged at a time when the leaders of the freedom movement were busy working out the modalities of transfer of power. Till the end of the Second World War, the Communists were hand in glove with the British Government and even tried to subvert the Quit India Movement.

Annie Besant who toured the region in the aftermath of the riots wrote: "It would be well if Mr Gandhi could be taken into Malabar to see with his own eyes the ghastly horrors which have been created by the preaching of himself and his 'loved brothers' Muhammed and Shaukat Ali." The atmosphere in Kerala got vitiated with the Minister for Tourism Mohammed

Riyaz announcing the construction of a memorial for Variamkunnathu Ahmed in Malappuram. Adding insult to injury was the declaration by M B Rajesh, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, that Variamkunnathu Haji was a revolutionary like Sardar Bhagat Singh. The Pandora's Box has been opened.

"Both the LDF and the UDF Governments have refused to instal a statue of Thunchathu Ezhuthachan, the father of the Malayalam language, in his hometown of Tirur citing religious sentiments. Then why is this special honour for a mass murderer?" asks Ali Akbar, move maker.

The centenary of Mappila Rebellion is a controversy that politicians could have avoided.

Witness: Several appear dead in Kabul airport blast



Medical and hospital staff bring an injured man on a stretcher for treatment after two blasts outside the airport in Kabul on Thursday

AP ■ KABUL
An explosion went off Thursday outside Kabul's airport, where thousands of people have fled as they try to flee the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Officials offered no casualty count, but a witness said several people appeared to have been killed or wounded. Western nations had warned earlier in the day of a possible attack at the airport in the waning days of a massive airlift. Suspicion for any attack targeting the crowds would likely fall on the Islamic State

group and not the Taliban, who have been deployed at the airport's gates trying to control the mass of people.
The Pentagon confirmed the blast, with no immediate word on casualties.
Adam Khan, an Afghan waiting outside the airport, said the explosion went off in a crowd of people waiting to enter the airport. Khan, who said he was standing about 30 meters (yards) away, said several people appeared to have been killed or wounded, including some who lost body parts.

Several countries urged people to avoid the airport earlier in the day, with one saying there was a threat of a suicide bombing. But just days — or even hours for some nations — before the evacuation effort ends, few appeared to heed the call.
Over the last week, the airport has been the scene of some of the most searing images of the chaotic end of America's longest war and the Taliban's takeover, as flight after flight took off carrying those who fear a return to the militants' brutal rule.
Already, some countries have ended their evacuations and begun to withdraw their soldiers and diplomats, signaling the beginning of the end of one of history's largest airlifts. The Taliban have pledged not to attack Western forces during the evacuation, but insist the foreign troops must be out by America's self-imposed deadline of August 31.
Overnight, warnings emerged from Western capitals about a threat from Afghanistan's Islamic State group affiliate, which likely has seen its ranks boosted by the Taliban's freeing of prisoners during their blitz across the country.



Smoke rises from explosion outside the airport in Kabul on Thursday

US official: ISIS believed to be behind Kabul attack

AP ■ WASHINGTON
US official says the complex attack outside Kabul airport is "definitely believed" to have been carried out by the Islamic State group.
The official says members of the US military were wounded in Thursday's attack, which involved two suicide bombers and gunmen.
The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss ongoing operations.
The Islamic State group is more radical than the Taliban and has carried out a wave of attacks targeting civilians.
The official says evacuation flights have continued to take off from Kabul airport in the waning days of an airlift to help people flee the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan.

Macron urges utmost caution

Dublin: French President Emmanuel Macron said "the situation has seriously deteriorated" near the Kabul airport after "several explosions happened in the last hours."
Speaking in a news conference during a visit to Dublin, Ireland, Macron said "we are facing an extremely tense situation that makes us coordinate obviously with our American allies and call for the utmost caution in a context we don't control." AP

Newly-formed Madhav Nepal-led CPN to join Deuba-led Govt

PTI ■ KATHMANDU
The newly-formed CPN (Unified Socialist) led by Madhav Kumar Nepal on Thursday announced to join Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba-led coalition government soon, vowing to not give up the communist ideology and move forward as a cultured revolutionary party.
The announcement came a day after the Election Commission granted official recognition to the newly-formed party, which was created after splitting the CPN-UML led by former prime minister K P Sharma Oli.
"We will soon join the Deuba government. We will not give up communist ideology and we will move forward by being a disciplined and cultured revolutionary party," Madhav Nepal, who is the Chairman of the CPN (Unified Socialist), said at his party's first press meet here.
"We will be part of the government. The five-party alliance will move further forward," he said.
Deuba is likely to expand his six-member Cabinet on Friday. He could not expand his cabinet for more than a month as the Madhav Nepal faction of the CPN-UML, which played a key role in the formation of the government, was in the process of getting recognition from the election commission.
Madhav Nepal had submitted an application at the Election Commission last week for registering a new political party after President Bidya Devi Bhandari issued an ordinance to amend the Political Parties Act 2071, aimed at easing the procedure for political parties to split.
Madhav Nepal, a former prime minister, had gone against the party and supported the then Opposition alliance in its bid to topple the government led by Oli.
"We assure you all that the party would embrace communist ideology," he said, blaming Oli for giving up Marxist-Leninist ideology and exercising autocratic principle.
He said his party would pursue a model of socialism suitable for Nepal and added that the party would make agriculture the foundation of Nepali national economy as Nepal is still an agrarian country.

'Overwhelming majority' airlifted from Af: Johnson

PTI ■ LONDON
British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Thursday that the "overwhelming majority" of people eligible for evacuation from Kabul airport have now left Afghanistan.
Johnson also reiterated that the UK government will do "everything we can" to get those remaining out of the country soon after warnings were issued of an "imminent" and "very lethal" terrorist attack from an Islamic State (ISIS) Afghanistan affiliate dubbed Islamic State Khorasan or ISIS-K.
Speaking to reporters during a visit to British military's Permanent Joint Headquarters in north London to meet troops involved in evacuation efforts in Afghanistan, Johnson said, "around 15,000" people have already been evacuated by British troops.

US says up to 1,500 Americans await airlift

Washington: The United States says as many as 1,500 Americans may be awaiting evacuation from Afghanistan amid growing warnings Thursday of terrorist threats targeting the Kabul airport as President Joe Biden's deadline for withdrawing troops fast approaches.
Untold thousands of at-risk Afghans are struggling to get into the airport even as many thousands of other Afghans already had been flown to safety in nearly two weeks of round-the-clock flights. AP

Russia says not yet decided to recognise Taliban

AP ■ MOSCOW
The Kremlin says that Russia will closely follow the developments in Afghanistan before making a decision on whether to recognise the Taliban's rule.
Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Thursday that Moscow will watch the Taliban's "future steps to ensure order and security of the country's citizens and provide security for the Russian diplomats."

Canada halts Af evacuations as deadline looms



Evacuees sit in a Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) C-177 Globemaster III transport plane for their flight to Canada from Kabul

Toronto: Canada has ended evacuations from Kabul's airport, a Canadian general said on Thursday, as the clock ticks down on dramatic Western efforts to help people flee the Taliban takeover ahead of a full American withdrawal.
General Wayne Eyre, the country's acting chief of Defence Staff, said all the other countries have to leave the airport before the Americans can wrap up their mission. Canadian military flights evacuated about 3,700 people.
"We stayed in Afghanistan for as long as we could. We were amongst the last to cease evacuation operations. We wish we could have stayed longer and rescued everyone who was so desperate to leave. That we could not is truly heartbreaking, but the circumstances on the ground rapidly deteriorated," Eyre said. AP

US instigating confrontation with naval exercises: Chinese military

PTI ■ BEIJING
China's military on Thursday criticised large scale military exercises held by the US and its allies in the South China Sea and Malabar naval drills by Quad countries, saying Washington is instigating confrontation by "forming gangs" which will lead to tensions.
Practicing unilateralism and instigating confrontation will only lead to tension, instead of bringing about so-called "freedom and openness", Senior Colonel Tan Kefei, a spokesperson for China's Ministry of National Defence, told an online media briefing while commenting on the recent US-led multinational joint exercises in the Indo-Pacific region as well as Malabar naval exercise by Quad countries - India, the US, Australia and Japan.
The US military recently held the Large-Scale Exercise (LSE) 2021 with the UK, Australia and Japan with the aim to strengthen the rules-based regional order and maintain a "free and open Indo-Pacific".
The Malabar naval exercise are scheduled to be held from August 26 to 29 off the coast of Guam amid mounting global concerns over China's growing military muscle-flexing in the Indo-Pacific region.
Tan said that the US, for some time, by perceiving some other countries as its imaginary enemies, "organised large-scale military exercises, formed gangs in relevant waters and showed off its military strength", the Chinese military's official website, chinamil.com.cn, reported.
Such movements of the US have severely undermined regional peace and stability and run counter to the common aspiration of countries in the region to pursue peace, cooperation and development, Tan said.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

See Section U/S 82 Cr. P.C.
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Srinivas, S/o Maman Chand, R/o WZ-43A, Old Shahpura, Prithvi Park, Tilak Nagar, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 543/2017, U/S 420 IPC, P.S. Vikaspuri, New Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Srinivas cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Srinivas has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).
Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Srinivas of FIR No. 543/2017, U/S 420 IPC, P.S. Vikaspuri, New Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint/case on or before 05.10.2021.
By Order
Sh. Deepak Vats,
Metropolitan Magistrate,
Room No. 9, Dwarka Courts,
Delhi

OFFICE OF THE CITY MAGISTRATE /MARRIAGE OFFICER GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR
PUBLIC NOTICE
Ms. Asha Thareja D/o. Late Mr. Sunder Shyam Thareja R/o. 205A, B-10, Udaigiri Apartments, Sector-34, Noida Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, (U.P.) have applied for "Marriageability Certificate" for her, objections, if any to the issuance may be filed on any day upto 03.09.2021 in the office of the undersigned.
Marriage Officer
Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.)

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male named **Umesh S/o Unknown**, R/o Unknown, Age: Approx 38-40 years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5'7", Built: Normal, Face: Round, was wearing Grey colour Printed Shirt and White & Black Half Pant, was found in unconscious condition at Plot No. V-185, Gamri Road, near Dispensary Arvind Nagar, Delhi. He was admitted in JPC Hospital and was declared brought dead by doctor vide MLC No. 3948/20. In this regard a DD No. 68-A, dated 02.07.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Jafraabad, Delhi.
Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.
SHO
P.S. Jafraabad, Delhi
DP/1009/NE/21 Ph. No.: 011-22560191, 22560192

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

N.I.T. No.	S.N.	04-A&B-2021-22-NRCH
1	1	Repair abandoned Dhoabi Ghat area, provision of passage shed from back gate to CT/MRI scan entre and renovation of room No. 50 to 58, Gyne OPD toilet block in Northern Railway Central Hospital in the section of SSE/W/ NRCH under ADEN/NRCH. Similar nature of work: Any civil work other than track work.
2	2	Provision of Medicine store, record rooms at various locations in Northern Railway Central Hospital in the section of SSE/W/ NRCH under ADEN/NRCH. Similar nature of work: Any civil work other than track work.
3	1	Rs. 98,13,229.00/-
3	2	Rs. 52,70,022.00/-
4	1	8 Months
4	2	5 Months
5		Upto 15.00 hrs. on 21.09.2021 Opening of Tender at 15.00 hrs 21.09.2021.
5		Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

No.: 128-W/269/OET/2021-22/NRCH/NIT-04-A & B Dated: 26.08.2021 1928/2021
Serving Customers with a Smile

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
CORRIGENDUM
No. PCMM/CLW/DKAE/E-Procurement/CORRIGENDUM/16, Dated: 24.08.2021. The following Corrigendum of E-Tender/s is for supply of materials for manufacture of Electric Locomotive. The Prospective/likely suppliers are requested to look up the website www.ireps.gov.in for detailed instructions. These are E-Tenders; only electronic offer bids shall be accepted. SI.No.: [47], Tender Notice no.: SI.No. 102 of PCMM/CLW/Dankuni/E-Procurement/21-22/24 Dated: 22-07-2021. Tender No.: 34212749A, Tender Opening Date: Tender Opening Date is to be read as "10-09-2021" in place of "30-08-2021".
PR2-200 PCMM/CLW/DANKUNI
Like us on: www.facebook.com/clwraiyways

Deputy General Manager, Rajasthan House, 7, Prithviraj Road, New Delhi.
F-36/TENDER/RH/2021/151 Date:- 18.08.2021
Bid for Providing and Supplying Kirana Items On Yearly Rate Contract at 7, Prithviraj Road, Rajasthan House, New Delhi are invited from interested bidders. The bid will open from 18.08.2021 at 04:00 P.M. till 25.08.2021 at 04:30 P.M. The tender value is Rs. 70,00,000.00 and other Particulars of the bids may be visited on the procurement portal (<https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>) and (<https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>) of the State.
NIB : GAD2122A0014 Sd/
UBN : GAD2122GLRC00016 Deputy General Manager,
DIPR/C-8436/2021 Rajasthan House, New Delhi.

Deputy General Manager, Rajasthan House, 7, Prithviraj Road, New Delhi.
F-36/TENDER/RH/2021/156 Date:- 18.08.2021
Bid for Providing Linen Washing Work On Yearly Rate Contract at 7, Prithviraj Road, Rajasthan House, New Delhi are invited from interested bidders. The bid will open from 19.08.2021 at 12:00 P.M. till 31.08.2021 at 04:00 P.M. The tender value is Rs. 20,00,000.00 and other Particulars of the bids may be visited on the procurement portal (<https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>) and (<https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>) of the State.
NIB : GAD2122A0015 Sd/
UBN : GAD2122GLRC00017 Deputy General Manager,
DIPR/C-8437/2021 Rajasthan House, New Delhi.

Israeli PM to make case to Biden against Iran nuke pact

AP ■ WASHINGTON
President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett are set to hold their first face-to-face meeting Thursday, and Israel's new leader intends to press Biden to give up his pursuit of reviving the Iran nuclear deal.
Before arriving in Washington, Bennett made clear the top priority of the visit to the White House was to persuade Biden not to return to the nuclear accord, arguing Iran has already advanced in its uranium enrichment, and that sanctions relief would give Iran more resources to back Israel's enemies in the region.

Capitol Police officers sue Trump, allies over insurrection

AP ■ WASHINGTON
US Capitol Police officers who were attacked and beaten during the Capitol riot filed a lawsuit Thursday against former President Donald Trump, his allies and members of far-right extremist groups, accusing them of intentionally sending a violent mob on Jan. 6 to disrupt the congressional certification of the election.
The suit in federal court in Washington alleges Trump "worked with white supremacists, violent extremist groups, and campaign supporters to violate the Ku Klux Klan Act, and commit acts of domestic terrorism in an unlawful effort to stay in power."
The suit was filed on behalf of the seven officers by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. It names the former president, the Trump campaign, Trump ally Roger Stone and members of the extremist groups the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers who were present at the Capitol and in Washington on Jan. 6.
Two other similar cases have been filed in recent months by Democratic members of Congress. The suits allege the actions of Trump and his allies led to the violence siege of the Capitol that injured dozens of police officers, halted the certification of Democrat Joe Biden's electoral victory.

Harris says she urged Vietnam to free political dissidents

Hanoi: US Vice President Kamala Harris said on Thursday she raised issues of human rights abuses and restrictions on political activism in her conversations with Vietnamese leaders this week, but offered no indication those talks bore fruit.
"We're not going to shy away from difficult conversations. Difficult conversations often must be had with the people that you otherwise may have a partnership with," she said at a news conference in Hanoi on Thursday. AP

Novel AI tool to help predict Arctic sea ice loss months earlier

PTI ■ LONDON
Scientists have developed a new artificial intelligence (AI) tool that can more accurately forecast Arctic sea ice conditions months into the future.
The improved predictions could underpin new early-warning systems that protect Arctic wildlife and coastal communities from the impacts of sea ice loss, according to an international team of researchers led by British Antarctic Survey (BAS) and The Alan Turing Institute, UK.
Described in the journal Nature Communications, the AI system, IceNet, addresses the challenge of producing accurate Arctic sea ice forecasts for the season ahead -- something that has eluded scientists for decades.
Sea ice, a vast layer of frozen sea water that appears at the North and South poles, is notoriously difficult to forecast because of its complex relationship with the atmosphere above and ocean below, the researchers said.
The sensitivity of sea ice to increasing temperatures has caused the summer Arctic sea ice area to halve over the past four decades, equivalent to the loss of an area around 25 times the size of Great Britain, they said.

8 KILLED IN FIRING OVER LAND DISPUTE IN PAK

Peshawar: Eight people were killed and 12 others injured in a firing between two rival groups over a land dispute in Pakistan's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, police said. The firing between the two groups occurred in Lower Kurram tribal district of the province, killing eight people. Police said that the firing has stopped following a ceasefire between two groups.

3 INDIAN-ORIGIN MEN ARRESTED IN CANADA

Toronto: Three Indian-origin men in Canada have been arrested and charged with human trafficking in connection with a case involving a victim under 18, a media report has said.

BLACK CAUCUS: SEND 100M VAX TO AFRICA

Washington: Black lawmakers are urging President Joe Biden to donate 100 million more Covid-19 vaccines to Africa, where only 2% of the population is fully vaccinated and the death rate is the highest in the world.



ETHIOPIAN RIGHTS GROUP: 150 REPORTED DEAD
Nairobi: The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission says it has received reports from residents that some 150 people were killed earlier this month in an alleged attack by the Oromo Liberation Army, which the Government declared a terrorist group this year.

MILITARY DRILL BY CHINA, PAK, THAI & MONGOLIA

Beijing: The militaries of China, Pakistan, Mongolia and Thailand will take part in a multinational peacekeeping exercise to be organised by the People's Liberation Army in the country's central Henan province next month, a senior official said here on Thursday.

Trai recommends reducing levies on satellite services

CUTTING OUT INTERMEDIARIES TO LOWER COST

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom regulator Trai on Thursday recommended the Government to reduce/remove various levies imposed on satellite operators as well as measures like avoiding intermediaries in the segment to make services affordable.

The regulator, in its recommendations on licensing framework for satellite-based connectivity for low bit rate applications, has suggested allowing use of all types of satellites for low bit rate connectivity.

It also recommended use of foreign satellites for providing connectivity for a longer

duration than the permissible 3-5 years at present.

Low bit rate services are required for machine-to-machine communications, sensors used for tracking cargo, vehicles, railway and traffic signals, soil content for farming, among others.

"The service licensees should be mandated to establish the earth station in India, corresponding to the chosen foreign satellite or satellite system, prior to using the leased capacities," Trai recommended.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) said providing choice to the VSAT operators to directly negotiate and execute agreements with the satellite system provider will also help in avoiding the intermediaries and making the satellite-based services affordable.

The regulator has not recommended any separate licence for low bit rate services

but has suggested amendment in the existing GMPCS (Global Mobile Personal Communication by Satellite) licence meant for satellite services.

Trai has also pitched for lowering the spectrum usage charges to 1 per cent from 4 per cent for low bit rate satellite connectivity. "Replacing the existing formula-based mechanism, spectrum usage charges for using satellite frequencies under the GMPCS service authorization should be prescribed as 1 per cent of AGR. These charges would cover the entire spectrum charges for handsets/user devices as well as for earth stations," Trai said.

The regulator has also recommended removal of network operations and control centre (NOCC) charges and facilitation charges by the government when hiring foreign capacities from the approved list of foreign players.

Niti Aayog releases NER District SDG Index report; East Sikkim tops chart

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

East Sikkim has topped in terms of meeting sustainable development goals in the Niti Aayog's North Eastern Region (NER) District SDG Index Report 2021-22 and Nagaland's Kiphire featured at the bottom, as per the specified parameters.

It was the release of the first edition of the North Eastern Region (NER) District SDG Index Report and Dashboard 2021-22 by NITI Aayog and Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (M/DoNER) on Thursday. The index measures the performance of the districts of the eight states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their corresponding targets



and ranks the districts based on the same. East Sikkim, with a score of 75.87, ranks first in the region followed by districts Gomati and North Tripura (score 75.73) at the second position. The score for the 103 districts ranges from 53 in Kiphire, Nagaland to 75.87 in East Sikkim, Sikkim, the report said. According to the report, out of the 103 districts considered for ranking, 64 districts belonged to the front runner category while 39 districts were in the performer category in the composite score and ranking of districts.

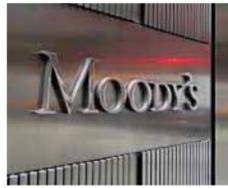
Strong buffers to help Indian banks withstand asset risks: Moody's

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

India's second coronavirus wave is increasing asset risks for banks, but the country's economic recovery, a tightening of loan underwriting criteria, and continued government support will prevent a sharp spike in problem loans, according to a Moody's Investors Service report.

"A severe deterioration of banks' asset quality is unlikely, despite an expected rise in new loan impairments, particularly among individuals and small businesses that were hit hardest by the virus outbreak. This is because government initiatives like the emergency credit linked guarantee scheme (ECLGS) have been effective in providing immediate liquidity for businesses," Moody's Vice President and Senior Credit Officer Alka Anbarasu said.

In addition, accommoda-



tive interest rates and loan restructuring schemes will continue to mitigate asset risks, such that the coronavirus resurgence will delay but not derail the improvements in banks' balance sheets that had begun before the pandemic.

Moody's rated banks also have stronger loss-absorbing buffers, which will help them withstand the asset quality decline and maintain their credit strength. Banks had reinforced these buffers in the past year through increases in capital, loan-loss reserves, and profitability.

NTPC announces recruitment of an all-Female Engineers batch

New Delhi: On Women's Equality Day, NTPC Ltd, India's largest integrated energy company has recruited its first all-Female Engineering Executive Trainees (EETs) batch to reaffirm its stand on diversity and inclusion. NTPC received an overwhelming response of the recruitment advertisement, which was published in April, 2021. The engineering graduates were selected based on the performance in GATE 2021 in the Electrical, Mechanical, Electronics and Instrumentation disciplines. Company has envisioned an all-female Operation Control Room at NTPC in the near future, towards a brighter future ahead for females in the organisation. Out of 50 offers sent by NTPC, 30 Female Executive Trainees (ETs) have already joined the company between 31st July and 6th August 2021.

Markets eke out slim gains; Nifty scales fresh peak

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty ended on a flat note for the second straight session on Thursday amid expiry of monthly derivative contracts and a muted trend overseas.

After trading range-bound through the session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended just 4.89 points or 0.01 per cent higher at 55,949.10.

Extending its rising streak for the fourth day, the broader NSE Nifty advanced 2.25 points or 0.01 per cent to its fresh closing peak of 16,636.90.

Reliance Industries was the top gainer in the Sensex

pack, rising 1.29 per cent, followed by M&M, HCL Tech, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, HUL and Nestle India.

On the other hand, Bharti Airtel, Maruti, PowerGrid, SBI, Tata Steel, NTPC and Sun Pharma were among the laggards, tumbling up to 4.18 per cent.

"Indian market started flat to marginally negative following negative Asian market cues as South Korea's central bank hiked interest rates, making it the first developed economy to do so in the pandemic era," said Narendra Solanki, Head-Equity Research (Fundamental), Anand Rathi.

Bank officers' union opposes National Monetisation Pipeline

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC) on Thursday opposed the National Monetisation Pipeline, terming the move as "wholesale privatisation" of public sector assets across all crucial infrastructure sectors.

The bank officers' union urged the Union government to desist from moving along this "disastrous path of selling family silver". "This wholesale privatisation of infrastructure assets under the garb of 'asset monetisation' is accompanying the disinvestment and strategic

sale of entire PSUs across several sectors, including general insurance companies and banks in the public sector, initiated through the Union Budget 2021.

"Such privatisation will only benefit a handful of large corporates while destroying the foundations of our national economy," it said in a statement. Employees, officers and other stakeholders of public sector enterprises, which collectively serve as the backbone of the economy, are totally opposed to privatisation of public assets in any form, it added.

SAIL aims at reducing net debt to ₹15,000-20,000cr in FY22

Kolkata: Steel Authority of India Ltd is aiming at reducing its net debt to a range of Rs 15,000-20,000 crore in the current fiscal if the prices and demand for the commodity remain stable, a top company official said on Thursday. The Maharashtra PSU has around ₹30,000 crore net debt as of June 30, 2021, down from ₹35,350 crore by end of the previous fiscal. "We are aiming at reducing the debt drastically from around ₹ 30,000 crore now to anywhere between ₹15,000-20,000 crore, depending on steel prices and demand situation," SAIL chairman Soma Mondal said.

MCA says don't interpret CSR spending as source of financing resource gaps in Govt schemes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Corporate Social Responsibility spending under the companies law should not be interpreted as a source of financing the resource gaps in Government schemes, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has said as it issued a detailed set of FAQs for the effective implementation of

CSR norms. Activities undertaken by companies as part of the normal course of business is not considered CSR work. However, the ministry has provided an exemption for companies engaged in R&D activities for new vaccines, drugs and medical devices in their normal course of business with respect to COVID.

The exemption would be in

place for three financial years till FY 2022-23, as per the FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) dated August 25.

"This exclusion is allowed only in case the companies are engaged in R&D in collaboration with organisations as mentioned in item (ix) of Schedule VII and disclose the same in their board reports," the ministry said.

Indian Tobacco Association urges Govt to extend RoDTEP benefits to tobacco

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Tobacco Association on Thursday said it has urged the Government to include tobacco under the tax rebate scheme RoDTEP (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products) with an aim to encourage exports from the sector.

The Government on August 17 announced rates of tax refunds under the export promotion scheme RoDTEP for 8,555 products, such as marine goods, yarn, dairy items. Under the RoDTEP, various central and state duties, taxes, and levies imposed on input products, among others, would be refunded to exporters.

UJVN LTD.
H.O.: 'UJJWAL', Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones : 0135-2763808 & Fax : 0135- 2763507
CIN No. U49101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvn.com

TENDER NOTICE Dated 26.08.2021
Letter No. 613

Office of the Executive Engineer (Maint.), Chibro Power Station, Dakpathar (Dehradun), invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Tender No : CH(Maint.)-09/2021-22. Replacement of Cooling & Bypass pipe line at Chibro Power Station. Estimated cost : ₹24,90,454 (GST extra). Date of availability of bid on website : 27.08.2021, 11:30 hrs. Last date for submission of tender : 18.09.2021, 13:00 hrs. For further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "www.ujvn.com".
(Executive Engineer, Maint., Chibro)

"Avoid Wasteful use of Electricity"

UJVN Limited
H.O.: 'UJJWAL', Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephone: 0135-2763808 & Fax: 0135-2763506
CIN No U49101UR2001SGC025866
Website: www.ujvn.com

Date Extension Notice-04 दिनांक: 25.08.2021
पत्रांक: 605

Due to unavoidable reasons the Date of Submission & opening of the e-NIT No. NCB/01/EE/PCM-DKP/ITN/2021-22 & NCB/02/EE/PCM-DKP/ITN/2021-22 invited by the office of the Executive Engineer Project Civil Maintenance-Dakpathar is being extended as below:
Last Date & Time for submission of bids on the portal Upto 17:00 hrs of 15.09.2021
Date & Time of Opening of bids on the portal at 11:00 hrs of 16.09.2021
Information regarding Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation etc. of tender may be obtained from the website.
Full & Further Details of tender can be seen from the e-procurement portal "https://uktenders.gov.in".
Executive Engineer (PCM)

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

Flipkart adds new warehouses in Karnataka

New Delhi: Walmart-owned Flipkart on Thursday said it has strengthened its supply chain network in Karnataka with the addition of three new facilities ahead of the upcoming festive season, a move that is expected to help create over 14,000 job opportunities.

The new fulfilment centres (warehouses) will help create deeper capabilities to support thousands of sellers, MSMEs, small farmers from the state to cater to the growing customer demand, create more employment opportunities while enabling faster deliveries for consumers, a statement said.

These new facilities will serve sellers of large appliances, furniture, mobile phones, apparel and electronics and are located in Kolar, Hubli and Anekal, it added.

Flipkart has nine supply chain facilities, including fulfilment and sortation hubs in Karnataka spread across nearly 23 lakh square feet area and has created more than 26,000 direct and indirect job opportunities.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that this person **Name:** Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** 40 Years, **Sex:** Male, **Height:** 5 feet 6 inch, **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Injury Mark:** on Right Leg due to Train Accident, **Wearing:** Blue Jeans, Blue sky T-shirt and White Sports Shoes, was found dead on 21.08.2021.

In this regard a DD No. 24A, dated 21.08.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station, New Delhi. The Dead Body has been kept preserved in the Mortuary of AIIMS Trama Centre, Delhi, for 72 hours for identification. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this dead person but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this dead person may kindly inform to the following.

SHO
P.S. Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station, New Delhi
DP/225/RLY/2021 Ph.: 011-24356743, 8750871311

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person **Name:** Unknown, **S/o** Unknown, **R/o** Unknown, **Age:** about 40-45 years, **Height:** 5'6", **Face:** Round, **Complexion :** Wheatish, **Built :** Medium, **Wearing :** White colour half shirt and yellow colour strip & black colour lower & bare footed has been found dead at Avanti Bai Chowk, Near Traffic Police Booth, Pull Mithai, Lahori Gate, Delhi on 19.08.2021. In this regard a case vide DD No. 33A dated 19.08.2021 has been lodged at Police Station Lahori Gate, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved for 72 hours at Subzi Mandi Mortuary, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about this found dead person may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO :
P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi North Dist., Delhi
DP/1445/N/2021 Tel. No. 011-23953776, 23958234

TECHNOFAB ENGINEERING LIMITED
Regd. Office: 913, Hemkunt Chambers, 89 Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110 019, CIN : L74210DL1971PLC005712
Tel : +91-11-2641-1931 / 2641-5961

EXTRACT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS (STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED) FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021

Sr. No.	Particulars	STANDALONE				CONSOLIDATED			
		Quarter Ended 31.03.2021 (Audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2021 (Audited)	Quarter Ended 31.03.2020 (Audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2020 (Audited)	Quarter Ended 31.03.2021 (Audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2021 (Audited)	Quarter Ended 31.03.2020 (Audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2020 (Audited)
1.	Total Income from Operations	1,032.19	2,662.90	501.37	5,653.95	1,032.19	2,662.90	501.37	5,653.95
2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (Before Tax and Exceptional Items)	(435.58)	(8,428.92)	(3,481.56)	(9,626.41)	(392.92)	(8,403.83)	(3,730.89)	(9,392.20)
3.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (Before tax)	(1,090.04)	(12,800.32)	(9,692.55)	(22,594.55)	(1,047.38)	(12,775.23)	(9,941.88)	(22,360.34)
4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period After Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	(1,084.55)	(12,800.32)	(12,787.58)	(24,054.00)	(1,052.34)	(12,785.21)	(13,087.49)	(23,867.70)
5.	Net profit for the period	(1,084.55)	(12,800.32)	(12,787.58)	(24,054.00)	(1,052.34)	(12,785.21)	(13,087.49)	(23,867.70)
6.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (After Tax) and other Comprehensive Income (After Tax))	13.17	5.88	(11.81)	(12.07)	13.17	5.88	(11.81)	(12.07)
7.	Paid-up equity share capital (10,490,000 Equity Shares of Rs. 10/- each.)	1,049.00	1,049.00	1,049.00	1,049.00	1,049.00	1,049.00	1,049.00	1,049.00
8.	Reserves (Excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Balance Sheet		(13,275.79)		(481.35)		(12,007.31)		772.03
9.	Earnings Per Share (EPS) (before extraordinary items) (of Rs. 10/- each)	(10.34)	(122.02)	(121.90)	(229.30)	(10.03)	(121.88)	(124.76)	(227.53)
	Diluted:	(10.34)	(122.02)	(121.90)	(229.30)	(10.03)	(121.88)	(124.76)	(227.53)

NOTE:- 1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Annual Financial Results is available on the Company's Website www.technofabengineering.com and also available on the Stock Exchanges websites i.e. (www.bseindia.com) and (www.nseindia.com) and also 2. The results were placed before and reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting held on 26th August, 2021 and subsequently approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on the same date and the same has been audited by the Statutory Auditors of the Company. 3. The figures appearing in the quarter ended 31 March 2021 is the balancing figure after deducting the figure for the nine months ended 31 December 2020 from those for the year ended 31 March 2021.

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors of Technofab Engineering Limited
Sd/-
Arjun Gupta (Chairman & Managing Director)
DIN-00012092

Date: 26/08/2021
Place: Faridabad

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL WELFARE, ASSAM
M.G. ROAD UZANBAZAR, GUWAHATI-1

No.DSW(ICDS)/G/SNP/98/2021/51

CORRIGENDUM

Reference to Eol No.DSW(ICDS)/G/SNP/98/2021/1, dated 09/08/2021 in regard to 'Lifting of rice (to be allotted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD, Govt. of India) from FCI depots in Assam and Re-packing of Lifted Rice from FCI Depots in Assam and supply of other food stuff etc. (and packing thereof)' as Take Home Ration (THR)/ Hot Cooked Meal (HCM) for various Anganwadi Centres and Mini-Anganwadi Centres of Assam, the following modifications are hereby notified through this corrigendum.

(1) In 3. Instruction, Group -A, Point No. 10 at Page No. 5 of Tender Document may be read as:
'Handling, Transportation and unloading for delivery upto the ICDS Project.'
Instead of
'Handling, Transportation and unloading for delivery upto the AWCs'

(2) In 4. DOCUMENTS/PARTICULARS REQUIRED FOR TECHNICAL BID, Point No. 10 at Page No. 6 of Tender Document may be read as:
'The bidders must furnish minimum of EMD of Rs. 50.00 Lakhs and upper Cap of EMD shall be 250.00 Lakhs only which will have to be furnished in the form of Crossed Demand Draft / Banker's Cheque/ Fixed Deposit/Bank Guarantee only issued by Scheduled Commercial Bank drawn in favour of the Director of Social Welfare, Assam and payable at Guwahati.'
Instead of
'The bidders must furnish minimum of EMD of Rs. 50.00 Lakhs and upper Cap of EMD shall be 250.00 Lakhs only which will have to be furnished in the form of Crossed Demand Draft / Banker's Cheque/ Fixed Deposit only issued by Scheduled Commercial Bank drawn in favour of the Director of Social Welfare, Assam and payable at Guwahati.'

(3) In modification of the earlier corrigendum issued vide No. DSW (ICDS) G/SNP/98/2021/14, Dated 10th August, 2021. In **COST NORMS AND CALORIFIC NORMS UNDER SUPPLEMENTARY NUTRITION PROGRAMME (SNP) at Page No. 3 of Eol Document** the cost norms for the target group of 3-6 years children may be read as:

Target group	Cost Norms	Calorific Norms
3-6 years Children	(i) Rs. 7.40 per child per day for Lifting of rice) from FCI depots in Assam and Re-packing of Lifted Rice from FCI Depots in Assam and supply of other food stuff etc. to provide Hot Cooked Meal (HCM) which will be paid to vendors. (ii) Rs. 0.60 per child per day to meet the expenditure for fuel and condiments, vegetables, transportation etc. for which fund will be provided to Anganwadi Centre Management Committee.	500 Calories & 12-15 gms protein
3-6 years Children	(iii) Rs. 7.00 per child per day for Lifting of rice) from FCI depots in Assam and Re-packing of Lifted Rice from FCI Depots in Assam and supply of other food stuff etc. to provide Hot Cooked Meal (HCM) which will be paid to vendors. (iv) Rs. 1.00 per child per day to meet the expenditure for fuel and condiments, vegetables, transportation etc. for which fund will be provided to Anganwadi Centre Management Committee.	500 Calories & 12-15 gms protein

Director, Social Welfare, Assam
UZANBAZAR, Guwahati-1

Janasanyog /C/497/721



For the past week or so *Chehre* has been generating quite the buzz, and for all the right reasons. Originally scheduled to release in theatres in June 2020, before the pandemic hit, the team behind the *Chehre*, chose to not take the OTT route and instead bide its time. Earlier this year, in April, it was announced once again that the film is set to release in theatres. However, that was when the second wave struck, with the steadily increasing number of Covid positive cases. And here we are, today is August 27 and *Chehre* is finally being aired in theatres across the country.

Rumy Jafry, the director, credited the producer of *Chehre*, Anand Pandit, for being at his patient best and believing in the project. "I have to let you know that, as a director, this film was made keeping in mind the audience in theatres. I have the constant urge to keep doing things that I haven't done before. Part of the reason why I chose to work on a thriller is that the scope is limitless. I can play with the lighting, background music, and shots and so on. Keeping in mind the technology and tools that are available in these times, we brought in the best of the best, like Resul Pookutty, so that we had a fitting end product. I don't have any qualms against OTT, it has opened so many interesting avenues for the audience as well as people in the industry. But Anand *bhai* agreed to wait for the situation to get better since the audience deserves to watch this incredible piece of cinema in the theatres for a wholesome experience. All credit to Anand *bhai*, for being at his patient best and recognising the value of *Chehre*," he shared.

A visibly excited Jafry could not stop gushing about the film and how it turned out to be better than what he had expected. He expressed, "Honestly, I did not know what to expect. And when I say that, I do not mean that I was anxious about the audience's response, though it is



A NEW FACE IN CINEMA

With the AMITABH BACHCHAN-starrer, *Chehre*, set to release in theatres today, CHRISTY VARGHESE catches up with the director, RUMY JAFRY

always nice to receive some positive feedback (laughs). When I first set foot in the industry, it took me three years to convince people to trust my ability as a director. And, well, here I am. But I have to admit, I was glad when people reached out to me with glowing reviews of the trailer. That made me think that I was on the right path and that I ought to believe in myself more often. I can't wait for the film to be released."

Elaborating on his experience of working with a stalwart such as Amitabh Bachchan, Jafry remarked, "I have worked with him in two projects in the past and it is always a delight to work with him. He is a thorough professional, through and through; so disciplined, dedicated and involved that there is absolutely no stress for the director on the set, in fact making my



work on the sets easier. You will not feel that such a senior actor, a superstar is present on your set."

He went on to reveal, "We shot a huge chunk of the film in Poland and Slovakia, that too in December. I was forewarned by a lot of my peers who were caught off guard when they learnt that I

would be shooting in Poland with Bachchan *ji*. I remember this one time when it was -14° and despite some discomfort, he still completed the shoot without a fuss."

As the conversation proceeded that part of the excitement was due to something Jafry had done for the first time in his career. "I feel like

a newcomer all over again. I wrote a song for the first time in my life, and would you believe it if I say that it is the title track of the film, which was recited by Bachchan *ji* and composed by Vishal and Shekhar," he shared with a wide smile.

When we asked him about his formula for work, he replied unabashedly, "I have decided that I will never repeat myself. I would hate to serve the same, boring stuff to viewers. I want to explore and come up with more incredible material for the audience. Truth be told, I have three projects ready, *sab likh k rakha hai*. But we all know how this industry works; I would like to take things one step at a time. I am sure that *Chehre* will make more people trust my vision. Dekh lena, *Chehre ke baad aur achche film banaunga main*."

Impawssible to resist

This International Dog Day, OKCupid reveals the depth of the connection between humans and our furry friends. By TEAM VIVA

Who doesn't love waking up to warm fuzzy cuddles in the morning or having someone wait at the door when they return home from work after a long time? For those of us who aren't dating, this companionship is offered by innocent round eyes and tails that start wagging every single time there is food around; our furry four-legged friends that make our hearts melt every time they smile.

One of the purest forms of love that exists is the one between a person and their pets. One's ability to showcase love and affection can be determined from how they treat their pet — qualities that are essential to a human relationship too. OkCupid has always been a platform which empowers users to find their kind of love based on shared interests, quirks and beliefs and for some daters, their pets are simply part of the package! On account of International Dog Day, celebrated yesterday, the premiere dating app, shared data from its in-app questions on how millennial daters in their search for unconditional love, look at the relationships their potential partners have with their furry friends.

Responses shared by daters on the app suggest that 67 per cent users would either love to have a furry friend, or already do. Those who are on the lookout for love also have a soft spot for rescued animals, with 81 per cent users saying that they would date a person who rescues stray animals and brings them home. Confirming this further, 66 per cent said they would prefer to adopt a pet rather than purchasing one from a breeder. Coming to how these adorable animals can help daters in their search for love, pets are also the purr-fect conversation starters for 31 per cent millennials, coming in a close second behind talking about goals, plans and wishes. In fact, 53 per cent users feel that pet owners who 'baby-talk' with their pets are endearing. Fair to say, millennials feel that talking in cute 'baby voices' to one's pets



★ ARE YOU A CAT PERSON OR A DOG PERSON?

Most users on OkCupid are pet lovers, with 41 per cent saying they prefer dogs. 26 per cent saying they love both dogs and cats, 6 per cent love cats exclusively, while 27 per cent were of the opinion that they don't like either.

★ DO YOU LIKE LARGE DOGS?

63 per cent responded with a resounding yes for the large burly animals, while 37 per cent would prefer small dogs running around in their lives.

★ WHEN A DOG LICKS YOUR FACE, WHAT IS YOUR REACTION?

42 per cent users claimed they would respond with 'Aww, how cute!' when a dog licks their face and showers them with kisses while 26 per cent users would prefer to not let dogs lick their face, and the remaining 32 per cent aren't exactly sure how they would react.

★ WOULD YOU RUN INTO A BURNING BUILDING TO RESCUE YOUR PET?

59 per cent said they would rush to rescue their pet without a doubt, and only 1 per cent said that they wouldn't. Well, that's comforting.

shows a person's sensitive side, a great quality to look for when searching for your kind of love!

To further understand how OkCupid's users feel about these four-legged bundles of joy and how their pet beliefs can impact their search for love, the dating app's study revealed some notable insight for the following questions:

★ WOULD YOU ALLOW A PET TO SLEEP ON YOUR BED?

43 per cent users have said they would allow their pet to sleep on their bed alongside them, while 32 per cent would not prefer their pets to sleep on their bed.

FASHION SCAPE

WE'VE GOT THE RETRO LOOK

On the fourth day of the Indian Couture Week (ICW), regal charm took centre stage as, the designers lent a modern touch to some traditional ensembles. By TEAM VIVA

ASHIMA-LEENA

Nazm-e-Mahal by Leena Singh is the story of the quintessential royal queen who values the old world charm. She is sophisticated, elegant and is empowered in her own demeanor. The poise in her gait portrays the epitome of her purity with timeless radiance and majestic epiphany.

Ashima-Leena (AL) couture - 2021 collection was adorned with the magic of royalty yet drenched with simplicity reflecting the pure soul of a princess belonging to the Mughal era. The collection combined delicate hand embroidery with meticulously curated woven textiles, with classic AL royal silhouettes worn by *maharanis* in palaces in the Mughal era.

The high point of this collection was its antique brocade sarees which have been sourced from the original wardrobes of the *maharanis* from the palaces of Rajasthan, and have been restored by the designers' weavers from Banaras. The warp and the weft of the weaves were infused with pure gold and pure silver



strains using a technique which has become extinct over the years. The subdued beautiful colours of light turquoise, light pink, light peach and vibrant purple coupled with rich heavy weaves of the beautiful antique sarees spoke of the classic and subdued taste and style of *maharanis* of that era.

The collection comprised classic blouses, circular lehengas, antique delicate sarees with jeweled tassels, brocade-woven odhnis with antique gold fabrics, and re-interpreted lengthened jackets that can be worn with various classic silhouettes.

The purity and the simplicity of the *maharanis* of bygone era were reflected and authentically portrayed in these most exclusive pieces of art, with special techniques of restoration. The brilliant selection of hues transformed textures into a chromatic scale of charming colors exuding an old-world charm.

Nazm-e Mahal can best be likened to a story that was woven beautifully with rich textiles, and employed magical restoration, to produce a confluence of the exquisite traditional wardrobes of *maharanis* with timeless royal silhouettes.

AMIT GT

The name of the collection this time is *Scintilla* which means a tiny spark of light. *Scintilla* has always allured us, the very first sliver of light at the dawn or in a pitch dark sky when we see a star shining, or in a total eclipse the first spark of light that shines on a world shrouded in darkness is called *scintilla*. It breaks the darkness both from outside and within. This collection is an attempt to depict the exultation nature celebrates through brilliant blooms, scintillating constellation, dew drops, snow falls or vivid colors of the sky. We depicted these elements through water lilies and other blooms, birds, constellations or fireworks and dew drops through signature brushstrokes like linear hand embroidery," said Amit, speaking on the occasion.

This time the sheer scale of the collection's trains and bustles in gowns as well as lehengas were far more dramatic and voluminous. And from what Amit said, we understood that it was all about the scintillating emotions of the bride, depicted through her ensembles.

Ruffles, scrunched textures, feathers and ingenious saree drapes, trains and bustles are something we all were used to seeing from Amit, over the past decade. However, this time around, brush stroke linear embroideries seem to be taking centre stage. Admittedly, Amit was ahead of his time when over a decade and a half ago he was showing dramatic ball gowns with long trains and bustles, along with saree gowns which are now a *de rigueur* in every Indian wedding. Duchesse satin gowns with detachable trains with large bows, organza textured ball gowns, saree drape gowns had been



a constant feature of Amit's collection over the years. Rachel Weisz, Eva Longoria, Elizabeth Gillies, Toni Braxton, Avril Lavigne are some notable names which have adorned his creations. "I always believed in pushing the envelope and making a way forward in fashion and I will continue to do more with more chutzpah and vigour and ardour," Amit signed off with a flourish.



SHANTNU & NIKHIL

Like an unlikely, shimmering *Lwaterbody* defying the withering heat of the Thar, Shantnu and Nikhil's collection stood out for its splendour and unapologetic glamour. The designers said that *Oasis* is, in essence, their response to the need of our times — beauty to those deprived of it, glamour to those missing it, power to those feeling helpless. Proportioned 70:30, the lineup consisted of menswear primarily, with key womenswear silhouettes that added a new dimension to the overall look.

On offer, the famed draped *kurtas* for men, now achieved in kaleidoscopic prints on the finest of silks. These were paired with armour-like *bundis* and military-inspired short *bandhgalas* in black. The new Shantnu and Nikhil cowl trousers updated the dhoti silhouette, and went perfectly with both, the shorter jackets as well as the longer sherpas, all topped with jewelled brooches and regalia-inspired accessories. For women, the designers



blurred the boundaries between ball gowns and lehengas, creating hybrid styles that would be suited to anywhere from New York to New Delhi. Voluminous drapes met expertly constructed bodices to form one-of-a-kind pieces that wouldn't be out of place in a dark, stormy fairytale. Embellished with exquisite hand-embroideries, they shimmered with crystals, while leather appliques lent a powerful statement to each look. Here, the signature Shantnu and Nikhil crimson lehengas took centre-stage, standing out of the crowd with their softer appeal and painstakingly executed embellishments all done by the hands of master artisans.

The colour palette travelled from gold to navy, reds to blacks, punctuated with multicolour couture prints developed in-house and transferred onto the most luxurious fabrics. The campaign storytelling embodied the same spirit of modernity which blended beautifully with the courageous voice of the collection. The backdrop of the campaign was set in a space which reflected a similar energy — The Suryagarh, Jaisalmer.

TRENDBLAZER

'AN IMMERSIVE AND DELIGHTFUL EXPERIENCE'

Renowned singer HARIHARAN is all set to perform in a live digital session today. He will not only be performing, but will also engage in an interactive session with his fans on TakaTak Manch, an initiative by short video platform MX TakaTak.

Commenting on the collaboration, Hariharan said, "Singing live in front of my fans has always been a fantastic experience. The move from performing on-ground to now performing live on digital platforms has been immersive and delightful."

fairtalk

ABHISHEK BACHCHAN



"Had a freak accident in Chennai on the set of my new film. Fractured my right hand. Needed surgery to fix it, so took a quick trip back home to Mumbai. Surgery done, all patched-up and casted. And now back in Chennai, to resume work. As they say, The show must go on! And as my father said, '*mard ko dard nahin hota!*' Ok, ok, it did hurt a little."

dailytalk

ANAND PANDIT



We wanted to shoot in unexplored, scenic locations of Europe to provide due justice to the script. The incessant snow had indeed made shooting difficult in some places but even in sub-zero conditions when we thought it wouldn't be possible to shoot, Amitabh Bachchan *saab* was the first one on set, such was his commitment."

LOVES HIS WORK: THE WEEKND

Canadian singer-songwriter THE WEEKND says he loves being creative and that he struggles to stay away from his work for too long. When asked if he's ever able to wind down and rest, he shared, "I don't even know what winding down really means. I just love work, you know... I love to work. I love my job and I love to create. If I do take a vacation, it can't be for too long because I feel like I'm missing out on everything that I could have been doing."



A CLOUD-9 CULINARY EXPERIENCE

KHUSHBU KIRTI counts the refurbished Wok In The Clouds (WITC), CP, as a favourite hang-out for all age groups

As we walked into the entrancing atmosphere at Wok In The Clouds (WITC), the establishment greeted us with classic pop music, symbols and signs suggesting beloved old bands and retro music with Marilyn Monroe waving at us from the wall, and dim lighting and cool air to compensate for the scorching heat outside. The classy look of the extensive bar only added to the sophistication of the restaurant. The happy customers around, ranged from young couples to entire families and the comfort level was clearly evident on their faces.

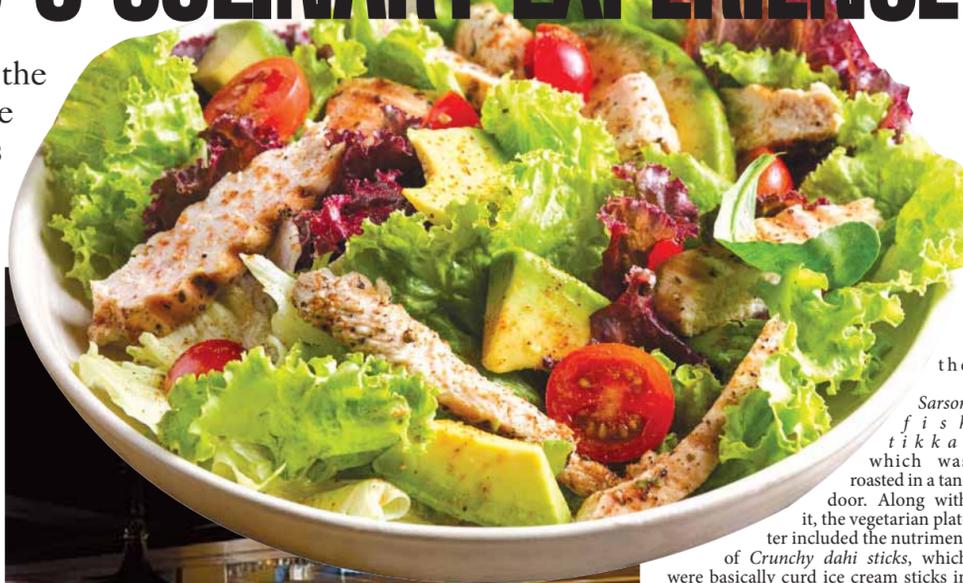
As an art lover, I was specifically engrossed in observing a bronze replica of the Vitruvian Man and I, for a moment, did nothing but awe at the brilliance of the architect.

We were welcomed warmly by Neha Sarna, who talked about how the customers were drawn back to this warmth and the classics. The significance of the quality of the product was also emphasised by the CEO Deepak Tandon, who mentioned that an entrepreneur starting a restaurant needs the following three things: a strong product, clarity, and determination.

Since its establishment in 2002, WITC has branched out, and the comparatively newer branch in Connaught Place, New Delhi, is catching eyes quicker than usual. On the subject of the cafe+bar exuding an urban-ish vibe, Sarna commented, "Here the main-course is all pre-plated. WITC is a more contemporary version of its older counterparts."

Thanks to its uniqueness of blending tradition with modernity, the multi-cuisine restaurant with its diverse menu still finds its peak popularity in traditional dishes like *Dal makhani*, *Dum biryani*, *Spicy tofu with green veggies*, et al. However, what was commendable was their modern touch, embellishing the traditions and the 19 years legacy that the chain of restaurants carried with it. The conventions were grazed with a stroke of novelty with savoury dishes like *Spaghetti with creamy pesto sauce*, *Prawn patia*, *Lemon fish*, *Sizzling brownie*, and so on. The vast cuisines incorporate that of Indian, Oriental, Mexican, Lebanese, Italian, Sizzlers, and Beverages.

The exotic cocktails' session commenced with *Demon gin* which was an amalgamation of squeezed lemon, apple and



the *Sarson tikka*, which was roasted in a tandoor. Along with it, the vegetarian platter included the nutriment of *Crunchy dahi sticks*, which were basically curd ice cream sticks in glasses, with a crunchy twist, *Bharwa gol-gappe*, adorned with curd and namkeen, were extremely appetizing. The aesthetic appeal was so endearing, nobody could stop themselves from clicking pictures as the dishes kept coming in one after the other. The representation of the WITC *Tandoori chicken*, *Cherry pepper chicken* and *Chilli chicken oyster sauce* was at par with the taste and competed for finger-licking dishes. The taste of the succulent sauce on the *Dynamite Prawns* was sweet and the crunchiness only added to its flavours.



orange juice, and tonic water on the base of gin. The tastes swerved together as if rendering a different kind of freshness and relaxation to the mind. The bourbon base gin, as the name suggested, contained the goodness of bourbon, sugar and water.

The first dish served to us was delicious *Chicken pistachio tom yum*. It would not be wrong to say that I had never tasted a better combination of white sauce, chicken pieces and pistachio. The warm soup soothed our insides. We were not finished, yet, when we were served with *Smoky avocado salad*, and *Lemon fish*. The piquant flavours of the tossed and fried lemon fish dissolved in our mouths, which was way different than

I could not imagine eating more food, but the scrumptiousness made it a most mandatory to not miss anything. Were we experiencing FOMO? Perhaps, because I, further, got a *South Indian gimlet* made for myself, customised, with the base of gin, spices, and juice. Moreover, it is a sin to say no to desserts and so we were served with a range of luscious dishes like *Angoori rabdi*, the grapes in the sweet rabdi had an intoxicating experience by itself. *Sizzling brownie*, the *Kulfi platter*, with mango, rose and *kesar* and *pista* flavours giving it an appearance of a colourful delicacy, and an aesthetically pleasing and moreish *Apple pie*.

We were informed of WITC's brand Meethi, and on tasting its sweets, it was impossible for me to not mention the toothsome *Kaju katli*, *Figs barfi*, *Doda barfi*, and *Pedas*. My favourite would be *Kaju katli* - you could taste the cashews, sugar, and milk as if freshly mixing and melting in your mouth.

I highly recommend the *Chicken pistachio tom yum*, *Spaghetti with creamy pesto sauce*, *Rose kulfi*, and *Demon gin* for this would spell a perfect weekend getaway meal!



Rise and shine!

Lack of nutrition can impact the quality of sleep, says **LAKSHITA JAIN**

You are what you eat" may be a cliché statement, but it reflects the fact that nutrition serves as a backbone for health. Providing the right amount of food can reduce the risk of obesity, diabetes, and improve heart health. These facts are well-known, but many people are unaware that their poor diet can also affect sleep.

Certain foods and drinks can make it easier or harder to get the sleep that one needs. Enough sleep is associated with maintaining a healthier body weight and can be beneficial for people who are trying to lose weight or have health conditions like thyroid, blood pressure and diabetes.

It's no secret that both a healthy diet and a good sound sleep play an important role in our health, but this secret is often overlooked.

Should dieting be avoided for better sleep?

Very low calorie diet or a very high calorie diet will make it difficult to sleep. Erratic diet trends of fasting to lose weight will create sleep problems in the long term. Empty stomach or too full stomach affects the quality of sleep. Loud snoring is a common sign of overeating. Overeating or junk eating can make you feel constipated, nauseous, gassy or acidic at night which may keep you awake at night.

Consuming excess refined or rich carbohydrates diets, especially during the latter half of the day like sugar, sodas, pastries, and *maida* can affect the way you sleep.

High consumption of coffee and tea during examinations, work or because of habit leads to insomnia. Caffeine dehydrates your body and alerts your brain throughout the night causing sleeplessness, anxiety, frequent nighttime awakenings, and overall poorer sleep quality. Cutting back the caffeine intake as a pre workout can be beneficial for some.

What kind of diet should be followed for better sleep?

Consume a balanced diet. Researchers have shown having a balanced amount of carbohydrates- protein and fats improves the quality of sleep.

Fat rich diet takes time to be digested. Reducing to 20-30 per cent fats and till 50 per cent carbohydrates will help.

Add a wide range of vitamins and minerals like Vitamin A, D, C, calcium, magnesium and potassium along with bal-

anced carbohydrate- protein and fats. Very late dinner can cause gastric problems.

Certain hormones are considered to be driving factors behind these poor nutritional choices associated with sleep deprivation. The normal production of leptin and ghrelin, hormones that help control appetite and hunger, is thrown off even after short periods of inadequate sleep.

Other chemicals in the brain that help guide food choices may also be impacted by lack of sleep. In addition, sleep is known to affect concentration, decision-making, and mood, all of which can play into the types of foods we incorporate into our daily diet.

Some foods that will help improve your quality of sleep:

MILK
Milk contains tryptophan and melatonin that may help you fall asleep. Tryptophan is an amino acid found in a variety of protein-containing foods. It plays an important role in the production of the neurotransmitter known as serotonin.

CHAMOMILE TEA
Stress is another marker for poor sleep. Having two cups of chamomile flower may reduce stress and anxiety and improve sleep quality.

ASHWAGANDHA
Ashwagandha is a magical herb for every health condition and also for sleep. Mix ¼ spoon of *ashwagandha* powder with a glass of milk or make it in tea form. Have it one hour after dinner.

BANANAS
Bananas are rich in magnesium and potassium which helps in relaxing our muscles and may be beneficial to improve the quality of sleep. Have it with milk one hour after dinner.

B12 RICH FOODS
Caffeine awakens your mind and helps you workout or focus more. But it dehydrates the body in the long run and can cause anxiety and sleeplessness. Adding B12 supplement gives the same focus and alertness but will also improve the quality of sleep.

AJWAIN AND METHI
Ajwain with honey will help you relax or two teaspoons juice of *methi* leaves along with one teaspoon of honey taken daily.

(The author is a certified clinical dietician, diabetes educator, meat technologist, and the founder of NUTR.)

R E C I P E S



BHATTI DA MURGH BIRYANI

WHAT YOU NEED

- Chicken leg and thigh: 900 gm
- Hung yogurt: 120 gm
- Lemon juice: 10 ml
- Garlic paste: 30 gm
- Ginger paste: 30 gm
- Kashmiri chilli powder: 8-10 gm
- Turmeric powder: 8-10 gm
- Crushed black pepper: 8-10 gm
- Salt to taste
- Mustard oil: 150 ml
- Chicken stock (reduced and thick): 1 ltr
- Cumin powder: 8-10 gm
- Kebab masala: 5-6 gm
- Garam masala: 8-10 gm
- Fresh cream: 25 ml
- Fresh coriander sprigs: 10-12

METHOD

- Wash and dry pat the chicken

thigh and leg. Apply the first marinade of salt, ginger, garlic paste and lemon juice.

- Then keep aside for 20 minutes.

For the final marinade:

- Mix hung curd, Kashmiri red chilli paste, coriander powder, turmeric powder, cumin powder, kebab masala, garam masala, crushed black pepper and mustard oil and place the chicken with the first marinade into the second marinade mixture.

For the chicken:

- Sear on an open charcoal grill on all sides to seal all the juices.
- Cook in the tandoor till 75 per cent is done and rest sprinkle with kebab masala, cream and chopped coriander.

Courtesy: Chef Gautam Mehrishi at Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel.

GULAB JAMUN THANDAI MOUSSE

WHAT YOU NEED

- For gulab jamun:
 - Cow milk *mawa*: 100 gm
 - *Maida*: 20 gm
 - Pista: 5 gm
 - Saffron: 6 strands
 - *Elaichi* powder: 2 gm
 - Desi ghee: 200 ml
- For sugar syrup:
 - Sugar: 100 gm
 - Water: 100 ml
- For *thandai* mousse:
 - Whipped cream: 100 gm

- Thandai syrup: 30 ml
- Veg gelatin: 2 gm

METHOD

- For gulab jamun:
 - Grate *mawa*, add *maida* and knead to form a smooth dough.
 - Make six equal balls and stuff with pista and saffron.
 - Heat desi ghee in a pan and fry gulab jamun on slow heat.
- For sugar syrup:
 - In a pan, put sugar & water and boil till one string consistency.
 - Remove from heat & keep it luke warm and add fried gulab jamuns.



For thandai mousse:

- Mix whipped cream, thandai syrup & gelatin together.

For final product:

- Take two bowls and add three piece of gulab jamun in each.
- Equally pour the mousse mixture on the top of gulab jamun.
- Chill in refrigerator for an hour.
- Garnish with chopped pistachio.

Courtesy: Masaledaar Modern India Kitchen, Thane.

DRY FRUIT AND NUT ROLLS

WHAT YOU NEED

- Happilo Omani dates: 1 cup
- Happilo Californian pistachios: a handful
- Happilo Californian almonds: a handful
- Happilo raisins: few
- Happilo cashews nuts: few
- Coconut powder: 1 cup
- Ghee: 1 tbsp
- Milk: 1 cup
- Sugar: half cup
- Figs (if preferred)

METHOD

- Finely chop a few almonds and cashew nuts and roast them in a frying pan by



pouring in some ghee.

- Pour the milk in a pan and add sugar. Slowly stir both the ingredients on a low flame.
- After the milk has boiled a little, add in the dates, raisins, almonds, pistachios and cashew nuts. Stir the mixture.
- Continue to cook on a low flame until the mixture begins to thicken and becomes a little dense.
- Add the coconut powder into this mixture and continue cooking until the mixture becomes comparatively dense.
- Add some ghee to give it a nice flavour and texture.
- Once the mixture has cooled down, take smaller portions and shape them into rolls.
- Place on a plate and serve.

Courtesy: Happilo.

JIM BEAM BOURBON SOUR

WHAT YOU NEED

- Jim Beam bourbon: 2 parts
- Lemon juice: 1 part
- Lemon lime soda: ½ parts
- Sugar: ½ tsp
- Lemon wedge
- Cherry

METHOD

- Mix Jim Beam with lemon juice, sugar, and ice in a shaker.
- Shake vigorously and strain into a whiskey sour glass.
- Garnish with lemon wedge and cherry

Courtesy: Jim Beam Bourbon Sour by Beam Suntory



ENGLAND ALL OVER INDIA

Root completes hat-trick of tons as hosts take 345 run lead

PTI ■ LEEDS

Joe Root stamped his authority over the Indian bowling attack with a third masterful hundred in as many games, putting England in a dominant position on day two of the second Test here at Headingley on Thursday.

Though India won at Lord's, they were not able to trouble Root (121 off 165) and the England skipper extended his purple patch with his 23rd Test hundred and sixth of the year to take his team to a commanding 423 for eight at stumps on day two.

England now lead by 345 runs.

After openers Rory Burns (61 off 153) and Haseeb Hameed (68 off 195) gave England the start they were desperately looking

for, Root and Dawid Malan (70 off 128) shared a brisk 139-run stand off 189 balls to pile misery on the Indians who were all out for 78 on day one.

Root as usual was a delight to watch, scoring runs at will and all around the wicket. His 14 boundaries included his trademark punch through the cover, which brought about his fifty before he flicked one

between mid on and midwicket to get to three figures.

Such was the range on offer that he also swept and reverse swept left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja. Barring Mohammed Shami, the Indian pacers had another ordinary day and Root made them pay for their erratic line and length.

With his 23rd hundred, Root equalled former skipper and middle-order batsman Kevin Pietersen's record and is now only behind Alastair Cook (33).

Jasprit Bumrah managed to get one past Root's watertight defence late in the final session to end a memorable innings in front of his home crowd. India managed to pick five wickets in the session but the damage had already been done.

Malan, playing his first Test in three years, lent much needed solidity in an otherwise struggling line-up. With the confidence that the southpaw played, it didn't seem that he was away from the five-day game for a long time.

India find themselves thrown in at the deep end and will have to bat extremely well to first avoid an innings defeat and then save the game from there on.

The pitch has dried out and Indian pacers failed to get purchase out of it for the second day running. Earlier, runs came thick and fast for England in the afternoon session as India bowlers appeared toothless, both with old and new ball. The hosts added 116 runs in the session with Root and Malan collecting runs comfortably.

Against the run of play, Malan

ENG CENTURY OPENING STAND VS INDIA (AT HOME)

Runs	Pair	Venue	Season	Result
114*	Marcus Trescothick /Michael Vaughan	The Oval	2002	Match drawn
186	Alastair Cook/Andrew Strauss	Birmingham	2011	England won
135	Rory Burns/Haseeb Hameed	Leeds	2021	—

Faisel Features

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Against the run of play, Malan

These days I bowl less in nets & save it for matches: Anderson

PTI ■ LEEDS

A geless English pacer James Anderson says the secret to his longevity in Test cricket lies in cutting down on his time at the nets to save it for the matches.

Anderson's masterclass was full on display in an awe-inspiring spell of 8-5-6-3 with the new ball as England bowled India out for 78 after Virat Kohli opted to bat in the third Test at Headingley on Wednesday.

"As I get older, I feel like I have to work that little bit harder in the gym. I feel like I bowl less in the nets, and try to save it for when it matters in the middle," the 39-year-old said after the first day's play.

"The biggest test in Test cricket is mentally getting yourself up for bowling big spells and playing in big games. It's about keeping yourself switch on through games and switch off when you are not bowling — that's something I've always had."

Just a week ago during the Lord's Test, Anderson, having grabbed a five-for in the first innings, was over-

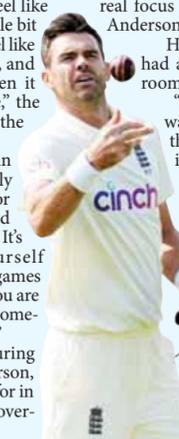
bowed in the second as the Indian tail frustrated the hosts with its remarkable resilience and invaluable runs.

Anderson said that after all the talk during the Lord's Test, the aim here was to "shut the noise" and focus on the job.

"We have made a conscious effort of trying to just focus on us, on what we do well and try and ignore everything else, the outside noise or wherever there might be going on, and make sure there's a real focus on what we do well," Anderson said.

He did admit that they had a chat in the dressing room.

"Yeah, I think there was a bit of chat about that. We were just making a point of trying to focus on what we do well. 'We're individuals, at the end of it. We have made a conscious effort to try and focus only on us, what we do well; try and ignore everything else, the outside noise, or whatever that might be, going on.'"



shortpasses

TIAFOE, CARRENO BUSTA WIN

WINSTON-SALEM: Frances Tiafoe followed his victory over Andy Murray by beating Thiago Monteiro 7-5, 7-6 (2) in the third round of the Winston-Salem Open. Top-seeded Pablo Carreno Busta also reached the quarterfinals after beating Dominik Koepfer 6-2, 6-3. But Daniel Evans was knocked out 6-4, 7-6 (4) by Richard Gasquet.

NO NICE FANS ALLOWED

NICE: Nice's home match with Bordeaux will be played without supporters on Saturday, following fan violence in the team's previous league game against Marseille.

MCTOMINAY UNDERGOES SURGERY

MANCHESTER: Scott McTominay has undergone groin surgery and misses this Sunday's Premier League clash with Wolves with his club Manchester United saying they "hope to have him back soon".

BAMFORD GETS ENG CALL-UP

LONDON: Leeds striker Patrick Bamford received his first call-up to the England squad for three World Cup qualifiers next month against Hungary, Andorra and Poland.

RAMIZ RAJA TO REPLACE MANI

KARACHI: Former captain Ramiz Raja will be the new PCB chairman after Ehsan Mani stepped down from the post on Thursday after completing his three-year term.

BAYERN BEAT BREMER 12-0

BERLIN: Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting scored four goals on Wednesday as Bayern Munich thrashed fifth-tier minnows Bremer 12-0 in the first round of the German Cup.

CHOPRA DECIDES TO END SEASON

NEW DELHI: Olympic Gold medalist Neeraj Chopra has decided to end his 2021 competition season due to a "packed schedule of travel and a bout of illness" and vowed to comeback stronger in a busy 2022.

MUMBAI BEAT OMAN IN 2ND T20

MUSCAT: Yashasvi Jaiswal's stroke-filled 75 coupled with an impressive show by the bowlers, led by skipper Shams Mulani (3/12), formed the cornerstone of Mumbai's 18-run win over Oman in the second T20.

INTER SIGN CORREA FROM LAZIO

MILAN: Joaquin Correa on Thursday signed for Inter Milan from Lazio on a season-long loan worth five million euros plus one million add-ons which will then automatically turn into permanent for another 25 million euros.

MENDY CHARGED WITH RAPE

MANCHESTER: Manchester City suspended Benjamin Mendy on Thursday after Cheshire police confirmed the Frenchman has been charged with four counts of rape and one count of sexual assault. Agencies



3rd Test, Day 3
Live from 3:30pm IST
SONY SIX NETWORK

Former England captain 'Lord Ted' Dexter dies

PTI ■ LONDON

Former England captain Ted Dexter has died at Wolverhampton after a bout of illness, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) said on Thursday.

He was 86. "After a recent illness he passed away peacefully in the Compton Hospice in Wolverhampton at midday yesterday, surrounded by his family," the MCC said.

A powerful middle-order batsman and medium-pace bowler, Dexter played 62 Tests between 1958 and 1968, leading the side in 30 of those and scoring 4502 runs at an average of 47.89, besides taking 66 wickets.



Known for his ability to dominate top-class fast bowling, he slammed nine hundreds, six of which were scores of above 140.

He was inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame earlier this year.

Dexter worked as a journalist and broadcaster post retirement and also served as England's chairman of selectors. He was also instrumental in devising the players' ranking system that was later adopted by the ICC and is currently known as the MRF Tyres ICC Player Rankings.

In a First-Class career that spanned from 1956 to 1968, he scored more than 21000 runs and claimed 419 wickets.

UP Govt adopts Indian wrestling till 2032 Oly

New Delhi: In a massive boost for the Indian wrestling, the Uttar Pradesh Government has adopted the sport and is expected to pump in an investment of ₹170 crore in infrastructure and support to the wrestlers till the 2032 Olympics, WFI President Brijbhushan Sharan Singh said.

The top boss of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) said that they took inspiration from the Odisha Government's support to the sport of hockey and they approached the UP Government for a similar assistance to their game.

"Odisha is a small state, yet they are supporting hockey in such a great manner, so we thought, why can't UP, which is such a big state, support wrestling. We approached them and the CM Yogi Adityanath has accepted it," Singh said.

"In our proposal, we have asked for ₹10 crore support every year till the 2024 Games (₹30 crore) and in the next Olympic cycle till 2028, we have asked for a support of ₹15 crore per year (₹60 crore) and in the final phase till 2032, it is ₹20 crore per year (₹80 crore)," he said explaining the details.

"With this happening, sponsorships will not be restricted to

WFI lets off Vinesh with a warning

New Delhi: Vinesh Phogat, who was temporarily suspended by the WFI for alleged indiscipline, will be eligible for this year's World Championship after she was let off with a reprimand on Wednesday. Two other wrestlers, Sonam Malik and Divya Kakran, too have been cautioned and like Vinesh, they will be in the fray to compete in the World Championships as well. However, in a letter addressed to the three wrestlers, WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh said they will be "compelled" to impose lifetime bans on the trio for any act of indiscipline in the future. PNS

just country's elite wrestlers. Even the Cadet level wrestlers will get sponsorship and we will be able to give prize money to even national champions."

The WFI had also roped in Tata Motors in 2018 as principal sponsors of Indian wrestling, a partnership which had brought with it a financial support of ₹12 crore that allowed the federation to give away central contracts to wrestlers till the Tokyo Games. PTI

Southee replaces Cummins in KKR; Adil Rashid joins PBKS

PTI ■ KOLKATA

New Zealand pacer Tim Southee has been roped in by Kolkata Knight Riders for the remainder of the IPL scheduled to be held in the UAE from September 19.

The veteran New Zealand pacer will be a replacement for Australia's Pat Cummins, who pulled out of the league due to "personal reasons".

"Cummins made himself unavailable for the season for personal reasons. Southee comes in with a vast experience

of 305 International games for the Kiwis with 603 wickets," the two-time former champions KKR announced on Thursday.

Third-highest wicket-taker in T20I cricket, with 99 wickets in 83 matches, Southee has been part of Rajasthan Royals, CSK, Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bangalore in the past.

He will now reunite with his former captain Brendon McCullum, the head coach of KKR.

"We are delighted to have Southee in our ranks. He is a proven match-winner

and a welcome addition to the already strong pace attack of KKR. With Cummins being unavailable we wanted to add experience and leadership to our bowling group and Southee is the ideal man for the job," McCullum told KKR website.

Elsewhere, Punjab Kings have picked England leg-spinner Adil Rashid to replace Jhye Richardson.

Paddler Bhavinaben in last 16, Sonalben out

Tokyo: Indian paddler Bhavinaben Patel progressed to the Round of 16 in the women's singles Class 4 table tennis event with a hard-fought 3-1 victory over Great Britain's Megan Shackleton at the Tokyo Paralympics here on Thursday.

The 34-year-old Indian dispatched world No 9 Shackleton 11-7, 9-11, 17-15, 13-11 in a contest that lasted 41 minutes.

The other Indian in the fray, Sonalben Manubhai Patel,

however, ended her campaign after losing 12-10, 5-11, 3-11, 9-11 to MG Lee of Korea in her second women's singles Class 3 group match.

Players in the Class 3 category have no trunk control, yet their arms are minimally affected by the impairment.

In Class 4 category athletes have fair sitting balance and fully functional arms and hands. Their impairment may be due to a lower spinal-cord lesion or cerebral palsy. PTI



Neeraj dismisses javelin controversy at Olympics

New Delhi: Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra on Thursday said he was pained by the controversy surrounding his comments on Pakistani Arshad Nadeem using his javelin during the Tokyo Games and called the entire furore "propaganda aimed at pushing a dirty agenda."

"I would request everyone to please not use me and my comments as a medium to further your vested interest and propaganda," Chopra said on his Twitter handle.

"Sports teaches us to be together and united. I'm extremely disappointed to see some of the reactions from the

public on my recent comments. "There was nothing wrong with Nadeem using my javelin to prepare, it is within rules and please do not use my name to push a dirty agenda," he added.

Chopra, in a recent interview, stated that he was searching for his personal javelin before his first throw during the Olympic final on August 7 and found Nadeem holding it.

According to rules, any javelin submitted to the officials by a competitor for his use can also be used by any other participant. This rule applies in all field events except for pole vault. Chopra made it clear that

Nadeem had not done anything wrong. "A controversy (*mudda*) has come up that I had talked about taking the javelin from Pakistani participant Arshad Nadeem before my first throw in the final. It has been made into a big controversy," Chopra said in a video clip posted along with his tweet.

"It's a very simple thing, we keep our personal javelin (inside a holding rack) but it can be used by anybody. "I am very sad that a big controversy has been created taking my name. We javelin throwers share a good bond and speak to each other nicely." PTI

Pep plans to quit Man City in 2023

AFF ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola on Wednesday said he plans to leave the English champions when his current contract ends in 2023 and hopes to eventually take charge of a national team.

"After seven years in this team, I think I'll take a break," said 50-year-old Guardiola.

"I'll need to see what we've done and assess motivations for the future. "And in this process I'd like to coach a national team: South American, European... I want to have the experience of a Copa

America." However, Guardiola is not banking on that national team being Brazil.

"A national team will be the next step, yes," said Guardiola, speaking at an online event organized by Brazilian financial services company XP Investimentos, and quoted by ESPN Brasil.

"I think the Brazil coach will always be a Brazilian. I can't see a foreigner coaching a team like Brazil."

The former Barcelona player has won the Premier League title in three of his five seasons in charge of City and last term took them to the Champions League final, where they lost 1-0 to Chelsea.



Venus, Kenin withdraw from US Open

AFF ■ NEW YORK

Seven-time Grand Slam champion Venus Williams withdrew from the US Open on Wednesday with a leg injury only hours after her sister Serena pulled out of the Grand Slam event.

Venus Williams, 41, posted a video and message on social media saying she was disappointed to miss the New York hardcourt tournament for the first time since 2006.

"Not the best news from Serena and I today," Venus said. "I too am unable to play the US Open. It's super, super, super disappointing."

"Having some issues with my leg all this summer and I just couldn't work through it. Tried my best here in Chicago but I just was unable to figure out the equation. This time I just couldn't make any miracles work." Venus, who won the 2000



Prajnesh advances to 2nd round in qualifiers

New York: India's top-ranked tennis player Prajnesh Gunneswaran progressed to the second round of the US Open qualifiers with a straight set win over Brayden Schnur of Canada. Gunneswaran got the better of the world No 232 Canadian 6-4, 7-6 in one hour 37 minutes on Wednesday night. The 31-year-old Indian will lock horns with American Christopher Eubanks in next round. PTI

pointing news."

"Fortunately I am vaccinated and thus my symptoms have been fairly mild," Kenin wrote. "However I have continued to test positive and thus will not be able to compete at the US Open next week."



6 Indians in final

New Delhi: Six Indian boxers advanced to the finals of the Asian Youth Championships in Dubai with two of them getting walkovers after their Kazakh opponents were quarantined following a Covid-19 case in the contingent.

Of the six Indians who made the summit clashes, two were men and four women.

In the women's draw, Simran Verma (52kg) and Sneha (66kg) progressed after getting walkovers from Kazakh rivals Khava Bolkoyeva and Anar

Turynbek respectively.

Joining them in the finals were Preeti (57kg) and Preeti Dahiya (60kg).

Preeti outclassed Narika Rai of Nepal RSC in the third round to book her final berth. Preeti Dahiya, on the other hand, defeated Uzbekistan's Rukhshona Uktamova 3-2.

Among the men, Vanshaj (64kg) defeated Iran's Faridi Abolfazl 5-0, while Vishal (80kg) outpunched Kazakhstan's Dauran Mamyr by a similar margin to move ahead. PTI

PSG vs Man City, L'pool vs Milan in CL

AFF ■ ISTANBUL

Paris Saint-Germain and Manchester City, two of the leading candidates to win the Champions League, will face each other in the group stage of this season's competition after coming out together in Thursday's draw.

Pep Guardiola's City beat PSG in the semi-finals of last season's Champions League on the way to losing the final to Chelsea in Porto.

Qatar-owned Paris responded to that disappointment by signing Lionel Messi and there is a chance that the two meetings of the clubs could see the Argentine come up against his great rival Cristiano Ronaldo.

The Portuguese forward is being strongly linked with a move to Abu Dhabi-owned City from Juventus before the European transfer window closes

on Tuesday, August 31. The clubs are in Group A along with RB Leipzig and Belgian champions Club Brugge.

Leipzig were already in a group with PSG last season, the two sides qualifying for the last 16 ahead of Manchester United.

The Germans, who also lost to PSG in the 2020 semi-finals in Lisbon, lost coach Julian Nagelsmann to Bayern Munich in the summer and replaced him with Jesse Marsch.

Holders Chelsea will play Juventus in Group H and both clubs will be expected to advance from a section also including Russian champions Zenit Saint Petersburg and Malmo.

The Swedish champions knocked out Rangers in the third qualifying round. Saint Petersburg will host this season's Champions League final on May 28 next year. Thursday's draw in Istanbul

also saw Barcelona come out in a fascinating Group E along with Bayern Munich, Benfica and Ukrainian champions Dynamo Kiev.

For Barca it will be a first meeting with Bayern since they were humbled 8-2 by the German giants in Benfica's Estadio da Luz in Lisbon in the quarter-finals a year ago.

Liverpool will face Spanish champions Atletico Madrid, meaning a return to the Wanda Metropolitan stadium where they beat Tottenham in the 2019 final to win the European Cup for the sixth time.

Jürgen Klopp's side will also play AC Milan and FC Porto in Group B. Milan are back in the Champions League for the first time since 2013/14.

Manchester United came out in Group F with Villarreal, Atalanta and Swiss champions Young Boys.