

OPINION 8
INDIA TELLS PAK TO
VACATE ALL ITS AREAS**WORLD 11**
ATTACK TARGETING ACTING
AF DEFENSE MIN KILLS 8**SPORT 14**
ENG ALL OUT FOR 183
ON DAY 1 OF 1ST TEST

LUCKNOW, THURSDAY AUGUST 5 2021; PAGES 14 ₹3



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OTT IS AN
ADDICTION:
SHREYAS
12 VIVACITY

CAPSULE

DESI AIRCRAFT CARRIER
BEGINS SEA TRIAL

New Delhi: The much-awaited sea trials of India's first indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant, the largest and most complex warship built in the country, began on Wednesday, a development described as "historic" by the Indian Navy. With the launch of the sea trials of the aircraft carrier, India has joined a select group of countries having niche capability to indigenously design, build and integrate a state-of-the-art aircraft carrier, the Navy said.

SCREEN TIME DAMAGING
EYES OF CHILDREN

New Delhi: As schools are closed and children being restricted to four walls of their homes due to Covid-19, spending more time on watching screen, they are becoming victim to Myopia, in which the shape of the eye changes, causing light rays to bend (refract) incorrectly, focusing images in front of, instead of on the surface of, the retina, researchers have said.

TWITTER GETS NCPCR
NOTICE FOR RAHUL POST

New Delhi: National Commission for Protection of Children's Rights has issued a notice to Twitter India, directing it to delete a photo posted by Congress MP Rahul Gandhi that reveals the identity of the Dalit girl whose rape, murder and forced cremation in Delhi has sparked furious protests. The NCPCR has contended that the tweet violates the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act and the Juvenile Justice Act.

Dahiya assures 4th Oly medal for India

Neeraj qualifies for javelin final; Lovlina clinches Bronze; Indian women hockey to fight for Bronze

PTI ■ TOKYO

Ravi Dahiya's charge into the final assured India of a fourth Olympic medal as wrestlers sent the country's hopes soaring, while javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra turned on the style to script history in qualification itself on a day when most things went spectacularly well for the contingent, except for the heartbreak in hockey and boxing.

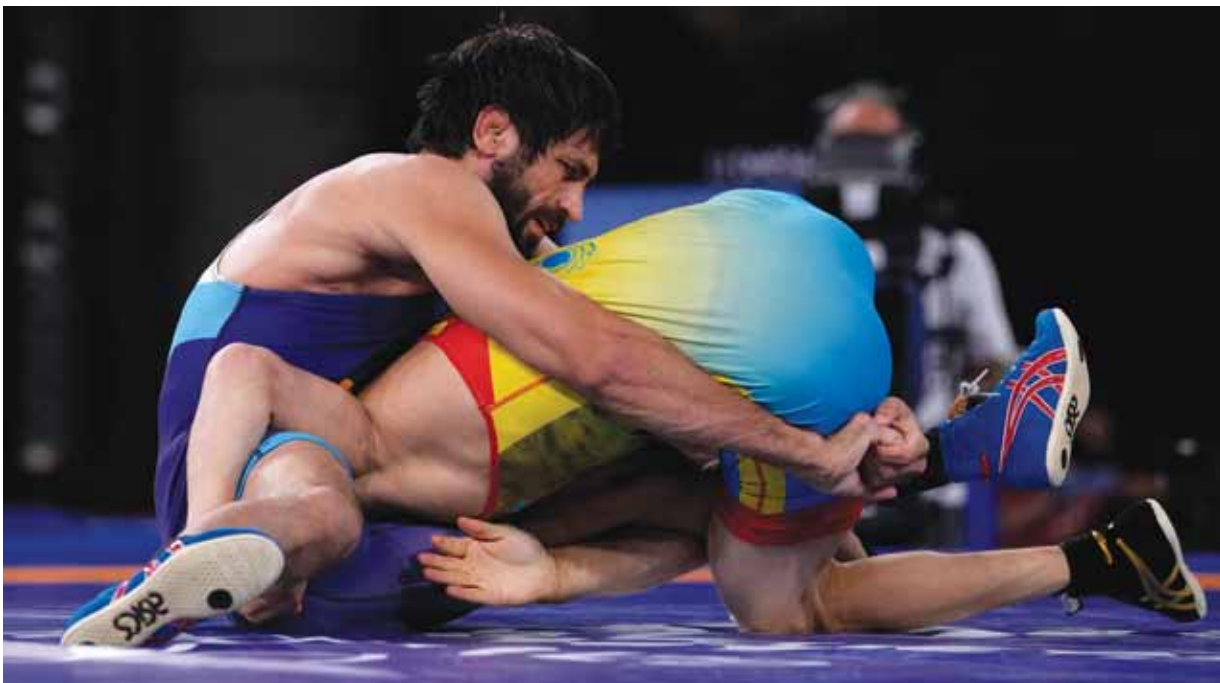
While Dahiya will fight for Gold on Thursday, Chopra will stake his claim for India's maiden track-and-field Olympic medal on Saturday.

The Rani Rampal-led women hockey team lost 1-2 to Argentina in the semifinals but stayed in the hunt for a medal. The courageous bunch, which has exceeded all expectations by coming this far, will play Great Britain on Friday for a Bronze medal.

The Indians fought valiantly and gave Argentina a run for their money by taking the lead in the second minute through a penalty corner conversion by Gurjit Kaur.

But the Las Leonas bounced back strongly with skipper Maria Barriounevo's (18th, 36th minutes) twin strikes from penalty corners to secure the hard-fought win.

On Thursday, the men's hockey team will eye a Bronze



Ravi Dahiya competes against Kazakhstan's Nurislam Sanayev during the 57kg Freestyle semi-final wrestling match at the 2020 Olympics in Chiba on Wednesday AP

medal, its first podium finish in 41 years, when it takes on Germany in the third-place playoff.

In the boxing ring Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) signed off with a Bronze medal after her showdown against reigning world champion Busenaz Surmeneli of Turkey ended in a crushing 0-5 loss.

Borgohain became the third Indian boxer to fetch a Games medal after Vijender Singh (2008) and MC Mary Kom (2012).

The Panipat lad Neeraj Chopra etched his name in history books in the qualification round itself when he became the first javelin thrower to qualify for the Olympic finals

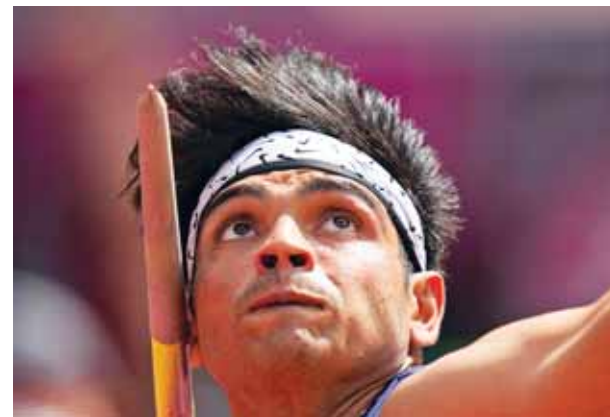
and also the first to top the charts with an impressive 86.65m effort.

But it was another 23-year-old, Dahiya, who emerged as the undisputed star of the day.

The son of a farmer from Haryana's Nahri village, who is competing in his maiden Olympic Games in the 57kg category, first outclassed

Colombia's Tigreros Urbano (13-2) in his opener and then outwitted Bulgaria's Georgi Valentinov Vangelov (14-4).

In his semi-final clash against Kazakhstan's Nurislam Sanayev, he conceded the lead but bounced back like a seasoned professional to march into the finals, becoming only the second wrestler after dou-



Neeraj Chopra competes in the qualification round of the men's javelin throw at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo on Wednesday AP

ble Olympic-medallist Sushil Kumar to achieve the feat.

He will be up against reigning world champion Zavur Uguev of Russia to whom he lost in the 2019 World Championship semi-finals.

"I had no business conceding that much lead against Sanayev. I am not happy with it," the usually reticent Dahiya told *PTI* after his impressive performance.

"I still have some unfinished business to do. I came with a target here and that is not complete yet (winning Gold)."

Others in medal contention are Deepak Punia (86kg) and Anshu Malik

(women's 57kg). While Punia lost in the semi-finals to get a direct entry into the Bronze-medal playoffs, Malik has made the repechage round after European champion Irina Kurachikina, who beat her in the opening round, made the finals.

On the golf course, Aditi Ashok got off to a brilliant start, carding a four-under 67 in the opening round for a share of the second spot at the Kasumigaseki Country Club.

India's other entrant in the field, Diksha Dagar (76), however, had a rough start in her maiden Olympics as she had five bogeys and no birdies to lie at the tied 56th spot.

Opp blames Govt for Parl logjam

Govt maligning us for disruption, we stand united on Pegasus debate demand: Opp

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Leaders of 14 Opposition parties on Wednesday said the responsibility for the Parliament logjam lies squarely with the Centre and urged it to respect Parliamentary democracy by accepting their demand for a discussion on the Pegasus controversy and farmers' issues.

Issuing a joint statement, 18 leaders from 14 parties said it is unfortunate that the Centre has "unleashed a misleading campaign to malign the combined Opposition" and blaming it for the continued disruption of Parliament proceedings.

The joint statement comes a day after the Opposition leaders met over breakfast hosted by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and drove on bicycles to Parliament in protest.

"The responsibility for the

deadlock lies squarely at the doorsteps of the Government, which remains arrogant and obdurate and refuses to accept the Opposition's demand for an informed debate in both the Houses," read the statement.

"The Opp parties stand firm and united on their demand for a discussion on Pegasus issue in both the Houses, replied to by the Home Minister, as this has national security dimensions," it said.

Earlier, a group of seven Opposition parties led by former NDA ally Shiromani Akali Dal submitted a memorandum to President Ram Nath Kovind urging him to direct the Govt to allow a full-fledged discussion in both the Houses on a range of issues they have been protesting ever since the Monsoon session started.

6 TMC MPs suspended for day for showing placards, defying Chair

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Wednesday suspended six TMC MPs for the day for carrying placards while protesting along with other Opposition MPs over the Pegasus spying issue.

Soon after the Rajya Sabha assembled for the day, shouting TMC and other Opposition MPs trooped into the Well of the House, some holding placards, to demand a discussion on the issue of Israeli-made Pegasus spyware allegedly being used to snoop on Opposition leaders, Government critics and journalists. The Chairman first asked members to go back to their seats and then threatened to invoke rule 255 against



those holding placards. As the members refused to budge, he ordered that those "not obeying the Chair and raising placards shall leave the House under rule 255."

He, however, did not name anyone and said Rajya Sabha Secretariat will give the list. Later a Parliamentary Bulletin identified the six MPs suspended for the day as Dola Sen, Md. Nadimul Haque, Abir Ranjan Biswas, Shanta Chhetri, Arpita Ghosh and Mausam Noor.

Ex-justice, registrars of SC, Rohatgi's staffer snooped

Lawyers of high profile cases too among new list

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



A day before the Supreme Court is set to hear the Pegasus phone tapping case, a new list of phone numbers were out on Wednesday, including the old phone numbers in the name of former Supreme Court Judge Arun Mishra, Registrars of Supreme Court, and lawyers of the many high-profile accused.

As per the report published by *The Wire* portal, Justice Arun Mishra, who is currently National Human Rights Commission Chairperson, confirmed that the number was with him during 2013-2014 and he is not using the number now.

"The presence on the list of a number associated with a sitting judge was mentioned on

the day *The Wire* began running its stories. Having now spoken to him on the record, we can confirm that a Rajasthan mobile number formerly registered in the name of Justice Arun Mishra, who retired from the Supreme Court in September 2020, was added to the database in 2019. A confidential source with access to BSNL records said that the number in question was registered in the name of Justice Mishra from September 18, 2010, to September 19, 2018," the report said.

The Wire further reported that Justice Mishra said, "The

number +9194XXXXXXX is not with me since 2013-2014. I don't use this number."

Phone numbers of NK Gandhi and TI Rajput, who worked in the crucial "writ" section of the SC's registry were also in the list of targets by the Pegasus Spyware. The numbers of two junior court employees, Tapan Kumar Chakraborty and Manav Sharma, who were dismissed from service by then CJI Ranjan Gogoi "for tampering with an order" in a contempt of court case against Anil Ambani of the Reliance ADAG group, were also on the list.

Former Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi's junior lawyer M Thangathurai's phone number was also on the list of targets for tapping. Thangathurai and Rohatgi both expressed surprise when informed by *The Wire* about the number's inclusion.

Phone numbers of lawyers of Christian Michel, Nirav Modi, Mehul Choksi also figured in the Pegasus tapping list.

AI suffered ₹70K cr loss after merger with IA: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Air India has been suffering heavy losses since its merger with Indian Airlines in 2007 and it has accumulated losses of about ₹70,820 crore till March 31, 2020.

In a written reply to MP Mahesh Poddar in the Rajya Sabha on the current financial condition of public sector airline company and the Government's initiative for its disinvestment, Minister of State for Civil Aviation VK Singh said financial bids for Air India are likely to be received from qualified interested bidders by September 15 this year.

The Minister said the major reasons for the losses include high interest the burden on debt due to bulk purchase of aircraft in the past. "The Government has decided to go for strategic disinvestment due to its fragile finances and its continued and accumulated losses," he added.

Shot or -ve RT-PCR report must for visiting Himachal

PNS ■ SHIMLA

With Himachal Pradesh witnessing a spike in Covid-19 cases again, the State Government on Wednesday made it mandatory for the tourists to carry Covid-19 vaccine certificate (single or both doses) or a negative RT-PCR test report issued not earlier than 72 hours.

The State on Wednesday reported 243 fresh positive cases while active cases jumped to 1,508. Four deaths, one each from Mandi, Una, Shimla and Kangra were reported.

The highest number of 72 cases was reported in Mandi followed by 45 cases in Chamba district. An order issued by Himachal Chief Secretary on Wednesday said blatant violations of Covid norms have been observed in several parts of the State, especially in public transport and at



public places. Massive crowds are also thronging the market places, violating norms of social distancing. Therefore, it is important that the field implementation authorities concerned shall ensure Covid appropriate behaviour in all crowded places such as shops, malls, markets, market complexes, weekly markets, restaurants and bars, mandis, bus stations, railway stations, public parks, gardens, marriage halls,

Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL CASES:	3,18,10,747 (+42,762)
DEATHS:	4,26,321 (+532)
RECOVERED:	3,09,67,168 (+41,814)
ACTIVE:	4,04,668
MAHA:	63,27,194 (+6,126)
KERALA:	34,71,563 (+22,414)
K'TAKA:	29,11,727 (+1,769)
TN:	25,67,401 (+1,949)
DELHI:	14,36,518 (+67)

sports complexes as well as at all areas identified as hotspots for transmission of Covid, it said.

You can offer prayer at Ayodhya's Ram temple by Dec 2023

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya is progressing according to the plan, and devotees are expected to be allowed to pay obeisance to the deity by 2023 end, sources in the Ram Temple Trust said on Wednesday.

The entire temple complex will, however, be ready by 2025, they added. Sharing details of the grand project, a culmination of the BJP's decades-long promise of building a temple at the place where Lord Ram is believed to have been born in Ayodhya, they said the main temple will have three floors and five "mandaps".

The length of the temple is 360 feet, width 235 feet and height of each floor will be 20 feet, they said.



"The construction work of the temple is progressing according to the plan and it is estimated that by end of 2023, devotees will be able to get the opportunity of Lord Ram's darshan," a source said.

The development assumes political significance as the next Lok Sabha elections are due in the first half of 2024. If the work goes in accordance with the plan, then the ruling BJP will receive a shot in the arm before hitting the campaign trail.

BRO builds world highest road to support frontline LAC troops

It is at an altitude of over 19,000 ft

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a big boost to provide logistical support to the frontline troops at the India-China border on Ladakh, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed a road at an altitude of more than 19,000 feet at Umlingla Pass, the highest road in the world, higher than the previous record of a road in Bolivia at 18,953 feet. The Umlingla Pass is now connected with a blacktop road.

The road has been constructed at an altitude higher than the Mount Everest Base Camps as the South Base Camp in Nepal whose altitude is 17,598 ft, while North Base Camp in Tibet is at 16,900 ft.



The road has been constructed much above the altitude of Siachen Glacier which is at 17,700 ft. The Khardung La Pass in Leh is at an altitude of 17,582 ft.

Besides providing access to the local population and giving a boost to tourism, the road will provide much needed

logistical back up to the troops guarding the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. Stand-offs are on at three friction points at the LAC there for the last one and half years. The road will ensure that the troops get unhindered supply of weapons, ammunition, besides food and other items.

Giving details of the 54-km long road, officials said here on Wednesday the BRO has constructed and black-topped the highest motorable road in the world at 19,300 ft at Umlingla Pass in Eastern Ladakh.

The road now connects the important towns in Chumar sector of Eastern Ladakh. It will prove to be a boon to the local population as it offers an alternate direct route connecting Chisumle and Demchok from Leh. It will enhance the socio-economic condition and promote tourism in Ladakh.

UP emerging as destination for pvt investors: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Claiming that Uttar Pradesh was emerging as the destination for private investors, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that out of proposals worth Rs 4.68 lakh crore received during the UP Investors' Summit 2018 held in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Uttar Pradesh, projects worth Rs 3.68 lakh crore had started.

Addressing a programme organised by a media group in Gorakhpur, the chief minister



NOTICE

It is informed that CHANDRAVATI and SANNO YADAV both are name of same person and her DOB is 01/01/1978. She lives in Moh-Kashinath, jalaun, distt-jalaun(UP)

NOTICE

I, Ranjan Kumar Laskar resident of 1/15-A, Jairam Pur Patpar, Subedar Ganj Road, Prayagraj have changed my son's name from Raj Laskar to Raj Bhattacharya vide Affidavit dated 02 Aug' 2021 at Prayagraj (U.P.)

सूचना

सूचनार्थ मेरे मकान संख्या EWS/198 A सेक्टर-6 गोमतीनगर लखनऊ का मूल एलाटमेंट लेटर वास्तव में खो गया है। इसका प्रयोग अशुद्ध होगा। चन्द्रकली पत्नी स्व० प्यारे लाल 403 / 177 कटरा विजन बेग लखनऊ-226003

NOTICE

I have changed my name From Noorin Asim to Noori Asim. Noorin Asim and Noori Asim both are the same Person. Noori Asim W/o Asim Arshad, 105/591, new Halim market, Flat No. 6 Chaman ganj, Kanpur

NOTICE

I Sunita Yadav W/o Mulyam Singh Yadav R/o Vill-Dhansinghpur, Post-Bishnugarh, Distt. Kannauj UP have changed my name from Sunita Yadav to Sarita Yadav vide Affidavit dated 16.07.2021 before the SDM Court Kannauj.

NOTICE

Sale deed dated 23.09.2010 executed by Mr. Habiburrahman Khan in favour of Mohd. Kamran S/o Mohd. Ahmad which is registered in the office of sub registrar (Regn.) Fatehpur on book no. 01 Zild no. 5528, page no.197/222 document no. 9207 has been lost on dated 27/10/2020. Kunwar madan Gandhi Director Durga and Sons Empire Pvt Ltd, Fatehpur

NOTICE

I Sana D/o Mohammed Ekram Siddique and W/o Khalid Iqbal R/o-BBB5, doctors residence, Eras Lucknow Medical College, Sarfarazgang, Lucknow. Have changed my name from Sana to Sana Siddique for all future purposes, through affidavit dated 12.07.2021, before , Faheem Ahmad Siddiqui (notary advocate) that Sana and Sana Siddique is one and same person.henceforth

NOTICE

I legally inform to all concern that I Rita Prakash W/o Prem Prakash Address- 5/3, Vineet Khand Gomti Nagar, Lucknow have changed my signature in all legal documents, bank, deeds etc with effect from date- 02-08-2021. My old Signature stands null and void with effect from date 02-08-2021 Vide affidavit NO-IN-UP21565999274021T dated-02-08-2021 My new Signature may be deemed my original Signature from today.

said that this could be made possible due to the guarantee of "security and strong infrastructure" that his government had been able to provide to the industrialists in just four-and-a-half years of its tenure.

He added: "Before 2017, the law and order situation in UP was so bad that industrialists ran away from making any investments in the state. Security and a sound infrastructure were non-existent. Roads were very poor. Extortion from businessmen by the mafia was rampant. And if at all an entrepreneur dared to take the initiative, he used to retreat after months of futile exercise of running from one office to another due to rampant corruption."

Yogi said that after taking over the command of UP, he directed officers to work on it and deputed officials to organise programmes in six major cities of the country to bring investment to UP.

"I personally visited Mumbai. There, I got an investment proposal of Rs 2.5 lakh crore in a single day. Everyone knows the achievement of UP's Investors' Summit held in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said.

The chief minister remarked that when infrastructure was strengthened, availability of employment was also guaranteed through investments.

"Industrial clusters are being built along expressways with the objective to bring investments and create job opportunities on a massive scale," he said and added that a large number of employment opportunities had been created in the state due to rising investments.

Besides, he said, in the last four-and-a-half years, four-and-a-half lakh youths were given government jobs while more than two crore people got employment through micro,



small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), he pointed out.

"It is a matter of joy that the largest state in terms of population has the lowest unemployment rate today," the chief minister quipped.

Talking about COVID-19 control, he said that the experience of successful control of encephalitis came in handy in the excellent management of the disease caused by novel

coronavirus. He asserted that the second wave of the pandemic had been successfully controlled and the government was prepared for the third wave, if at all it took place.

"UP, with a population of 25 crore, has only 600 active cases today. There is not a single case in about 10 districts. We have done 6.64 crore Covid tests in the state. We are also far ahead of other states in vaccination. Yesterday, 28 lakh people were vaccinated in a single day. So far, 5.16 crore people have been vaccinated," he said.

The chief minister said that the government was capable of vaccinating its entire population in three months if vaccines were available.

Yogi said that his focus was not only on Gorakhpur but the entire state when it came to development.

"All infrastructure projects like Purvanchal Expressway, Bundelkhand Expressway, Ganga Expressway are for the

entire state. All the tehsil headquarters are being connected with two-lane and four-lane roads. As 54 borders of the state are adjacent to other states, the focus is also on interstate connectivity," he said, adding that a 12-lane road would be built between Delhi and Meerut.

The chief minister said that Indians took pride in looking upon Lord Shri Ram as their revered ancestor and those who questioned this, their DNA raised doubts.

He said that no one should hesitate to call Lord Ram an ancestor. He said Indonesian Muslim artists had come to Ayodhya to perform Ramlila because they believed in Ram.

"Even their names were Sanskritised and despite being Muslims they take pride in the fact that Lord Ram is their ancestor too."

When was asked to elaborate further on this, he said that he respected Islam, but his ancestor was Lord Ram.

SP's cycle yatra today

Lucknow (PNS): Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, after a long gap, will ride a bicycle in the state capital on Thursday, to pay tribute to socialist leader late Janeshwar Mishra, on his 89th birth anniversary.

The SP president has said the cycle yatra will also be a protest against the anti-people policies of the Bharatiya Janata Party government. More than 2,000 youths will ride bicycles on the streets of the state capital along with Akhilesh Yadav with the flags of Samajwadi Party for over 6.5 kilometres.

Similar cycle yatrias will also be held in all the tehsils.

Akhilesh Yadav has called upon the party workers to make the cycle yatra a success, saying that the BJP government in UP is about to complete its five years, but in this entire period, there has been no development but only destruction everywhere. He said that the BJP government had razed democracy by misusing time and resources.

Yadav said that BJP had inflicted a huge damage to the dignity of politics. He alleged that with the help of lies and hypocrisy, the BJP had spread ideological pollution and the BJP government was working only to mislead the people to hide its failures.

The SP chief said that his party had decided to fight against injustice through cycle yatra. He said the purpose of cycle yatra was also to protest against keeping Mohammad Azam Khan in jail by implicating him in fake cases, crime and corruption reaching the peak in UP galloping inflation, three anti-farmer agricultural laws, youth suffering from unemployment, women oppression, danger to democracy due to rigging in the panchayat polls and the COVID-19 deaths due to the collapsed health system.

Meanwhile, Yadav will leave the party office at 10 am on Thursday on his bicycle, to be flagged off by his wife and former MP Dimple Yadav.

Bundelkhand gets ready for 'water' revolution

PNS ■ JHANSI

The parched Bundelkhand is awaiting a revolution when piped water will reach every house under the Har Ghar Nal project, saving women from their hard toil to fetch water from far-flung areas.

"The people of the villages will get a major relief through the Har Ghar Nal scheme implemented by the state government for seven districts. Pure water will be made available in the villages and the people of our village will also get the benefit of this project," said Pawan Sharma, village head (gram pradhan) of Bukhara in Mauranipur block of Jhansi district.

Bundelkhand, the cultural powerhouse of Uttar Pradesh, is swinging to the rhythm of water. The happiness of people who have faced scarcity of water for years is to such an extent that not only in the folk songs of Jhansi but in Mahoba, known as the land of Alha Udal, instead of Veer Ras, the Har Ghar Nal Yojana is being praised.

Folk songs like 'Paani ki suvidha de kar sarkar ne mushkil mein diya sahara hai' and 'Bin paani hum jeevan mein reh nahin sakte' are reverberating in all the seven districts of Bundelkhand.

"Why will not the women rejoice because once the water-stressed region is blessed with the potable water under this scheme, the thirst of thousands dealing with water woes will be quenched," the gram pradhan said.

He said the happiness among

rural women was overwhelming as their regular woes of trudging long distances and back to fetch water for farming, cooking and other household purposes that takes a heavy toll on their health and family life will come to an end.

The Yogi Adityanath government has approved projects to extend piped drinking water scheme to about 4,500 villages of nine districts of Bundelkhand and Vindhya region that had never been supplied pure drinking water. The entire area was divided into 50 parts and the best quality bidders were allowed to work at very competitive rates. These companies will also maintain these projects for the next 10 years.

Initially, the 10 village clusters to be covered by the scheme in Jhansi district include Gulara, Bachel, Tilaitaha, Budhpura, Imlouta, Barthari, Teharka, Kurechha, Purva and Barwar. They will receive water from Mateela, Parichha, Lahchura, Sapra and Pahadi dams, the Barwar lake and the Betwa river and will be distributed among the villages through the network of pipes.

A senior official said that the supply was earlier scheduled to begin in December 2022 but the state government had directed the construction agency to expedite the construction work in Jhansi district to start supply to 648 villages in December this year.

There is a belief that the piped water project will bring social harmony.

"There were fights over water.

Now with every house getting water, women will be able to save time and the presence of pure water will also get rid of diseases." Said Pravesh, a resident of Bukhara and a representative Jal Jeevan Mission

Awareness campaigns are being run in every village to ask people to save and preserve water. Alha ballads and street plays are being organised in gram panchayat secretariats. The women representatives of the Jal Jeevan Mission are making people aware of the importance of water conservation.

The song 'Jal prithvi par hai sabse annmol...' has become the anthem of the region. Be it Budhpura village of Jhansi or Lahchura Kashipur village of Mahoba, or Saliya Nathupura village, or Gorkha village of Charkhari tehsil, the folk songs of Har Ghar Nal Yojana are on everyone's lips.

In addition, street plays like 'Pani ki keemat pehchan' and 'Jal hai to kal hai' are being staged to motivate people to save water.

"There should be no wastage of water and to save it, women have started a campaign, which will benefit many," said Kumari Kanchan, a resident of Mauranipur development block in Jhansi.

Radheysheyam, a resident of Dhawar village in Mahoba, sums up: "Everyone is happy with the fact that our region will get water. The scheme is being praised in our folk songs and street plays. For the first time any government has thought of bringing water to our houses."

Significant increase in tax, non-tax revenue collection in July

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Khanna said that a significant increase of over Rs 1,980 crore had been registered in collection of tax and non-tax revenue in the month of July this year as compared to last fiscal 2020-21 in the same month.

Khanna said here on Wednesday that against the collection of Rs 10,675 crore in July last year, the collection in July this year was Rs 12,656 crore.

He said the goods and services tax (GST) collection in July 2021 was Rs 4,697 crore against Rs 4,120 in July 2020. The collection of value-added tax (VAT) in July 2021 was Rs 2,328 crore against Rs 1,903 crore in July 2020, he added.

The collections from excise duty on alcohol was Rs 2,795.49 crore in July this year against Rs 2,632 crore in July 2020. The collections from stamps and registration in July 2021 was Rs 2,089 crore against Rs 1,365 crore in July 2020. The collection from tax on transport was Rs 6.12 crore in July 2021 against Rs 474 crore in July 2020. The tax collection from geology and mining in July 2021 was Rs 132 crore against Rs 178.54 crore in July 2020.

The finance minister said in the first quarter of the current fiscal 2021-22 ending on June 30, the total collection from state taxes was Rs 30,156 crore against a target of Rs 44,826 crore which is 67 per cent of the target. The collections from non-tax revenue was Rs 1,953 crore against the target of Rs 6,067 crore which is 32.2 per cent of the target.

On non-tax revenue, the minister said against the target of Rs 25,421 crore for the current fiscal, the collection so far is Rs 2,465 crore which is 9.7 per cent of the target.

Khanna said UP had the lowest VAT rate on petrol and diesel as compared to other states. In UP only 17.48 per cent VAT or Rs 10.41 per litre tax was imposed, whichever was higher, and effective tax on petrol was Rs 13.07 per litre. He said on diesel, the VAT rate was 26, 80 per cent or Rs 18.74 per litre and effective tax rate charged from consumers was Rs 20.14 per litre.

Def industrial corridor to catapult UP as an advanced mfg centre

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor is all set to catapult the state as one of the largest and most advanced manufacturing centres for defence equipment in the country. In the last three years, the state government has received investment proposals from 55 big companies out of which 19 have been allotted land to set up their factories.

The Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) has allotted 55 acres of land to 19 firms, which will

establish their manufacturing units with an investment of Rs 1,245 crore, providing employment to thousands of people. With these investments and many more in the pipeline in the defence industrial corridor, the state is gearing up to become self-reliant in the manufacturing of defence equipment in near future.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced the creation of a defence industrial corridor in UP during the UP Investors' Summit in February 2018, with nodes in Lucknow, Kanpur Nagar, Chitrakoot, Jhansi, Agra and Aligarh.

Subsequently, domestic and foreign companies signed memorandums of understanding (MoUs) worth Rs 50,000 crore for investment during the Defence Expo held in Lucknow in February, 2020.

Most of the MoUs have been signed for that part of the corridor which falls in the Aligarh node. Defence manufacturing companies have also shown interest in investing in the Lucknow node of the corridor.

According to UPEIDA officials, altogether 29 companies have submitted their proposals for setting up their units

in the Aligarh node and have also requested for allotment of land for the same.

A total of 11, eight, and six defence manufacturing companies have sought land from the government to set up their factories in the Lucknow, Kanpur Nagar and Jhansi nodes, respectively.

Acting promptly on their requests, the UPEIDA has so far allotted 55.4 hectares of land to 19 international companies in the Aligarh node.

Prominent among the 19 companies include Anchor Research Lab LLP, which will invest Rs 550 crore and has

been allotted 10 hectares of land by the UPEIDA.

Similarly, 10 hectares of land has been allotted to Sadiate Innovation International, which is investing Rs 150 crore. Jai Sai Anu Overseas, which will set up its unit at the cost of Rs 100 crore, has been given 4.5 hectares of land. Similarly, Milkar Defence Pvt Ltd has been allotted four hectares of land to set up its unit at a cost of Rs 98.25 crore. Tractrix Auto Dynamics, which is investing Rs 40 crore, has been allotted two hectares to set up its factory.

Jitendra Singh Bablu who set Joshi house afire joins BJP

Lucknow (PNS): The atmosphere is beginning to build up for the 2022 assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh with political weather cocks starting to switch sides.

Former Bahujan Samaj Party MLA Jitendra Singh Bablu, the prime accused in the torching of the house of former UP Congress president Rita Bahuguna Joshi, joined the Bharatiya Janata Party in the presence of BJP state president Swatantra Dev Singh along with other leaders here on Wednesday.

Jitendra Singh Bablu was MLA from Ayodhya district.

Presently Rita Bahuguna Joshi is the BJP MP from Allahabad. The incident happened in 2009 when BSP

president Mayawati was the chief minister of the state and Joshi was UP Congress president.

In July 16, 2009 the house of Rita Bahuguna Joshi was set afire after she gave a statement against the then Chief Minister Mayawati. Close to midnight a group of masked men stormed into the house, raising slogans against Joshi. Eyewitnesses had claimed that they were armed with iron rods, sticks and petrol cans. They went about breaking everything before sprinkling petrol and throwing a matchstick to set the house ablaze. The fire raged for nearly two hours and several policemen were there but they remained mute spectators. Joshi had claimed that BSP leg-

islator Jitendra Bablu had led that attack. His picture was also carried by local media.

Reacting to Bablu joining BJP, Rita Bahuguna Joshi said that he might have misled the BJP leaders.

"I will speak to party national president JP Nadda and state party president Swatantra dev Singh and tell them the true story," she said.

Among others who joined the BJP are: ex-Congress vice-president Pankaj Mohan Sonkar (Azamgarh), former BSP coordinator Manoj Sharma (Ghaziabad), BSP leader Prakash Singh (Rae Bareilly), Air Commodore (Retired) Shyam Shanker Tiwari and social worker Dr Bina Lavanika of Agra.

लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण (ISO 14001:2004, ISO 9001:2008 प्रमाणित संस्था) प्रतिकरण भवन, विपिन सड़क, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ (उ.प्र.), पी.बी.एक्स. नं. : 2307845, 2307839, 2307833, वेबसाइट : www.lkalucknow.co.in							
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सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि प्राधिकरण को आवारासीय/व्यावसायिक/रेल्वे/नजूल/इन्फ्रामेन्ट ट्रस्ट योजनाओं के निम्नलिखित आवेदकों द्वारा उनके नाम के सामने अंकित सम्पत्ति का हस्तान्तरण/नामान्तरण किये जाने हेतु प्राधिकरण में प्रार्थना-पत्र प्रस्तुत किया गया है :-							
क्र.सं.	मूल आवंटी का नाम	भवन/बूखड संख्या	योजना का नाम	मृत्यु दिनांक	मूल आवंटी के उत्तराधिकारी अथवा आवेदक का नाम	उत्तराधिकारी के पक्ष में अनापत्ति कर्ताओं के नाम	मूल आवंटी (मृतक) से सम्बन्ध
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	श्रीमती रचना देवी	भूंसं०-डी-1/59 सेक्टर-ई	कानपुर रोड	10.02.2007	1. श्रीमती प्रदीक्षा सिंह 2. श्रीमती अंजु सिंह	—	पुत्रियाँ
2.	श्रीमती प्रमा देवी पचौली	भूंसं०-एसएलएस०-11/1106, सेक्टर-डी-1	कानपुर रोड	11.11.2014	1. श्रीमती दीपा पचौली 2. श्री हरीश चन्द्र पचौली 3. श्रीमती निवेदिता पचौली	—	पुत्रकृ पुत्र पौत्री
3.	श्रीमती पुष्पा कपूर	भूंसं०-बी-1/35, सेक्टर-डी-1	कानपुर रोड	18.01.2010	श्री जगमोहन नाथ कपूर	पंजीकृत वसीयतनामा एवं सक्षम न्यायालय द्वारा निमित्त उत्तराधिकार आदेश के आधार पर	पति
4.	श्री छेदी लाल	आश्रयहीन भूंसं०-1/886, रुचि खण्ड-1	शारदा नगर	08.02.1999	1. श्रीमती विजय लक्ष्मी 2. श्रीमती आनमिका राजपूत (विवाहित) 3. सुश्री तुलजा, 4. सुश्री मोनिका	—	पत्नी पुत्रियाँ
उपर्युक्त नामान्तरण के आवेदन के सम्बन्ध में यदि किसी भी व्यक्ति को कोई आपत्ति हो तो वह साक्ष्य सहित प्रकाशन तिथि से 30 दिनों के अन्दर अग्रोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के कार्यालय में प्राप्त करा दें। निर्धारित तिथि तक कोई आपत्ति प्राप्त न होने पर प्राधिकरण अभिलेखों में कलम-6 पर लिखित व्यक्ति का नाम दर्ज कर लिया जायेगा तथा उसके बाद किसी भी आपत्ति पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा।							
सचिव							

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in august presence of

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Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

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Thank you Modi Ji

Slight increase in Covid cases

61 test +ve in UP, 17 in Lko

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh showed a slight increase in the number of Covid cases with 61 testing positive in the last 24 hours. Additional Chief Secretary, Medical and Health, Amit Mohan Prasad appealed to people to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour and avoid visiting crowded places. He said 45 patients recovered even as there were 686 active cases in the state, with 474 in home isolation, as on Wednesday.

So far, 17,24,16,821 people in 3,58,67,542 houses have been surveyed through 6,48,597 team days in 2,95,422

areas across the state. Prasad said that 28,04,258 people were given vaccine doses in the state in the mega drive on August 3. The first dose has been administered to 4,35,76,972 people while 80,71,927 people have been fully vaccinated. A total of 5,16,48,899 doses have been administered in the state.

He said a total of 2,46,058 samples have been tested in the last 24 hours. "A total of 6,64,63,922 samples have been tested so far in the state, out of which 1,23,955 samples have been sent for RT-PCR testing," Prasad said.

Meanwhile, 17 people tested positive in Lucknow on Wednesday. CMO Dr Manoj Agarwal said they have upped the vigil and surveillance. He said the patients were detected in the catchment area of Balrampur Hospital. Eight

patients recovered even as the number of active cases in the state capital was 57.

"These patients came out positive in antigen testing and now they are being tested through RT-PCR for confirmation," he said. When asked whether it was a sign of the onset of third wave, the CMO said it might not be so.

Director of Balrampur Hospital said those who tested positive were being screened before entering the premises. "They tested positive outside the hospital. The CMO office is now carrying out further tests," he said.

Meanwhile, the DM held a meeting on Wednesday evening and issued directions for a 6-day testing campaign in government and private hospitals, and 125 rapid response teams will be pressed into ser-

vice. He said the samples of patients should be collected for genome sequencing. Since there is a possibility of the third wave, all the control rooms should be made fully active and wide publicity be given to the helpline numbers. DM Abhishek Prakash said.

He said all the officers who have been appointed for Covid management should ensure that the transmission of virus is checked. The DM said all those arriving at the railway & bus stations and airport should be tested and their travel history secured.

He said testing and early treatment is the best way to check the transmission of virus, and contact tracing should be carried out effectively. The DM also stressed on the need for vaccination as much as possible at the same time.

Woman killed for dowry by hubby, in-laws

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A woman was killed for dowry allegedly by her husband and in-laws in Para police station area. Police registered a case of dowry death in this connection.

As per reports, Dipika aka Lucky Rawat of Unnao had a love marriage with Durgesh Yadav of Hans Kheda locality in Para on May 31 earlier this year. Her family, barring her mother, was against the marriage. Just a couple of days later, the couple had differences.

Dipika's brother Bachchu Lal said Durgesh, his brother and parents used to torture Dipika for dowry. "Dipika had narrated her ordeal to us when she came to the house in the past. I gave her some ornaments when she was going to Durgesh's towards the end of last month. On the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday, Durgesh, his brother and parents attacked Dipika with an iron rod and killed her," he alleged.

Meanwhile, a sum of Rs 25,000 was fraudulently withdrawn from the bank account of a girl even though her ATM was with her in Ashiyana. As per reports, Priya Yadav of Devi Kheda got a message regarding deduction of money from her bank account. She contacted the bank and was told that the money was withdrawn through an ATM.

Five more police stations to come up in Lucknow

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Lucknow Police Commissionerate is preparing the roadmap to make policing more effective and public-oriented. Plans are afoot to set up five more police stations in the city to cater to the need of the population and to check crime incidents.

The police commissioner has made a proposal to this effect and sent it to the headquarters. Currently, the Lucknow police commissionerate has 40 police stations, including Sushant Golf City and Gomtinagar Extension, which were added last year. Land has also been earmarked for new police stations and the report has been sent to the district magistrate for notification. The five police stations include-BBD, Bijnor, Madheganj, Dubagga, and Sherpur.

A senior police officer in Lucknow said that five new police stations have been added keeping in view the rise in population and crime incidents taking place, new police stations would strengthen law and order.

Under the arrangements, Dubagga police station will be carved out of Kakori police station and its surrounding area. Bijnor police station will also be made whose jurisdiction area will be divided from the surrounding area of Sarojininagar police station.

On the other hand, the area of BBD and Barabanki border with Chinhat will be made a separate BBD police station while Madheganj police station will be carved out of Hasanganj and its surrounding area.

Apart from this, Sherpur police station will be made by carving out an area from Madaion and some parts of Aziznagar. "With more police stations and cops, the issues of people will be handled more efficiently, which will also improve the police and population ratio in the city indirectly," a senior officer said.

Police Commissioner DK Thakur said a proposal to this effect has been sent to the government and it would soon be a reality. He said he hoped that the additional number of police stations would help in effective policing.

Besides, the Lucknow police are also planning to intensify beat policing. Under the scheme, a WhatsApp group consisting of committees of different localities and beat constables would be members of this group. The beat constable will be asked to reach the scene and resolve the issues involving petty disputes in these areas.

Thakur said the beat system is already in place at the police stations. "We plan to intensify it by increasing the number of beat constables at the police station and outpost

levels. The constables will be given the responsibility to add more and more people to their areas so that more information reaches them," he said.

He pointed out that the system was implemented in Gomtinagar Extension on an experimental basis. "In the system, several citizen welfare societies and mohalla samitis were added and we got several suggestions to improve the policing," he said, adding that the system would be implemented at all the police stations.

A report on the beat system has been sought from different police station officers for study. Some of the constables or head constables in duty have been transferred and these posts will be filled soon. The beat incharges will keep the mobile numbers and names of the members of mohalla samitis and welfare societies.

The incharge of a police outpost is beat incharge in the area. The constables and head constables deployed at the police outposts are allotted beats and it is their responsibility to keep a list of people who are influential, the names of criminals jailed in the recent past and those released on bail, and hold meetings with the citizens. Once the system is implemented, lakhs of people will get directly connected with the Lucknow police commissionerate.

People in rural areas shed vax hesitancy

Lucknow (PNS): There was a hundred percent coverage of rural parts of the district in the mega vaccination drive carried out on Wednesday. As per figures provided by District Immunisation Officer Dr MK Singh, the target for the rural areas was 21,800 and 21,633 were vaccinated. There were 36 points at which the jabs were administered to people in rural areas, including BKT CHC, Gayatri Shakti Peeth, Avadh University, BBDU, Chinhat, Gayatri Mandir, Gosainganj CHC, GGS Sports College in Gudamba, Itaunja CHC, Kakori CHC, Malihabad CHC, Mohanlalaganj CHC, Nagam CHC and Itaunja CHC to name a few.

As many as 1,148 vaccine jabs were administered in BKT, as against the target of 500 while 1,192 doses at Kakori CHC, 766 doses at Samudai Kendra in Nagam, 846 jabs at Malihabad CHC, 1,343 at BBDU, 602 at Mohanlalaganj CHC, 736 at at Maharaja Agrasen Public School, 1,199 at Gosainganj CHC, 611 at Itaunja CHC, 578 at Sarojininagar CHC,



602 at Samudai Kendra (Gvari), and 433 at TD Girls College. The coverage was as high as up to 238% at some of the vaccinations centres but was less at others.

Dr Singh said that vaccine hesitancy was not seen in rural areas and people were eager to get jabbed. "The good response could also be attributed to the administration teams that helped in mobilising people," he said. He added that in areas where the vaccination coverage was over 100 percent, it was

because of the centres being close to the homes of beneficiaries. "If the facility is provided closer to homes, the vaccination percentage is bound to be better," he said. On the Health department planning a similar drive in future, he said it would depend on government directions. He pointed out that they had kept a target of 4,000 for rural CHCs but had to reduce it to 1,000 because there were several direct demands for workplace vaccinations.

Slapgate: SHO among three sent to lines

Lucknow (PNS): Three policemen, including Krishna Nagar SHO, were sent to lines following the slapgate controversy. Those who faced the music included inspector Mahesh Dubey, sub-inspector Mohammed Mannan and incharge of Bholakheda police outpost Harendra Kumar.

Dubey was sent to lines for dereliction of duty and not initiating action in time which created controversy and showed police in bad light. Also, there were allegations by the cab driver, who was challenged for breach of peace along with his two friends, that he had to shell out Rs

10,000 for the release of his vehicle from the police station.

A police spokesman said Dubey was replaced by Alok Kumar Rai, who was the SHO of Aminabad. CP's reader Surabali Pandey was given the charge of Aminabad police station. Earlier, Dubey was in the midst of a controversy in the Pulatsya Tiwari encounter case when he was posted at Ashiyana police station.

In the Krishna Nagar case, the girl, who was seen in a CCTV footage repeatedly slapping the cab driver, Saadat Ali, had levelled allegations against the police and

also against the traffic police a day after she was named in a case of loot. Interestingly, she was not seen doing anything except slapping the cab driver on July 31 night.

Initially the Krishna Nagar police did nothing against the girl and challaned Saadat and his aides Danish and Inayat for no fault of theirs. Saadat was seen defending himself when the girl was slapping her. The action against the girl came a day after the police were pilloried on social media. However, the police registered case of loot against the girl on the complaint of Saadat and it also went against them.

No differences with Owaisi, says Rajbhar

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After holding long parleys with Bharatiya Janata Party's UP unit president Swatantra Dev Singh, Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party chief Om Prakash Rajbhar on Wednesday claimed that he had no differences with All India Majlis-e-Itehad-ul-Muslimeen chief Asaduddin Owaisi and the AIMIM was with the Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha. Rajbhar said his meeting with the UP BJP president was a courtesy call and the BJP leader was also from the OBC community.

Meanwhile, AIMIM state president Shaukat Ali said the

sole aim of his party was to stop the BJP from coming to power in UP in 2022 and if Rajbhar went with the BJP then his party would have to truck with his party and the morcha.

Rajbhar's meeting with the BJP state president on Tuesday fuelled speculations that he may again join hands with the saffron party ahead of the 2022 assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh. The meeting came amid reports of his differences with Owaisi. Rajbhar said, "I have talked to Owaisi over phone on Tuesday after meeting the BJP state president. I have given him details about my meeting with Singh."

Contradicting reports of

his differences with Owaisi, Rajbhar said that he (Owaisi) remained with the Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha, a coalition of smaller parties.

"We are strengthening the Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha. On August 7, we will hold a conference of women, backward and most backward castes in Varanasi. Another conference will be held in Prayagraj on August 8," he said.

Rajbhar said before meeting the BJP state president, he had paid a courtesy call to Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya on Monday. He reiterated that his party "will not ally with the BJP".

Rajbhar, who leads the

Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha, had on Tuesday said his outfit would ally with the BJP if it picked a backward caste leader as its chief ministerial candidate for next year's assembly polls. The SBSP leader, once an ally of the BJP, made the remark after a meeting with BJP state president Swatantra Dev Singh and vice-president Dayashankar Singh that he initially described as a "courtesy call". Rajbhar, who had recently launched Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha as a political front of small parties, said, "The BJP is keen to forge an alliance with us. They think it is necessary to enter into an alliance with us to form the government again."

60-yr-old man booked for raping minor ends life

Lucknow (PNS): A 60-year-old man accused of attempting to rape a 12-year-old girl in Bareilly, committed suicide under mysterious circumstances. His body was found hanging from a tree in Faridpur area of the district on Tuesday. The deceased, identified as Harish Gupta, had left his house since being accused in the case last Sunday. A local electrician had lodged a complaint alleging that Gupta attempted to rape his minor daughter. Based on the complaint, the police registered a case against Gupta at the Faridpur police station. He was charged under Section 354 (attempt to outrage the modesty of a woman) and appropriate sections of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and the POCOA Act. According to a report, before the cops could arrest him, Gupta went into hiding. Some neighbours claimed him to be "innocent" and alleged that the case was just lodged to settle an old dispute and to defame him. While the police were searching for him, locals found him hanging from a mango tree on Tuesday. The locals informed the police about the body and the cops who visited the spot sent the body for post-mortem. An investigation into the sexual assault case was on when police came to know about the hanging.

CITYBRIEFS

CDRI, NIPER-G SIGN MOU

The Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) and NIPER-Guwahati (NIPER-G) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for collaborative R and D projects on Wednesday. The MoU was signed by NIPER-G director Dr USN Murty and CDRI director Prof TK Kundu. Spokesperson Sanjeev Yadav said that CDRI is a pioneer drug research institute having all the infrastructure facilities and for development of new drugs from conceptual to commercialisation stage, including GLP facilities, SAR, QSAR, combinatorial synthesis, bioinformatics, proteomics, genomics, regulatory toxicology, pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, pharmaceuticals and expertise

in conducting and coordinating clinical trials. "This MoU will provide collaborative cooperation through collaborative research programmes in specific fields of interest.

ADMISSION OFFER

Gagandeep Singh, a student of City Montessori School, Kanpur



has been selected for admission by six prestigious universities of England. He has received offers for admission from the London College of Fashion, University of Arts College, University of Westminster, University of Southampton, Regents University of London

and Birmingham City University.

CBSE CLASS X RESULTS

Students of Lucknow Public Collegiate excelled in the CBSE Class X exams, results of which were declared on Tuesday. Prakhara Chandra top-scored with 97.6%, followed by Faiza Fayyaz 96.6%, Ishita Rastogi 96.2%, Bhaskara Ashoka 95.4%, Gauravi Arya 95.4%, Katiyayani Kushwaha 95.2%, Ishana Mishra 95.0%, Anushka 94.8%, Adeela Azeem 94.6%, Abhijit Chauhan 93.6%, Aparna Bajpai 93.6%, Tanishka Yadav 93.4%, Vaishnavi, Raj Singh 93.4%, Nivedita Roy 93.2%, dev 92.8%, Pranjal Tiwari 92.8%, Swastik Tripathi 92.0%, Aryan Kumar 91.4%, Nikhil Tiwari 91.4% and Kirti Sahni 91.2%.

उपग्रह पावर ट्रांसमिशन कॉर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड, निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
(1) निविदा संख्या 45-वि.प्रा.मं.
(प्र.)ल./2021-22, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड-प्रथम, लखनऊ के अन्तर्गत उपखण्ड अधिकारी, विद्युत पारेषण, उपखण्ड-तृतीय, लखनऊ के प्रयोगार्थ चालक सहित एक नगरीय क्षेत्र चालित टैक्सो कोट का हल्का वाहन 09 माह की अवधि के लिये किराये पर लिए जाने हेतु निविदा आमन्त्रित की गयी है। जिसके लिए www.upptcl.org पर दिनांक 04.08.2021 को प्रकाशित किया गया है। कार्य की अनुमानित लागत रु. 1.89 लाख का कार्य की धरोहर धनराशि रु. 2,00,00, है। प्रपत्रों को मूल रूप में इस कार्यालय में दिनांक 26.08.2021 को 14.00 बजे तक जमा करेंगे। कार्य की कुल मात्रा निविदा विधिहीनकरण व अन्य नियम एवं शर्तें www.upptcl.org पर उपलब्ध है। अधोहस्ताक्षरकों को बिना कोई कारण बताये किसी भी निविदा अथवा सभी निविदाओं को अस्वीकार/विमार्जित करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित है। निर्धारित तिथि के विस्तार तथा शुद्धि पत्र से सम्बन्धित सूचना यदि कोई होगी केवल वेबसाइट पर जाली जाएगी अतः स्वयं को अपडेट रखने के लिए उपरोक्त वेबसाइट को नियमित देखते रहना चाहिए। **अधीनस्थ अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल-प्रथम, उपग्रह पावर ट्रांसमिशन कॉर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड, कक्षा सं-111 से 114, यू-नल, पारेषण भवन, विद्युति खण्ड-11, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ** पत्रांक- 1225 दिनांक - 4.8.2021 "राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचाये"

उपग्रह पावर ट्रांसमिशन कॉर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड, इ-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
अधोहस्ताक्षरकों द्वारा निम्न कार्य हेतु अनुमती निविदादाताओं से दो भागों में इ-निविदा आमन्त्रित की जाती है। इ-निविदा के प्रथम भाग में अधीनस्थ अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल, बरेली (बाजू) खाता सं 10897666087, IFSC : SBIN0000615 एस.बी.आई. सिविल लाइन, बरेली) के पक्ष में इ-निविदा मूल्य एवं धरोहर धनराशि RTGS/NEFT के माध्यम से स्थानान्तरण का शूटीआउर सं 0 तथा पे-इन स्लिप की प्रति, भुगतान हस्ताक्षरित निविदा प्रपत्र एवं अन्य संबंधित प्रपत्र तथा इ-निविदा के द्वितीय भाग में Excel Sheet पर मूल्य/वर्, etender.up.nic.in Web Site पर Up-Load की जाती है। इ-निविदा सम्बन्धी समस्त जानकारी, नियम व अर्हकारी शर्तें, निविदा प्रपत्र में अंकित हैं। इ-निविदा से सम्बन्धित कोई भी प्रपत्र, भौतिक रूप से कार्यालय में स्वीकार नहीं किया जाएगा। अधोहस्ताक्षरी को बिना कारण बताये एक या समस्त निविदाओं को निरस्त करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित है। विस्तृत जानकारी, अन्य संबंधनों एवं तिथि विस्तार आदि के सम्बन्ध में इ-निविदा Up-Load करने के दिनांक/समय तक वेबसाइट देखते रहें: **1. निविदा सं. 38/उख/वि.प्रा.मं(प्र.)/2021-22** : विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड, बदायूँ के अन्तर्गत 132कं. वी. लाइनों की 1 वर्ष की अवधि में पेट्रोसिंग, शिड्यूल/ब्रेकडाउन अनुखण से सम्बन्धित समस्त कार्य (नि.प्र. मूल्य रु. 2,360/-, जी. एस.टी. सहित, धरोहर धनराशि रु. 63,000/-, वैधता अवधि 120 दिन. निविदा Upload करने की अन्तिम तिथि 02.09.2021 समय 17:00 बजे तक एवं निविदा खोलने की तिथि 03.09.2021 समय 12:00 बजे) **2. निविदा सं. 38/उख/वि.प्रा.मं(प्र.)/2021-22** : विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड, बदायूँ के अन्तर्गत 220 कं. वी. लाइनों की 1 वर्ष की अवधि में पेट्रोसिंग, शिड्यूल/ब्रेकडाउन अनुखण से सम्बन्धित समस्त कार्य (नि.प्र. मूल्य रु. 2,360/-, जी. एस.टी. सहित, धरोहर धनराशि रु. 32,000/-, वैधता अवधि 120 दिन. निविदा Upload करने की अन्तिम तिथि 02.09.2021 समय 17:00 बजे तक एवं निविदा खोलने की तिथि 03.09.2021 समय 12:00 बजे) **अधीनस्थ अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल, उपग्रहपावर ट्रांसमिशन कॉर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड, एन.आई.सी. ऑफिस, रामपुर बाग, बरेली।** पत्रांक- 1053 दिनांक- 4-8-2021 "राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचाये"

लखनऊ नगर निगम जलकल विभाग, जोन-1
लालबाग, लखनऊ
अत्यकालिक निविदा सूचना
पत्र सं 418/EE-1/नि 0 दिनांक : 4.08.2021
निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु अनुमती ठेकेदारों से नीचे दिये गये विवरण के अनुरूप कार्य को कराये जाने हेतु मोहरबन्द निविदायें दिनांक 13.8.2021 के सायंकाल 4.00 बजे तक आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। निविदा प्रपत्र किसी भी कार्य दिवस में दिनांक 13.8.2021 को 1.00 बजे तक निविदा मूल्य का नगद भुगतान कैश काउन्टर पर करके प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं। भरी हुई सीलड निविदायें उसी दिन अधोहस्ताक्षरी के कार्यालय में 4.00 बजे तक निविदा बाक्स में प्राप्त की जायेगी। निविदा बाक्स से प्राप्त सभी निविदायें उपस्थित निविदादाताओं के समक्ष 4.30 बजे सायंकाल खोली जायेगी।

क्र.सं.	कार्य/आपूर्ति का विवरण	निविदा का मूल्य	धरोहर धनराशि
1.	जोन-1 अन्तर्गत के 0कं0सी0 क्षेत्र अन्तर्गत महावीरपुरी में रूल्स वाल्व से श्री धनश्याम मौर्या के मकान तक 08इंच ब्यास की 72 मीटर पी0वी0सी0 पाइप लाइन डालने का कार्य।	100.00	2000.00
2.	जोन-1 अन्तर्गत अमीनाबाद क्षेत्र स्थित किश्चियन कालोनी, बुलन्दबाग, हाथीखाना आदि नलकूपों हेतु पी-ग्रेविल की आपूर्ति।	100.00	2300.00

निम्न एवं शर्तें निविदा प्रपत्र में दी गई हैं, जिन्हें देखा जा सकता है। विस्तृत जानकारी अधिशासी अभियन्ता जोन-1 के कार्यालय में सम्पर्क कर किसी भी कार्य दिवस में प्राप्त की जा सकती है।
अधिशासी अभियन्ता जोन-1 जलकल विभाग

ASIAN FERTILIZERS LIMITED
CIN: L99999UP1986PLC007621
Regd. office: Flat No. 202, Preet Garden, 3A/172, Azad Nagar, Kanpur, 208002
Corporate office: P.W.D. officer's colony, Near Sahara Press, Park road, Gorakhpur-273001
E-mail: afli@asianfertilizers.com, investor@asianfertilizers.com
Phone: (0551) 2203421, 2202436, Website: www.asianfertilizers.com

NOTICE
Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirements) Regulation, 2015 (Listing Regulation), Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Asian Fertilizers Limited is scheduled to be held on 14th August, 2021, interalia, to consider and approve the unaudited financial results of the Company for the quarter ended 30th June, 2021.
The said notice may also be accessed on the Bombay Stock Exchange website at www.bseindia.com and company's website at www.asianfertilizers.com

FOR ASIAN FERTILIZERS LIMITED
SD/- Ashok Kumar Matanhelia
Managing Director
Din: 01763776

Place: Gorakhpur
Date: 05/08/2021

Yogi govt outperformed SP, BSP in paddy purchase: Minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi on Wednesday launched a counterattack on the opposition parties, claiming that more development policies have been implemented during the current BJP government as compared to previous regimes to boost agricultural production. He said 15 Agriculture Welfare Centres are being established in Varanasi Division on the basis of an integrated model to make urea and insecticides available to the farmers at one place besides imparting them technical training in how to increase food production.

A total of 351 Agriculture Welfare Centres are to be established in the state on the basis of integrated model to facilitate the farmers with an estimated cost of ₹ 350 crore and of them, as many as 15 centres are to be set up in the Varanasi Division with an estimated cost of ₹ 9 crore, including five in Varanasi district with an estimated cost of ₹2.64 crore, the minister said while talking to media persons at Circuit House. "Excellence



UP Minister Surya Pratap Singh addressing a press conference in Varanasi on Wednesday.

Pioneer

centers will also be established to facilitate the farmers, as will godowns in Chandauli and other districts for the storage of food grains," he added.

During the regime of Samajwadi Party, the state had only recorded the food production was around 4.40 crore metric ton, while during BJP regime in the last four years, the recorded food production was 6.24 crore metric ton with an increase of around 1.85 crore metric ton production, Shahi claimed, adding not only the

production, the productivity also increased from 22.71 quintal per hectare during the SP regime to 30.84 quintal per hectare during the last four years in the Yogi government.

Moreover, record purchase was also made from the farmers during the last four years and the MSP (minimum support price) was made one and half as compared to the previous governments, he informed adding, during the years 2017 to 2021, the government

bought 214.56 lakh metric ton of paddy and made payment of over ₹37,825 crore to the farmers which was more than the payment made during the regime of the BSP and the SP.

Similarly, more purchase of wheat was made from the farmers and also more payment was made to them during the present government in comparison to the previous governments of BSP and SP, Shahi claimed. In the last 70 years, record purchase of 66 lakh metric ton of food grains was made this year, he further claimed.

The SP-led government had not made payment of ₹ 10681 crore to the sugarcane growers and when the Yogi came to power, the farmers got their payment.

There is no shortage of urea and seed which is being made available to each district in sufficient quantity, he informed and ruled out any increase in the price of urea. Commenting on on-going farmers' agitation, he alleged that farmers are being misguided.

EoTT to revolutionise freight train operations: NCR GM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Trial of End of Train Telemetry (EoTT) was conducted successfully between Kanpur-Tundla section of North Central Railway. Officers of NCR, BLW and RDSO were present during the trial. EoTT is going to revolutionise freight train operations, NCR GM Pramod Kumar said.

Marching towards a new era of technology, North Central Railway's Kanpur Loco shed conducted the trial of End of Train Telemetry (EoTT) system successfully.

End of Train Telemetry (EoTT) is a cutting-edge technology for operation of the train without Brake Van on an automated system. It is an ambitious project of Indian Railways which has been put on fast track mode. EoTT technology will eliminate the

requirement of the Brake Van (last vehicle of a goods train meant for guard) and perform all safety functions hitherto performed by Guard for safe operations of freight trains. Thus, one additional wagon can be connected in place of Brake Van thereby enhancing the scope of more loading, thus augmenting revenue.

EoTT mainly consists of two units namely Head of Train Unit (HoT) which is mounted on the locomotive and a portable End of Train Unit (EoT) mounted on the Centre Buffer Coupling (CBC) of the last wagon. These two units are paired and communicate with each other over a radio link.

Brake power pressure of the last vehicle of the train is displayed to the train driver in the Head of train Unit (HoT) display in the Loco Cab of the

locomotive. Whenever an emergency brake is applied by the Loco Pilot in the Loco Cab, emergency brakes from the last vehicle also get applied which reduces the braking distance and time for controlling the train. Further, it will also alert Loco Pilot when the pressure level of the last vehicle moves outside the specified limits in case of parting of train derailment. High visibility marker light in the End of Train Unit (EoT) has been provided with the facility of automatic switching on and off depending upon the ambient light condition. EoTT has a Global Positioning System (GPS) module to indicate location, length and speed of the train. Global System for Mobile (GSM) communication module is used for transfer of data to server.

EoTT system has been

commissioned in loco no. 32266/WAG-9/CNB of Electric Loco Shed, Kanpur and field trial of EoTT was conducted by North Central Railway in a freight train between Kanpur and Tundla section. A team of higher officials of NCR, RDSO and BLW led by Chief Electrical Locomotive Engineer (CELE) NCR PD Mishra were present during the trial. This EoTT device has been jointly developed by RDSO Lucknow and Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW). Further, four such EoTT systems will be commissioned in Electric Loco Shed, Kanpur based locomotives on trial basis shortly, informed the CELE.

Pramod Kumar said: "The trial of EoTT has shown encouraging results. The technology is going to revolutionise freight train operations in days to come". ---

3 die after eating poisonous food

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Three members of a family died while two others were struggling for life perhaps after consuming poisonous food in Chak Pinh village under Sarai Akil police station of the neighbouring district of Kaushambi. The police suspected that the wheat flour used by the family was poisonous. However, food samples have been sent for test and viscera of the bodies have been preserved after post mortem.

It is learnt that the family of a farmer consumed food at 9.00 pm on Tuesday, and after some time the condition of the family members started deteri-

orating and they fell unconscious. Neighbours somehow came to know about their condition and they took all the five people to a nearby hospital where Shivkaly (65), Seema (30), and a five-year-old boy were declared dead while Kanhai (35) and Sangeeta (22) were referred to SRN Hospital of MLN Medical College of Prayagraj in a critical condition.

In yet another case in Bhagwatipur under Holagarh police station one Sanjay Patel (40) died while three other family members were undergoing treatment after consuming poisonous food on July 28. Since then, all the four had been undergoing treatment

where Sajjan Patel breathed his last on Wednesday.

YOUTH RUN OVER BY TRAIN, LOSSES BOTH LEGS: A 24-year old man lost both his legs in a rush to catch the train at Prayagraj Railway Junction. The accident occurred at the Prayag Railway Junction on Wednesday morning. When the youth was trying to catch the superfast train, his foot slipped and he fell on the track and was run over by the train. The youth was taken to Swaroopnari Nehru Hospital (SRN) in a critical condition. The victim was identified as Sultan Ahmed, son of Taslim Ahmed of Gaura village under Motigarpur police station of

Sultanpur district. He is preparing for competitive exams. He had to go to his village and on Wednesday morning he went to Prayag Junction to catch the Manwar Sangam Superfast train.

The train does not stop at Prayag Junction and only slows down.

In an attempt to board the train, Sultan's foot slipped due to which he fell on the railway track and was run over.

Ambulance driver Kamlesh Kumar and EMT Ashok Kumar, who reached there, rushed Sultan Ahmed to SRN Hospital and his family members were informed about the accident.

Relief for people as Ganga starts receding

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The water level of river Ganga started showing a receding trend as it was flowing below the danger mark on Wednesday. After seeing a rising trend continuously for many days, the water level of river Ganga has started receding, giving relief to the residents of low-lying areas on Thursday. However, prior to the start of this declining trend, the river had touched Sheetla Mata Mandir and the Water Police booth at Dashashwamedh Ghat. As the level is still very high, the connections between the ghats remain broken and Ganga aarti and cremation venues have been shifted upstairs.

As per the report of local



After touching Sheetla Mata Mandir and Water Police booth, river Ganga starts receding in Varanasi on Wednesday.

Pioneer

office of Central Water Commission (CWC), though the river was steady both at Phaphamau and Allahabad in upstream, it was falling

between Mirzapur and Ghazipur including Varanasi but it was still rising at Ballia where the river was flowing not only above the warning level

(56.61 metres) but it had already crossed the danger mark (57.61 metres) as it was recorded at 57.72 metres at 8 am on Wednesday. It is expected that by Thursday the river would start receding at Ballia also. The residents of Daab area surrounded by river Ganga and Gomti heaved a sign of relief as the rising trend of Gomti was checked at downstream Maighat and started falling at upstream Jaunpur. River Sone was also receding at Chopan while Rihand at Kharra and Kanhar at Duddhi in Sonbhadra district but the water level of river Choti Sarju was steady both at Azamgarh and Mau. Besides, during the last 24 hours most of the areas in this belt of Purvanchal (eastern UP) remained dry.

Bol's net profit up by 188%

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Zonal Manager BS Fonia, Bank of India (BoI) Varanasi Zone, said that Bol's net profit stood at ₹ 720 cr, up by 188% over Q4FY21, with operating profit at ₹2,806 cr, up by 34% over Q4FY21. Non-interest income grew by 39% YoY and NIM improved by 15 bps sequentially with NII up by 7%. Retail credit grew by 10.57% YoY, agriculture credit by 11.08% and MSME cred-

it 11.45%. Advances grew by 11.02% YoY and it constitutes 51.36% of Advances and CASA deposits increased by 13.80% YoY. Gross NPA ratio down by 40bps YoY Net NPA ratio down by 23bps. Credit cost declined by 241 bps over Q4FY21 and slippage ratio declined by 96 bps over Q4FY21. YoY provision coverage ratio (PCR) at 86.17% improved by 130 bps and YoY CRAR stood at 15.07% higher than both Mar'21 and Jun'20

RAM. Further, global deposits increased by 4.73% YoY to ₹ 6,23,385 cr on June 21. Domestic deposits went up by 6.71% YoY to ₹5,52,303 cr during the same period, domestic CASA went up by 13.80% YoY to ₹2,35,980 cr in Jun'21 and CASA percentage stood at 43.22%. As on 30.06.2021, Bank's total capital adequacy ratio (CRAR) was at 15.07% against 14.93% in Mar '21. CET-1 ratio stood

at 11.52% as on Jun'21 against 11.51% in Mar'21. Priority sector advances increased by 10.58% YoY to ₹ 1,39,020 cr in Jun '21 which constitutes 39.65% of ANBC.

Advances to Small & Marginal farmers constitutes 9.35% to ANBC and that to weaker sections constitutes 12.10%, which are well above the regulatory norm, sanctions under PMSVA Nidhi 97.82% and disbursement, 96.91%.

NABARD sanctions two projects for GI craftsmen

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

For branding and marketing of various traditional handicraft and other products, Geographical Identification (GI) authorized user registration is an important legal process. Varanasi is the region with the highest GI products in the world as about 20 lakh people from 10 districts of Purvanchal (eastern UP) including Varanasi are directly associated with these GI products. Moving forward in this direction, Chief General Manager (CGM) of NABARD (UP) Dr DS Chauhan has sanctioned two important projects for the development of GI craftsmen under which 1,000 GI authorized users and 300 GI artisans of Varanasi region would get skill training in 17 products of Purvanchal including 12 GI registered and five others which are expected to get GI certification soon.

In this direction, for skill training the approval letter was given by the Divisional Commissioner (DC) Deepak Agrawal to General Secretary of Human Welfare Association (HWA) and GI expert Padam Shri Dr Rajni Kant in the presence of DDM NABARD Anuj Kumar Singh in the commis-



DC Deepak Agrawal giving NABARD approval letter to Dr Rajni Kant in Varanasi.

sioner's office here on Tuesday. For the first time in the country, such a big initiative has been taken by NABARD for the GI authorized users, whose benefits will be available to the GI artisans as well as the consumers to get the right products with GI tag.

A 15-day skill upgradation training will also be given to 300 artisans especially women craftsmen of Mirzapur hand-made rugs and Varanasi's glass beads. The NABARD has launched this project from Varanasi, the parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and in the

coming time this initiative will be taken for other parts of Uttar Pradesh and also for non-GI products of the country.

Speaking on the occasion, Deepak Agrawal appreciated this effort of NABARD and Dr Rajni Kant and gave his best wishes for the successful operation of this important project. He assured that full cooperation from the administration would be provided for the GI campaign so that the right products of the artisans and weavers can be directly linked to the market through GI tag and the youth can get more employment opportunities.

BLW, RDSO DEVELOP EOTT EQUIPMENT: Indian Railways has introduced a new tool called 'End of Train Telemetry' (EOTT) in the direction of smooth rail operations. This new EOTT equipment has been developed with the joint efforts of Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) and Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO), Lucknow.

This equipment is a state-of-the-art unmanned and wireless technology device which consists of two parts. One part called Cab Unit (CU), which is installed near the loco pilot in the cab inside the locomotive and the other part called Rear Unit (RU), which is installed in the last wagon. These two units are linked with each other through radio wireless technology and due to which the driver and the operating centre are constantly getting the account of all the work conducted by the guard. This technology is economical and reliable and is used in many rail networks in the world. The first equipment has been installed in electric locomotive number - 32266 (goods train) and after its successful testing, this technology will be used in freight trains operations.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Now that the authorities of UP Board have declared the results of Classes X and XII, requests have been invited from students who are not happy with the marks awarded to them.

Students can register their complaint/problem at help desks set up for the purpose. These help desks have begun functioning in Prayagraj and at the UP Board's regional offices located in Meerut, Bareilly, Varanasi and Gorakhpur from Monday. Students can register their problems through online

and offline modes. There will also be a facility to file complaints online at the UP Board headquarters in Prayagraj, informed Vinay Kumar Pandey, director (secondary education) and chairman of UP Board.

UP Board, counted among largest examination conducting bodies in the world in terms of examinees, has also released a phone number and e-mail addresses of these help desks for the benefit of the students, he added. Although board officials have not yet specified the date till when the help desks will remain functional, it is

expected that they will be active for a month. "Students having problems regarding incomplete results, errors in name, date of birth or requiring re-evaluation of answer sheets can register their complaints and request for corrections at these grievance cells from 10 am to 5 pm," said the chairman of UP Board.

If required, students may submit their representations at the regional offices concerned, he added. Each year, after the declaration of results by the board, all its offices observe a holiday for three days to help the staff and officials

recover from the stress involved in getting the results declared on time. Only after the holiday do the grievance cells start functioning.

However, in 2019 and 2020, the board has ensured that its grievance cells start functioning from the next day of result declaration itself. Likewise, this year also, the grievance cells have started functioning from the very first working day after the declaration of results.

"This is being done to cut the period of anxiety suffered by students over these errors," said officials.

AU student shows skills in banana leaf painting

ALLAHABAD (PNS): Manoj Kumar, a fine art postgraduate student of Allahabad University and a young artist from Sangam city, has been making sincere efforts to carve a niche for himself in the area of leaf painting. Hours-long hard work and assiduous trial and error method have made him a notable banana leaf painter already. The artist, however, claims that banana leaf painting is a far more difficult job than it looks. The reason, according to him, is the tenderness and unpredictability of the object itself as oil acrylic

colours on the green and dry banana leaf often skids on a movable base, and it becomes really difficult for an artist to protect the banana leaf from any sort of harm during the process. "I was able to do better after trying and trying and trying to get better at it," said Manoj Kumar. Given the holy month of Shraavan and its significance to Sangam City, this is the first time when the artist is trying to sketch lord Shiva on a banana leaf. Talking about his craft and the intricate aspects of it, he says, "The biggest challenge I face with banana leaves

is that image outlining with pencil is not possible on it. Moreover, oil acrylic colours also do not hold firmly on leaves and the colour skids on the leaf just as it would on a wet human body," he added.

Unlike working on other plains like canvas, paper and walls, painting on green banana leaves takes a much longer time," said Manoj. He ensures the leaves do not break or tear by putting them in a unique solution before drying them. The artist says that he finds acrylic is the best material for this medium of artwork.

DEBBARMA COMPLETES PHD: Victor Debbarma has successfully completed PhD in Agronomy under the supervision of Dr Vikram Singh, Associate Professor, Department of Agronomy, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology & Sciences, Prayagraj. His thesis was entitled "Study of System of Crop Intensification on growth and yield of cereals under organic production system". A total of 11 research papers published by Victor in peer-reviewed journals.

Sudarshan: Extend all benefits of govt schemes to SCs, STs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Member of Uttar Pradesh SC, ST Commission, Kishen Lal Sudarshan, while addressing a meeting at the Circuit House here, said that directives had been issued to the Kanpur Development Authority to ensure the transfer of ownership rights of the 23 identified slums on old rates.

He said realising that the poor members of SC,ST community were unable to make payment of ₹ 50,000 at one time as installments, the issue had been taken up with the principal secretary (housing) and he had been asked to settle the issue on top priority.

He strongly recommended creation of proper hype regarding the schemes and projects meant for SCs and STs and said camps should be organised in slums for this and pamphlets and brochures should be distributed at the earliest.

He said it was a matter of concern that incidents of atrocities against the SCs and STs were continuing despite the best efforts of the UP government and directed the officials concerned to ensure that it was checked on priority and financial assistance was released as well. He said last year there were 121 cases in which over ₹1.38 crore was distributed among the SCs

and STs. He said the members of these communities should be extended the benefits of various schemes launched by the UP government like pension, scholarship, national family benefit scheme, mass marriage. He said there should be no delay in arranging the marriage of daughters of SCs and STs

He also demanded that the list of the old age pension for 2008 beneficiaries should be prepared at the earliest. He also demanded feedback on the Chief Minister Abhyudaya Yojana for free coaching and said the list should be made available on top priority.

He issued orders that the

contract safai workers of Kanpur Nagar Nigam should be regularised and in case of death of the contract worker, the dependent of the family should be given a job as per their educational qualification. He said the appointment portal should be set right and updated as per the norms.

He said the benefits of the UP government schemes should be soon extended to those orphaned during COVID-19.

Prominent among those who took part in the meeting were Additional Municipal Commissioner Bhanu Pratap Singh, G Sharma and Kamal Kishore besides several other corporators.

Gang arranging fake sureties for bail busted; 5 arrested

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The crime branch of Kanpur Nagar police has busted a gang involved in arranging fake sureties and relevant documents and arrested five persons from Kalyanpur police area on Wednesday.

The accused included a lawyer, two munshis and two fake sureties and recovered fake surety documents, photographs and other certificates in large numbers from them.

They were identified as lawyer Sheel Kumar Gupta of Gwaltoli, Sachin Kumar Sonkar of Raipurwa and Santosh Singh of Kalyanpur. Sachin and Santosh are mushis.

Besides, the police arrested Vrindavan and Surendra of Auraiya who used to present themselves in the court as fake sureties on the instructions of their lawyer. The accused lawyer and his accomplices used to arrange fake sureties for the release of inmates from jail after they were bailed out by the court.

This often happened in the case of hardcore criminals or prison inmates of other districts and states as, according to rules, a surety should be a permanent resident of the district. In such cases, the gang would arrange fake sureties and other relevant documents for the release of the prison inmate granted bail.

Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime) Deepak Bhuker said on being informed by the court about the frequent use of fake sureties, particularly in the cases of prison inmates belonging to other districts and states, the crime branch started investigation and busted the gang. He said in cases of Unnao and Auraiya districts, fake sureties in over 90 per cent of the bail cases were being produced in the court.

It may be recalled that 61 accused of Bithoor had been sent to jail by the Kotwali police but they managed to get bail from the courts on the basis of fake sureties in the past.

Police recovered 21 Aadhaar cards, three RCs, four envelopes sent by the court for verification of sureties, three voter identity cards, two address certificates, 165 photos, six rubber stamps, 12 letter-heads, two stamps, seven surety forms and one history ticket. All these were used in arranging fake surety, the ACP said.

KDA seals illegal construction

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The enforcement squad of Kanpur Development Authority sealed the illegal construction being carried out on plot No 9/46 (1) Jawa Building, Benajhabar Colony, Arya Nagar, on Tuesday.

On the directive of the executive engineer, the squad comprising Assistant Engineer SD Tewari and Junior Engineer Yogendra Singh, Jaipur along with local police force and other staff reached the spot and sealed the premises.

It may be recalled that the drive was carried out in the light of an order dated July 27 issued by Kanpur Development Authority Secretary SP Singh to contain illegal constructions being carried out in the district in violation of the set norms and sanctioned layout.

GANJA RECOVERED: The Special Task Force (STF) arrested two drug smugglers and recovered two quintals of ganja (cannabis) worth around ₹50 lakh from them near Tauns Tiraha on Narval Road in Kanpur Outer.

They were identified as Sanji Kumar of Bahuara in Rohtas district of Bihar and Sanjay of Charauth in Sitamarhi (Bihar). Police recovered one pick-up (BR24 GB9475), two Aadhaar cards, three debit cards, one driving licence, one PAN card, ₹2,500 in cash and three mobile phones from the accused.

The drug was being smuggled from Odisha to different districts of Uttar Pradesh.

NCL CMD lauds contribution of retd officials

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

In Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) on Tuesday a function was organised in honour of Director (Personnel)



Bimlendu Kumar and General Manager (Materials Management) AK Singh who had retired at the headquarters in July. Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD) of the company, PK Sinha, Director (Technical Operations) Dr Anindya Sinha, Director (Finance and Personnel) RN Dubey, and Director (Technical/Projects and Planning) SS Sinha besides General Managers (GMs) of headquarters and regions joined the video conferencing. Addressing the function, NCL CMD Sinha said that during his tenure as Director (Personnel) Bimlendu Kumar has been very sensitive towards social and welfare

works. Sinha described Bimlendu Kumar as an outstanding personality both personally and professionally. He termed the retirement of director (personnel) as a loss to the

he had good coordination with all the departments. CMD described the contribution made by the retired officers to the company as invaluable and wished them a bright future. On the occasion retired Director (Personnel) Bimlendu Kumar said that the work culture of NCL is excellent. He described his NCL tenure as golden. He further added that for the honour bestowed upon him by this company he would be grateful to the NCL family. Besides, the AK Singh described the time of farewell as an emotional moment after being associated with the company for a long time. He thanked all the personnel for their cooperation during his tenure. Besides directors and general managers present in the function also shared their work experiences with the retired officials and threw light on their style of working.

Peace committee meetings held

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

In view of festival of Moharram peace committee meetings were held at all police stations as well as police outposts in the district on Tuesday. They were attended by reputed persons, 'taziadars', social

overloaded vehicles. On first day of drive on Tuesday action was taken against as many as 200 vehicles in Mirzapur and against 100 others in Bhadohi district. On the other hand, District Magistrate of Mirzapur Praveen Kumar Laxkar has directed the teams



workers etc. In the meetings stress on laid on following the Covid-19 prevention guidelines. The participants assured the police that during the festival communal harmony would be observed and directions of the administration would be followed.

VEHICLES CHALLENGED: On the direction of Divisional Commissioner Yogeshwar Ram Mishra the DMs of Mirzapur and Bhadohi have constituted teams for checking overloading of vehicles. One of the teams led by Additional District Magistrate (ADM-F&R) UP Singh launched the checking at Chilh Tiraha under Chilh police station and challaned several

to continue the drive.

COVID VACCINATION: Owing to the joint efforts of Health department and the social organisations 240 teams vaccinate as many as 50,247 people at 65 booths in the district. Apart from the booths at health centres Covid vaccination camps were organised by the different organisations, including Vyapar Mandal, Bharat Vikas Parishad, Rotary Club Vindhyachal, Kaseri Navyuvak Club, Brahmsakti, Hindu Yuva Vahini and Blood Donors Club. Meanwhile MLA (City) Ratnakar Mishra himself visited the camps and appealed to the people to get themselves

vaccinated in order to defeat Coronavirus and follow the Covid-19 prevention guidelines strictly. Prominent among those who worked hard for the success of the drive were Durga Prasad Chaudhary, Govardhan Tripathi, Sushil Singh, Lalu Karata, Ashutosh Soni, Himanshu Kaseri, Amit Shrinet, Shaileendra Agrahari, Shatrughan Kesari and Apoorv Shukla.

PRIORITIES: Mithilesh Kumar, who took over charge as Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, PWD, recently, while spelling out his priorities said apart from the routine work he will try to make Mirzapur city attractive. About other projects said he will try his best to connect all tourist spots with comfortable roads.

EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE: Arsh Upadhyay topped Daffodils Public School by securing 98.4 per cent marks in CBSE class X. While congratulating him and extending



his best wishes to him, its director, Amardeep, said this accomplishment was the result of the dedication, devotion and commitment of the teachers, hard work of the student besides the support of his guardians.

Ramshree Public School students excel

CORRESPONDENT ■ JALAUJAN

The students of Ramshree Public School excelled in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) class X results declared on Tuesday.

Ansh Gupta scored the highest 96 per cent marks, Aryan Yadav, Gaurav Yadav, Anvesh Tiwari and Raksha Tiwari 95 per cent, Vishal Rajput, Swapnil Rajput, Jia Fatima, Nikhil Singh and Yash Mittal 94 per cent marks. Besides, Akash Dubey, Prakanksha Rajput, Divanshi Shukla, Pushpendra Patel, Palak Singh secured 93 per cent marks and Aradhya, Nisha Kushwaha, Fahad Khan, Ramija Ansari, Anshika Pandey, Illima Khan, Sanskar Gahoi, Divyashu Verma, Vaibhav Singh, Om Singh, Bhumi Verma, Vaishnavi

Rajawat, Abhishek Katiyar, Mohd Zeeshan, Iqra Khan, Anushka Tiwari, Priya Tripathi, Shivam Gupta, Garv Uppal, Kshitij Sharma and Vaishali



Gupta scored above 85 per cent. Riya Patel, Aviral, Megha Verma, Shivam Pal, Prakar Dubey, Indal Kumar, Sharad Kulshrestha, Shreyansh Mishra,

Kushal Saini, Ayush Dixit, Vishal Prajapati, Viharya Srivastava, Vaishali Gupta scored more than 83 per cent marks. About 150 children scored more than 75 per cent marks. The students attributed their success to school director, Anurag Julius Massey, mentor Pradeep Nigoutia, chairman Achal Nigoutia and their teachers. Besides, the teachers went to the houses of the students, wished them a bright future, presented mementos and offered sweets to them. Vice-principal Meeta Khanna, coordinator Parul, Pooja Dixit, Imran Ulla, Shivaji, Praveesh Singh, Shafkar, Shyamji, Akhlaq, Maya Gupta, Aarti, Shilpi Dwivedi, Gajendra Pratap Singh, Anmejay, Shakir, Gaurav Srivastava, Deepak Sengar and others were also present.

Awareness drive for prevention of dengue

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Varanasi division of North Eastern Railway (NER) is serious about the health of its employees as well as passengers. For the prevention of possible dengue disease in the

post-rainy season the Divisional Hospital by running a campaign in the division is creating awareness about the prevention of dengue and breeding of its carrier, Aedes mosquitoes. Dengue is a dangerous disease caused by the bite of the Aedes mosquito. Its effect during the rainy season is more during the months of July-October. For its prevention the Divisional Hospital, Varanasi, is running a campaign for regular cleaning of the main offices of the division, railway residences and drains of the stations. Spraying of anti-larvicide medicines is being done at regular intervals in

the water-logged areas as well as drains in railway colonies. Spraying of anti-mosquito medicines in railway buildings and residences and fogging in the premises are being done at regular intervals. Besides dengue test of patients suffering from fever is also being done in the

Divisional Hospital. On the confirmation of dengue, prompt action is taken regarding its prevention in and around the patient's residence. For the prevention of dengue among the employees programmes for creating awareness are also being conducted by putting up posters and pamphlets at various places. The Varanasi division administration for the prevention of dengue infection among its employees and railway passengers is creating awareness through various means of communication, Public Relations Officer (PRO), Ashok Kumar said.



Principal, SPSEC, Bhawna Gupta felicitating the outstanding students on Wednesday.

Pioneer

Impose curbs during festivals, States told



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Alarmed that upcoming string of festivals might not turn into Covid super spreader events, the Union Health Ministry on Wednesday advised States to impose adequate local curbs to check spread of infection.

The advice comes in the backdrop of rising cases on Wednesday after usual week-end lull.

India's coronavirus cases have again crossed the 40,000-mark with 42,625 fresh infections in the last 24 hours and deaths shooting past the 500-mark in a single day in the last 24 hours.

For the past seven days except on Monday, India has been reporting more than 40,000 cases every day, a cause of concern for the Government fearing third Covid wave anytime soon.

However, more worrying is the fact that the number of people getting cured of the viral infection was lower than the number of new cases, as indi-

cated by the Wednesday data available from the Union Health Ministry.

Another key Covid number – the active cases – also saw a spike of more than 5,000 cases. The morning update provided by the Union Health Ministry stated that, at present, India has 4,10,353 active cases. The government data said India witnessed 36,668 recoveries in the last 24 hours.

A look at the cumulative numbers showed that Kerala witnessed the sharpest surge in the last couple of weeks. There was a nearly 30 per cent increase in weekly numbers even as almost 50 per cent of the country's total daily new Covid cases are registered in the Southern State.

In other Southern states such as Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, Covid numbers have seen a slight uptick. However, India's recovery rate currently stands at 97.37 per cent. The weekly positivity rate remains below 5 per cent and is currently at 2.36 per cent.

‘Covid death count still being carried out’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indicating that the number of Covid-19 deaths could be on the higher side than what has been reported so far, as States are still reconciling mortalities, the Government on Wednesday clarified that while some infections could go undetected, deaths could not be missed given the robust and statute-based death registration system in India.

During the peak of the second wave, the health system across the country was focused on effective clinical management of cases requiring medical help due to which correct reporting and recording of Covid deaths could have been delayed but it was later reconciled by states and UTs, the Union Health Ministry said in a statement

The daily positivity rate continues to remain below 5 per cent for 55 continuous days and currently stands at 2.31 per cent

Union Health secretary Rajesh Bhushan in a letter to the concerned officials from the States pointed out about various festivals like Muharram, Janmashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi and a few

Covid cases again cross 40K-mark

here.

The reconciliation of deaths is still being carried out allaying all speculations of under-reporting and under-counting of deaths due to Covid-19, it said.

States like Maharashtra and Bihar have already reported ‘backlog deaths’ pushing the number of total Covid death toll in the country. Maharashtra mortality tally rose by 29,920 fatalities in under two months, from 95,958 deaths on 28 May to 1,25,878 by 11 July in which 23,000 of the cases were “backlog” deaths — in that, they occurred much before the days they were reported on.

Also the Union Health Ministry has written all the districts to report every Covid death.

others slated ahead and said measures should be ensured to curb crowds and that people strictly follow Covid appropriate norms.

The Health Ministry data says that a total of 62,53,741 vaccine doses were administered in the last 24 hrs. With this, a total of 48,52,86,570 vaccine doses has been administered in India so far.

Action sought against Rahul for violating POCSO Act



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) on Wednesday issued a notice to Twitter India, calling for action against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's handle for violating the POCSO Act by posting pictures of the parents of a 9-year-old girl who was allegedly raped and murdered in southwest Delhi's Nangal.

For its part, the BJP appealed to the NCPCR to take strict action against Rahul under the POCSO Act and issuance of notice to him for revealing the minor and her family's identity.

Rahul, who visited the parents of the minor Dalit girl, posted a photo that showed him comforting the girl's parents. He wrote: “The parents’ tears ask for only one thing: their daughter, the country's daughter, deserves justice. And I stand with them in this fight.”

“Revealing the identity of the girl by tweeting a photo of her parents (is) in violation of the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act... The NCPCR, taking cognisance of this, has asked Twitter India to issue a notice to Rahul Gandhi and remove the post,” the NCPCR, the child rights body, tweet-ed.

Later, a notice signed by NCPCR chairperson Priyank Kanoongo stated that Rahul



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gandhi, a former president of the Congress party, violated Section 74 of the Juvenile Justice Act, which prohibits disclosure of the identity of children, and Section 23 of the Protection of Children against Sexual Offences Act, which lays down procedure for the media to report sexual offences against children.

In its notice addressed to Twitter India's Resident Grievance Officer, the NCPCR said it was acting on a complaint that the photo “reveals the identity of the girl” by showing her parents.

The NCPCR reminded Twitter India that under the Juvenile Justice Act and the POCSO Act it is illegal to disclose the identity of a minor via any form of media, or publish any information or photograph that may, in any way, reveal his/her identity.

Reacting to Rahul's post, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said, “His (Rahul Gandhi) tweet violates sec 23 of POCSO Act & sec 74 of Juvenile Justice Care & Protection of Children Act that prohibits revealing the minor's identity.”

“He revealed identity of child's family and is using the issue for his political agenda. I appeal to the NCPCR to take strict action under the POCSO Act and a notice must be issued to him. No one is a VIP. Rahul Gandhi must be answerable to this,” Patra said.

Twitter hasn't shared specific details of policy to tag tweets as manipulated media: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (IT) told Parliament on Wednesday that Twitter has not shared its details of its policy pertaining to labelling of certain messages as ‘Manipulated Media’.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology (IT), Rajeev Chandrasekhar said as per Twitter, the labelling of certain messages as ‘Manipulated Media’ has been done as per their ‘Synthetic and Manipulated Media Policy’. “However, no specific details of how this policy became applicable have been shared. Government has been

engaged with Twitter on this issue,” he said.

The minister said that the issue of labelling of user tweets as manipulated media does not come under the purview of above said Rules.

Further, on the issue of manipulated media, Meity has pointed out to Twitter that they are violating the principle of natural justice and urged Twitter to be transparent and equitable in applying the criteria,” he said.

“On May 26, Twitter was non-compliant of these Rules because it did not appoint key functionaries including Chief Compliance Officer, Nodal Contact Person and the Resident Grievance Officer,” the minister said.

ED files chargesheet against naxalites

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ED on Wednesday filed a prosecution complaint (chargesheet under police parlance) against a notorious interstate criminal and also a member of a banned Naxal outfit, Madhav Das, wife Urmila Devi and his brother-in-law Yogendra Das, under money laundering charges.

In the prosecution complaint filed before the Special Judge (PMLA), Patna, the agency pleaded for awarding

punishment to the accused for committing offence of money laundering and confiscation of the attached assets worth Rs 1.01 crore owned by Madhav Das and his family members.

Das has a criminal record of several cases of bank robbery and dacoity in Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal. The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of 24 FIRs lodged in various police stations of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal.

CBI takes over Dhanbad judge murder case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday took over the probe into the alleged murder of Additional District Judge, Dhanbad, Uttam Anand from Jharkhand police and despatched a 20-member team of officials of the SIT constituted to investigate the sensational case from the agency headquarters here to Dhanbad. A team of Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) will follow the SIT soon. The agency re-registered the case related to the death of ADJ, Dhanbad, Uttam Anand on the request of Jharkhand Government and further notification from the Centre and took over the probe into the sensitive case earlier registered by the local police vide FIR No.300/2021 at Police Station, Dhanbad.

The Dhanbad police had registered the case on July 28 under Section 302 (murder) and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) against unknown auto driver.

Samagra Shiksha Scheme to continue till 2026, says Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Playschools in government schools with trained teachers, focus on child safety and vocational and skill-based training from Class 6-12 are some of the key features that the Centre has laid emphasis on keeping in mind the post-Covid education scenario as it approved the continuation of the Samagra Shiksha Scheme (SSS) for school education till March 31, 2026.

The SSS is an integrated scheme for school education. It treats school education as a continuum and is in line with the Sustainable Development Goal for Education.

The revamped scheme favours formalisation of playschools and anganwadi in the school education system. The Government schools too



will have playschools and the teachers will be trained accordingly, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said after the Cabinet nodded the SSS.

As per the scheme, emphasis will be placed on vocational learning. Classes 6-8 will receive its exposure while focus on skills will be placed for students of classes 9-12. Further discussions are being held to formalise coding, augmented and virtual reality, etc. along with more modern skills in schools.

For the first time, the Centre has also added child safety within the SSS, Pradhan said, adding States will be given aid to make a commission for protection of child rights.

Cabinet approves continuation of 1,023 fast track courts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved continuation of 1,023 fast track special courts, including 389 exclusive POCSO courts, as a centrally sponsored scheme for another two years.

Briefing the media, Union Minister Anurag Thakur said out of 31 States and Union Territories, 28 have started the scheme. West Bengal is one of the States which has not started the scheme, he pointed out, adding “We are hopeful they will start it soon.”

The scheme would continue from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2023 with an outlay of ₹1572.86 crore — ₹971.70 crore as central share and ₹601.16 crore as State share, an official statement said.

The central share is to be funded from ‘Nirbhaya’ Fund. The scheme was launched on October 2, 2019.

Incidents of rape of minor girls below the age of twelve years and women below the age of sixteen years have shaken the conscience of the entire nation.

Coronavirus-induced lifestyle changes taking toll on health of school kids’ eyes

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Covid-19 pandemic-induced lifestyle changes such as significant decrease in outdoor time and increase in screen time is taking a toll on the health of the eyes of school-children. It is causing myopia, also known as near-sightedness or short-sightedness, among children, researchers have cautioned.

Myopia is a condition in which the shape of the eye changes, causing light rays to bend (refract) incorrectly, focusing images in front of, instead of on the surface of, the retina.

Though there has been a rise in cases of Myopia for the past few decades, during Covid-19 crisis the trend has accelerated. Globally, it's projected that by 2050 half of the world's population will be myopic.

In their study published online in the British Journal of Ophthalmology, the researchers have warned eye care professionals, and also policy makers, educators and parents, that collective efforts are needed to pre-

vent the potential public health crisis among kids as a result of Covid-19.

Though the study was conducted on school students in Hong Kong, the results are applicable on almost all school kids world over, including India where schools and colleges have been shut down for the past one year, in a bid to control the march of coronavirus. Children have been particularly badly affected, with outdoor activities restricted or banned and socialising severely limited.

Like Hong Kong, India too has among the world's most densely populated cities, with most residents living in high-rises and small apartments with little outdoor space.

Some 709 of the children were recruited to the study at the start of the pandemic (December 2019 to January 2020) and were monitored for around 8 months; 1084 children had entered the study before the start of the pandemic and had been monitored for around 3 years.

The children's visual acuity—the ability to see clearly—was measured and they filled

in questionnaires on their lifestyle, including how much time they spent outdoors and on close work, at study entry and during subsequent clinic visits.

Around 1 in 5 (19.5 per cent) of the children in the Covid-19 group developed short-sightedness between January and August 2020, compared with around 1 in 3 (37 per cent) of those in the pre-Covid-19 group over a period of three years.

And after factoring in age, gender, length of monitoring period, parental short-sightedness, and how much time was spent outdoors and on close work, the numbers of new cases of short-sightedness were higher among children in the Covid-19 group.

The estimated 1-year incidence of short-sightedness was 28 per cent, 27 per cent, and 26 per cent, respectively, for 6, 7 and 8 year olds in the Covid-19 group, compared with 17 per cent, 16 per cent, and 15 per cent, respectively, for 6, 7, and 8 year olds in the pre-Covid-19 group, as per the study.

Rlys drops internet plan in trains

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Railways has “dropped” its ambitious project to provide internet connection in trains because it was found not to be cost-effective.

In a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said as a pilot project, Wi-Fi-based internet facility was provided in the Howrah Rajdhani Express train through satellite communication technology.

“This technology was capital intensive with recurring costs in the form of bandwidth charges and thus, was not cost effective. Also, the internet bandwidth availability to passengers was inadequate. Hence, the project was dropped. At present, suitable cost effective technology for provision of Wi-Fi based internet services in trains is not available,” he said.

Former railway minister Piyush Goyal had said in 2019 that the Centre is planning to provide WiFi services in trains in the next four to four-and-a-half years.

India, Israel set to take defence ties to new height

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Signifying strong defence and strategic ties between the two countries, IAF Chief R K S Bhaduria on Wednesday reviewed the entire range of bilateral relations with his Israeli counterpart during his ongoing visit to Tel Aviv.

The two countries have forged close defence ties since diplomatic relations were established in the early 1990s. Israel has now emerged as one of the top weapon and technology provider to India.

Giving details about the IAF chief visit, officials said he is in Israel to discuss enhancement of bilateral exchanges between air forces of the two countries.

“As strategic partners, India and Israel enjoy strong, multi-dimensional ties, an important pillar of which is defence cooperation and military level exchanges,” IAF said on Twitter.

Both sides will discuss enhancement in the depth and scope of bilateral exchanges between the two air forces, it men-



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major milestone, the sea trials of the first indigenously designed and built aircraft carrier INS Vikrant on Wednesday commenced. India has now joined the select group of countries including US, Russia, UK and France having the expertise to design and build the highly complex aircraft carriers.

Once it passes the sea trials, INS Vikrant is likely to be inducted into the Navy by the end of next year. The Navy on Wednesday described it as a “proud and historic day” and said India has joined a select group of countries having niche capability in this field of ship-building.

INS Vikrant is the largest and most complex warship to be built within the country. The 40,000-tonne aircraft carrier set off on its maiden sea trials, 50 years after its namesake played a major role in the 1971 war. It was built at a cost of more than Rs 23, 000 crores by the public sector Cochin Shipyard.

Once the extensive sea trials are over, the aircraft carrier will be put through the stringent aviation trials before induction into service.

“It is a proud and historic day for India as the reincarnated Vikrant

India has now joined the select group of countries including US, Russia, UK and France having the expertise to design and build the highly complex aircraft carriers.

(IAC) sails for her maiden sea trials today in the 50th year of her illustrious predecessor's key role in the victory in the 1971 war,” Indian Navy spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said.

The aircraft carrier is around 262 metres long and 62 metres wide. In June, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reviewed the construction of the aircraft carrier that will be able to accommodate up to 30 fighter jets and helicopters.

The warship will have a fleet of Mig-29K fighter jets and Ka-31 helicopters.

There are 14 decks in all, including five in the superstructure. The ship has over 2,300 compartments, designed for a crew of around 1,700 people, including specialised cabins to accommodate women officers.

BJP received ₹785.77 cr donations in 2019-20

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Being the ruling party, the BJP continued to bag the lion's share of donations in 2019-20. It received over ₹785.77 crore in donations above ₹20,000 from 5576 donations including electoral trusts, individuals and corporate. The opposition Congress was far behind with ₹139.016 crore from 350 donations. The amount

received by the BJP is five times more than what Congress got during the same period and more than three times the aggregate of ₹228.035 crore declared by the INC, NCP, CPI, CPM and AITC.

Interestingly, BJP declared a donation of Rs 4.80 lakhs from Amravati Municipal Corporation. No details of address, bank name, PAN etc. have been

provided by the party against this donation, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), a non-government organization that released the data, said.

“A casual search on the internet shows that the aforesaid donor is a Government of Maharashtra local body. It raises questions on the legality of the contribution made by a municipal cor-

poration which is a governing body (whose Mayor and deputy Mayor are from BJP) to a political party,” the ADR said. The report, prepared by the ADR focuses on donations received by the national political parties, above Rs 20,000, during the financial year 2019-20, as submitted by the parties to the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Lok Sabha proceedings adjourned 5 times on Wednesday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned five times on Wednesday after the passage of two bills without any debate, amid protests by the opposition over Pegasus snooping allegations and other issues. As soon as the House met again at 3.30 pm, Rajendra Agrawal, who was chairing the proceedings, took up the Coconut Development Board (Amendment) Bill, 2021, which

was moved by Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar. However, the opposition members continued their protest on the Pegasus snooping row as well other matters.

Amid the din, Tomar moved the bill, saying the proposed legislation will benefit coconut farmers in different states.

Soon thereafter, the bill was passed without debate even as the opposition objected to the hasty approval to the bill.

The bill has already been approved by the Rajya Sabha. As the opposition uproar continued, Agrawal adjourned the proceedings for the day. Earlier in the day, the House had given its nod to the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Bill, 2021.

The Bill was moved by Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav for consideration and passage.

FIRST COLUMN

AN INNOVATIVE INSTITUTION

SWIFT bridges financial inequalities by offering financial services to the underprivileged



GOBHANU SASANKAR KORISEPATI

An Indian student has developed an innovative microfinance concept for women, inspired by Bangladesh's Grameen Bank — the world's largest microfinance institution — which made banking more accessible to the poor. SWIFT- Sustaining Women in Financial Turmoil — was formed in September 2020, when its founder, Gobhanu Korisepati, launched a microfinance social business platform. He spent over three months in an internship with Grameen Bank to learn the logistics. SWIFT was founded to bridge financial inequalities in India by making financial services accessible to the underprivileged. The need was felt because he witnessed the complexities accompanying traditional loans such as mandatory collateral and proof of income firsthand and found that financial services tend to discriminate against the poor directly. The institution is based on an adapted version of micro-finance that best targets women who lack access to financial services. It brings women financial stability and human dignity by



providing them micro-loans to start their entrepreneurial adventures. A loan can change the life of any individual, especially for a woman coming from an underprivileged background. To date, SWIFT has loaned to over 1000 women, working with a focus on sectors such as agriculture, clothing, and food services. The largest loan SWIFT has lent individually is worth ₹20,000. The borrower is a young woman, Magali, and the loan helped her buy wholesale fabric, thread, elastic, yarn, and maintain her sewing machine. The loan was unique as it was aimed at reaching vulnerable populations in an isolated region. SWIFT's many loans are targeted to help the women who need it the most, and they have been successful in lending over ₹19 lakh so far. Another borrower from SWIFT is Meela, a rural farmer who aspired to be an entrepreneur, and the loan provided the perfect opportunity to do so. Meela has a family of three and a monthly household income under the poverty line. By providing her a loan, SWIFT helped her buy seeds and fertilizers to increase agricultural production. SWIFT currently selects the needy based on criteria that are constantly being adapted to fit the best interests of Indian women.

The criteria currently considered are based on the community impact a loan would have: how many people the loan can positively affect and risk evaluation factors, loan duration, and repayment schedule. It is important to note that SWIFT does not charge any interest on the loans as its goal is only to better the livelihoods of the borrowers and their communities. When asked how SWIFT has raised funds, Gobhanu says that SWIFT is fortunate enough to have gained a following on social media platforms and its website (swiftmfi.org), which primarily allocates its funding addition to local fundraisers such as bake-sales and charity games. What makes SWIFT unique from other charities is that it is run directly by children. A few months after founding SWIFT, Gobhanu sought out help and was overwhelmed by the support of youth he could find online. Today the SWIFT team consists of over 20 high school students who donate their time and efforts to make the world a better place. SWIFT is also currently inculcating the habit of microfinancing throughout schools as the organization believes that financial literacy is a fundamental step for India's development. Gobhanu says that his vision is for SWIFT to reach developing and developed nations worldwide, not just India. In the coming years, he hopes to create a sustainable student-run organization that works to create equality of opportunity for marginalized communities.

(The writer is a student from Andhra Pradesh and founder of the SWIFT initiative. The views expressed are personal)

Youth and radicalism:
Search for cannon fodder



AMRITA BHINDER

The so-called movement for Khalistan checks all the necessary boxes to be an 'ideal' issue for agencies like Pakistan's ISI to attack India

W

illiam Faulkner's observation that "the past is never dead, it is not even the past" holds for issues that enemies of India exploit to fuel unrest. The resurgence of the talk surrounding 'Khalistan' indicates how those interested in harming India never stop sowing seeds of discontent.

For any strife to continually 'catch the fancy' of the people, it has to appear personal and immediate. Such issues can find easy access in India with many societal, caste, religious, and sectarian fault lines. The abundance of youth is a bonus for those looking to take advantage. The radicalisation of youth to be used as cannon fodder is commonplace across strife-driven regions like in Syria where the social unrest originated from college campuses. The JNU protest is another illustration where sloganeering against a fee hike soon transformed into a demonstration of whatever was the 'flavour of the month protest'

The so-called movement for Khalistan checks all the necessary boxes to be an 'ideal' issue for agencies like Pakistan's ISI to attack India. It is well-documented that ISI pumped monetary and arms resources and provided a haven for extremists who propagated the demand for a separate State of Khalistan.

In the last few years, long-standing issues like left-wing extremism or Islamist terror are being called out or are past their sell-by date. The significant churn in the United States and Australia, and the United Kingdom against Chinese influence in college campuses has shaken things up. The crackdown by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman in 2017 on Islamist terrorists unleashed significant changes in how Jihadist terror operated across the globe. Vowing to galvanise an Islamic military coalition that aimed to counter "terrorism and extremism," Mohammed bin Salman led a series of high-level meetings of an alliance of Muslim nations against terrorism funding and the day-to-day disruption of al-Qaida, the Islamic State, and like-minded jihadists. In this atmosphere, global entities that benefit from strife, such as the military-industrial complexes, need to fan new issues to survive.

One of the reasons why Khalistan is a red-flag issue unlike ever before is the global support that has come its way in the recent past, with significant ramifications. In a recent Club House chat, a young person of Indian origin based in Europe and dedicated to the Khalistan cause claimed that the movement aimed at the physical separation of Punjab from the Indian union in less than two generations. The support for the separatist elements of the Khalistan movement, especially amongst the second-generation Punjabi youth based in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, has gained momentum as it ostensibly seeks to correct a historical wrong. However, the danger has increased manifold due to a suc-

KHALISTAN WAS NEVER A DOMESTIC ISSUE, AND THE SOONER THE AVERAGE INDIAN REALISES THAT IT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO CHANGE THE WORLD, THE FASTER WE CAN COUNTER IT. THE REASON THAT WE CANNOT TAKE ALL OF THIS TO BE AN OVERSTRETCHING OF ONE'S IMAGINATION IS STARING US IN THE FORM OF A SIMPLE FACT — THE WORLD HAS SHIFTED FROM 'CONVENTIONAL WARFARE' TO THE UNCONVENTIONAL

(The writer is a lawyer and columnist. The views expressed are personal.)



cessful shift in the perspective. The anti-Sikh pogrom of 1984 is not attributed to Congress but the 'Indian State'. As a result, the Khalistan issue now targets the Indian government and propagates a 'revolt' as the only way out.

This status transition is strategically designed and it would be foolish to think otherwise. It is similar to the Israel-Palestine issue and the desire of vested parties to replicate the model where a narrative would constantly stoke fires of how the Indian state has unleashed a flurry of horrors upon the ordinary citizens of Punjab. The narrative-building machinery is also in place, with socio-cultural events such as literary jaunts with authors and think tanks disseminating ideas and information to that end.

One can see how global concepts such as critical race theory, a 40-year-old idea that believes racial division to be a social construct instead of a personal bias, are promulgated locally. The ongoing farmers' protest is a testimony to the same, where a broad idea - farmers opposing the three laws - has been rejigged to make it region-specific - how the state has primarily targeted the farmer of Punjab.

The Khalistan issue is also being pitched as a shared narrative at a global level, claiming to echo the sentiments of the Sikh community, even though the citizens of Punjab rejected the very idea of a separate State. The local view is routinely, and even vehemently, dismissed on public platforms and social media by radicalised elements based outside of India. While

Indians wave off the issue as bunkum or pointless wishful thinking of a handful of wavered NRI youth, global media picks on that point of view and furthers it. The physical or virtual protests also have many Pakistan-sponsored implants disguised as Sikhs. The cycle is then completed when such news is peddled for domestic consumption as the local view that an authoritarian government has suppressed.

The propagators of Khalistan are quick to portray Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the all-powerful fascist responsible for the subjugation of Punjab, even though the actions of the current Indian government tell a completely different story. In 2018, a Delhi court awarded the first death penalty to two persons in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots in the cases that were probed and re-opened by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up by the Modi government in 2015. In 1994, the two had gotten away due to lack of evidence, and their conviction became possible only due to the evidence provided by the BJP state government.

The Khalistan issue is a testing ground for other pan-India strifes that can be used against the country. It is in tandem with a 2016 Pakistan Senate recommendation to the then Nawaz Sharif government to play up caste and religion issues in India to curb India's global influence. A 13-member committee of the Senate, Pakistan's equivalent to the Rajya Sabha, asked the government to talk about 'Dalits, unhappy Muslims, and encourage those opposing Prime Minister Narendra Modi' to destabilise India. It also made some tactical recommendations to "hire International lobbyists and strategic communication firms and reactivate Pakistani community living abroad to change the global narrative".

The narrative-building efforts to push Khalistan or any exploitable local fault line to the forefront as a global agenda cannot be ignored or undermined. One is reminded of how the US attack on Iraq in 2002 also resulted from a complex narrative-building exercise. India's stature as a geopolitical player on the global stage has only increased in the recent past. Whether it is Asia or the Indian Ocean Region, India's significance is now key to shaping the world as it has also emerged as a natural counter balance to China. This reality does not suit traditional foes such as China and Pakistan and their new supporters, namely, Turkey and Iran.

Rest assured, any narrative that thwarts India would be ready to pick for them. Khalistan was never a domestic issue, but its play has only increased, and the sooner the average Indian realises it has the potential to change the world, the faster we can counter it. The reason that we cannot take all of this to be an overstretching of one's imagination is staring us in the form of a simple fact - the world has shifted from 'conventional warfare' to the unconventional. While we might not comprehend the severity of unconventional warfare, it surely is at play around the world by those interested in it.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT AFRAID OF DEBATING ON PEGASUS IN PARLIAMENT? WHAT DO YOU WANT TO HIDE? — AIMIM CHIEF ASADUDDIN OWAISI



WITH CHECKS AND BALANCES IN PLACE, ILLEGAL SURVEILLANCE IS NOT POSSIBLE. THOSE REPORTS HAVE NO FACTUAL BASIS. — ELECTRONICS AND IT MINISTER ASHWINI VAISHNAW

Maldives and Indian relationship

There have been a few untoward incidents that led to the Maldivians harbouring anti-India sentiments



PK VASUDEVA

The MDP believes that the anti-India campaign run by Azaan is a well-funded, tailor-made, and intricately choreographed political campaign to bring ties between the Maldives and its closest ally, India, to breaking point.

The reason for the 'India out' campaign was the military presence in the Maldives, which according to the locals, is a threat. The 'India out' campaign started in 2020 and spread across social media like a wildfire. The co-founder of the Dhiyares media, Shifxan Ahmed, clarified that they had only one issue - about the Indian military presence.

It is not the first time that an anti-India campaign had reared its ugly head. Back in 2013, when the Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) was in



power, international relations between India and Maldives took a hit. PPM, led by Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, had tilted towards the Chinese. To please the Chinese, the Yameen government indulged in anti-India slogans and policies.

Researcher Dr. Gulbin Sultana, an analyst at Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA), shares the same sentiment about the anti-India rhetoric of 2013. But even if the Yameen government had a biased that

favoured the Chinese, they engaged in an India-first policy as well.

There have been a few untoward incidents that led to the Maldivians harbouring anti-India sentiments. The first incident was when India gifted two Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopters (ALF) in 2010 and 2015. These helicopters were to be operated by Indian officers and to be used for ocean search and rescue operations, airlifting patients across the islands, and Maritime weather surveillance. They were based in Addu atoll and at Hanimaadhoo but the pro-China stance of the Yameen government let it interpret them as proof of the Indian military's growing presence in the Maldives. In 2016, when the agitation reached its peak, the Yameen government requested

India to take back their choppers and the defence personnel. The Indian refusal to take back the choppers added fuel to the fire. In 2018, Ibrahim Mohamed Solih came to power and scrapped agreements that proscribed the use of choppers and he extended the stay of Indian personnel stay in the Maldives. Solih's friendly stance towards India and its choppers again fuelled anti-India sentiments in the Maldives.

The Maldivian government believed in keeping terms of contracts about defence, sovereignty, and national security secret. Some groups of people interpreted this secrecy as a threat to democracy. The domestic players in the Maldives opposed agreements with India because of this lack of transparency. According to

Maldivian law, any agreement has to be tabled in Parliament and needs parliamentary approval. It is only after the approval the government can engage in bilateral treaties. But the Solih government, in the name of national security, does not share any data with Parliament. The idea of keeping everything under wraps in the name of national security angers the people and fuels protests.

The second incident was the signing of Sifvaru-Uthuru Thilafalhu (UTF) harbour project agreement between India and the Maldives in 2021, under which India will be developing a Maldives National Defence Force Coast Guard Harbour. This project was initiated under the Yameen government. The dockyard is an atoll located near Male', the cap-

ital of the Maldives.

The Indian motive behind signing this agreement was the growing presence of the Chinese in the Indian Ocean region. This agreement would satisfy the strategic interests of both India and the Maldives. But in 2019, when the Solih government came to power, media suspicion began to grow, owing to Solih's inclination towards India about the UTF project. The Maldivian government has repeatedly clarified that they would not allow any military presence on their land, be it Indian, Chinese, or anyone else. The Maldives has repeatedly asked India not to interfere in its domestic politics.

After the threats to blast the Indian high commission in the Maldives, appropriate security measures have now been taken.

RBI's MPC begins deliberations

LIKELY TO MAINTAIN STATUS QUO ON INTEREST RATE

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The RBI's rate-setting panel MPC began its three-day deliberations on Wednesday to finalise the bi-monthly monetary policy amid expectations that it may opt for status quo on interest rate on account of inflationary concerns.

Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das will unveil the resolution of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on Friday.

Headed by the RBI Governor, the six-member MPC also includes three external members.

Experts are of the view that the RBI may prefer to wait and watch for some more time before taking any major action on the monetary policy front as the central bank's focus is on managing inflation as well supporting economic growth.

The central bank had left the benchmark interest rate unchanged at 4 per cent at the June policy meet. It was for the



sixth time in a row that the MPC maintained status quo on interest rate.

M Govinda Rao, chief economic advisor of Brickwork Ratings, said the MPC has kept key policy rates unchanged since May 2020, after having brought them down to a record low of 4 per cent from 5.15 per cent through two rate cuts (75 bps in March 2020 and 40 bps in May 2020), to assuage the economic consequences of the Covid-19

pandemic.

Moreover, the MPC has continued with the accommodative policy stance after changing it from neutral in June 2019. "We expect the RBI MPC to hold the repo rate at 4 per cent and continue to be accommodating to support the nascent recovery, in the upcoming MPC. We also expect it to sound a cautionary note and emphasise the need to closely monitor the situation," Rao said.

Markets maintain record run on earnings boost; Sensex scales 54,000 for 1st time

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks clamored up to fresh lifetime highs on Wednesday, with the Sensex surging past the 54,000-mark for the first time, as stellar earnings whetted risk appetite amid supportive global cues.

Banking and finance stocks saw hectic buying after largest lender SBI reported a 55 per cent jump in standalone net profit at ₹ 6,504 crore for the June quarter, helped by a decline in bad loans.

Surging for the third straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex rallied 546.41 points or 1.02 per cent to end at its new record of 54,369.77, bettering the previous session's closing high. It scaled its lifetime peak of 54,465.91 during the session.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty surged 128.05 points or 0.79 per cent to its all-time peak of 16,246.85. It touched a lifetime intra-day high of 16,290.20.

HDFC was the top performer in the Sensex pack,

Rupee climbs to over 5-week high of 74.19/USD

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Indian rupee added another 9 paise to mark its highest level in over five weeks at 74.19 against the US dollar on Wednesday, aided by bullish equities and subdued crude oil prices. Further, gains in Asian peers against the US dollar too bolstered rupee sentiment.

surging 4.77 per cent, followed by Kotak Bank, ICICI Bank, SBI, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank.

On the other hand, Titan, Nestle India, UltraTech Cement, Sun Pharma, Maruti and Bharti Airtel were among the laggards, dropping up to 2.14 per cent.

However, the market breadth was negative, with 16 Sensex stocks closing in the red, while 14 advanced.

PHDCCI calls for 3-tier GST, capping highest slab at 18%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Industry chamber PHDCCI on Wednesday called for a 3-tier GST rate structure, with the highest slab at 18 per cent, to help boost consumption and reduce evasion.

Under the Goods and Services Tax (GST), a four-rate structure that exempts or imposes a low rate of tax 5 per cent on essential items and top rate of 28 per cent is levied. The other slabs of tax are 12 and 18 per cent. Besides, a 3 per cent rate is applied on gold, silver and processed diamonds.

PHDCCI President Sanjay Aggarwal said an ideal GST rate structure would be to have two to three slabs of GST rates.

"We suggest the lowest rate at 5 per cent, a moderate rate of 12 per cent, by clubbing the category of 12 and 18 per cent, and the highest rate of 18 per cent for luxury and sin goods only," he said.

This rationalisation of rates will increase consumption and tax revenue, reduce compliances, reduce tax evasion and

PHDCCI President Sanjay Aggarwal said an ideal GST rate structure would be to have two to three slabs of GST rates

help to make

GST as good and simple tax, as simplified tax regime is the need of hour to reduce litigation pertaining to tax matters. "This will also lead to removal of hardships and provide ease of doing business and compliance among taxpayers," Aggarwal added.

Aggarwal further said that the government had rationalised GST rates in the 28 per cent slab category and taking out about 200 items from the highest slab and putting in either 18 or 12 per cent.

Still products such as air conditioners, and cements are charged at 28 per cent GST, he said. A nationwide GST, which subsumed 17 local levies like excise duty, service tax and VAT and 13 cesses, was rolled out on July 1, 2017.

Over 360 UDAN air routes operational now

IANSS ■ NEW DELHI

India has till date operationalised 361 air routes under the regional connectivity scheme 'Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik' or RCS-Udan.

The scheme was launched in 2016. Under it, airlines are provided with a 'Viability Gap Funding' to keep fares affordable and accessible. "Till date, 361 routes and 59 airports (including 5 heliports and 2 water aerodromes) have been operationalised under the Udan scheme," the Ministry of Civil Aviation said in a statement on Wednesday. "The scheme is envisaged to establish strong aerial connectivity in all States and UTs of the country which hitherto were not connected, laying the foundation of a new regional segment in India's aviation market." According to the ministry, on Tuesday, the first direct flight operations between Imphal (Manipur) and Shillong (Meghalaya) was flagged off under the RCS-UDAN. "The operationalisation of this route fulfills the objectives of the Government of India to establish strong aerial connectivity in priority areas of NorthEast India."

RBI cautions against fraudulent offers of buying/selling old notes

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Wednesday cautioned the public not to fall prey to fictitious offers of buying or selling of old banknotes and coins on commission basis by unauthorised entities.

In a statement, the RBI said it has come to its notice that certain elements are fraudulently using the name/logo of the Reserve Bank of India and seeking charges/ commission/ tax from public for transactions related to buying and selling



of old banknotes and coins through various online/ offline platforms.

"It is clarified that Reserve Bank of India does not deal in such matters and never seeks charges/ commissions of any sort. Reserve Bank of India has also not authorised any institution/ firm/ person etc to collect charges/ commission on its behalf in such transactions," it said. RBI advised the public to remain cautious and not to fall prey to elements using its name to extract money through such fraudulent offers.

CBIC launches portal with info on customs procedures, rules

IANSS ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Board for Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) on Wednesday launched the Indian Customs Compliance Information Portal (CIP) at www.cip.icegate.gov.in/CIP for providing free access to information on all Customs procedures and regulatory compliance for nearly 12,000 Customs Tariff Items.

CIP is yet another facilitation tool developed by the CBIC to empower businesses as well as any interested person with up-to-date information on the legal and procedural requirements of Customs and Partner Government Agencies (FSSAI, AQIS, PQIS, Drug Controller etc.) for carrying out imports and exports, a statement said. The portal would provide, at the click of a button, complete knowledge of all import and export related requirements for all items covered under the Customs Tariff thereby improving the ease of doing cross border trade. For using CIP, one can simply enter either the Customs Tariff Heading (CTH) or the description of the goods in question to get information to step-by-step procedures, regulatory compliances requirements like License, Certificates, etc., for imports as well as exports.

Govt holding consultations with stakeholder to explore development of freight smart cities, says Goyal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is presently holding stakeholder consultations with States, central ministries, and technical institutions to explore the development of freight smart cities in the country, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

State Governments have been requested to identify cities for development as freight smart cities, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

He said that one of the inputs during stakeholder consultations has been to start with a list of 10 such cities, which has not yet been finalised. "The government is presently holding stakeholder consultations with State Governments, central ministries, technical institutions, etc. To explore the development of freight smart cities in the country," Goyal said. Replying to a question on Open Network for

Digital Commerce (ONDC), Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Som Parkash said it is an initiative aiming at promoting open networks for all aspects of the exchange of goods and services over digital or electronic networks.

"ONDC is expected to make e-commerce more inclusive and accessible for consumers. Consumers can potentially discover any seller, product or service by using any compatible application or platform, thus increasing freedom of choice for consumers," Parkash said.

ONDC will enable the consumers to match demand with the nearest available supply, he added. "This would also give consumers the liberty to choose their preferred local businesses. Thus, ONDC would standardise operations, promote inclusion of local suppliers, drive efficiencies in logistics and lead to enhancement of value for consumers," the minister said.

India, World Bank sign \$250 mn project for making dams safe

IANSS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Government, the Central Water Commission, representatives from 10 participating States, and the World Bank on Wednesday signed a \$250 million project for long-term dam safety programme and improving the safety and performance of existing dams across various States. The Second Dam Rehabilitation and

Improvement Project (DRIP-2) will strengthen dam safety by building dam safety guidelines, bringing in global experience, and introducing innovative technologies.

Another major innovation envisaged under the project, that is likely to transform dam safety management, is the introduction of a risk-based approach to dam asset management that will help to effectively allocate financial resources

towards priority dam safety needs. The project will be implemented in approximately 120 dams across Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu, and at the national level through the CWC. Other states or agencies may be added to the project during project implementation.

India needs 3 private players in telecom: Airtel CEO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Bharti Airtel CEO Gopal Vittal on Wednesday asserted that a large nation like India needs three private players in the telecom sector, and hoped the Government would take measures to offer relief to the industry that is facing "serious financial stress".

The comments assume significance in the backdrop of Vodafone Ideas desperate struggle to stay afloat. Aditya Birla Group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla had in June this year offered to hand over the group's stake in debt-laden Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) to the government or any other entity to ensure that the company remains a going concern.

Mamata speaks to Modi about Bengal floods

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

With already three lakh people having been displaced due to floods and weather office forecasting more rains in the coming days Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday accused the central agencies for creating man-made flood in her State and wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking respite from the present situation.

The Chief Minister who also had a telephonic talk with the Prime Minister earlier on the day and told him how faulty maintenance and erroneous decisions taken by

the centrally controlled Damodar Valley Corporation had left flooded large parts of southern Bengal.

Besides Banerjee lodging a verbal complaint with the Prime Minister she also wrote a letter to him about what she called "grave man-made flood situation" in South Bengal districts adding how the DVC authorities had released "unprecedented" volume of water from its dams at Panchet, Maithon and Tenughat.

While sources said that the DVC had released 5.98 lakh cusec of water in last four-five days Banerjee on Wednesday told newsmen that "the DVC had announced

leaving of 54,000 cusecs of water ... but they have released 2 lakh cusecs of water without informing us... every year we have to face this problem for no fault of ours and lakhs of our people get affected and thousands of hectares of land get inundated causing losses worth crores."

In her letter to the Prime Minister she wrote "The entire flood protection system managed through different dams including state barrages both on West Bengal and Jharkhand side are very old. Due to years of siltation and lack of proper maintenance the water holding capacity has reduced,"

She said "we have been



complaining against this practice for years but nothing has been done as a result of which the State is suffering." A tweet from the Prime Minister's

office later said that he had assured of all support to Bengal. Banerjee had called up Modi after conducting a survey of the flood-hit areas.

She visited the worst-hit areas in Amta and Udainarainpur in Howrah district. At least 15 people have died, and around three lakh displaced after heavy rain lashed parts of south Bengal.

Meanwhile rejecting the Chief Minister's allegations that arbitrary decision of the DVC was responsible for the Bengal floods the Corporation authorities said that "Blaming DVC for flood is unjustified as the DVC only implements the decision of the committee on water regulations. State government's consent is taken before the discharge of water and DVC issues warning to district administrations."

Kerala relaxes lockdown rules despite high rate of new Covid cases

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala logged 22,414 new cases of Covid-19 on Wednesday while 108 patients succumbed to the pandemic during the last 24 hours. Though the average Test Positivity Rate continued to be slightly higher at 11.37 per cent, the State Government decided late on Tuesday to do away with the total lockdowns slapped during the weekends.

Veena George, Minister of Health, the frontline leader of the fight against the pandemic, told the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday that shops and commercial establishments of all places barring regions with high TPR would be allowed to function from 7 am to 9 pm. "We have decided to continue with the lock down on Sundays. The gathering for all functions would be limited to



20 persons. Restrictions would be enforced in places based on the number of cases tested positive for every 1,000 persons," said George.

The minister also said that places of worship which could accommodate large gathering would be allowed to admit not more than 40 persons.

The department of health tested 1.97 lakh samples on Wednesday. Malappuram remained the epicentre of the

pandemic with 3691 new patients and was closely followed by Thrissur (2,912).

The death toll in Kerala due to the pandemic touched 17, 211 on Wednesday. There are more than 1.76 lakh Covid-19 patients undergoing treatment in various hospitals in the State.

Physicians in Government Hospitals in Kerala are of the view that the correct numbers were not being released by the Health Department as details of the kind of tests done on samples are being kept as a secret.

"While Tamil Nadu Government discloses the daily count of RT-PCR tests done on the samples, the information provided by the Government of Kerala is not clear about the kind of tests," said the Government doctors who spoke on condition of anonymity.

TN Govt to again come out with law banning online gaming

IANSS ■ CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Government will again come out with a proper law banning online games like rummy, said Law Minister S. Regupathy.

In a statement issued here, Reghupathy said public interest is important, by following due procedures and specifying valid reasons, the Government will again come out with a law banning online games like rummy. The Madras High Court on Tuesday struck down the law brought in by the previous AIADMK Government banning online gaming in the state. The law also provided for fine and jail term for the violators.

Finding youngsters getting cheated and committing suicide and to protect the innocent citizens, the AIADMK government brought the law by

amending the Tamil Nadu Gaming Act, 1930 (Tamil Nadu Act III of 1930), Chennai City Police Act, 1888 (Tamil Nadu Act III of 1988) and Tamil Nadu District Police Act, 1859 (Tamil Nadu Act XXIV of 1859).

According to Reghupathy, the court had said the government did not specify the reasons for banning the online gaming when the law was made.

PMK founder S. Ramadoss urged the Tamil Nadu government to come out with a law by rectifying the defects.

He said thousands of families in Tamil Nadu were happy when the online gaming was banned last year while the Madras High Court order on Tuesday is disappointing.

With attractive advertisements the online gaming companies lure the youth and then push them into debt trap.

Ramadoss said about 25 youth committed suicide during the last couple of years as they were unable to pay back their debts incurred to play the online games.

He said the previous Tamil Nadu government had first brought an ordinance banning the online gaming last November and later made it into a proper law this February.

As a matter of fact, it was the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court in July last year that had suggested to the state government to enact suitable laws to regulate the online gaming industry.

Quashing the first information report (FIR) filed by the Kudankulam police against a school teacher who had watched a game of rummy played in a farm, the court expressed its concern at the unregulated growth of online gaming industry.

Mumbai gets first genome sequencing lab

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

As part of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)'s ongoing fight against the Covid-19, the first-ever next-generation genome sequencing laboratory in Mumbai was commissioned at the TN Medical College & BYL Nair Charitable Hospital here on Wednesday.

The new laboratory, set up at one of the premier medical institutes in the city in the run up to its centenary that falls on September 4, will enable the BMC to identify variants of Sars-Cov-2 that causes Covid-19.

The new facility can analyse a large number of samples in a short period and also identify mutants, something that will be especially useful in hotspot areas and congested cities.

The next-generation genome sequencing (NGS) is a method of characterisation of pathogens. This technology is used to determine the order of nucleotides in entire genomes or targeted regions of RNA or DNA, which helps in understanding differences between two strains of the virus, thereby identifying mutants. The specialty of NGS is that a large number of samples can be processed in a short period at high speed.

Every batch for testing will comprise 384 samples and results will be declared in four days

Inaugurating the laboratory, Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray said

that the facility would go a long way in combating the Covid-19.

"We are currently fighting a war with a hidden enemy like the Coronavirus. The new genome sequencing laboratory will enable detection and treatment of the Covid-19 virus or its incarnations, and even other contagious diseases speedily," the chief minister said.

The chief minister said that it was very critical to have a virus testing lab in Mumbai to avoid delays in getting the test report which often led to fatalities in the past. Uddhav said that Nair Hospital, which was set up 100 years ago during the Spanish flu pandemic, was preparing to cater to the health of citizens for another century which is commendable.

Nair Hospital Dean Dr. Ramesh Bharmal said that the genome sequencing laboratory could handle 1,000 cases simultaneously and provide the results within the next few hours.

The entire cost of the equipment and the operating expenses have been raised through donations by a US-company, ATE Chandra Foundation and the TM Nair Medical College Global Alumni Association.

Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar, Municipal Commissioner I. S. Chahal, Public Health Committee Chairperson Rajul Patel, Dr. Shashank Joshi and Dr. Sanjay Oak were among those present at the inaugural function.

Attack targeting acting Af Defense Min kills 8



AP ■ KABUL

A bombing attack that targeted Afghanistan's acting Defense Minister, Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, killed at least eight people and wounded 20, authorities said on Wednesday. The Deputy Minister was not hurt in the attack claimed by Taliban insurgents.

The blast went off late Tuesday in a heavily guarded upscale neighborhood of the Capital of Kabul. It was followed by a gun battle that also left four militants dead, authorities said.

The casualty toll could rise, Interior Ministry spokesperson Mirwais Stanekzai said Wednesday.

Taliban spokesman

Zabihullah Mujahid in a statement Wednesday claimed responsibility for the attack. It came as the insurgent group presses ahead with an offensive that is putting pressure on provincial capitals in the south and west of the country.

Mujahid said the attack was revenge for recent attacks by Afghan national forces in various provinces that he said caused civilian casualties and displacement.

Stanekzai said it appeared the guesthouse of acting Defense Minister Bismillah Khan Mohammadi was targeted in the attack but he was not hurt.

Mohammadi's Jamiat-e-Islami party was told the minister was not in the guest-

house at the time and his family had been safely evacuated.

All four attackers were shot and killed after five hours of fighting, Stanekzai said.

Stanekzai said the attack took place in the posh Sherpur neighborhood, located in a section of the capital known as the Green Zone, where security is tight. It is home to several senior government officials.

Hours after Tuesday night's attack, the Defense Ministry released a video in which Mohammadi said his guards had been wounded in a suicide attack. "I assure my beloved countrymen that such attacks cannot have any impact on my willingness to defend my countrymen and my country," he said.

UNSC says it does not support restoration of Islamic Emirate in Af

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

The UN Security Council, currently being presided over by India, has declared that it does "not support the restoration of the Islamic Emirate" in Afghanistan as it expressed deep concern over the high levels of violence in the war-torn country following the Taliban stepping up its military offensive.

It also condemned in the "strongest terms" last week's "deplorable" attack against the United Nations in Afghanistan's Herat.

In a Press statement on the "escalating violence in Afghanistan" issued by Council President India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador T S Tirumurti, members of the 15-nation Security Council reaffirmed that there is no military solution to the conflict and "declared that they do not support the restoration of the Islamic Emirate."

"The members of the Security Council called on both the Islamic Republic and the Taliban to engage meaningfully in an inclusive, Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process in order to make urgent progress towards a political settlement and a ceasefire," the press

statement said.

"The members of the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the deplorable attack" against the UN compound on July 30, which resulted in the death of an Afghan security forces guard and several injured.

Security Council members "expressed their deep concern about the high levels of violence in Afghanistan following the Taliban's military offensive and called for an immediate reduction of violence," the press statement said.

"They also expressed deep concern about the number of reported serious human rights abuses and violations in communities affected by the ongoing armed conflict across the country," it said.

The Council condemned in the strongest terms all instances of terrorism and deliberate targeted attacks against civilians, including on the UN compound caused by the recent violent Taliban offensive.

"While continue prioritising the achievement of peace through negotiations, the AFG Gov, fulfilling its mandate, will continue to defend its citizens against atrocities and war crimes committed by the Taliban and their associated regional and intl terrorist groups," the Mission added.

The Council stressed the

need for full, equal and meaningful participation of women in this regard.

Afghanistan Foreign Minister Mohammed Haneef Atmar said in a tweet that he spoke with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar "to discuss convening an emergency UN Security Council Session" on Afghanistan.

"UN & intl community must play a greater role to stop the unfolding tragedy in due to Taliban violence & atrocities. Appreciate the lead role of as current UNSC President," Atmar said.

Following the issuance of the Press Statement, Afghan Mission to the UN tweeted that it welcomes the "strong condemnation" by the Security Council of all instances of terrorism and deliberate targeted attacks against civilians, including on the UN compound caused by the recent violent Taliban offensive.

"While continue prioritising the achievement of peace through negotiations, the AFG Gov, fulfilling its mandate, will continue to defend its citizens against atrocities and war crimes committed by the Taliban and their associated regional and intl terrorist groups," the Mission added.

British navy group: Hijackers have left vessel off UAE coast

AP ■ FUJAIRAH (UAE)

The hijackers who captured a vessel off the coast of the United Arab Emirates in the Gulf of Oman left the targeted ship on Wednesday, the British navy reported, ending a ship seizure that revived fears of an escalation in Mideast waters.

The incident, described by the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations the night before as a "potential hijack," ended with as much mystery as it began.

While the details of who briefly impounded the asphalt tanker and why remain unclear, the seizure once again reveals a region on edge as Iran and the United States seek to broker a resolution to their standoff over Tehran's tattered 2015 nuclear deal with world powers.

Over the past years, the rising tensions have played out in the waters of the Persian Gulf, where just last week a drone attack on an oil tanker linked to an Israeli billionaire off the coast of Oman killed two crew members. The West blamed Iran for the raid, which marked the first known fatal assault in the yearslong shadow war targeting vessels in Mideast waters.

Iran denied involvement.

Late on Tuesday, intruders boarded a Panama-flagged asphalt tanker called Asphalt Princess sailing off the coast of Fujairah, authorities said. The official news agency of Oman's military said it received reports that the Asphalt Princess had been hijacked and dispatched Royal Air Force maritime patrol aircraft and naval vessels "to contribute to securing international waters."

Possible signs of trouble began to emerge that evening when six oil tankers off the coast of Fujairah announced around the same time via their Automatic Identification System trackers that they were "not under command," according to MarineTraffic.com. That typically means a vessel has lost power and can no longer steer.

Satellite-tracking data for the Asphalt Princess had showed it gradually heading toward Iranian waters off the port of Jask early Wednesday, according to MarineTraffic.com. Hours later, however, it stopped and changed course toward Oman, just before the British navy group declared the hijackers had departed and the vessel was now "safe."

Israel fires back after 3 rockets launched from Lebanon

AP ■ TEL AVIV

Three rockets were fired from Lebanon into Israeli territory on Wednesday and the army responded with sustained artillery fire, Israel's military said. There was no immediate information on damages or casualties.

The announcement came after sirens sounded in northern Israel warning of a possible rocket attack from Lebanon. Two rockets land-



ed inside Israeli territory, the army said, adding that it fired

artillery back into Lebanon. Channel 12 reported that

one rocket exploded in an open area and another was intercepted by Israel's defense system, known as the Iron Dome. The warnings went off near Kiryat Shmona, a community of about 20,000 people near the Lebanese border.

A Lebanese army official said the military had no comment pending investigations. Other Lebanese security officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment from The Associated

Press.

However, several witnesses in the border area in south Lebanon said two rockets landed in an Israeli community across the border, followed by multiple artillery shells that were fired from Israel. The Israeli shells landed in an area between the Lebanese villages of Marjayoun and Khiam, they said, adding it was not clear where the rockets were fired from.

WHO: 4 mn new coronavirus cases reported globally

AP ■ GENEVA

There were more than 4 million new Covid-19 cases reported globally in the last week, driven mostly by spikes in the Middle East and Asia.

That's according to the World Health Organization's

latest weekly report on the pandemic.

The U.N. health agency said Wednesday infections have been increasing for more than a month, although the worldwide number of deaths dropped by about 8%.

In the Middle East and Asia, however, deaths

increased by more than a third. In the last week, the highest numbers of coronavirus cases were reported by the U.S., India, Indonesia, Brazil and Iran. More than 130 countries have now reported cases of the easier-to-spread delta variant, first identified in India.

JD-U MP claims his phone was tapped in past

Patna: A day after Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar demanded investigation in the Pegasus snooping case, a JD-U MP on Tuesday alleged that his phone was also tapped in the past.

Kaushalendra Kumar, who represents Nalanda, said that many leaders and Ministers of the NDA Government are claiming that their phones were being tapped.

"It is the need of the hour to investigate the Pegasus phone tapping case thoroughly. Our Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has also advocated the same and he is absolutely spot

on," he said.

However, clarifying that they were "not opposing the NDA or the Narendra Modi Government," he said: "The investigations in this extremely sensitive espionage case will eventually help the NDA Government in future."

"The phones of many Union Ministers were tapped during the Pegasus incident. Clarity will come only after investigations of the cases," he added. The MP's statement makes it seems that the JD-U wants to raise the issue in a bid to corner its alliance partner BJP.

Telangana HC surprised over ₹60 cr sanctioned to fight contempt cases

Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court on Wednesday expressed surprise over the State Government sanctioning ₹60 crore to fight contempt of Court cases pending against State bureaucrats including Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar.

Passing interim orders, a division Bench, comprising Chief Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Vijayans Reddy directed the State Government not to release

the money.

The court was hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) by a lecturer against the government's financial assistance to meet the legal expenses to fight contempt cases filed predominantly against Chief Commissioner of Land Administration (CCLA), a post held by Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar.

The court questioned how the government would spend the taxpayers' money.

It wanted to know what are the treasury norms and if they allow this financial assistance.

The High Court served notices to secretaries of finance and revenue departments, directors of treasury, CCLA and to Somesh Kumar in his personal capacity.

The court adjourned the hearing till October 27.

The chief secretary had on June 7 issued a Government Order (GO)

sanctioning Rs 58,95,63,000 towards contempt cases pending in the High Court.

More than 250 contempt cases are reportedly pending against the bureaucrats.

The PIL has come up for hearing close on the heels of the High Court taking serious view of willful disobedience by bureaucrats. In some cases, court imposed fine on district collectors and sentenced few others to imprisonment. IANS

Stop Lankan Navy from firing on TN fishermen, Stalin urges Jaishankar

IANs ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has urged External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to exert pressure on the Sri Lankan Government not to attack Indian fishermen in the sea.

Citing the firing by Sri Lankan Navy on fishermen at Kodyakkarai, Stalin, in a letter to Jaishankar, said that a permanent solution must be arrived at as the attacks are affecting the livelihood of thousands of Indian fishermen.

While Indian fishermen were fishing from a registered boat near Kodyakkarai on August 1, the Sri Lankan Navy opened fire, injuring Kalaiselvan in his head. He was being treated at Nagapattinam government hospital while nine other fishermen in the boat escaped miraculously, he said.

"Unleashing violence on our fishermen without following international laws and practices is condemnable," Stalin said, noting India cannot remain a mute spectator to this outrage by the Sri Lankan Navy and that solution has to be found out immediately.

Kejriwal orders probe into alleged rape-murder of Dalit girl



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal met with the family of the nine-year-old victim and consoled them PTI

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday met with the family of the nine-year-old Dalit girl and ordered a magisterial enquiry into her death following an alleged sexual assault.

Kejriwal also assured the family of all possible support from the Delhi Government and announced a compensation of ₹10 lakh for the family of the girl.

In a tweet, Kejriwal said that the Government will appoint top lawyers to ensure the accused persons are punished. "Our girl cannot come back. The injustice done to the family is unfortunate and cannot be compensated, but the Government will give ₹10 lakh to them and order a magister-

ial inquiry into the matter," he told reporters after meeting the family. "There is a need to strengthen law and order in Delhi. I appeal to the Central Government to take firm steps in this direction," he said.

The parents of the girl accompanied by hundreds of locals were staging a protest near the site of the incident in Old Nangal area in southwest Delhi, demanding capital punishment for the accused.

The girl used to live with her parents in a rented house in front of a crematorium. On Sunday at around 5.30 PM, she went to get cold water from a cooler at the crematorium after informing her mother.

Around 6 PM, the crematorium's priest, Radhey Shyam, and two-three other people, known to the girl's mother,

Minor's case transferred to Crime Branch

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Wednesday transferred the case of the alleged rape and murder of a nine-year-old girl in southwest Delhi's Old Nangal area to Crime Branch.

"The case has been transferred to the Crime Branch for further expeditious and scientific investigation in order to enable a speedy trial in the interest of justice," said Chinmoy Biswal, the spokesperson of Delhi Police. The girl died under suspicious circumstances, even as her parents alleged that she was raped and forcefully cremated by a crematorium's priest in the Nangal village.

Police had said that based on the statement of the victim's mother, rape charges have been added in the FIR. Four people, including the priest, have been arrested. Only the burnt legs of the girl were recovered from the crematorium ground.

called her there and showed her daughter's body claiming that she got electrocuted while getting water from the cooler.

I'm with girl's parents in fight for justice: Rahul

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday met the family of the nine-year-old Dalit girl who died following an alleged sexual assault in Delhi. After meeting the victim's family, Gandhi said that the family is demanding nothing but justice.

Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala, along with several party workers also accompanied Gandhi to meet the victim's family.

While talking to reporters at the Delhi Cantonment area, Gandhi said that he was with the family and would not back down even an inch till they get justice.

"I have told the family that Rahul Gandhi is standing with them till they get justice and will not back down even an inch," he said.

"The parents' tears are saying only one thing, that their daughter, the daughter of



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi speaks to media after meeting the family members of the minor girl who was allegedly raped and then murdered in Delhi cantt area, in New Delhi on Wednesday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

this country, deserves justice. And I am with them on this path to justice," Gandhi wrote in Hindi on Twitter. He also shared a picture of his meeting with the girl's parents on Twitter.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) has also launched an inquiry into the incident that took place in Old Nangal area in southwest Delhi and sum-

moned the Delhi Police after the girl's parents alleged that she was raped and her body was forcibly cremated by a crematorium priest who had falsely claimed that she was electrocuted.

On Tuesday, opposition parties targeted Union Home Minister Amit Shah over the incident, questioning the law and order situation in the national Capital, even as the

alleged the priest and the others dissuaded her mother from making a PCR call, saying that the police would make a case

out of it and during the post-mortem, doctors would steal the girl's organs, so it was better to cremate her.

I-Day: Army wants kin, protesters to clear Cantt



Delhi Police personnel detain a protester for shouting slogans against BJP Delhi president Adesh Gupta during a protest as he arrived to meet the family of the minor girl who was allegedly raped and murdered, in New Delhi on Wednesday PTI

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Army establishment at Delhi Cantonment area on Wednesday served a notice to the protesters at Old Nangal village and asked them to vacate the area in view of security concerns and the forthcoming Independence Day celebrations.

"The Army establishment of Delhi Cantonment has served a notice to the protesters on Old Nangal road to remove the tents and obstacles so that the Army services can resume normally in view of upcoming Independence Day," said Ingit Pratap Singh, the Deputy Commissioner

of Police (DCP), Southwest district.

The copy of the letter marked to Delhi Police asked them to remove the protesters from the close vicinity of military units/establishments to avoid any security hazard.

"It is intimated that a protest has taken place near FOL Depot which is in close vicinity of the Central Vehicle Depot, Delhi Cantonment since Monday.

It is intimated that a number of logistic units (major & minor) alongwith serving soldiers are residing in & area around the protest. These logistic units are facing a lot of administration problems due to the protest," the letter stated.



Bollywood
‘Funk music has been a huge inspiration in my life.’
—Benny Dayal

REMOTE WORKING — BOON OR BANE?

ANAND DORAIRAJ talks about how ‘workations’ may lend a fun element to your job

Not long before the global pandemic hit us — reappraising the way we think about work and leisure — the prospect of working from home, even if it were only fortnightly, was an exciting proposition. The benefits of skipping the endless commute to the workplace, attending meetings while virtually donning your favourite pair of pyjamas, and aligning your tasks around your chores or sleep cycle, would always outdo the regularly inconvenient humdrum of life otherwise.

But COVID altered our lives and beliefs in so many unexpected ways. The novelty of working from home started to fade away in a matter of a few months after offices were shut. The makeshift work desks at different corners of homes eventually blurred the personal-professional boundary, triggering overwhelming sentiments of ‘living at work’, burnouts and ‘Zoom fatigue’, resulting in monotony, lethargy and reduced productivity levels.

The sustained monotony of working from home has also proved to be detrimental to mental health, particularly impacting professionals who have been living away from families. However, since large companies are looking at the remote working structure as a more permanent solution for its obvious pros and considering how the third wave of COVID-19 is just around the corner, as per experts, we may have to find ways to mix things up and make working from home a sustainable and agreeable process.

The solution — A ‘workation’

Experts swear by the mantra of rotating your workspace, so your day feels more varied. Initially, professionals tried to mix things up depending on the amount of space at their disposal. But as they ran out of options, a few took it to the next level by hiring a space in the outdoors — to work!

And that’s how the term



‘workation’ was coined. Workation = work + vacation. It’s combining business with leisure. It’s attending Zoom calls against the enviable backdrop of a waterfall. It’s scheduling emails while sunbathing at a beach. It’s creating campaigns while sipping a cup of hot cocoa at a rustic cafe somewhere in the hills. It’s hitting targets while hitting the roads.

A workation allows you to take your office along with you on your vacation. When you work from the hills or beaches, you integrate the elements of leisure into it, giving yourself time to unwind and rejuvenate whilst delivering on your daily targets. The idea of taking a road trip to a nearby destination — to relocate for a few weeks or even months — has proven to do wonders for your productivity, boosting motivation and striking a perfect work-life balance.

Smart marketing by the travel and hospitality sector

With the workation fad doing the rounds, hotels and homestays near metro cities have introduced ‘Workation Packages’ to cash in on the trend. They have bolstered their infrastructure to offer the best remote working experience — contactless



check-ins, high-speed internet (even on the beaches and open spaces), comfortable work desks, in-room dining services, and babysitting services for kids. They are training their staff rigorously on the COVID SOPs to ensure compliance with all social distancing and safety measures. To promote longer workations, they are rolling out lucrative offers with slashed tariffs on long-term rentals and extended stays.

The workation-readiness isn’t limited to the hospitality sector. The travel industry, which was equally affected by the pandemic (if not more), is all geared up to facilitate safe commute to workations, which are usually in smaller towns located a few hundred kilometres away from densely populated urban spaces. The safety benefits and convenience offered by car rentals coupled with the charm of a classic road trip after months of confinement is what’s making car rentals the preferred choice of travel among workationers. After all, who does not want to be pampered by a doorstep pickup and drop, with a chauffeur-driven car at your disposal?

If you are based in any one of the metropolitan cities and can’t wait to get away from the hustle and bustle, listed below are some brilliant recommendations located amid picturesque attractions:

Bangalore

▣Kabini: Witness the wild waking from slumber in their natural habitat at any one of Kabini’s jungle lodges. After a busy workday, unwind by opting for an evening safari ride for the ultimate wildlife experience.

▣Honnavar: Don your favourite beach shorts and cabana-style shades to answer your Zoom calls amidst the clean yellow sands and turquoise waters of Honnavar.

▣Dandeli: A visual retreat for nature and adventure lovers, the rustic jungles and idyllic waterfalls of Dandeli will serve as your picture-perfect workstation.

▣Sakleshpur: Nestled amid the Western Ghats, this gorgeous hill station will overwhelm your senses with its vast aromatic tea and spice estates. You can also treat yourself to trekking and camping activities after a fruitful work week.

Mumbai

▣Igatpuri: A hidden paradise tucked in the Sahyadris, it will be the perfect workation for mountain lovers.

▣Jawhar: Lush greenery, pristine lakes and waterfalls, breathtaking treks and dense forests — it is a land of serenity still unexplored and offbeat.

▣Velas: Known for its Olive Ridley sea turtles, it is a paradise for beach lovers. After an exhausting day at work, unwind by trekking your way to the cliffs and witness the picturesque sunsets at the Velas beach.

▣Goa: Delicious

seafood, unparalleled nightlife, alluring beaches, cosy cafes, affordable stays, it is already a favourite amongst workationers!

Delhi

▣Pushkar: Why work from home when you can work from a majestic palace! And once you have pampered yourself with all the royal treatment, work from one of the desert camps in the place.

▣Jim Corbett: Book a cottage with large windows with a view of the stunning jungles of Jim Corbett. Listen to the sounds of birds cooing or river flowing nearby and the occasional roars of the Royal Bengal Tiger to chill your spines. This one’s not for the faint-hearted!

▣Mussoorie: Travel back in time to the colonial town of Mussoorie. Work against the majestic backdrop of the Garhwal Himalayas and rejuvenate your senses.

▣Jaipur: Spend your evenings witnessing the ancient forts, admiring the old-world charm and enjoying the delectable Rajasthani cuisine in the Pink City.

Kolkata

▣Sundarbans: Find your inspiration for work in the wilderness. The trees, the forests, the streams, and the unique fauna of Sundarbans can inspire you. Take a relaxed break cycling or taking nature walks or go for wildlife photography.

▣Lachung: Work amid pine forests, rhododendron sanctuaries, snow-capped peaks, rustic cottages, hot springs and rich biodiversity.

▣Falta: The serene river town of Falta is surrounded by lush green landscapes and has a fascinating history associated with it. Unwind after work exploring its fort and port or go for a tranquil ferry ride.

▣Kalimpong: Experience the charm of working amidst rolling hills, picturesque valleys, magnificent monasteries and rich diversity of flora and fauna.

Escape the monotony of home and head out to refresh your mind and soul while working from outdoors.

(The author is the VP, head of growth at Savaari Car Rentals, the largest chauffeur-driven car rental company in India in terms of geographical reach.)



‘A BREATH OF FRESH AIR’

Actor AAHANA KUMRA shares how the teleplay, *Sir Sir Sarla* is a story replete with love and nostalgia. By TEAM VIVA

For Aahana Kumra, shooting for Zee Theatre’s *Sir Sir Sarla* was an immensely rewarding experience. She remarks, “The wonderful thing is that during the shoot, I did not lose the flow I experienced on stage while performing a play live. Thankfully the director just let us be and didn’t ask us to give multiple retakes. The whole experience turned out to be enjoyable.”

Aahana attended the first screening of the play at the writer, director and actor Makarand Deshpande’s house and shares, “Spending time at Mac sir’s place was a nice way to relive the shoot especially because we have not been able to perform the play on stage for a live audience due to the pandemic.”

Sir Sir Sarla explores the story of Professor Palekar and his student Sarla – the pretty, innocent young girl who seems smitten by her mentor – and Phandihar who shares a love-hate relationship with the professor. The play dwells upon the bond between the students and their professor, which faces many vicissitudes. Secrets are revealed, accusations are hurled, and the three lives remain interwoven for many years to come. The narrative is very unique and also relatable, says Aahana. “Even though we were travelling extensively with the play before the pandemic, it took me a long time to understand Sarla. Then in cities like Lucknow and Bareilly, I actually met people who were like Keshav and Sarla. They would come to meet me after the show and say that this was their story. That was such a revelation and as an artiste, I began to feel there was an added responsibility to portray Sarla in a real and organic way because so many women saw themselves in her,” she adds.

With time and experience, the play’s theme began to make more and more sense to her. As she says, “In a world full of hate and anxiety, this play is like a breath of fresh air. It really transports you to a place replete with love and nostalgia.”

Sir Sir Sarla is written and stage directed by Makarand, and stars him alongside Aahana, Sanjay Dadhich and Anjum Sharma. Its filming director is Suman Mukhopadhyay. Watch the play on DishTV D2H Rangmanch Active.

As a first-time mom-to-be last year, many ideas of a postpartum body were all driven by the hundreds of articles on ‘how to bounce back’ on the internet. But the reality of what a postpartum body looks (and feels) like hit me like a deer caught in headlights. It was not only opposite to all the miraculous flat belly pictures that I saw of women at just three months postpartum but no one was talking about how regressive it was to put societal pressure on women to bounce back when their bodies had to completely change to create a universe.

It was time to change the dialogue. But if I had to, I needed to be first empowered with the knowledge of what really changed in my post-baby body. I chose to do this by getting certified as a pre-post-natal specialist so that I could share the post-baby body changes no one tells you about.

First, yes, we must have the doctors’ permission before starting exercise post-delivery but it should not be interpreted to mean that you can or should start lifting weights immediately, run or take part in intense cardio. It should ideally be light walking and rehabilitative exercises to restore strength and function to the deep core stability system (focussing on transverse abdominal (TA) and pelvic floor muscles) under the guidance of a postnatal specialist. Unlike popular belief, our body is not miraculously ready to resume exercising once the doctor gives the go-ahead at the four or six weeks check-up.

Second, post-baby urinary incontinence is a real thing and the life quality of one out of three new moms will be affected due to it. And Kegels (exercises where you pretend you have to pee and then hold it) aren’t enough. It’s normal to pee when you laugh, cough, sneeze,

Shh! Secrets revealed

SUCHETA PAL talks about the post-baby body changes no one tells you about and what to do about them



jump and run postpartum, but you don’t have to live with it. Your pelvic floor needs to be able to lengthen, relax and contract — not just contract. If the pelvic floor is always in a contracted state, the muscles become shortened, tightened, and sometimes weak. And it doesn’t help in the recovery process. Thus Kegels alone are not the answer. Instead, practising proper activation and release of

these muscles with the technique of connection breath/ diaphragmatic breathing is the key.

Most probably you have a condition called Diastasis recti which is the partial or complete separation of the rectus abdominis, or ‘six-pack’ muscles, which meet at the midline of your stomach. Diastasis recti is very common during and following pregnancy. This is because

the uterus stretches the muscles in the abdomen to accommodate your growing baby. Diastasis recti is what we popularly see externally as the post-baby belly.

Don’t get disheartened with the flat belly before and after pictures of women on social media within weeks of childbirth. Every woman’s body is different and so is their recovery time. It can take anywhere from six weeks, six months to even a few years before you see improvements. What we need to understand is the reason behind it. If left untreated, diastasis recti can potentially lead to poor core stabilisation, pelvic floor dysfunction, and back or pelvic pain. And of course, the external effect is the post-baby belly.

Crunches, planks, leg lifts, and bicycles can cause an increase in intra-abdominal pressure and worsen diastasis recti or ab separation. The first step instead is rehabilitating the deep core with movements such as the dead bug, open book, clamshell and heel slides.

We made an entire universe and popped it out too. So, will we be able to rebuild our ‘pre-pregnancy strength’? We may actually exceed it in ways we can’t even imagine.

The key is to lay a strong foundation with a strong core post-pregnancy. Our body goes through a lot of changes through pregnancy and regaining physical strength, post-birth, is tough but at the same time, there is a newfound appreciation for the body and what it is capable of.

It’s not going to be easy but we need to stay on track, be patient and show grace to our body and celebrate every small win.

(The author is the founder of the MOM.BOD.STRONG programme and is an ambassador of Zumba in India.)

Pull out your Bellbottoms!

The team behind Pooja Entertainment’s forthcoming spy thriller, *Bellbottom*, congregated at Delhi for the film’s trailer launch. The film releases in theatres, in 2D and 3D formats, on August 19



Producer Jacky Bhagnani, Lara Dutta, Akshay Kumar and Vaani Kapoor captured together



Akshay Kumar with the rest of the team behind *Bellbottom* during the trailer launch

Photos by Pankaj Kumar

TRENDBLAZER



ENCOURAGED BY YOUTH: AKHTAR

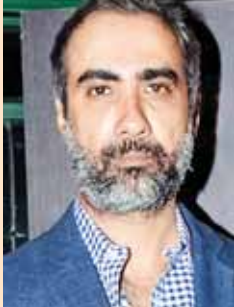
As the unique show on poetry, *India Shayari Project* will be launched on August 15, iconic poet and lyricist JAVED AKHTAR shares how he is impressed to observe that the younger generation is keen to understand the beauty and nuances of poetry.

“India has been a country of many great poets and *shayars*. It is heartening to see the youth wanting to embrace and understand the beauty and nuances of the spoken word,” says Akhtar.

The show will be launched on ZEE5.

fairtalk

RANVIR SHOREY



‘I think indie cinema works like the R&D department for the business of cinema. You see, in mainstream commercial films, there is huge money involved so it is naturally a profit-making venture. If cinematic excellence is not supported by the big production houses, the sensibility will not change in the business as well as among the larger section of the audience.’

dailytalk

SHREYAS TALPADE



‘OTT is definitely an addiction. You won’t go to a movie theatre or watch TV for 24 hours. But your phone is there with you all the time. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic situation, we are kind of becoming loners. Whereas earlier we would socialise, that is not happening so regularly now. So we want entertainment and are stuck on our phones.’

NOT TOO KEEN ON ACTING AGAIN: POMPEO

Actor ELLEN POMPEO, who is known for her work in the show *Grey’s Anatomy*, hasn’t ruled out returning to acting one day, but she isn’t ‘super excited’ about continuing her acting career.

“I’m not saying I’ll never act again, I very well may, but I’m not super excited about continuing my acting career. I’m more entrepreneurial at this stage.” Pompeo said, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The actress is excited about investing in businesses and starting businesses.



Lending a helping hand

VIT (AP) offers ₹62 lakhs as scholarships to Covid-affected students

Dr G Viswanathan, founder-chancellor of VIT announced ₹62 lakhs as scholarships in the form of 100 per cent fee waiver for 25 VIT-AP University students who have lost a parent, who was the bread-winner of the family, due to COVID-19. These 25 students are pursuing various Engineering & Non-engineering programmes. During the first wave of the pandemic, VIT (AP) offered a building as a quarantine centre to the state's health department and donated ₹75 lakhs to the Andhra Pradesh CM Relief Fund to aid the government's efforts in its fight against the novel Coronavirus.

"VIT (AP) hopes that such students do not face financial difficulties and will be able to complete their study on time," says Dr S V Kota Reddy, vice-chancellor of VIT (AP).



Home-grown talent elevated to the top leadership position of SRM University

SRM Institute of Science and Technology, an internationally acclaimed and Category 1 private university headquartered in Chennai with multiple campuses across India has appointed Prof Dr C Muthamizhchelvan as its 5th vice-chancellor.

Dr Muthamizhchelvan is a home-grown talent of SRM who had started his career as a lecturer in the department of physics and has been a part of the institution for over 35 years. His experience and global exposure would set a new milestone for the university in the ever-changing education space. The founder-chancellor on the occasion of welcoming the new vice-chancellor, sent a strong message to the internal community on his trust in fellow members and freedom to grow within and lead.

Dr Muthamizhchelvan, on assuming office as vice-chancellor, shared his



thoughts, "SRM IST is a unique breed of a multi-stream university which outgrew its challenges of the century through its agility,

valour and culture. It has been a land of opportunities for the academic and innovation community turning to the brighter sides for more

than a lakh of students and researchers. The new age challenges require a thorough understanding of the global learning ecosystem

and the strongly inherited strengths of the university to set a new benchmark in the education space. I believe, our visionary leader, the founder-chancellor has seeded this idea in me from my early days and has now handed over the mantle of vice-chancellor, SRM IST, to me to lead this prestigious university towards making a strong impact."

He further added, "As a home-grown talent of SRM my focus (ISEE) on this role will be to:

- ♦Intensify efforts and consistently improve processes in the changing paradigm of teaching and learning.
- ♦Scale up the aspiration levels of the students and research community.
- ♦Encourage the innovative and enterprising minds to achieve their career goals.
- ♦Envision socially relevant and sustainable goals to achieve an impactful model for the goodness of mankind and every life on this planet."

Electrification of remote villages in Kargil and Ladakh

Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd (POWERGRID), a Maharatna PSU under the Ministry of Power, has successfully commissioned 40 km of 11 kV transmission line from Lalung to Darchik under the rural electrification scheme PMDP (Prime Minister Development Programme). The line is used for the electrification of adjoining villages namely Lalung, Silmoo, Batalik, Darchik, Hurdass, Sinikcey and Garkon. With the commissioning of this line, all remote villages in Aryan Valley (in Kargil district) are now connected to the national grid through 220 kV Srinagar Leh transmission system. Earlier, these villages were dependent on DG sets for power supply which was available for a limited time only.

In addition to the above, electrification of 20 villages in Leh district has also been completed by POWERGRID which involves the commissioning of the project in

remote villages like Largiab in Nubra Valley.

Besides, a number of 11 kV lines totalling 150 km, connecting villages Wanla to Fatoksar, Lamayaru to Atishe, Fotorse and Saspol area have been established by POWERGRID and it connects all villages in-between.

POWERGRID has built a state-of-the-art 220/66 kV gas-insulated substations (GIS) at Drass, Kargil, Khalsti and Leh connecting the Ladakh region to the national grid through the 341 km of 220 kV transmission line emanating from Srinagar. 220 kV Srinagar-Leh transmission system has been transferred to POWERGRID as ISTS and POWERGRID is committed to maintain high system availability and provide reliable power to the entire Ladakh region.

The reliable power from the Grid will drive economic development in the region and bring prosperity to the remotest villages of Ladakh besides eliminating generation through DG sets.

CLW Women's Welfare Organisation organises tree plantation drive



World Environment Day was observed by Chittaranjan Locomotive Works' (CLW) Women's Welfare Organisation.

Based on this year's theme of 'Ecosystem restoration', Namita Kashyap, president of CLW-WWO, Satish Kumar Kashyap, general manager of CLW, and other members of CLW-

WWO actively participated and together they planted 101 saplings of different species in various areas of CLW.

This plantation drive was held over a period of two days. Namita urged everyone to plant a sapling for environmental protection. This plantation drive was carried out following social distancing norms.



Mini Ipe takes charge as the managing director of Life Insurance Corporation of India

DDB Mudra Group's new initiative

We, here at DDB Mudra Group, are closely involved in an initiative with Give India and Puma to raise funds for Covid relief in India.

As professionals, we see this initiative as an opportunity to volunteer our time, talent and influence to deal with a humanitarian crisis of epic proportion.

Your support can make a huge difference. The initiative is called Team For Humanity, and it represents an opportunity for all of us to come together in the face of a common enemy.

It is also an invitation to the global sports community to come together (putting rivalry aside) for the fight that matters most at this point in history — humanity vs COVID-19.

We have brought onboard Indian and global influencers like Virat Kohli, Usain Bolt, Lewis Hamilton, Kareena Kapoor among many others.

Fans, teams, leagues, associations, sportspeople, brands, networks, media, influencers and NGOs in India and abroad are joining hands to help in humanity's fight against covid.



POWERGRID organises O&M conference

K Sreekanth, chairman and managing director of Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd, inaugurated the 16th Asset Management Conference on July 29, at Gurugram in presence of board members and CVO. Asset management employees from all over the country joined the conference through virtual mode. The objective of this conference was to devise strategies for operations and maintenance management of the rapidly increasing transmission system. A number of presentations and ideas were discussed and shared during the conference by various experts.

The event was organised adhering to all COVID-19 related protocols.

Placement updates from VIT

The first day of the placement season saw 81 students from VIT getting packages above ₹25 lakhs per annum, with the highest salary touching ₹75 lakhs per annum

Campus placements at Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) commenced on July 15 for the 2022 graduating batch with VIT sharing the first slot with eight super dream companies such as Microsoft, Dyte, Amazon, PayPal, D.E. Shaw India Pvt Ltd, Morgan Stanley, Udaan and WorkIndia.

VIT adheres to a centralised placement process and this year too, the students from all the four campuses of VIT, Vellore, Chennai, Amaravati (AP) and Bhopal (MP) participated in all the campus recruitment processes. The entire process for all companies in the first slot, mainly pre-placement talk, online test, technical and HR interviews were conducted online as well as remotely.

Chancellor of VIT, Dr G Viswanathan announced the results of the campus placements by the companies in the first slot this week.

Microsoft selected 21 students for full-time vacancies. PayPal - 13 offers, Udaan - three offers, Dyte - six offers, WorkIndia - eight offers, D.E. Shaw India Pvt.Ltd - two offers, Morgan Stanley - 10 offers and Amazon - 13 offers. At present, the highest CTC is offered by Dyte with ₹ 75 lakhs annual salary package to two students from the 2022 graduating batch in VIT.

Followed by first slot placements, companies like Wells Fargo, Texas Instruments, Walmart labs, Komprise and Societe Generale are in the pipeline for forthcoming slots.

129 students from the 2022 graduating batch received pre-placement offers (PPO) from companies during their summer internships. Pre-placement offers were made by D.E. Shaw India Pvt. Ltd (one offer), Fidelity investments (13 offers), HPE CTY (eight offers), JP Morgan (60 offers), Natwest (two offers), Wells Fargo (10 offers),

Visa (10 offers), Morgan Stanley(five offers) ZS associates (seven offers) and Appointment (3 offers) to summer interns. The other PPO results of VIT students who did their summer internships with Optum, SKF, Kristal, and Adobe are expected soon.

"Overall, 195 placements in super dream companies and internship offers were rolled out to VITians by top companies within two weeks of the placement season. VIT's placement calendar is packed till the end of August", said Dr Viswanathan.

He added that the other super dream companies like Walmart, Nielson, HealthRx, Thorogood, HyperVerge and Razor pay, which offer more than ₹10 lakhs per annum as CTC will be conducting their recruitment in the coming weeks. Other Dream companies, core engineering companies and IT service companies are expected to

hire VITians next month.

The PG internship placements which started in VIT in March is continuing simultaneously, 118 companies have already completed their remote hiring process and have selected 912 PG students from M Tech, MTech (Software Engineering), MCA and MSc courses of the 2022 graduating batch.

Intel, Qualcomm, NetApp, Nokia, Philips, Titan, PayPal, VMware, Media Tek and Danfoss are some of the prominent recruiters who hired interns from VIT this year. Intel and Nokia have hired more than 100 students for internships.

Dr Viswanathan congratulated all the students who got selected for internships and placements and wished the other students a great placement season. He also thanked all the companies that have accepted to conduct remote hiring in these challenging times.

'Cleanliness counts, everywhere'

HASHMAT ALI KHAN kickstarts *Swachata Pakhwada*, a cleanliness drive, in Jammu



A special cleanliness drive, *Swachata Pakhwada*, was inaugurated at Jammu's Department of Hospitality and Protocol under the guidance and active participation of director-general of hospitality and protocol, Hashmat Ali Khan, KAS, to bring a fortnight of intense focus on the issues and practises of Swachata. The first day of the campus cleanliness drive began from the Circuit House, Canal Road in which all the staff of the Department of Hospitality and Protocol participated.

Speaking on the occasion, the director-general motivated the staff to set the highest standards of cleanliness as the core objective of the department since the department daily deals with numerous guests official and non-official, from within the U.T as well as all across the nation. He further explained that this event is part of the 76th Independence Day celebrations and the motive behind these activities under *Swachata Pakhwada* is to ensure that every member of the staff realises their duty towards keeping their workplaces, and their surroundings, clean. He further urged the employees to pay attention to the minutest details as they form the bigger picture.

The event was organised by the joint director of Hospitality and Protocol, Ansuya Jamwal, KAS who informed that a complete calendar has been charted out for carrying out the *Swachhta*



Pakhwada in all the houses and assets of Hospitality & Protocol viz Circuit House, State Guest Houses, Tara Niwas Udhampur, Director Generals Office, Joint Director Office and stores of H&P et al as per the government directions which will witness the participation of all the officials and imbibe in them the spirit of cleanliness and bring qualitative *swachata* improvement especially during these challenging times of Covid-19. She impressed staff to adopt the leanings of the event and make certain that the practices are replicated throughout the year.

Others who participated in the drive included the deputy director of Stores, Ashima Sher, assistant director, Amir Choudhary, Muneeb Umar, assistant director(Central), Dr Anand Thakur Sen, Accounts Officer, assistant of housekeeping Bua Ditta Sharma, manager of Circuit House, Puneet Kour and all the officials of the Department of Hospitality and Protocol. The drive ended with a commitment to carry out the objectives of the drive with the same zeal and enthusiasm in all premises for the whole year.

NTPC recognised for its digital initiatives

NTPC Ltd, India's largest integrated power producer has been bestowed with the DIGITAL PSU Award in Maharatna Category at the 8th PSU Award 2021 by Governance Now.

A K Gautam, director (finance), NTPC Ltd received the award from Dr Kiran Bedi, Former Lt Governor of Puducherry, during the virtual award ceremony.

In the past three years, the digitalisation efforts of NTPC have helped in creating more than 20 lakh files in PRADIP, which is equivalent to more than 50 crore paper pages. PRADIP, a unique initiative to make NTPC



paperless, stands for Pro-Active and Digital Initiatives to become Paperless. It has helped in saving close to 61,000 trees, a concrete step towards a more sustainable ecosystem. NTPC has also held over 2,35,000 meetings in virtual mode,

leading to a massive decrease in the company's carbon footprints.

The award is a testimony to NTPC's digitalisation efforts that have led to the digital transformation of the company. In the past few years, NTPC has successfully

implemented a number of IT initiatives such as PRADIP, virtual office platform - M365, vendor payment portal, CLIMS, PI apps, Suraksha app, RTM (Real Time Marketing) app. The largest integrated power producer is in the process of embracing new technological platforms - AI/ML, RPA, IOT, AR/VR to make the infrastructure more robust and seamless.

The digitisation efforts have been a definitive step towards making the internal processes robust and unified which is contributing immensely towards addressing the ESG parameters for NTPC.

POWERGRID to set up oxygen plant in Gurugram

An MoU has been signed between Maharatna PSU, Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) and the deputy commissioner of Gurugram on August 4 for the supply and installation of PSA Type 2x50 Nm3/hr oxygen generation plant with bottling facility at Tau Devi Lal Stadium, Sector-38, Gurugram, Haryana under the CSR initiative of POWERGRID in Northern Region-I.

The aforementioned oxygen plant has a capacity of filling approximately 250 oxygen cylinders daily, which in turn would be distributed by the state



government through its distribution channels to rural as well as urban Gurugram.

The agreement was signed by Sanjay Sharma (Sr GM of POWERGRID) and Yash Garg, IAS, DC,

Gurugram. Vinayak Chauhan (Sr. GM, CSR) and Vinod P Baxla (Sr DGM, HR) from POWERGRID were also present along with other senior officials during the ceremony.

**TOKYO
TIMELINE**

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

●**Athletics:** Neeraj Chopra qualified for final by topping qualification round in men's javelin throw. Shivpal Singh finished 12th in group B qualification and 27th overall in men's javelin throw; failed to advance to final round.
●**Boxing:** Lovlina Borgohain lost to Busenaz Surmeneli of Turkey 0-5 in women's 69kg semifinal.
●**Golf:** Aditi Ashok at tied second and Diksha Dagar at tied 56th after round 1 in women's individual stroke play.
●**Hockey:** India lost to Argentina 1-2 in women's semifinal.
●**Wrestling:** Ravi Kumar beat Oscar Eduardo Tigreros (Colombia) in first round, beat Georgi Valentinov Vangelov (Bulgaria) in quarterfinals, beat Nurislam Sanayev (Kazakhstan) in semifinal of men's freestyle 57kg.
Anshu Malik lost to Iryna Kurachkina (Belarus) in first round of women's freestyle 57kg; will play in repechage round.
Deepak Punia beat Ekerekeme Agiomor (Nigeria) in first round, beat Zushen Lin (China) in quarterfinals, lost to David Morris Taylor (USA) in semifinals of men's freestyle 86kg; will play for Bronze medal.

IN ACTION TODAY

●**Athletics:** K T Irfan, Rahul Rohilla and Sandeep Kumar in men's 20km race walk event. (01:00 pm)
●**Golf:** Aditi Ashok and Diksha Dagar in women's individual stroke play round 2. (04:00 am)
●**Hockey:** India vs Germany in men's Bronze medal match. (07:00 am)
●**Wrestling:** Vinesh Phogat vs Sofia Magdalena Mattsson (Sweden) in women's freestyle 53kg. (08:00 am)
Anshu Malik vs Valeria Koblova (ROC) in repechage round of women's freestyle 57kg. (second bout after 07:30 am start)
Ravi Dahiya vs Zavur Uguev (Russian Olympic Committee) in men's freestyle 57kg final. (ninth bout after 02:45 pm start)
Deepak Punia in men's freestyle Bronze medal match. (11th bout after 02:45 pm start)
Live on SONY TEN & SIX Network

PTI ■ CHIBA

Ravi Dahiya on Wednesday became only the second Indian wrestler to qualify for the title clash at the Olympic Games, when he sensationally turned around the 57kg semifinal bout by pinning Kazakhstan's Nurislam Sanayev but Deepak Punia was left to fight for Bronze medal after he lost his semifinal, here on Wednesday.

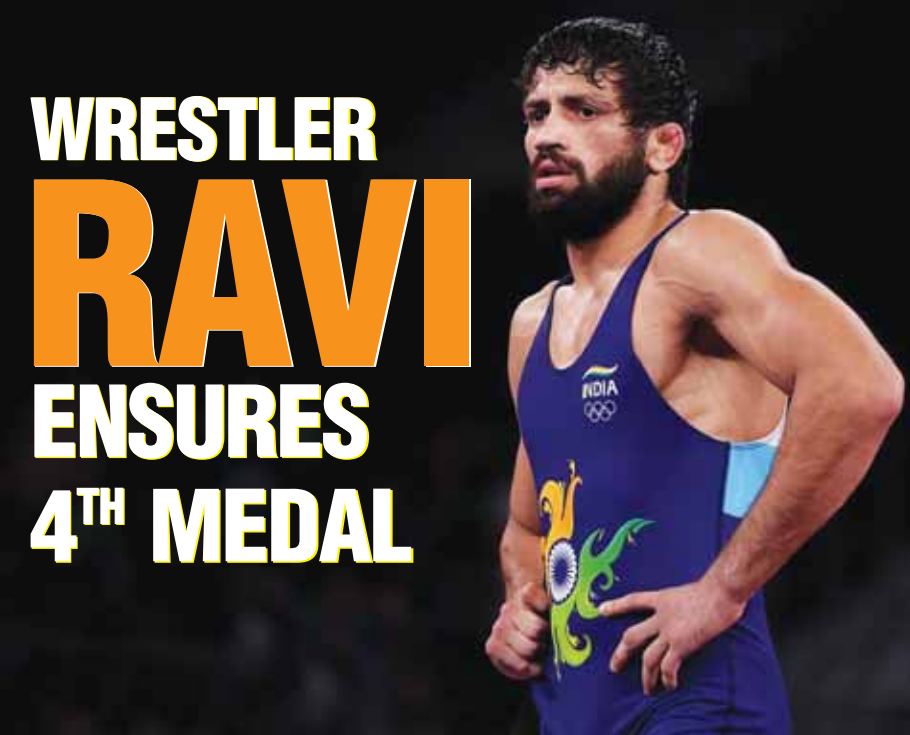
Before Dahiya, Sushil Kumar was the only Indian to make the Gold medal bout at the 2012 Olympics in London where he had settled for a Silver.

The fourth seeded Dahiya trailed 2-9 after Sanayev effected a few 'fitley' (leg lace) but as the clocked ticked away, Dahiya regrouped and got hold of his rival with a double leg attack that resulted in a 'victory by fall'.

"I had no business conceding that much lead against Sanayev. I am not happy with it," Dahiya told PTI when asked about his inspiring achievement.

It just shows the kind of standards the Indian from Nahri village in Haryana has set for himself.

"I have beaten Sanayev twice before, so I knew I can pull it off despite trailing by a



Ravi Dahiya reacts after win against Kazakhstan's Nurislam Sanayev during the men's 57kg freestyle semifinal @Tokyo2020hi

huge margin. I was assured inside, but I should not have conceded lead and made it a close fight. That was pretty bad of me," he said.

"I still have some unfinished business to do. I came with a target here and that is not complete yet (winning

Gold)."

In the final on Thursday, Dahiya will face reigning world champion Russian Zavur Uguev to whom he had lost in the 2019 World Championship semifinals.

Despite a huge deficit, the 23-year-old Dahiya did not

panic, showing tremendous mental strength and dramatically turned the bout in his favour.

After the end of the first period, Dahiya had a 2-1 lead but Sanayev came prepared

and attacked the Indian's left leg, got a good grip and turned



India's Deepak Punia, top, and China's Lin Zushen in action on Wednesday AP

him thrice to log six points in a jiffy.

Suddenly, Dahiya's lead was gone and he was staring at a defeat but his superior stamina and technical prowess was still at work. The remaining one minute was enough for him to turn the tide and he did it in style.

He got hold of Sanayev with a double leg attack and then gripped him tightly with the Kazakhstan wrestler's back on the mat and finished the bout with a mighty 'pin'.

A dominant Dahiya had won both his previous contests on technical superiority en route the final.

Dahiya outclassed Colombia's Tigreros Urbano (13-2) in his opener and then

outwitted Bulgaria's Georgi Valentinov Vangelov (14-4).

While Dahiya was a live-wire on the mat, Deepak Punia (86kg) made good use of a favourable draw to reach the semifinals but lost to the formidable American David Morris Taylor. He will now fight for Bronze on Thursday against the winner of the repechage round between Myles Amine and Ali Shabanau.

It was always going to be a herculean task for Deepak to trouble the American, the 2018 world champion and the reigning Pan-American champion.

It was hardly a contest as Taylor effected one move after another to win by technical superiority in the first period itself.

Deepak could make only one move on counter attack but the American did not give the Indian any chance to convert that into points.

The 22-year-old Deepak had earlier got past Nigeria's Ekerekeme Agiomor, the African championship Bronze medalist by technical superiority and then prevailed 6-3 over China's Zushen Lin in the quarterfinal.

Anshu Malik, on the other hand, lost her opening 57kg bout to European champion Irina Kurachkina but since the Belarus wrestler has

reached the final, the 19-year old Indian has got a second chance to be in medal round.

She will now compete in the repechage round on Thursday and if she wins, she will also fight for Bronze.

Dahiya will now be only the fifth Indian wrestler to win an Olympic medal.

KD Jadhav had become India's first wrestler and also the first individual Olympic medalist when he won a Bronze during the 1952 Helsinki Games.

After that, Sushil Kumar enhanced wrestling's profile by winning a Bronze at 2008 Beijing Games and bettered the colour of the medal by claiming a historic Silver in 2012 at London Olympics that made him India's only athlete with two individual Olympic medals for nine years.

The feat then has now been matched by shuttler PV Sindhu. In the same 2012 Olympics, Yogeshwar Dutt won a Bronze.

Sakshi Malik became the first Indian woman wrestler to win an Olympic medal when she took a Bronze in 2016 Rio Olympics.

This Tokyo edition could well be a watershed Olympics for Indian wrestling with both Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia also in contention for a medal.

Lovlina ends with Bronze

Tokyo: Indian boxer Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) signed off with a Bronze medal in her debut Olympic Games after a comprehensive 0-5 loss to reigning world champion Busenaz Surmeneli on Wednesday, bringing an end to the country's campaign in the sport here.

Up against quite literally a bully in the ring, Borgohain was completely out-punched by the Gold medal favourite Turkish boxer, who produced a thoroughly dominating performance.

Borgohain also coped a one point deduction in the second round for not paying attention to the referee's instructions despite a couple of cautions.

"I don't know what to say. I could not execute what I had planned. I could have done better," Borgohain said after the loss.

The Indian's start was not all that bad as she stood up to the strong challenge but she came undone after Surmeneli got down to connecting her vicious hooks



India's Lovlina Borgohain, right, exchange punches against Busenaz Surmeneli of Turkey during their women's welter weight semifinal boxing match PTI

and body shots.

The third round was especially punishing for Borgohain, who faced two standing eight counts during the bout.

Surmeneli was unrelenting in all three rounds after being unsettled only slightly in the opening few seconds when Borgohain tried to keep her at long range and struck only counter-attacking straight hits.

The flamboyant Turkish boxer didn't just out-punch her rival after that but also taunted her with some show-boating, including dropping her guard to dare the Indian.

Nonetheless, Borgohain goes home a history-maker as the 23-year-old has become only the third Indian boxer to ensure a podium finish at the showpiece after Vijender Singh (2008) and MC Mary Kom (2012).

Another heartbreak in hockey

Tokyo: A brave Indian women's hockey team put up a gritty performance but it was not enough to secure a maiden Olympic final berth as it lost 1-2 to world No 2 Argentina in a hard-fought semifinal on Wednesday.

India still have a chance to win the Bronze medal as they will take on Great Britain in the third-fourth place play-off match on Friday.

The Indians fought valiantly and gave Argentina a run for their money by taking the lead in the second minute through a penalty corner conversion by Gurjit Kaur.

But the Las Leonas bounced back strongly with skipper Maria Barriounevo's (18th, 36th minutes) twin strikes from penalty corners to secure the hard-fought win.

The Netherlands will play Argentina in the final on Friday.

The bunch of 18 fearless and determined Indian women had already done the unthinkable when they stunned three-time champions Australia 1-0 on Monday to enter the Olympic semifinals for the first time.



Indian players react after defeat against Argentina in the semifinal match PTI

India has learnt to bounce back from losses: Marijne

Tokyo: The Indian women's hockey team has learnt to bounce back from losses, said coach Sjoerd Marijne, adding that the defeat to Argentina in the Olympic semifinal is history as the side focusses on claiming a historic Bronze.

"We came here to win a medal and still there's one (available). It's now about recovery, about the mindset. The good thing is, it's not always good that we lost a lot

in the past but we also have learned to deal with the losses," Marijne said after the match.

"So it's okay, what can we improve on from this match?"

The Dutchman feels India failed to grab their opportunities against Argentina, which eventually made the difference. "In these matches it is about taking your opportunities. Argentina did that better than us. With the PC, the

injection was not always perfect, the trapping was not good and then you can't play exactly the PC you want," he said.

"I can't be angry with the girls or be mad because we don't play these kind of matches so much. It's a whole new experience and you also have to learn how to play these matches. It's all about taking your opportunities. "The intensity we showed in the last quarter, that was really good."

Neeraj into the final with one attempt

Tokyo: Medal contender Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian javelin thrower to enter the finals of the Olympic Games with a stunning throw of 86.65m in his opening attempt that put him on top of the qualification round on Wednesday.

The 23-year-old kept India's hopes of an elusive Olympic medal from athletics alive by earning a direct entry into the finals to be held on Saturday as he sent the spear well past the qualifying mark of 83.50m in his first attempt.

However, Shivpal Singh, failed to make the final cut with a below-par best throw of 76.40m, which he came up in his first attempt, to finish a lowly 12th in the Group B qualification which featured 16 athletes.

Competing in his first Olympics, Chopra took just a few seconds to make the final round. He topped the Group A contest as well as the two qualifications rounds and left the javelin arena after his first throw.

"I am at my first Olympic Games, and I feel very good. In warm-up my performance wasn't so good, but then (in the qualifying round) my first throw had a good angle, and was a perfect throw," Chopra said after his event.

Chopra is, however, under no illusion that the final will be a totally different contest where the world's best will go for podium finish.

"It will be a different feeling (in the finals), since it is my first time in the

Olympics. Physically we (all) train hard, and are ready, but I also need to prepare mentally.

"I will need to focus on the throw, and try to repeat this (performance) with a higher score," said the youngster who came into the Olympics with the fourth best throw (88.07m) this year.

Chopra's performance on Saturday will go down as one of the best performances by an Indian in the Olympics, as he finished ahead of Gold medal favourite and 2017 world champion Johannes Vetter of Germany.

Vetter, who had earlier said that Chopra will find it tough to beat him in the Olympics, struggled in his first two throws before crossing the automatic qualification mark with a 85.64m final throw.

The 28-year-old towering German, who came into the Olympics after having seven monster throws of over 90m between April and June, was lying at a dangerous seventh position after his first two throws but eventually qualified for the final at second overall behind Chopra.

Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who had won a Bronze medal when he topped the 2018 Asian Games in Indonesia, topped Group B to earn an automatic qualification to the finals with a second round throw of 85.16m.

He qualified for the finals at overall third behind Chopra and Vetter. PTI



Aditi placed 2nd ahead of big names

Tokyo: Indian golfer Aditi Ashok got off to a brilliant start at the Olympic Games, carding a four-under 67 in the opening round for a share of the second spot at the Kasumigaseki Country Club on Wednesday.

Aditi, who caught the golfing world's attention five years ago at the Rio Olympics, shared the position with World No 1 Nelly Korda.

She was one shot behind the leader, Madalene Sagstrom of Sweden, who shot 66.

"I think I played better than I expected today because I had a lot of hybrids into the greens, so I didn't really expect to be like 5-under through 17," Aditi said.

Aditi may well have had a share of the lead but for a bogey on the 18th hole.

While Sagstrom shot a bogey free five-under 66, Aditi



had five birdies against one bogey and that on the closing hole.

She was placed well ahead of some big names in women's golf, including the formidable defending champion, Inbee Park (69).

India's other entrant in the

field, Diksha Dagar (76) had a rough start in her maiden Olympics as she had five bogeys and no birdies to lie at the tied 56th spot.

The 60-player field will play 18 holes each day and there will be no cut, so all players get to play 72 holes. PTI

TTFI to issue show cause to Manika

New Delhi: Table Tennis Federation of India on Wednesday decided to issue a show cause notice to star paddler Manika Batra for her refusal to take national coach Soumyadeep Roy's help at the Tokyo Olympics.

Though Manika's coach Sanmay Paranjape was given access for training sessions in Tokyo, he did not have the accreditation to enter the field of play and a request to upgrade his access card was denied. In a show of protest, Manika had refused help from designated team coach Roy during her singles matches.

"Before she boarded the flight to Tokyo, she very well knew that her personal coach did not have field of play access. Therefore, she should not have acted the way she did. "We will issue the notice tomorrow and Manika will have 10 days to respond and based on that we will decide what action to be taken further," TTFI secretary general said. PTI

England all out for 183 on Day 1

PTI ■ NOTTINGHAM

England were all out for 183 in their first innings against India on the opening day of the first Test here on Wednesday.

Having reached tea at 138 for four, England lost their remaining six wickets for just 45 runs in the day's third and final session.

Skipper Joe Root made 64 off 108 balls, even as the others failed miserably to stand up to the Indian pace bowling attack. For the visitors, Jasprit Bumrah picked up four wickets for 46 runs, Mohammed Shami had 3/28, while Shardul Thakur bagged 2/41.

England scored 77 runs in 25.2 overs bowled in the afternoon session for the loss of two wickets, after scoring 61 in the first session.

The pitch had enough for the pacers in the first hour of play with the ball swinging and seaming around.

With India going in with four pacers, Shardul Thakur came into the side but the one



Indian players celebrate after England batsman Jonny Bairstow was declared out on Day 1 of first Test

spinner picked was Ravindra Jadeja, who didn't bowl in the first session.

Dropping premier spinner R Ashwin was a big call as he had been well prepared for the series opener with his prepara-

tion including a county game. Earlier at tea, Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow frustrated Indian pacers with solid Test match batting in challenging conditions before Mohammed Shami broke their 72-run stand by dismissing

the latter to leave England at 138 for four at tea on day one. Like the first session, Indian pacers beat the batsmen regularly but Root (52 batting off 91 balls) and Bairstow (29 off 71) played with grit and patience to

thwart their attempts.

Shami was finally able to break their threatening stand by having Bairstow leg before at the stroke of tea. Shami got one to jag back in and India reviewed the umpire's decision successfully. England scored 77 runs in 25.2 overs bowled in the afternoon sessions for the loss of two wickets.

India had their tail up early on in the session when Shami had Dom Sibley caught at short mid-wicket in the third over post lunch. Shami made Sibley fall into a trap set for him with a full ball on his pads which the England opener flicked it straight to KL Rahul, leaving the hosts at 66 for three.

Bairstow joined Root in the middle and they ended up batting the rest of the session.

While the Indian pacers kept asking questions with the ball constantly moving around, Root seemed to find answers more often than that not. He played with soft hands and close to his body, and was quick to latch on to the loose balls.