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Farmers call off protest, say battle won, war on



Farmers dismantle structures after a decision to withdraw their protest at Singhu border in New Delhi on Thursday. PTI

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Having weathered rain, heat, bone-chilling cold, and Covid-19 pandemic for 378 days during which around 715 lives were lost, the farmers on Thursday decided to suspend their agitation after the Government repealed three controversial agriculture laws and accepted all their demands.

“The agitation is being suspended because the Centre has agreed to all our demands. Battle has been won and the war to ensure farmers’ rights, especially to secure the minimum support price (MSP) as a

legal entitlement for all farmers, will continue,” said Gurnam Singh Chadhuni, farmers’ leader and one of the members of the core committee of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella body of 40 farm unions. Chadhuni added that the agitation could be resumed if the Centre “backtracks from its promises”.

The farmers’ groups said considering that the nation is mourning the demise of Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat and his associates, they have also postponed their “Fateh March” (Victory Day

celebrations) on Thursday and will vacate Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur borders in Delhi after holding a grand “Victory Day” (Vijay Diwas) parade at all protest sites and toll plazas across the country on Saturday.

Protest sites were like home, will be lifelong memory: Farmers

New Delhi: After spending over a year agitating against the three farm laws at three Delhi border points, many farmers became nostalgic as Samyukta Kisan Morcha announced that thousands of protestors would

Kisan to celebrate Vijay Diwas tomorrow

The decision was taken at a meeting of the SKM earlier in the day after a written proposal from Sanjay Agarwal, Agriculture Secretary, was received on the pending issues of farmers accepting all demands put forward by the protesting farmers, including the withdrawal of cases registered by central agencies and the State Government and compensation to the families of farmers who had died during the course of the movement against the contentious agriculture laws.

The Government had sent a draft proposal to the farm unions on a plain paper on Wednesday, saying that in light of the concessions proposed, there was no justification for the agitation to continue, and requested the unions to end it.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays his last respects to flag-draped caskets of Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat and others at Palam airport in New Delhi, on Thursday. Ranjan Dimri / Pioneer

Prez, PM, Def Min pay tributes to CDS Rawat at Palam airport

Tri-services COI will investigate Mi-17 V5 crash, Rajnath informs Parliament

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

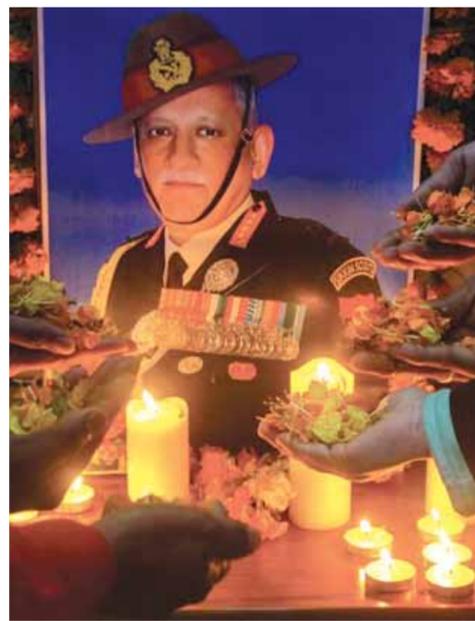
The entire top echelon of the Government, defence services, and Parliament on Thursday paid tributes to Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat and other military personnel who were killed in a deadly helicopter crash on Wednesday in Tamil Nadu.

President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh drove to the Palam airport and laid wreath on their mortal remains after these arrived from Wellington in the evening. The chiefs of the three Services besides National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval were present to pay their homage.

Gen Rawat, his wife Madhulika Singh and 12 other were killed on Wednesday when an Air Force Mi-17 V5 helicopter crashed just before landing.

In Parliament, Rajnath informed the MPs about the sequence of events leading to the helicopter crash.

The Defence Minister apprised both the Houses of Parliament that the last rites of



Candlelight tribute to CDS General Bipin Rawat, his wife & 11 Armed forces personnel killed in a chopper crash in Coonoor on Wednesday, in Gurugram, on Thursday. PTI

Gen Rawat and his wife will be performed with full military honours at Brar Square, Delhi Cantonment, on Friday.

The last rites of other military personnel will also be performed with appropriate military honours, he said.

Members of both the Houses observed silence for a

Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington. This recovery will help the investigators to find out the cause of the mishap of the helicopter.

Rajnath also said the lone survivor Group Captain Varun Singh was on life support system and all efforts were on to provide him the best medical care. It was learnt the fighter pilot was airlifted from Wellington to Bengaluru late on Thursday.

They also said positive identification of only three mortal remains were possible as of now, including Gen Rawat, his wife and Brigadier LS Lidder. Their mortal remains will be released to their next of kin for final rites as desired by respective families, officials said here on Thursday.

Mortal remains of Gen Rawat were laid for all to pay their last respects at his residence, 3 Kamaraj Marg here. As regards the ceremonies related to the final rites, sources said civil dignitaries and citizens can pay their respects from 11 am to 12.30 pm on Friday followed by military personnel paying respects from 12.30 to 1.30 pm.

The final journey of Rawat from his residence to the Brar Square Crematorium is scheduled to start from his residence about 1400 hours, they added. Officials said positive identification of remaining mortal remains was continuing.

Continued on Page 2

Jamia violence: Sharjeel Imam granted bail

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court on Thursday granted bail to Jawaharlal Nehru University student Sharjeel Imam in a case related to alleged violence at Jamia Millia Islamia University in December 2019.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Dinesh Kumar admitted him on bail on furnishing ₹25,00,000-bond with one surety of like amount. “Considering the nature of the offence, and the fact that he was not arrested during the investigation, the (bail) application is allowed,” the judge ordered.

The incident of violence in the varsity had occurred concerning student protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) in December 2019.

The FIR under which he is an accused involves offences such as rioting, conspiracy, attempt to commit culpable homicide, voluntarily obstructing public servant in discharge of public functions, and assault under the Indian Penal Code.

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WHO bats for booster dose for those with weak immune

Certain features of Omicron to have major impact on course of pandemic

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the Omicron variant spreading its tentacles in 57 countries, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on Thursday warned that its certain features, including its global presence and a large number of mutations, suggest it could have a major impact on the course of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In the meantime, a vaccine advisory panel of the global health agency has recommended that people who are immunocompromised or received an inactivated vaccine should receive a booster dose of a Covid-19 shot. Its contention was that vaccines’ efficacy against Covid-19 wanes, with a significant decline seen



in older people in particular.

On the Omicron variant, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, “We are now starting to see a consistent picture of rapid increase in transmission (rates), although for now the exact rate of increase relative to other variants remains difficult to quantify.”

Emerging data from South Africa suggests increased risk

of re-infection with Omicron, but more data are needed to draw firmer conclusions, he added.

While some evidence might suggest that Omicron causes milder symptoms than the earlier Delta variant, it’s still early days to draw any final conclusions, WHO experts have said.

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Amid Covid concern, India won't resume int'l flights till Jan 31

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid rising concerns over the coronavirus variant Omicron, India has decided to keep scheduled international passenger flights suspended till January 31.

“The competent authority has decided to extend the suspension of scheduled international commercial passenger services to and from India till 2359 hours of January 31, 2022,” reads the circular issued by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Thursday.

The DGCA had on December 1 decided not to resume scheduled international flights from December 15, less than a week after announcing that it would resume the services.



This suspension won't apply to international all cargo operations and flights specifically approved by DGCA, it mentioned. “International scheduled flights may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on case to case basis,” the regulator added.

In another tweet, it clarified that all international flights under the existing bubble agreements shall continue to operate till January 31.

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Centre asks States to keep buffer stock of 8 drugs, hospitals ready

‘Deal with possible surge immediately’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Concerned at the rapid infection rate of Omicron Covid variant in various countries, the Government on Thursday asked States to ensure adequate buffer stock of eight critical drugs and make sure all hospitals are ready to deal with any possible surge in cases.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan held a review meeting with senior officials of States and Union Territories on Thursday and urged them to ensure the availability of adequate buffer stock of critical drugs used for the treatment of the Covid-19.

The meeting was held in the wake of the detection of a number of cases of the highly



transmissible Omicron variant of the virus in India.

Speaking to Health Secretaries and National Health Mission directors via video conference, Bhushan said all health facilities

should have functional ventilators, PSA plants, and oxygen concentrators.

India has reported 23 cases of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 so far from Jaipur, Pune, Delhi, and Karnataka.

Most of those who tested positive either recently arrived from African countries or were in contact with such people.

“States were informed that many ventilators supplied by the Centre are still lying unpacked and unused at some field hospitals, with consumables not being procured and made available by the States,” said a statement from the Union Health Ministry.

“This needs to be reviewed immediately to ensure that all PSA oxygen plants, oxygen concentrators and ventilators are installed and are functioning,” it added.

The five-fold strategy of test-track-treat-vaccinate-adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour was highlighted as the mainstay of public health response strategy for effective and timely control and management of the pandemic.

Continued on Page 2

UK HC rejects India's appeal to extradite terror accused Kuldeep Singh

PTI ■ LONDON

The High Court in England on Thursday rejected an appeal by Indian authorities seeking permission to appeal against a magistrates’ court order turning down the extradition on human rights grounds of Kuldeep Singh, wanted in India as an alleged senior member of the banned terrorist organisation Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZFF).

Singh, alias Keepa Sidhu, is charged with conspiring with others to commit terror activities in Punjab in 2015-16, including a plot to assassinate then Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal and Sukhbir Singh Badal respectively. He is also accused of recruiting youths in Punjab to the banned KZFF by offering them money and organising a meeting of separatists in a gurdwara.

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CAPSULE

ELGAR ACCUSED SUDHA OUT OF JAIL AFTER 3 YRS

Mumbai: Activist Sudha Bharadwaj, an accused in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case, was on Thursday released from a prison here on bail, after spending over three years in jail.

HALAL ROW PLAGUES FILM INDUSTRY IN KERALA

Kochi: Two Malayalam film stars are finding themselves at the receiving end of a campaign carried out by a religious group. It started with the release of Kaaval (Guard), a movie in which Suresh Gopi, BJP’s Rajya Sabha member played the lead role. Film buffs thronged theaters to watch their favourite star who returned to the big screen after a hiatus. But they were taken aback when groups of well dressed and sweet talking youngsters approached them and pleaded with them not to watch the movie.

None but Zakia pointed a finger at us: SIT to SC

Petition filed by Cong leader's wife Zakia Jafri alleges larger conspiracy in Gujarat riots

New Delhi: The Special Investigation Team (SIT) told the Supreme Court on Thursday that nobody has "raised a finger" against it for the probe conducted in the 2002 Gujarat riots except the petition filed by Zakia Jafri, who has alleged larger conspiracy during the violence in the state. Zakia Jafri, the wife of Congress leader Ehsan Jafri who was killed during the violence at Gulberg Society in Ahmedabad on February 28, 2002, has challenged the SIT's clean chit to 64 people including Narendra Modi who was the Gujarat chief minister during the riots in the state. A bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar reserved judgement on Zakia Jafri's petition against the Gujarat High Court's October 5, 2017 order rejecting her plea against the SIT decision.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the SIT, told the bench that the apex court should endorse what the trial court and the Gujarat High Court had done on Jafri's plea otherwise it is an "endless exercise" which will go on because of "some motives" of social activist Teesta Setalvad, who is the petitioner number two in the petition. "I think what the trial court and the high court have done, your lordships should endorse it otherwise it is an endless exercise which will always go on only because of some motives of petitioner number two (Setalvad)," Rohatgi told the bench, also comprising Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and C T Ravikumar, while concluding his arguments. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the petitioners, referred to the work done by Setalvad's organisations and said to "paint" us as somebody who is "anti-Gujarat, defaming Gujarat" is unfair. "Very few times in the history of the court, matters of this moment are before you. It happened earlier on few occasions. This is yet another occasion when the majesty of the law is being tested. And here, I am not interested in targeting anybody but as your lordships

know, under criminal law you take cognisance of offences and you don't take cognisance of offender," Sibal said. He said it is the SIT's task to find out who the offenders are, if any offence has been committed. "So, if nobody did it and all this happened without anybody doing it with the material which is before you, we can close it. But if you feel that offences have been committed then who is responsible is a matter of investigation," Sibal said. Rohatgi said that the SIT was given a job by the apex court and the team did much more than what was required. "Nobody has raised a finger against us except this petitioner," he said. "I have submitted and I will repeat that it is petitioner number two (Setalvad) who is driving this litigation now for the last 10 years. Ample opportunity was available at the relevant time to say something if you want," Rohatgi said. He said now after almost 20 years, the petitioners want

the court to order further investigation in the matter. "Now, he says do it again. I don't know, who will do it, who will monitor. New SIT will come now, obviously you don't trust this SIT. So, we should have another SIT. I don't know, we should get Scotland Yard now because these fellows are from CBI. The CBI is here, police was here," he said. "I don't know from where we should get. Mylords, the idea is only to keep the pot boiling for ulterior purposes of petitioner number two (Setalvad)," Rohatgi said. Zakia Jafri's counsel had earlier argued that her complaint of 2006 was that there was "a larger conspiracy where there was bureaucratic inaction, police complicity, hate speeches and unleashing of violence". Ehsan Jafri, the former MP, was among the 68 people killed in the violence, a day after the Godhra train incident. The S-6 coach of Sabarmati Express was burnt at Godhra on February 27, 2002 killing 59 people and triggering riots in Gujarat in 2002.

On February 8, 2012, the SIT had filed a closure report giving a clean chit to Modi, now the Prime Minister, and 63 others including senior government officials, saying there was "no prosecutable evidence" against them. Zakia Jafri had filed a petition in the apex court in 2018 challenging the Gujarat High Court's October 5, 2017 order rejecting her plea against the SIT decision. The plea also maintained that after the SIT gave a clean chit in its closure report before a trial judge, Zakia Jafri filed a protest petition which was dismissed by the magistrate without considering "substantiated merits". The high court in its October 2017 order had said the SIT probe was monitored by the Supreme Court. However, it partly allowed her petition as far as its demand for a further investigation was concerned saying she can approach an appropriate forum, including the magistrate's court, a division bench of the high court, or the Supreme Court seeking further investigation. **PTI**

Mixed reactions float at Singhu border after farmers' stir ends

New Delhi: As farmer unions announced suspension of their agitation, local residents and traders at the Singhu border protest site expressed mixed emotions, with small traders fearing loss of customers and others hoping for a smoother road connectivity. Thousands of farmers, prominently from Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, had been protesting at the borders of the national capital since November 26 last year demanding repeal of the three farm laws. Vijay Hooda (28), who lives in Haryana's Sonapat district, said his mother suffered due to the road closure as she had to commute a longer distance for work. "My mother works in Haiderpur (in Delhi) and travels around 50 kilometres to her workplace everyday. Her morning travel is convenient as she takes the train. However, there is no train service to Sonapat when she leaves her office at 2 pm. Because of this, she is compelled to change four vehicles in three hours and travel back

when the farmers arrived here. "People come here and buy tea and other products. Sometimes, we also get food from the protesters," he told PTI. Sandeep Rathi, who lives in Singhu village and is pursuing graduation, said the local residents had no issues with the protesting farmers, but wanted to see a smooth commute. "We have no issues with the farmers. But the road closure is a big concern. The villagers are taking alternate routes causing traffic snarls on service roads. Relatives, too, avoid visiting our homes..." Rathi said. Amardeep Singh, who owns an auto spare parts shop, is hopeful that his business will be back to normal when the stir ends. Sewa Singh, who opened a saloon on the roadside, said his business totally depended on the protesting farmers. "I opened this saloon around three months ago and my business depended on these protesters. I will have to vacate when they do," he said. **PTI**

those 50 kilometres. The public transport fares have also been doubled," he said. On Thursday, the Sanyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of 40 farm unions, announced that farmers will go back home on December 11. Farmer leaders said they will meet on January 15 to see if the government has fulfilled their demands. Ravinder Kumar, a tea seller at the Singhu border protest site, said his business increased since farmers began camping here. "It is a highway and not many people stop here. Earlier, my business was limited. I run a small tea stall near the service lane and my business increased

Ravinder Kumar, a tea seller at the Singhu border protest site, said his business increased since farmers began camping here

UK HC rejects...

From Page 1
District Judge Gareth Branston, presiding over the extradition case at Westminster Magistrates' Court here, ruled in January that as the offences carry maximum sentences and "no possibility of a review of such a life sentence with a view to its commutation, remission, termination or conditional release", it would be contrary to Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights. "The District Judge's comprehensive and clearly reasoned judgment cannot be faulted," High Court Justices Nicola Davies and Pushpinder Saini said in their judgment, handed down at the Royal Courts of Justice here. "There are no grounds upon which it would be appropriate for this court to interfere with the discretion exercised by the District Judge," they conclude. Singh faces a total of four charges in India, under sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act related to raising funds for terrorism, conspiracy and being a mem-

ber of a terror outfit and of the Arms Act related to firearms offences. The court documents note that he is accused of being a point of contact in Punjab and liaising with the head of the KZF, who was residing in Pakistan, and other co-accused members of the organisation, who lived in Belgium and England. Singh, who entered the UK illegally in 2005, was on immigration bail when he was arrested at Loughborough Immigration Reporting Centre in eastern England in October 2019. In September 2020, the Indian authorities were successful in revoking bail granted to him at the magistrates' court level. Singh - who used a Punjabi interpreter in court - then remained remanded in judicial custody for the duration of the extradition hearings before District Judge Branston, which concluded in December last year. In his judgment in January, District Judge Branston accepted Indian Government assurances regarding prison condi-

tions under which Singh would be kept as "clear, binding and sufficient". "There is no evidence that Mr Singh has previously been ill-treated in India. This country has considered and accepted previous assurances by the Indian Government. There is no cogent evidence to suggest that they will not be complied with," he said. He also noted that it is undisputed that there is evidence of a conspiracy to commit criminal offences in India but questioned the proportionality of a life term without parole. The judge said, "In my judgment, if such a sentence were imposed upon Mr Singh in the context of this case, then such a sentence would plainly be grossly disproportionate to the offending alleged. "Whilst clearly very serious allegations, Mr Singh is alleged to have been involved in the funding and recruitment of terrorist activity. As is observed, there is no evidence that anyone was actually killed as a result of his alleged activities. He is accused of acts preparatory to terrorist offences."

Prez...

From Page 1
Mortal remains will be kept at the mortuary of Army Base Hospital till completion of positive identification formalities. Appropriate military funerals of all deceased were being planned and coordinated in close consultation with close family members. Besides Rawat, India's first CDS and its most senior military officer, and his wife, those who died were Defence Adviser Brigadier Lakhbinder Singh Lidder, Staff Officer Lt Colonel Harjinder Singh and nine other personnel, including the Air Force helicopter pilot, Rajnath informed Parliament. The nine are Wing Commander Prithvi Singh Chauhan (pilot and commander of the helicopter), Squadron Leader Kuldeep Singh, Junior Warrant Officer Rana Pratap Das, Junior Warrant Officer Arakhal Pradeep, Havildar Satpal Rai, Naik Gursewak Singh, Naik Jitendra Kumar, Lance Naik

Vivek Kumar, Lance Naik B Sai Teja, he said. The Minister said Air Marshal Manavandera Singh will head the tri-service court of inquiry to find out the cause of the accident leading to the death of 13 out of 14 passengers. Manavandera himself is also a helicopter pilot and is now the chief of the IAF Training Command. In Wellington, where Rawat was scheduled to give a lecture at the DSSC on Wednesday, the mortal remains of the victims in caskets wrapped in the Indian tricolour were taken to the Madras Regimental Centre, Wellington, on Thursday. Chief Minister M K Stalin, several State Ministers, senior Army officials and veterans laid wreaths and paid floral tributes. The remains were later taken to Coimbatore by road, about 70 km away, from where they were flown to New Delhi in a special IAF aircraft. In his statement, Rajnath said the Indian Air Force Mi-17V5 helicopter took off from Sular air base at 11.48 a.m. on Wednesday and was scheduled to land at Wellington at 12.15 p.m.

The Air Traffic Control at Sular airbase lost contact with the helicopter at approximately 12.08 p.m. Later, a few locals reported a fire in the forest near Coonoor and rushed to the spot where they saw the remains of a helicopter engulfed in flames. Rescue teams from local administration also reached the crash site and tried to recover survivors, he said. "All those recovered from the wreckage were immediately rushed to the military hospital at Wellington." IAF chief Chaudhari was sent to the spot after receiving information about the accident on Wednesday itself, Rajnath said. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla expressed grief at Gen Rawat's untimely demise and said the country had lost a skilled warrior, an outstanding strategist and an experienced leader. In Rajya Sabha, Deputy Chairman Harivansh said the CDS had an illustrious military career spanning over four decades during which he held several important staff positions and went on to become the Chief of Army Staff on December 31, 2016.

Centre asks States to keep buffer stock...

From Page 1
The States and UTs have also been asked to enhance testing and focus on surveillance to ensure the early identification of suspected cases for prompt isolation and further clinical management. They were also asked to ensure the availability of RT-PCR testing facilities in all districts, the statement said. "Districts reporting higher case positivity were alerted to monitor the case trajectory regularly, and to promptly dispatch positive samples to the mapped INSACOG labs for genomic sequencing," it said. Close monitoring of emerging hotspots/clusters, breakthrough and re-infection cases, and a prompt investigation was discussed. It was emphasised that all contacts for positive patients are to be traced and tested according to the protocol as quickly as possible, the statement said. Keeping the winter season in mind, they were advised that the prevalence of influenza-like illness, severe acute respiratory infection and respiratory distress symptoms need to be closely monitored, it added.

Amid...

From page 1
Scheduled international passenger services have been suspended in India since March 23, 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic. But special international flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May 2020 and under bilateral "air bubble" arrangements with selected countries since July 2020. India has formed air bubble pacts with around 32 countries, including the US, the UK, the UAE, Kenya, Bhutan and France. Under an air bubble pact between two countries, special international flights can be operated by their airlines between their territories. The DGCA had on November 26 announced that India will resume scheduled international passenger flights from December 15.

PM to lay foundation stone of Ganga Expressway in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW
Continuing the spate of launching mega projects before Uttar Pradesh assembly elections slated early next year, the Yogi Adityanath Government has decided to start work on the six-lane Ganga Expressway in December and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to lay its foundation in Shahjahanpur on December 18. A large rally has been organised at Roza railway grounds in Shahjahanpur the same day. The 594 km-long Ganga Expressway will start from Meerut and go up to Prayagraj, touching Hapur, Bulandshahr, Budaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, Rae Bareilly and Pratapgarh districts. The six-lane expressway could be expanded to eight-lane later and is being developed at a cost of Rs 36,290 crore. Officials of UP Expressway Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA), the nodal agency of the expressway, said that global tenders were invited for the construction of the Ganga Expressway which would be constructed in four packages.

Farmers...

From Page 1
"This is not the end as the movement is just suspended. We have decided to meet again on January 15 in Delhi to review whether the Government has acted on the proposals agreed upon," farmer leader Balbir Singh Rajewal said. After the announcement of suspension of the agitation, protesters were seen dismantling their tents and packing their baggage. SKM core committee member Shiv Kumar Kakka on behalf of the morcha apologised to residents and businessmen who faced problems due to the agitation. In a statement, the SKM thanked all those who supported their movement and said the SKM will monitor and review whether the Government has kept its commitments with regard to the withdrawal of police cases against protesters and compensation for the kin of those who died, as well as the progress on the committee to ensure MSP is given to all farmers. "To ensure that the Government is keeping to its commitments made to the protesting farmers, and to chart out future course of action, SKM will hold its next meeting on January 15th in Delhi," it said. After Fateh March at Singhu and Tikri protest sites on Delhi's borders on December 11 around 9 am, Punjab farm leaders plan to pay obeisance at the Golden Temple in Amritsar on December 13. Border protest sites were brimming with energy and farmers were eager to go back home. However, there was no major celebration because of the demise of General Rawat in the crash. The farmer leaders also paid tributes to those killed in the unfortunate incident. With farmers set to vacate the protest sites at Delhi's borders, commuters will leave a huge sigh of relief as roads closed for over a year will reopen, ending their traffic woes. Those travelling from Delhi to Ghaziabad, Noida and Haryana and vice versa had a tough time due to road closures and traffic diversions. Earlier, the farmers were also demanding that Union Minister Ajay Mishra, whose

son Ashish has been tried in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case, be sacked. However, as the matter is subjudice the SKM's five-member panel had removed that point. The letter sent to the SKM by the agriculture secretary said in light of the concessions proposed, there was no justification for the agitation to continue and requested the unions to call it off. According to the amended proposal, the Centre will also appeal to other States to withdraw all cases lodged against protesters during the agitation. The revised document said the Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana - all BJP ruled states - have agreed to simultaneously withdraw all cases lodged against the protesters with immediate effect. All the cases lodged against protesters and their supporters in Delhi and by different central agencies, such as NIA and ED, will also be withdrawn. On the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, the new draft States that the Government will hold discussions with all stakeholders and SKM before introducing the Bill. There was a status quo on stubble burning in the revised draft - the Government had agreed to decriminalise certain sections and remove criminal liability.

WHO...

From Page 1
According to Mike Ryan, executive director of the WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, although the evolutionary nature of the virus makes it more transmissible as it mutates, this doesn't necessarily make the virus less severe, as has been suggested by some "urban legends." Whether or not a mutation turns out to be milder or more lethal is a matter of chance, he said. As studies of the latest Covid-19 variant are evolving, the WHO said it still needs days or even weeks for global epidemiological data to come in, be analysed and then to draw any firm conclusions. It's also still premature to say that Omicron could result in a significant reduction in vaccine effectiveness, according to WHO Chief Scientist Soumya Swaminathan. The WHO has called on all countries to increase surveillance, testing, and sequencing, and to submit more data to its Clinical Data Platform using an updated online case reporting form. The WHO's vaccine advisory panel suggested booster doses for people who are immunocompromised or received an inactivated vaccine. Many countries have been rolling out booster shots, targeting the elderly and people with underlying health issues, but worries about the new Omicron variant have prompted some to expand their use to larger portions of their populations. With vaccination rates worryingly low in much of the developing world, the WHO has said in recent months that administering primary doses - rather than boosters - should be a priority. The recommendation comes after the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on immunisation held a meeting on Tuesday to evaluate the need for Covid-19 boosters. Speaking in a briefing, SAGE chair Alejandro Craviotto said emerging data showed that vaccines' efficacy against Covid-19 wanes, with a significant decline seen in older people in particular.

It is notified for the information of general public that M/s N.N. Unitek Pvt. Ltd. is in process to mutate the name of Mrs. Sabina Marak W/o Late Alexander Sangma in respect of Flat No. S-3, Second Floor, Plot No. C-48, Shalimar Garden Ext-II, Ghaziabad, which was earlier allotted to Mr. Alexander N. Sangma who died on 06.08.2021 after obtaining the Survivor Certificate & NOC from other legal heirs. Any person having any right or interest in respect of the said property are hereby required to give notice of the same to the undersigned on below mentioned address within 15 days from the date of publication hereof together with copies of all documents on the basis of which claims are made, failing which any such right, title, interest, or claim, if any, will be deemed to have been waived and not binding on our Client. C.K. JHA Advocate-E24, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-110032 (M) - 9811295674

ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE SECTION-6 GOVERNMENT OF UTTAR PRADESH
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ADVERTISEMENTS No. - 933/2021
Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of Uttar Pradesh invites offline application for the following different posts:

Sl. No.	NAME OF THE POST	NAME OF BOARD/DISCOM	NOS. OF VACANCY
1	Chairman	Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board, Lucknow	01
2	Member-Secretary	Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board, Lucknow	01

Last date for filing of application is One month from the date of publication. Details and off-line application form is available on Website www.uppcb.com

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(Short-term)
Gist of e-NIT No: MHCHD/TS /2021-22/225/e-tendering
Dated: 08.12.2021

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir state, e-tenders, valid for 180 days, are invited from the Registered, reputed & experienced firms as detailed in the NIT for below mentioned works:
Name of Work:- Providing, Fitting and testing of Oxygen flow meters, Humidifier bottles for self sealing valves and fine adjust valves with allied items for Bulk Oxygen Cylinders of Govt. B&J Hospital, Srinagar.
Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs) :- 3.50
Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees) :- 200
Time of completion (in days) :- 05
AAA :- MC/Plan/B&J/205/4362-65, Dt: 01-10-2021
TS No :- MHCHD/TS/152, Dt: 12/2021
Position of Funds :- Available
Earnest Money (in Rs.) :- 7000

1. The Tender document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from 08.12.2021 (18.00 hrs).
2. The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site from 09.12.2021 (10:00hrs) to 17.12.2021 (14:00 hrs) in two (02) cover.
3. The bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on 17.12.2021 (16.00 hrs) or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar
No. DIPK-14529/21 Dated:- 09.12.2021

DELHI JAL BOARD : GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SW)-III/AEE(TM)-10
SECTOR-VII, R.K. PURAM, NEW DELHI - 110022

"Stop Corona : Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hygiene"
N.I.T. No. 42(2021-22)SW-III

S. No.	Description	Amount Put to Tender, Tender Fee	Date of release of tender in E-Procurement Solution)	Last Date/Time of receipt of Tender Through E-Procurement Solution
1.	Improvement of old damaged sewer line at Munirka Village near Rama Market to Anupam restaurant and adjoining lane under AC-44	Rs. 26,36,713/- Rs. 500/-	08-12-2021 Tender I.D.No. 2021_DJB_212340-1	23-12-2021 At 2:00 P.M.

Further details in this regard can be seen at (<https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in/>)

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 771 (2021-22)

Sd/- ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (TM)-10

Jamia violence: Sharjeel Imam...
From Page 1
Imam will, however, remain in jail as he is accused in three other cases related to violence in Delhi. In October, the court had denied bail to Imam in connection with allegedly delivering an inflammatory speech and inciting violence during the CAA-NRC protests in 2019, saying free speech cannot be exercised at the cost of communal peace and harmony. Besides this case, Imam is also accused of being the "masterminds" of the February 2020 riots, which had left 53 people dead and over 700 injured. He has been booked under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). He was also arrested in another case under UAPA and sedition for his alleged speeches at two universities in 2019, where he allegedly threatened to "cut off" Assam and the rest of the Northeast from India.

Couple killed after truck overturns on their car



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a tragic incident, a man and his wife were killed, while their minor daughter was injured after a dumper truck carrying gravel overturned on their car in southwest Delhi's RK Puram area. The accident took place on the Ring Road around 12 AM. Police said that manhunt has been initiated to nab the accused, who

is on the run. According to Gaurav Sharma, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Southwest district, after receiving information about the accident, the police reached the spot and found that three people were stuck in the car. "A fire brigade team was called at the spot, but the heavy dumper couldn't be removed. Thereafter, a hydraulic crane was ordered to rescue the

injured," said the DCP. Manish Sharma and his wife Shipra were shifted to AIIMS hospital, where they succumbed to injuries. Their six-year-old daughter was rescued safely, the DCP said. The driver of the dumper truck escaped from the spot after the accident. A case was registered and a police team was sent to apprehend the accused, said the DCP.

Explosion in Rohini court, proceedings suspended as 1 hurt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

One person was injured in a low-intensity explosion that took place inside courtroom 102 in Rohini district court on Thursday morning, fire officials said.

According to Chinmoy Biswal, the spokesperson of Delhi Police, at around 10.25 AM, an incident of minor low intensity explosion in a laptop bag occurred at Rohini court complex.

"The spot was cordoned off and Forensic and NSG team were called at the place of incidence. Prima facie, the incident seems to have occurred in a black colour bag which was found lying on spot," said the spokesperson. "There is no casualty. However, a Naib Court, Head Constable (HC) Rajeev sustained minor injuries and received treatment from the Hospital. He is fine. Forensic teams have collected the debris from spot and taken it for examination," said the spokesperson.

"A case has been registered and investigation is being carried out by Special Cell," he added. The Delhi Fire Service (DFS) said that the fire department received information about the explosion at 10.40 AM, following which seven fire tenders were rushed to the spot.

The incident comes months after jailed gangster Jitendra Gogi was shot dead by two men, who were dressed as lawyers, inside a Rohini courtroom on September 24, with police in retaliatory fire killing the assailants, who were from the slain gangster's rival Tullu gang.

BSES to organise 'online' special Lok Adalat

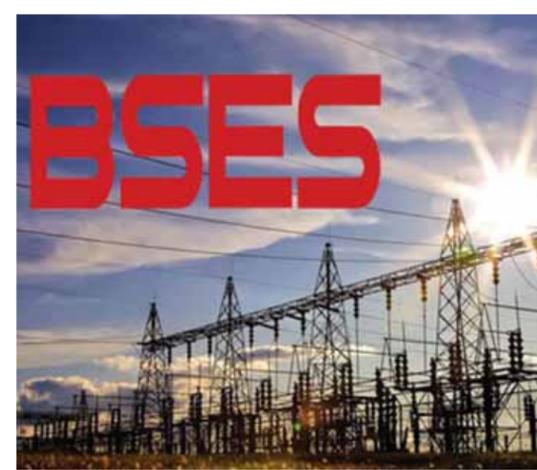
STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Adapting to the 'new normal' in the wake of Covid-19, BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) and BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) will organise an 'online' and 'hybrid' Lok Adalats for an amicable on-the-spot settlement of power-theft cases in South, West, East and Central Delhi.

This will be organised in association with the Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLISA). Lok Adalat for BRPL consumers will be organised on December 11 and BYPL consumers can participate on December 11 and 12, a senior BSES official said.

The official said that consumers desirous of settling their power-theft cases can use this opportunity for an amicable and on-the-spot settlement of their power theft cases, relating to both Direct Theft (DT) and Meter Tampering (DAE).

Cases that are either pending in any court of law or are yet to be filed in any Court of Law shall be taken up by the Lok Adalats, he added.



While announcing the upcoming Lok-Adalats, BSES spokesperson said "These special events help resolve cases quickly. This exercise is a win-win for everybody. For the consumers, it means an opportunity to amicably settle their cases and an escape from a prolonged and expensive legal process. For an overworked judiciary, it means some burden off their Courts. For BSES, it means, more people coming into the billing net. In fact, over 37,000 cases have been resolved in last 24 Special Loks Adalats."

DJB revises its billing system



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Water Minister and Delhi Jal Board (DJB) Chairman Satyendar Jain on Thursday said water bills can not be more than 1.5x last month's bill anymore. Taking it to micro blogging site, Jain tweeted: The Delhi Jal Board has updated its billing system today. Now your bill cannot be more than 1.5 times the previous month. If it exceeds this, an explanation will be provided to the customer, and he or she may file a complaint. The Delhi Jal Board will be held accountable and responsible for any errors."

His decision came after receiving many grievances by Jal Board officials wherein the meter readers either do not upload a picture of the current meter reading or upload a random image and put a reading as deemed fit by them. "This exercise has no check until a consumer lodges a complaint about the same. Most consumers pay their bills thinking to be accurate and not realising the change in consumption pattern in the bi-

monthly billing cycle," a Government official said. According to officials, there will be an automatic system check to stop billing from the meter readers table if consumption variance is more than 50% higher or lower in comparison to the previous bill. "In such a case, the bill will only be generated by the Zonal Revenue Office, if the meter reading image confirms the consumption. This step will curb the erroneous reading bills that were being generated," DJB official said. The department will strengthen its vigilance system. In case of improper images of the meter reading, meter Inspectors will visit the site and recheck the images and make sure the images are taken properly by the meter readers. This incorrect image feeding will also call for strict action against the concerned meter readers. This will bring a robust system ensuring 100 per cent accuracy in billing. At present, there are about 900-meter readers taking readings of about 26.50 Lac consumers in 41 zones of DJB. Out of these consumers, about 18 lac consumers avail zero bills under free water scheme.

Govt to revive lake in Tikri Khurd

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Thursday said it will revive a lake in Tikri Khurd and the remaining treated water will be discharged back into drain number six which further meets the Yamuna.

Water Minister Satyendar Jain said revitalising the Tikri Khurd lake will not only save the environment from contamination but will also help in improving the depleting groundwater level in Delhi and simultaneously improve the natural ecosystem. "The remaining water will be supplied to nearby farm houses for gardening and other purposes," Jain said.

He also instructed officials from the Flood and Irrigation department to develop a ten kilometer stretch of drain number six and develop it as a recharge zone.

Jain who inspected the Sewage Treatment Plant at Narela, also added that Delhi government has set a target to clean Yamuna before the next assembly elections. "The Yamuna receives 155 MGD of wastewater from neighbouring States, with 15 MGD coming from Haryana through Drain No. 6, 90 MGD coming from Badshahpur Drain, and 50 MGD coming from Uttar Pradesh," he added.

The DJB classifies ponds of around 1 to 1.5 acres as 'water bodies' and larger ones as lakes.

Lakes are being connected to existing treatment plants to ensure a source of water.

The Delhi government will rejuvenate the lake at Tikri Khurd under its 'city of lakes' project, by using the recycled water discharged from the Narela STP.

This 'city of lakes' project was launched in 2018 to supplement water supply by recharging groundwater and recycling treated wastewater in order to meet the city's daily water demand.

The focus was to build new groundwater recharge reservoirs and rejuvenation of existing lakes.

Gurugram police stations will have cyber help desk soon: Commissioner



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Gurugram: In a bid to deal with the cybercrime cases in a faster manner, soon all the police stations in Gurugram will have a cyber help desk.

Currently, the city has only one cybercrime help desk. This was announced by the Commissioner of Gurugram police K.K. Rao while presiding a crime meeting along with all the senior police officers of the Gurugram police at his camp office on Thursday.

The Commissioner said that cybercrime is increasing day by day and due to having only one cyber police station, it is not easy for all victims to reach the cyber police station, so as per the orders of the higher officers, instructions have been given to make a cyber help desk in all the police stations.

While interacting with the officers, the Commissioner discussed several aspects related to crime like control of crimes and criminals, disposal of pending complaints, crimes against women and children and taking swift action against proclaimed criminals, patrolling, setting up checkpoints on strategic roads and smuggling

of arms, illicit liquor and narcotics. Rao ordered officials to keep an eye on those who violate traffic rules, steal vehicles and those involved in a hit and run incidents through cameras and ensure action against those who violate the traffic rules. "Gurugram Police is issuing 1,000 challans daily through CCTV cameras. Gurugram Police is taking immediate action against those involved in vehicle thefts, road accidents and violating traffic rules and taking action against them as per rules," he said. The commissioner ordered prompt action on the complaints received through various channels include complaints received in the offices of Commissioner of Police, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Assistant Commissioner of Police, complaints received in the police stations and through an online medium), so that the common man do not face any inconvenience. The commissioner during the meeting also instructed the concerned officials to dispose of the complaint received within one week.

CAQM notice to industries for violating environmental norms

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Commission for Air Quality and Management (CAQM) on Thursday said gross violations have been reported in industrial units, construction and demolition project sites causing air pollution in Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR).

As per the latest findings of 40 flying squads of the commission, 38, 48, 104 and 38 cases of environmental norms were reported in Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan respectively. A closure issue notice was

also sent to these units causing air pollution in the Capital region and adjoining areas. Sharing more details on it, an official from the CAQM said, the Enforcement Task Force (ETF) of the Commission reviewed the filed

level action and inspected reports of the flying squads on a daily basis. "General compliance levels reported to be satisfactory and improving over the days. However, serious violations still being reported across sectors; majorly in Industrial units, Construction & Demolition (C&D) project sites, use of Diesel Generator Sets in industrial installation/commercial complexes and residential set ups," it said. According to the CAQM database, 1,215 cumulative inspections have been carried out till December 7th. "Gross violations of

Directions/ Orders of the Commission and non-adherence of prescribed norms has been reported from 228 numbers of units / sites across various sectors. Of these, closures have been identified for 128 No. of Industries, 58 C&D Project sites and 42 Commercial / residential complexes operating on DG Sets," it said. The flying squads have further verified physical closure of operations and 111 No. of such units have so far been physically closed down, till further orders from the Commission.

FORDA: Resident docs' protest over NEET-PG counselling delay suspended for a week

New Delhi: The Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA), spearheading a nationwide protest since November 27 over the delay in NEET-PG 2021 counselling, said on Thursday that the stir has been suspended for a week.

In a statement, it said the decision has been taken in view of developments over the issue in the last few days and the death of Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat and others in a copter crash on Wednesday.

FORDA has decided to put the agitation on hold for one week after holding discussions with representatives of state RDAs virtually on Thursday, it said.

"We express our sincere gratitude to all resident doctors of the nation who came forward and joined the agitation. We are resuming all services with immediate effect.

"In case the issue is not addressed by December 16, 2021, we will be forced to call for a complete shutdown of all services except Covid areas in healthcare institutions," the statement said.

While FORDA president Dr Manish claimed all RDAs have aligned with its decision, Dr Akash Yadav, vice-president of resident doctors association of Delhi government-run Maulana Azad Medical College, said, "MAMC RDA is yet to take any decision on it".

MAMC resident doctors had from Thursday morning boycotted all routine and emergency services as part of the nationwide stir, affecting patient care at three facilities attached to it. Lok Nayak Jaiprakash



(LNJP) Hospital, G B Pant Hospital and Guru Nanak Eye Centre are attached with MAMC. LNJP is the biggest healthcare facility run by the Delhi government and is the nerve centre of its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. In a statement issued late on Tuesday night, the MAMC RDA said, "Even after the boycott by many institutions of Delhi, we continued to run emergency services. But apathy of government and plight of overburdened residents have brought us to do total boycott of all services including OPD, OT, Ward and Emergency services from 09/12/21 (Thursday)."

"Functioning of ICU and Covid wards will not be affected to safeguard the interests of critically ill patients," it had said.

Meanwhile, the general secretary of RDA of Safdarjung Hospital, Dr Anuj Aggarwal, on Thursday said, "We support the decision of FORDA for putting on hold the protest for one week while hoping for the urgent intervention by the Government of India to fast-track the process." Resident doctors at Ram Lohia Hospital resumed all duties following the announcement by the FORDA. Resident

Court rejects suit seeking restoration of deities inside Qutub Minar complex

New Delhi: Referring to the judgment in the Ayodhya land dispute case, a Delhi court has rejected a civil suit seeking restoration of Hindu and Jain deities and right to worship within the Qutub Minar complex, saying that past wrongs cannot be the basis for disturbing the peace in present and future. The lawsuit, filed on behalf of Jain deity Tirthankar Lord Rishabh Dev and Hindu deity Lord Vishnu, claimed that 27 temples were partly demolished by Qutubuddin Aibak, a general in the Army of Mohamad Gauri, and Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque was raised inside the complex by reusing the material.

Rejecting the suit, Civil Judge Neha Sharma said, "India had a culturally rich history. It has been ruled over by numerous dynasties.

During arguments, the counsel for the plaintiff has vehemently argued on the point of national shame. However, nobody has denied that wrongs were committed in the past, but such wrongs cannot be the basis for disturbing the peace of our present and future." The judge added, "Our country had a rich history and has seen challenging times. Nevertheless, history has to be accepted as a whole. Can the good be retained and bad be deleted from our history?"

She referred to the Ayodhya judgment delivered by the Supreme Court in 2019 and highlighted a portion of it in the order, which stated, "Cognizant as we are of our history and of the need for the nation to confront it, Independence was a watershed moment to heal the wounds of the past. PTI

HC asks retail liquor dealers to pay licence fee under New Excise Policy; 500 brands registered by Delhi Govt

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Thursday asked retail liquor dealers to pay licence fees to the AAP government under the new Excise Policy from December 1, as the state has already registered over 500 liquor brands with their MRPs fixed.

The high court further directed the dealers to deposit 75 per cent of the amount of licence fee from November 17, the date when they were scheduled to commence business under the new policy, to November 30.

"Keeping in view that today a number of liquor brands stand registered, there is no reason as to why the petitioners (retail liquor dealers) could not commence payment of licence fee. They agree to pay the licence fee with effect from December 1, 2021.

"I am of the view that equities can be balanced by directing the petitioners to deposit 75 per cent amount of licence fee from November 17 to November 30... this amount will be subject to the outcome of the pending writ petitioners," Justice Rekha Palli said. The court was hearing pleas by several retail liquor traders seeking to restrain the government from

demanding the sums of money in the form of licence fees or security deposit and also to direct the authorities not to levy or demand licence fees from the successful bidders until the government performs its own obligations under the tender terms and conditions and the Delhi Excise policy 2021-2022.

The court disposed off the applications for interim reliefs. The petitioners said they are successful bidders for licences for operation of retail liquor vends and sought to declare the decision of the Delhi government to levy licence fees with effect from November 1, 2021 as illegal.

On November 9, the high court had asked the Delhi government to inform it about the number of liquor brands where MRPs are fixed and those yet to be done under the Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22. On November 11, the Delhi government had orally assured the court that no coercive action would be taken against liquor retailers for the time being for not paying the licence fees.

During the hearing, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Rahul Mehra,

representing the Delhi government, said out of 1,171 brands, as of now 519 brands have been registered with their MRPs fixed and contended that no case is made out even for continuation of the interim order.

The counsel argued that the bidders cannot turn around now and find fault with the implementation of policy on technical grounds and now that majority of brands have been registered, there is no ground to continue the interim order.

Senior advocate Maninder Singh and lawyer Tanmaya Mehta, representing the liquor retailers, said even though they had earlier agreed to pay the licence fee, it was subject to the Delhi government fulfilling its commitment under the new Excise Policy.

He said though the policy has been brought into effect, the authorities failed to register brands in a time bound manner and that there were hardly any brands available for sale. The petitioners are successful bidders of L-7Z (zonal licence for retail vend of Indian liquor and foreign liquor) and L-7V (retail vend of Indian liquor, foreign liquor in a zone). PTI

Incentives for green homes suggested

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Residential buildings make up 75 per cent of India's construction market, still it is yet to become a priority for energy efficiency policy for India, a study by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has noted. It has favoured doling out incentives to residential building developers to encourage them to construct green homes to help cut down carbon emission and combat climate change.

India intends to reduce the emissions intensity of its gross domestic product by 33-35 per cent by 2030 from the 2005 level. To achieve this target, improvement in energy efficiency is required in all sectors, especially in the building sector, as the building sector in India consumes over 30 per cent of the total electricity. A green building or sustainable building (according to some) puts into consideration energy use, water use, indoor environmental quality, building material, and effects on its site during the planning, designing, construction, and operations of buildings.

To date, efforts of India's policymakers have focused on reducing energy consumption in new commercial buildings. Achieving significant scale will depend on efficiency measures becoming standard practice in the commercial middle market,



retrofit, and, particularly, the residential buildings segment, said the EIU in its report "Achieving scale in energy-efficient buildings in India--A view from the construction and real estate sectors."

The report focuses on incentivizing the developers engaged in the residential home sector as the gross electricity consumption in residential buildings has been rising sharply over the years. Data says, building energy-consumption figures rose to 260 Trillion watt in 2016-17, which was 55 TWh in 1996-97. It is estimated that this will further increase in the range of 630-940 TWh by 2032.

The Government, to address energy efficiency in the commercial building sector, launched the Energy

Conservation Building Code (ECBC) in 2007. The code was extended to the residential buildings through ECBC 2018-R (Eco-Home guidelines) and it applies to all the residential-use buildings built on a plot area of more than 500 m².

Stating that the "time is ripe for the government to make energy-efficient building an attractive business with profit potential," the EIU suggested that by capitalizing on India's massive construction boom, the government can help achieve scale in energy-efficient buildings and slow the growth of CO₂ emissions.

It noted that developers are less attracted by potential energy savings since these mostly benefit homeowners, so they would like to see more incentives for energy efficient residential construction.

Parliament passes Bill to accord status of national importance to six more pharma institutes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Thursday passed a Bill that seeks to accord the status of institute of national importance to six more institutes of pharmaceutical education and research, and also set up an advisory council for them. The National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was introduced in the Upper House by Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya. It was passed by a voice vote. While introducing Bill, Mandaviya said the NIPERs would be governed on the lines of the IITs.

The Bill, cleared by Lok Sabha on December 6, seeks to accord institute of national importance status to six more institutes of pharmaceutical

education and research, start new courses and set up an advisory council. It was introduced in the Lower House in March this year and referred, thereafter, to the Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers.

It seeks to amend the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research Act, 1998, which established the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) at Mohali in Punjab and declared it as an Institution of National Importance.

With the amendment, six more institutes of pharmaceutical education and research will be declared as institutions of national importance. These are located in Ahmedabad, Guwahati, Hajipur, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Raebareilly. It also



proposes to bring down the membership of the board of governors mandated to manage the affairs at each NIPER from the current 23 to 12.

Participating in the debate, Neeraj Dangi of the Congress said state governments should also get a place in the council of board of governors of the NIPERs. Fellow Congress MP L Hanumanthaiah said an "over-centralisation of power and lack of autonomy" is seen

in the Bill. Sushil Kumar Gupta of the AAP suggested that there should be a minimum educational qualification criteria for MPs who are to be a part of the NIPER board, while RJD's Manoj Kumar Jha said they should have medical and pharma background.

Taking part in the discussion, Abdul Wahab of the IUMI, while "wholeheartedly" supporting the Bill, said, "All

the Bills from the government should be like this so that you can pass hundreds of Bills...The problem is they are getting some Bills which nobody can accept. So this Bill we are all accepting."

Supporting the Bill, Ram Nath Thakur of the JD(U) called for setting up of more NIPERs, while M Thambidurai of the AIADMK questioned the role of the AICTE in the NIPERs.

Ram Gopal Yadav of the SP sought clarity on whether the national importance status would lead to the end of OBC and SC/ST reservation at the NIPERs.

Anil Jain of the BJP noted that the council for the NIPERs would look into various measures like growth of pharma education and other related activities ahead.

LS passes Bills to extend CBI, ED directors tenures up to max 5 years

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Two Bills were passed by the Lok Sabha on Thursday to extend the tenures of directors of the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate up to a maximum of five years from the present two years.

These bills seek to replace two ordinances issued last month. Congress MPs walked out of

the House, saying they were not satisfied with the reply of Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh.

The Central Vigilance Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and the Delhi Special Police Establishment (Amendment) Bill, 2021 were passed separately by voice vote after the House rejected various amendments moved by Opposition members on the two bills.

The Opposition and the BJP sparred over the government's move to extend the tenures of the Directors of the CBI and the ED up to a maximum of five years, with the Opposition alleging that it would completely undermine the autonomy of these institutions, and the ruling party defending the step as being necessary to fight large scale corruption.

Vaccination, natural infection boost production of potent Covid antibodies: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A combination of vaccination and naturally acquired infection appears to boost the production of maximally potent antibodies against the Covid-19 virus, said researchers from University of California - Los Angeles Health Sciences in a study published in peer-reviewed journal mBio.

Thus, it raised the possibility that vaccine boosters may be equally effective in improving antibodies' ability to target multiple variants of the virus, including the delta variant, which is now the predominant strain, and the recently detected omicron variant. (The study was conducted prior to the emergence of delta and omicron, but Dr. Otto Yang, the study's author, said the results

could potentially apply to those and other new variants.)

"The main message from our research is that someone who has had COVID and then gets vaccinated develops not only a boost in antibody amount, but also improved antibody quality — enhancing the ability of antibodies to act against variants," said Yang, a professor of medicine in the division of infectious diseases and of microbiology, immunology and molecular genetics at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. "This suggests that having repeated exposures to the spike protein allows the immune system to continue improving the antibodies if someone had COVID then been vaccinated."

Yang said it is not yet known whether the same benefits would be realized for people who have repeated vaccinations but who have not contracted COVID-19.

"Overall, our findings raise the possibility that resistance of SARS-CoV-2 variants to antibodies can be overcome by driving further maturation through continued antigenic exposure by vaccination, even if the vaccine does not deliver variant sequences," the study says. It suggests that repeated vaccinations may have the capacity to accomplish the same thing as getting vaccinated after having had Covid-19, although further research will be required to address that possibility.

The study's other authors are F. Javier Ibarondo, Christian Hofmann, Ayub Ali, Paul Ayoub and Dr. Donald Kohn, all of UCLA.



Varun steers pvt Bill for MSP guarantee

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP Member of Parliament Varun Gandhi, who supported farmers' agitation against the now-scrapped three controversial Central farm laws, has piloted a private member's Bill seeking legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP) for the agriculture produce, one of the key demands of the farmers.

The Bill is called the Farmers' Right to Guaranteed Minimum Support Price Realization of Agri-Produce Bill 2021.

The Bill, which is awaiting admission, seeks 50% assured



return for farmers on the comprehensive cost of production of a crop, and a Rs 1 lakh crore fund to compensate them in case they are forced to sell the produce below the Minimum Support Price. Presently, MSP is available

on 22 agricultural commodities, apart from sugarcane for which the government promises a fair and remunerative price.

The Bill envisages legally guaranteed MSP for the 22, with an annual financial outlay of Rs 1 lakh crore for it. It also proposes a separate department to implement the legal guarantee of MSP and six months' imprisonment for traders who fail to comply.

On the payment of the MSP, the Bill seeks it to be timely and made directly to a bank account within two days of a transaction.

In 2017, varun had moved

another private member bill that envisaged that MPs and MLAs be recalled within two years from being elected if 75% of those who voted for them are not satisfied with their performance.

The Private member bill mostly doesn't get passage in the parliament.

The Central Government has accepted farmers' demands and repealed the three farm laws last month that intended to deregulate the agriculture sector making farmers apprehensive that the MSP and 'Mandi-System' may soon be shown the door by the Government.

India removes Singapore from list of 'at-risk' nations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the Omicron variant has been reported in 57 countries and the World Health Organization (WHO) expects the number to continue growing, India on Thursday removed Singapore from its list of "at-risk" nations which means international passengers from the nation arriving here will not need to follow additional Covid-19 testing and quarantine measures. India has reported 23 Omicron cases so far.

The current list of "at-risk" countries includes the United Kingdom, South Africa, Brazil, Botswana, China, Ghana, Mauritius, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Hong Kong and Israel.

Passengers arriving in India from at risk countries are required to take an RT-PCR test and are not permitted to leave the airport or board a connecting aircraft unless they receive a negative result.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare stated on Tuesday that Bangladesh had

been removed from the list of "at-risk countries." The statement was met with immediate acceptance in Dhaka, where Foreign Minister Dr A.K. Abdul Momen stated that the decision was made in response to a request from the Government of Bangladesh.

Opp suspends dharna at Gandhi statue inside House for a day

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Opposition parties on Thursday suspended for a day their dharna at Mahatma Gandhi statue inside Parliament complex against the suspension of 12 Rajya Sabha MPs in view of the death of Chief of Defence staff Gen Bipin Rawat and 12 others in a chopper crash.

Leaders of the parties, however, condemned the Government for not allowing them to pay tribute to the top-most defence officer in the country inside Parliament after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh briefed both the Houses about the Wednesday incident.

Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge said they wanted to convey their condolences over the incident but were not allowed to do so, for which they condemned the government's attitude. "We decided to suspend our protest in front of the Gandhi statue for a day in view



of the tragic incident in Tamil Nadu and in honour of Gen Bipin Rawat and his wife and 11 other soldiers who lost their lives," he told reporters outside the Parliament.

"We condemn the Government for such an attitude. May God grant some wisdom to the government. What kind of democracy is there and how the House is being run when time is not being given to leaders to pay tribute to the top-most defence officer," he said.

Centre issues SoP for use of drone in crop protection

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Agriculture has released standard operating procedure (SoP) for use of drones for the purpose of spraying pesticides on agriculture crops. Releasing the SoP, the ministry said, in recent years, use of drones in agriculture has gained prominence and some states are actively engaged in checking the suitability of this new technology in agriculture.

"Application of pesticides using drones has great potential as we move towards commercialization and achieving precision in agricultural crops," it said. According to the ministry, the SoP for drone regulation for pesticide application covers important aspects like statutory provisions, flying permissions, area distance restrictions, weight classification, overcrowded areas restriction, drone registration, safety insurance, piloting certification, operation plan, air flight zones, weather conditions.

It also covers SOPs for pre, post and during operation period, emergency handling plan,



etc. The aerial application of pesticides through drones will be allowed subject to certain provisions. For instance, operators should use only approved pesticides and their formulations at approved concentration and height.

Operators have to ensure washing decontamination and first-aid facilities and notify the public about aerial application of pesticide not less than 24 hours in advance through competent authorities. Further, the pilots should undergo training including clinical effects of insecticides, the ministry added. However, drone-based spray requires less amount of water, as well as pesticides, due to better application and bio-efficiency.

POST-POLL VIOLENCE IN WEST BENGAL

CBI registers three more cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered three more cases, including two cases taken over from the State police and one fresh case in the post-poll violence in West Bengal. With this, the number of cases taken over by the agency stands at 48.

The CBI has been taking over the probe of such cases following a directive from the Calcutta High Court dated August 19.

Two of these cases were earlier registered at different police stations of West Bengal on various allegations while one case has been registered afresh, the CBI

said in a statement.

The first case was earlier registered at police station Barasat, North 24 Parganas on June 26, 2021 on the allegations that the accused broke into the house of victim on June 25 and severely beat him. He was admitted to Barasat Hospital and later shifted to another hospital. But the victim finally succumbed to such injury on August 6, it said.

The second case was earlier registered at police station Jhargram, under Jhargram district on June 17. It has been alleged that the accused attacked the maternal house of the complainant on May 3 and vandalized it. It was also alleged that the mis-

creants also outraged the modesty of the complainant's maternal grandmother.

The third case was registered afresh on the complaint dated September 15 submitted by the complainant to police station Raina under Purba Bardhaman district. It was alleged that some unknown accused attacked the house of the victim several times between May 2 and May 4 and threatened his family members besides vandalizing it. It was further alleged that the victim was found missing on May 5 and was finally found hanging from a nearby tree in the afternoon of the same day, it further said adding, investigation is continuing in these cases.

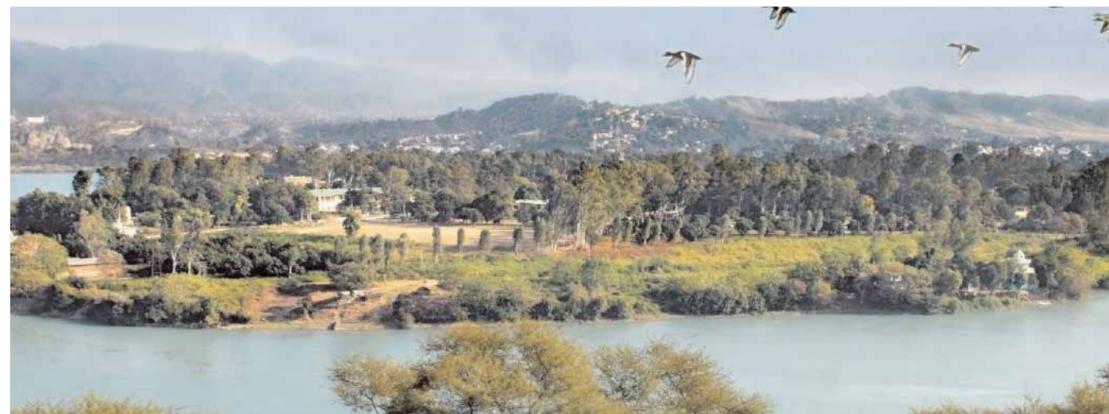
UP's Haiderpur wetland gets global importance tag

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Home to over 15 globally threatened species viz critically endangered gharial, endangered hog deer, black-bellied tern, steppe eagle, Indian skimmer and gold mahseer, Haiderpur Wetland, a human-made wetland spread over 6,908 hectares in Uttar Pradesh's Bijnoor district, has finally got Ramsar Convention tag of global importance.

Fed by the Ganga and Solani rivers, the wetland came into existence in 1984 after the construction of the Madhya Ganga Barrage on the former.

With this, there are now a total 47 such designated areas in the country, the Union Environment



Ministry tweeted on Thursday.

"It's good news for birders and nature lovers. Now Uttar Pradesh leads by having the maximum number of Ramsar sites in the country," said Ramesh Pandey, Inspector General of Forests with the Ministry. Suresh Babu, director, rivers, wetlands and water policy, World Wide Fund for Nature-India (WWF-India) added as "it is located within the boundaries of the Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary, the wetland enjoys some level of protection." The Convention tag will give it global recognition.

The Site supports more than 25,000 waterbirds, serves as a breeding site for the near-threatened Indian grassbird and provides refuge to the northern subspecies popula-

tion of the vulnerable swamp deer during its seasonal flood-driven migration. The Site also regularly supports more than 1% of the population of greylag goose and bar-headed goose.

"Haiderpur Wetland also helps to support the livelihoods of the local communities and contributes to the maintenance of hydrological regimes and to hazard reduction. It is used for recreation and tourism, and scientific and educational activities are also associated with the Site," the authorities noted on the Ramsar website after designating Haiderpur as Ramsar Site.

The wetland has also been identified under Namami Gange, a central flagship, as a model wetland along the Ganga.

Activist Sudha Bharadwaj set free on bail after 3 years in jail

SC dismisses NIA appeal to quash HC bail granted to activist in Bhima Koregaon riots case

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Two days after the Supreme Court dismissed the NIA's appeal challenging the default bail granted to her by the Bombay High Court in the Elgar Parishad-cum-Bhima-Koregaon riots case, lawyer-activist Sudha Bharadwaj walked out of the Byculla women's jail on Thursday, after three years of incarceration.

In line with the order passed by a special National Investigation Agency (NIA) court on Wednesday, Bharadwaj was released from the jail on a provisional cash bail and a personal bond with directions to

furnish sureties worth Rs 50,000 within three months.

Apart from the cash bail and 15 other conditions listed in her bail orders were: that she will not leave jurisdiction of the Mumbai court without the court's permission, that will give details of her place of residence in Mumbai and her contact numbers, the contact numbers and addresses of her relatives residing with her and three of her blood relatives, that she would attend the proceedings of the trial and that she would report to the nearest police station through WhatsApp video call fortnightly.

In its bail order, the NIA court has also refrained from making any statement regarding the proceedings pending before the court before any form of media — print, electronic or social, indulging in any activity similar to the activities on the basis of which the present FIR was

registered against her for offences under the Indian Penal Code and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and trying to establish to establish communication with co-accused or any other person involved directly or indirectly in similar activities or make any international call to any person indulging in similar activities.

It may be recalled that on December 1, the Bombay High Court had granted default bail to Bharadwaj -- who is one of 16 accused in the Elgar Parishad-cum-Bhima-Koregaon riots case -- after holding that "to deprive her indefeasible right on the premise that the application preferred on 26th November 2018 was premature would be taking a too technical and formalistic view of the matter".

Bharadwaj is the first among 16 activists and academicians arrested in the case to have been granted default bail. While Jesuit priest Stan Swamy

died in a private hospital on July 5 this year while waiting for medical bail, Poet-activist Varavara Rao is currently out on medical bail.

The eight accused whose default bail pleas were rejected were: Varavara Rao, Sudhir Dhawale, Vernon Gonsalves, Rona Wilson, Surendra Gadling, Shoma Sen, Mahesh Raut and Arun Ferreira.

Holding that the Pune Sessions Judge was not competent enough -- in terms of jurisdiction -- to extend time for investigation and detention under provisions of Section 43D(2) of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and Section 167(2) of the Cr.PC, the HC bench observed that the Sessions Judge had no judicial competence to extend the period of detention under Section 43-D(2)(b) of UAPA and considered four other aspects -- the period of 90 days of her detention expired on January 25,

2019, no charge-sheet was filed, there was no lawful order of extension of period of detention and the Bharadwaj's bail plea awaiting adjudication.

Relying on a catena of decisions which held that the right of the accused to be released on default bail is indefeasible and is also associated with the fundamental right flowing from 'the procedure established by law' under Article 21 of the Constitution of India, the HC bench granted Bharadwaj default bail.

In their order, the two judges noted: "On the touchstone of the guarantee of personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution, in our view, to deprive the applicant-Sudha Bharadwaj of the indefeasible right on the premise that the application preferred on 26th November 2018 was premature, would be taking a too technical and formalistic view of the matter. In our view, all the requisite condi-

tions to release the applicant-Sudha Bharadwaj on default bail stood fully satisfied".

While rejecting default bail pleas by eight other accused, the HC bench noted that accused Sudhir Dhawale, Rona Wilson, Surendra Gadling, Dr. Shoma Sen and Mahesh Raut had never claimed to have filed an application for default bail after the expiry of initial period of 90 days from the date of their production till the filing of the chargesheet on November 15, 2018. The three other P Varavara Rao, Vernon Gonsalves and Arun Ferreira had not preferred to file such an application till the filing of the supplementary charge-sheet.

The arrests of "Maoist-linked" activists were made under the FIR registered on January 8, 2018 at the Pune's Vishram Baug Police Station in connection with the Elgar Parishad organised on December 31, 2017 by the leftist outfit Kabir Kala Manch

(KKM) and Republican Panthers Party ahead of the January 1, 2018 Bhima-Koregaon riots.

It may be recalled that the scanned copies of 10 "incriminating" letters were among the virtual and physical documents recovered by the investigators during their simultaneous raids conducted by the investigators on April 17 2018 ahead of the arrest of Wilson and other accused in the case.

Among other things, the NIA has charged the accused with promoting the activities and ideologies of the banned outfits, mobilising people and students, training in handling sophisticated arms and explosives.

The NIA's draft charges said the larger objective was to conspire against and destabilise the governments of India and Maharashtra, threaten their sovereignty with large-scale violence, strike terror in the people, as per the draft

charges. The NIA said that to achieve their objectives, the accused -- through a banned Leftist organisation and its frontal outfits -- had arranged to raise Rs 8 crore for annual supplies of sophisticated weapons, the NIA said.

The arrested accused in the cases are: Sudhir P. Dhawale, Vernon S. Gonsalves (both of Mumbai), Arun T. Ferreira of Thane, Sagar Gorkhe of Ahmednagar, Ramesh Gaichor of Pune, Surendra P. Gadling, Shoma K. Sen, Mahesh S. Raut (all of Nagpur), Anand B. Telumbde of Yavatmal, all in Maharashtra.

The absconding-accused are: Milind Telumbde aliases Dipak and Sahyadri of Yavatmal, Prakash Goswami aliases Navin and Ritupan Goswami of Assam, Kishan Bose aliases Prashanto of Kolkata, Mupalla Laxman Rao, alias Ganpati, Chandrashekhar, Manglu, and Deepu.

Didi arrogant CM: Adhikari

State Opp leader backs Mahua Moitra after CM reprimanded her in public

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

On a day after Mamata Banerjee publicly chided and warned Trinamool Congress MP from Krishnagar Mahua Moitra against indulging in groupism in the party State Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari attacked the Bengal Chief Minister for insulting people's representatives in public in utter disregard of their honour and prestige.

"This arrogant Chief Minister is swollen with pride ... otherwise even a dim person would not fail to have some regard for the honour and prestige of people's representatives ... here this Chief Minister is so egotistical that she humiliates them in public and often in front of the live camera without even considering that their friends and

family members could be watching the programme live," said Adhikari.

The BJP leader said he too was a victim of such public harassment by the Chief Minister adding such "public misdemeanor" was one of the reasons why he left the TMC. "I too was in that party for years ... served it with full diligence ... but I often felt embarrassed when I was humiliated in public ... even a dim person should know that people's representatives have their personal honour and prestige and that they should not be insulted in public like this."

The BJP leader's comments came on a day when the Chief Minister publicly reprimanded Moitra for indulging in groupism in the party over "trifle matters like distribution of tickets."

Banerjee was addressing an administrative meeting in Nadia district when she told Moitra a vocal party MP in parliament to mend her ways and not indulge in intra-party sabotage. The Chief Minister was apparently speaking in favour of district party president Jayanta Ghosh when she warned the Moitra saying, "I have all the information about who is indulging in groupism and who is playing sabotage and then leaking things to the media ... that too for trifle matters like distribution of tickets."

"You (Moitra) should be aware of the fact that the party's decision in selection of candidates is final and should be honoured ... party's decision is paramount and will have to be honoured ... no individual opinion will be taken consideration after that ... no sabo-

tage or such activities will be tolerated ... I have all the information that I collected from the CID and the police about what is going on here ... this groupism must stop."

In an unrelated statement the Chief Minister also directed the Circle Inspectors and the local administration to keep a tab on the activities of the Border Security Forces. "The BSF will do its own work and the Police which is in charge of the law and order of the State will do their own ... The ICs should conduct naka checkings to see whether any one (read BSF) is overstepping its limits," she said.

The Chief Minister has been vocal against the Centre's decision to expand the BSF's area of jurisdiction from 15 km inside the international border to 50 km.

Anti-halal drive casts shadow over Malayalam film industry

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Two Malayalam film stars are finding themselves at the receiving end of a campaign carried out by a religious group. It started with the release of Kaaval (Guard), a movie in which Suresh Gopi, BJP's Rajya Sabha member played the lead role. Film buffs thronged theaters to watch their favourite star who returned to the big screen after a hiatus. But they were taken aback when groups of well dressed and sweet talking youngsters approached them and pleaded with them not to watch the movie.

"This is the first time in my life people asking me not to buy tickets. They told me that movie has a fascist playing the lead role and it was my duty to boycott the movie and make sure that the film bombs in the box office," Roshy Raveendran, a travel operator based in

Ernakulam, told *The Pioneer*.

Lakshmi Sreekumar, a human resources professional, too had the same experience in a theatre in Ernakulam. "I do not have any complaints against them because they looked like gentlemen except in their demand," said Sreekumar.

Prasant Arya in Thiruvananthapuram was also requested by a group of youngsters asking him not to buy tickets for watching "Marakkal: Lion of the Arabian Sea" in which Mohan Lal was the hero. "This is shocking. Suresh Gopi is a BJP activist and I can understand certain outfits campaigning against him. But Mohan Lal is an apolitical person and I find no justification in their plea not to watch the movie," said Arya.

G Suresh Kumar, film producer and owner of Revathi Kalamandir, the company that produces blockbuster cinemas

too sounded upset over the developments. "This has caused a communal division among the film fraternity and it is a shocking development. We may have to think many times over before venturing out to make movies. Despite the efforts by these groups, I understand both the movies became hits with filmgoers," said Suresh Kumar.

It all started with a controversy over food being served in Halal hotels in the State. Things took a turn for the worst when videos of some religious leaders spitting on food went viral in social media. Though social activists and intelligentsia strongly denied the existence of such practices, some zealots came out in the open and justified the act quoting religious scriptures. It is widely believed that the call to boycott the movies of Suresh Gopi and Lal are in retaliation.

Maha CM gave ₹22 cr aid to needy, ₹9 cr to victims of natural calamities: RTI

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray has extended a medical assistance of ₹22 crore to 4932 needy citizens and another ₹9 crore as financial assistance to the families of those killed in natural calamities and road accidents during the first 22 months of tenure in office, according to an RTI reply.

Responding to an Right to Information (RTI) query raised by social activist Anil Galgali, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said that of the total Rs 130 crore deposited in the chief minister's relief fund since November 28, 2019 when the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) was sworn into the office, a total of Rs 31 crore had been extended assistance to the needy citizens.

"Of the Rs 130 crore deposited in CM's Relief Fund, Rs 31 crore was spent towards extending assistance to citizens as on September 30, 2021. Another Rs 99 crore is lying unused in the fund," the CMO said in a reply given to Galgali on November 15, 2021.

The Chief Minister's Relief fund is meant for providing immediate relief to the people in distress in the state. It provides financial assistance to the people affected by the major natural calamities like flood, drought and fire accidents. It also provides financial assistance to the economically weaker citizens for treatment of some of the major diseases.

According to the RTI reply, the CMO has been giving financial assistance to 8 citizens per day on an average. "We distributed Rs 22 crore to 4932 citizens in 22 months for medical purposes, while another Rs 9 crore to the next of kin of those killed in natural calamities.

UP crosses over 17 crore jab mark, tops State list

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The ongoing Covid vaccination drive has gained further momentum across Uttar Pradesh with the Cluster Model 2.0 being implemented in rural areas, under which special teams have set up and asked to go door-to-door and make people aware about the health benefits of the vaccine.

In Uttar Pradesh, over 80 per cent of the eligible population has been administered the first dose of the Covid vaccine while 38 per cent of the eligible residents have been completely vaccinated against Covid-19 by giving them both doses of the vaccine. In numbers, more than 11.65 crore individuals have been partially vaccinated, while 5.65 crore people have been given both the jabs.

Till now, the State has

administered over 17.30 crore doses of Covid vaccine and the 17 crore vaccine dose mark was breached on Tuesday. Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the fastest state in India to carry out Covid vaccination. The sustained availability of vaccines and accurate strategy, mainly the Cluster Model 2.0 being adopted by the state government, along with dedicated work by health workers has been responsible for the achievement.

Teams are going from village to village and providing call slips (containing information of place and date of vaccination) to the people. Before the arrival of the vaccination team in a cluster, mobilisation teams are clearing the misconceptions related to the Covid vaccine among the people and motivating them to

get vaccinated. Two quick response teams have also been activated to manage any adverse event after vaccination in the cluster. Vaccination is being carried out in combined district hospitals till 10 pm to ensure that no one is left out of the anti-coronavirus vaccination drive.

Eliminating the deadly second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, of the 1,74,886 samples tested in the last 24 hours, only nine samples tested positive across the state. In the same period, another 11 COVID-19 patients recovered from the infection. The state government has left no stone unturned to minimise the devastating impact of the novel coronavirus and as a result the positivity rate has slumped to 0.01 per cent, the lowest in the country.

Kangana moves HC to quash FIR against her

FIR was filed against actress for likening Sikhs to Khalistanis

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Bollywood Actress Kangana Ranaut on Thursday moved the Bombay High Court seeking to quash a First Information Report (FIR) registered by the city police against her last month for her Instagram post likening the Sikh community to Khalistanis.

In her plea before the HC, Kangana -- who was booked by the Khar police on November 23 for allegedly hurting the religious sentiments of the Sikh Community for her "derogatory" Instagram post -- urged the court to quash the FIR against her on the ground that no case had been made out against her section 295-A (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings or any class insulting its religion or religious beliefs) of IPC or even otherwise.

Among other things, the

actress told the high court that her post was against the acts of banned organization subsequent to the repeal of the farm laws and it was within her fundamental right of free speech under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India.

Seeking to quash the FIR on the grounds that the police officials miserably failed to apply its mind while registering it, Kangana stated that the case registered against her was 'nothing but an act to maliciously prosecute her for exercising her fundamental right to freedom of speech' and it would inadvertently create a "chilling effect" on her right to freedom of speech.

She told the court that the mens rea for committing an offence which was essential and of utmost importance, was absent in her case.

The high court is likely to hear the case sometime next

week. It may be recalled that the Khar police registered an FIR against 34-year-old Kangana under section 295-A of IPC on the basis of a joint complaint lodged by Manjinder Singh Sirsa, president of Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC), New Delhi, Amarjeet Singh Sandhu of Shri Gurusingh Sabha Gurudwara, Dadar, and Jaspalsingh Siddhu, president of supreme council of Navi Mumbai Gurudwaras.

In his complaint to the police, Sandhu had said on November 21 that Kangana had made derogatory remarks about Sikh community in her post on Instagram and that her post was intended to insult the religion and its followers.

After submitting the complaint, the DSGMC delegation -- led by Manjinder Singh Sirsa -- had met Maharashtra Home

Minister Dilip Walse Patil and top officials of the Mumbai police, and demanded action against Kangana

In his complaint, Sirsa alleged that Kangana had intentionally and deliberately portrayed the farmers' protest (Kisan Morcha) as a "Khalistani" movement and also dubbed the Sikh community as "Khalistani terrorists".

Sirsa said that the actress had made references to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots and the then prime minister Indira Gandhi.

In the post, the actor has used very derogatory and insulting language against the Sikh community, Sirsa said in his complaint.

"This act on her part is most degrading, disrespectful and contemptuous, which has hurt the sentiments of the Sikh community settled all over the world," Sirsa added.

Yogi to inaugurate UP floor at India Pavilion in Dubai Expo

Lucknow: The state of Uttar Pradesh is set to showcase its diverse business ecosystem along with vast investment opportunities across key sectors like food processing, tourism, textiles, MSMEs, healthcare, etc. at the India Pavilion in Expo 2020 Dubai as the State week commences from December 10.

The state will be promoting its key sectors, government initiatives and cultural heritage with various business-focused sessions and performances till December 23 at the Expo 2020 Dubai. The week (December 10-23) will start with a virtual inaugural address by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath followed by the virtual keynote address by state MSME, Textiles and NRI Minister Sidharth Nath Singh and UP's Industrial Development Minister Satish Mahana. UP's Director, Industries, Maneesh Chauhan along with Special Secretary (Industries) Dr Muthukumarasamy B will also be present at the inaugural event.

As part of the state week, the UP delegation will be meeting potential investors, industry associations in Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi, and

heads of global companies to explore trade and investment opportunities for the state. The discussions will be focused around the sectoral advantages and policy frameworks, investor and sector perspectives, with representatives inviting investors to participate in the state's success.

The delegation will also participate in 'Elevate', the start-up pitching session organised by Invest India on December 14 and attend sessions on India's education system on December 15. The state will host an array of cultural performances and food festivals throughout the week to highlight the state's cultural diversity and heritage.

The state will hold various B2B and G2B meetings to enable the state to secure business opportunities on a global platform. UP will host various discussions around the handloom and textile sector, tourism and culture of Uttar Pradesh, healthcare and pharmaceutical, agro, food processing and dairy, education and skill development, infrastructure, defence, aerospace, homeland security, logistics and warehousing among others. **PNS**

EC issues 'Stick' symbol to Rajbhar-led SBSP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Election Commission of India has allotted a 'Stick' symbol in Uttar Pradesh to the Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP) led by Om Prakash Rajbhar.

The SBSP has forged an alliance with the Samajwadi Party for the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly election. Rajbhar made the announcement of the allotment of the symbol here on Thursday through the Twitter.

A former minister in the Yogi Adityanath-led government, Rajbhar has been campaigning extensively along with SP chief Akhilesh Yadav and separately as well. In public gatherings that he has addressed, Rajbhar has fiercely attacked the Bharatiya Janata party, his former ally. The SBSP leader reached Varanasi on Wednesday, where he slammed the Central and state governments over several issues and also said the government was 'ignoring the plight of farmers.

The SBSP chief said, "The construction of Vishwanath Corridor will not do any good to the poor. The BJP people only see things like Muslims, Pakistan and graveyards whereas the poor need bread, clothes, houses and education."

Earlier, while speaking about his party's alliance with the SP, Rajbhar said the alliance was not for seats but for caste-based census. He said, "When the government is formed, a caste-based census will be done. At the same time, there is an alliance with the SP on issues of inflation, corruption and employment and I do not seek any post. If I had the desire for a post, I would have been a minister."

During a recent visit to Lalitpur along with Akhilesh Yadav, Rajbhar had said, "We have to make Akhilesh Yadav the chief minister by all means. Three hundred units of electricity will be free if Akhilesh Yadav's government is formed. After losing the by-election, the BJP is scared and has reduced the rate of petrol.

Kashi Vishwanath set to become Purvanchal's development corridor

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Set to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 13, the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor is expected to pave the way for development of not only Varanasi but the entire eastern UP region colloquially termed as Purvanchal, enhancing business and trade and creating employment opportunities for the youths of the region.

An official spokesman said that the construction of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham was underway with several buildings being built in and around it.

"Besides, the 70-km-long Panchkosi route is being given an international character with the beautification of 108 main temples, 44 dharamshalas (shelter homes), kund (pool) and yatri niwas (guest houses). Also, Rudraksh Convention Centre has been constructed within Kashi's municipal boundaries with the help of Japan at a cost of Rs 186 crore. A cruise facility has been provided in river Ganga. A total of

Rs 403.39 crore has been spent so far to make Varanasi a smart city. A multi modal terminal has been constructed at a cost of Rs 418 crore. Multi-level parking lots are also being built in different places to solve parking issues of visitors and tourists," he said.

Meanwhile, the Uttar Pradesh government has been working continuously to promote industry and boost employment opportunities in Kashi as a result of which the city has been making rapid strides on the path of development.

"The development of Kashi is also benefiting people from neighbouring districts of Chandauli, Ghazipur, Jaunpur, Mau, Bhadohi and Mirzapur," he added.

"With the new government initiatives, new business opportunities are being made available in different sectors ranging from tourism and hospitality to traditional handicrafts. Developmental activities taking place in Kashi are set to create employment opportunities for the youth.

Thirteen overseas passengers test positive for Covid

Samples sent for Genome sequencing

Chennai: Thirteen passengers who arrived from 'at risk' and 'non-risk' countries to Tamil Nadu till date have tested Covid-19 positive and their RTPCR Samples have been sent to Bengaluru for genomic sequencing analysis, Tamil Nadu Minister Ma Subramanian said on Thursday.

The minister for health and family welfare said 9,012 people have so far arrived from 'at risk' countries of which 11 have tested Covid-19 positive while 33,112 people arrived from 'non-risk' countries, of which two have tested positive.

"Of the 13, one has been asymptomatic and is under home isolation. Seven people are under treatment in King Institute of Preventive Medicine and Research, two in Anna Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Tiruchirappalli and one in Government Medical College Hospital, Nagercoil

and two in private health care facilities", he told reporters.

He said all were 'doing well' and their samples have been sent to The Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine (inStem), Bengaluru for genomic sequencing analysis. Earlier in the day, he inspected the ACTech block located in the Anna University campus here after a student tested Covid-19 positive on Wednesday.

"The 763 students in the campus underwent RTPCR tests, nine of them have tested Covid-19 positive. They have been admitted to the Kings Institute of Preventive Medicine and Research. Their samples have been collected and are being sent for genomic sequencing", he said.

Subramanian said the department has issued instructions to the University that professors, staff, wardens and students should adopt social distancing while having food in the canteen. **PTI**



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Third degree

Tests show a third, booster dose offers significant protection against Omicron

The hope is that as we speak, the Indian COVID task force is monitoring epidemiological research into the efficacy of Covishield and Covaxin against the new mutant, Omicron. The real-world situation — India has proven Omicron cases — is readily available for experiments to be conducted on blood samples. The basis for the research is a South African report that antibodies in fully vaccinated people are not enough to prevent Omicron infection. Foreign scientists say that is no cause for panic. Their confidence stems from Pfizer and BioNTech tests that show that a third, booster shot of the COVID-19 vaccine offers significant protection against Omicron. These companies say people with three doses showed significantly higher antibodies to fight Omicron than those with two doses. It can be argued that these tests may be limited in scope because they examined only 39 samples to get faster results. They have not released any of their test data either. However, the indications are on the right track that a third dose is needed to tackle Omicron. That brings us to the question: Where is India on the third dose? The country's vaccination programme has picked up speed after the festive season and nearly 60 crore doses still need to be administered to vaccinate the entire adult population. At least one-third of the fully vaccinated population may be ready for a third dose, given that they may have got their second dose over six months ago. As every day passes, the number of claimants for the third dose increases.

This means the Government is already on notice to not only start reserving the required number of third doses but also take a decision on agreeing to a booster dose. That is not all. South Africa is reporting the growing prevalence of the virus — not necessarily Omicron — among children. Adolescents, admitted to hospitals for other reasons, are testing positive for COVID-19. That suggests an increased community transmission. In India, Gujarat has reported a couple of adolescents testing positive for Omicron. They could be isolated cases, but the truth is that a sizeable section of Indian children may have been exposed to the virus in the first two phases of the pandemic and Omicron is no exception. There is also no idea when the Government allows vaccination for them. The other section of Indians beginning to demand a booster dose is the frontline health workers who are geared up for a fresh wave. It is over 10 months since they were fully vaccinated and their current immunity levels may not be able to protect them from post-Delta mutants. They have to handle Omicron cases in five States and rightly feel threatened. The COVID task force should also focus on encouraging Indian vaccine companies to explore the viability of a vaccine that can tackle Omicron and future mutants. Pfizer and Moderna are currently in a race for such a vaccine that they claim can be produced in 95 days.

PICTALK



Sand artist Ajay Rawat pays tribute to CDS Gen Bipin Rawat, in Pushkar desert

PTI

Winter harvest

The farmers have suspended their year-long protest and let's hope the matter ends here

After forcing the Union Government's hand to repeal the three contentious farm laws and eliciting from it a written assurance on a host of pertinent issues, farmers from a number of States — who had been agitating on different borders of Delhi since November 26 last year — have promised to vacate the protest sites in the morning of Saturday, December 11. Though they started pulling down their makeshift tents on Thursday afternoon after much rejoicing, the initial euphoria soon subsided and the farmer leaders clarified that the agitation was only being "suspended" as of now. A leader, Gurnam Singh Charuni, said that the umbrella organisation of various farmer outfits (the Samyukt Kisan Morcha) would hold a review meeting on January 15 and if the Government didn't move ahead on its assurances by then, they could resume the stir. They reached the decision after receiving a letter from the Union Government with promises of forming a committee on the Minimum Support Price (MSP) guarantee and withdrawing cases (involving both stubble burning and of clashes against the police in a handful of northern States) against them immediately.

The Centre also agreed to pay compensation to those who lost their lives during the protest, pointing out that Uttar Pradesh and Haryana had given in-principle consent to the demand while Punjab has already announced it. Thousands of farmers had camped at the borders of Delhi, with dozens dying from the scorching heat, a bitter winter and even the deadly second wave of COVID. The protest, which presented one of the biggest challenges to the Modi-led Government at the Centre, effectively ends just in the nick of time to offer some reprieve to the BJP at the hustings ahead of the Assembly elections in five States, including the politically significant Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Goa, in the first quarter of 2022. In fact, there are voices mocking the Government that it surrendered its case after year-long posturing only because it didn't want to antagonise the strong farmers' lobby. Be that as it may, the matter hasn't yet cooled down completely and mischievous embers among the political and farming classes could still try to flare up trouble for the ruling party at the eleventh hour. Both the farmer leaders and the Government need to be on the lookout for such elements and nip their antics in the bud.

Contradictions in the Congress' cupboard

The party has repeatedly proved that governance is more important to it than ideology as it indulged in the politics of convenience for decades



PRAFULL GORADIA

Salman Khurshid has done much-needed service to the Congress by triggering an ideological debate in the party. Until now, the popular impression was that the party was a platform on which politicians met in the pursuit of power. Ideas or ideologies were merely the responses to the challenges of the hour. When MK Gandhi felt that if Hindus and Muslims united, they could squeeze out the British by the early 1920s, he became president of the Khilafat Committee. This movement was to coerce the British to somehow retain the Sultan on the throne of Turkey. If they succeeded, he would also continue to remain the Caliph of all Sunni Islam. MA Jinnah stayed away from these gymnastics because he knew that the final call would be taken by Kamal Pasha, who was later called Atatürk, and not by the British Government.

When Gandhi saw that the Turkish ice was not melting, in 1921 he gave a call for non-cooperation with the British Indian Government. This involved non-violence which did not excite the Muslim salivators and they resorted to rioting; Malabar was a horrific holocaust of murder, rape and loot by the Moplas. When upbraided by Annie Besant, a past president of the Congress, Gandhi replied that the Mopla was obeying the rules of his religion. When the violent mood spread to Kohat in Baluchistan, Gandhi exhorted the Hindus to display their courage by allowing the rioters to kill them. He withdrew the Non-Cooperation Movement because a police station was set on fire at Chauri Chaura in UP. It was easier to retreat than to go forward. In 1948, when KM Munshi came to Mani Bhawan in Bombay to seek Gandhi's blessings before any military action was ordered, the great man was silent on the subject of the action. Otherwise, his blessings were with Munshi.

In 1947, Nehru told General Lockhart, the interim C-in-C of the Indian Army, to wind down the force because we are a nation of peace and police were adequate to protect India. Yet in 1948, we lifted tanks to the Kashmir Valley. In



1961, our troops were proud to conquer Goa, Daman and Diu, the Portuguese colony inside Indian territory. At Avadi in 1955, we swore by following a socialistic pattern of society while Nehru continued to reside in the British C-in-C's palatial bungalow at Teen Murti.

Indira Gandhi, at one stage, asked which country is free from corruption. She was generally right and stood absolved. She talked socialism and practised the ideology as she understood it; she nationalised the coal industry as well as 19 bigger banks and general insurance. No one explained to her that this was the adoption of State capitalism. Where was the society or the public in all this? Certainly nationalised assets gave the Government power and patronage but the people generally remained poor. Gandhi and nonviolence were overlooked so that we could march into East Bengal in 1971. It was a military victory but, at the same time, we removed a millstone from around Islamabad's neck. We cannot deny that for the Congress, it was a military victory that ensured a landslide in the 1972 general election



IDEOLOGY HELPS IN BINDING THE PARTY MEMBERS TOGETHER WHEREAS POWER CAN AT BEST KEEP THE MINISTERS TOGETHER. THAT IS ONE OF THE MAIN TROUBLE SPOTS FOR THE CONGRESS TODAY

on the slogan "Garibi Hatao".

The Nehruvian socialism endured for long until PV Narasimha Rao had to overturn it overnight upon coming to power in 1991. He had won the election on a socialist manifesto and governed with a capitalist goal. No one raised a question on the contradiction; ours is a considerable electorate. When the vigour provided by Rao's liberalisation got exhausted, Indira Gandhi's grandson declared that the Congress was a Muslim party. Secularism was rubbed off the Congress blackboard with the ease of a soft duster.

Of all leaders, a BJP heavyweight once asserted that Bangaru Laxman's *abhishhek* in Nagpur that governance is more important than ideology. Yes, this is partly true; because Rao would have been chain bound to not liberalise in 1991 and India would have been in big economic trouble. On the other hand, ideology helps bind the party members together; whereas power can at best keep the Ministers together. That is one of the main trouble spots for the Congress today. This party depended on their top leader to hold them together;

first MK Gandhi, then Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv, even Sonia Gandhi. Once the leader is deficient in charisma, the problem begins. It is not that the younger leaders are very weak but they are up against a phenomenal giant and his party. This hasn't happened ever before. The Communist parties had the benefit of ideology but it was a philosophy which had been washed away by history and its Soviet leadership was blissfully unaware.

Even Karl Marx was not aware of the lacuna in his theory. He was so obsessed with distribution that he overlooked the importance of production. He wanted the bourgeoisie out because of its wealth. But what about its managerial function; the party apparatchik is no replacement nor, for that matter, the union leader. Being a theoretician, he could overlook this but what was his friend and partner Friedrich Engels doing? Why didn't Marx check it with him?

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HAPPY ENDING TO THE FARM PROTEST

Sir — It can be categorically stated (and is plain to see) that the realisation that continuance of the farmers' protests would be disastrous for the BJP in political terms persuaded the Modi Government to accede to the demands of the protesting farmers and paved the way for farmers to call off their year-long agitation. The sheer scale and strength of the protests made the Modi Government flexible enough to reach a settlement mostly on the farmers' terms. The groundswell of public opinion that the Modi Government was openly hostile to the farmers and the imminence of the Assembly elections have left it with no choice but to retreat from its earlier position.

The farmers can heave a huge sigh of relief that they have succeeded in warding off the threat to their livelihoods and lands in the form of the much-vaunted farm laws by using their right to protest and forcing the Government to repeal them. Unity among farmers and their assertion of their identity as farmers and their refusal to be divided on religious and caste lines brought them victory against all odds. Sadly, the Government exacted a very high price of martyrdom of over 700 farmers before it repealed the three farm laws and agreed to set up a panel to decide on the demand for the legal guarantee of Minimum Support Price (MSP), withdraw cases against farmers and not to introduce the Electricity (Amendment) Bill without consulting all stakeholders.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

NEED TO BE VOCAL ABOUT OUR RIGHTS

Sir — The purpose of Human Rights Day is to make people aware of their basic rights. Human rights call for better education, employment, healthcare and other basic needs. It voices the need to end the issues of inequality, exclusion and discrimination. Those who violate human rights should be punished according to the Constitution of India.

December 10, is observed as the Human Rights Day across the world and the theme for this year is 'Equality -

The nation will miss you, General



The untimely demise of India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat in a helicopter crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu has sent shock waves across the nation. He held the Indian flag high and never compromised on cross border strikes and gave a fitting reply to enemy incursions. He took strategic leadership to new heights and India's military ties with other countries flourished during his regime. As CDS, he drew plans for mod-

ernisation of India's defence sector. The nation will never forget the invaluable service rendered by the General.

Hailing from Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand, General Rawat has been a true son of the soil and made not just his hometown but the entire country proud. General Rawat was entrusted with the onerous task of creating a 'joint theatre command' in which the Army, Navy and the Air Force would operate in synergy with the aim of proving greater combat capabilities. He was involved in counter insurgency operations in both J&K and North-east as well as the Line of Actual Control in Arunachal Pradesh during India's 1987 clash with China. His tenure as the army chief will also be remembered for his muscular policy against Pakistan and the Doklam standoff against China in 2017. General Rawat was a true Indian and a true soldier. He served his country until the last breath and left an unmatched legacy behind. The nation will sorely miss him.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights. On this occasion, through different programs, youth is made aware of intimidation, apartheid and taking better steps towards climate. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the level of inequality and poverty is increasing on a large scale. In such a situation, it is very important to restore the basic rights of those who have suffered. We have to voice our support to the needy in order to deal with these challenges and ensure that there is no inequality in society. For this, everyone, from individuals to the Government, should work together to make the world a better place to live.

Vishal Patidar | Ujjain

JOINT FAMILIES IMPART THE RIGHT VALUES

Sir — The most important characteristic of joint families is that they are large in size as they consist of members of upto three to four generations. It includes parents, grandparents, children, grandchild-

dren and other close blood relatives. Several nuclear families live together as one and constitute a joint family. We must cherish the role played by the joint family system in nurturing and preserving our cultural and social values.

Family, in Indian society, is an institution by itself and a typical symbol of the collectivist culture of India right from the ancient times. The joint family system or an extended family has been an important feature of Indian culture, till a blend of urbanisation and western influence began to affect our home and hearth. This is especially true of urban areas, where nuclear families have become the order of the day. There is no denying the fact that socio-economic factors have played their role in the joint family system getting diluted.

MR Jayanthi | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

We trained together at the NDA. In the loss of Brig LS Lidder, India has lost one of its brightest and bravest officers.



Former Union Minister

—Col Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore

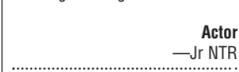
General Bipin Rawat was a true leader and friend of Israel. Much strength to the people of India at this difficult time.



Israeli Prime Minister

—Naftali Bennett

I have grown up watching Ajay Devgn's movies. So when I worked with him, it was like working with a guru.



Actor

—Jr NTR

France will not join the diplomatic boycott by other western countries of the upcoming Winter Olympics in Beijing.



French Sports Minister

—Jean-Michel Blanquer

Congress president Sonia Gandhi has decided not to celebrate her birthday on December 9 because of the untimely demise of Gen Bipin Rawat.



Congress leader

—KC Venugopal



FIRST COLUMN

INDIA, RUSSIA BUILD ON OLD FRIENDSHIPS

The private sector companies of both countries need to take their relationship to the next level



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Show case event marked India's foreign policy space this week. It was the visit of Russian president Vladimir Putin along with his defence and foreign affairs minister to hold the 21st India Russia summit. The summit could not be held in 2020 due to pandemic restrictions but was revived this year as India and Russia celebrate "5 decades of 1971 treaty of peace". This treaty initiated a multi front strategic partnership course between India and Russia and also marked a shift in India's position vis-a-vis the cold war and led to many regional relationship-rejigs. Russia's friendship is a key pivot for India in the evolving geopolitical situation. Russia shares a robust trade relationship with China, although many would argue that it is heavily skewed in China's favor. China in turn is almost a 'provider' government for Pakistan, and India and China haven't had a civil relationship for some years now, escalated by



border conflicts in Ladakh. The US, another of India's strategic allies with a huge focus on the Indo Pacific region (due to increased China aggression), pulled out of Afghanistan this year, adding to the volatile geopolitics emerging in the region. The joint statement from the India-Russia summit highlighted their concurrence on the situation in Afghanistan. India has been dialing up on the Russian connect since the beginning of 2021 to mitigate the risks emerging out of Afghanistan. India's special 'privileged status' with Russia needs to be exploited to the hilt to reduce the accelerated progress of China in Afghanistan. China has an aggressive colonization approach towards smaller or fragile countries in the central Asian region and views India as its challenger to regional dominance. India shares borders with Pakistan and China both of whom work as a team to keep India engaged in conflicts along its borders. To add to it is the presence of highly trained and armed Taliban fighters who can be used by any of the parties for spreading terrorism in India.

It is on Afghanistan that Russia and India may need to focus more. The summit statement talked of the roadmap for bilateral consultation and cooperation on Afghanistan and one has to wait for further outcomes. It may be recalled that a regional security dialogue on Afghanistan among the NSAs of key countries in the region was hosted by New Delhi a month back, but China and Pakistan had not participated. The push should be to bring other invested countries in the region such as Iran to share a common platform with India and Russia on Afghanistan. Russia has huge treasure troves of information about Afghanistan including insights into its tough and rugged topography and maps. This institutional knowledge from a power like Russia has to be appropriately channeled by strategic allies such as India to arrest the march of China in the region. Another key aspect of Indo-Russian partnership is economics which despite the defence deals and cooperation in energy sector has remained lukewarm on trade in goods and services front. The 21st summit in Delhi targeted \$30 bn trade and \$50 bn in investment in the next four years. It leaves a lot of room for growth. India and Russia have so far limited their economic ties to public sector companies except in the case of Rosneft that bought Essar oil in 2017. The private sector companies from both countries need to take this relationship to the next level.

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

The dam safety law will seal the cracks



DEVENDER SINGH ASWAL

The Act provides for maintaining standards of dam safety and to evolve dam safety policies and recommends measures against safety provision violators

As the principal draftsman of the Standing Committee of Parliament on Water Resources on the Dam Safety Bill, 2010, it is a matter of immense personal satisfaction that the dam safety legislation has been eventually enacted. The Dam Safety Bill, 2021, was passed by the Rajya Sabha after extensive debate on December 2. The Lok Sabha had passed it in August 2019. Many opposition members in both Houses wanted the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee but the Government rejected the demand.

The stand of the Jal Shakti Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, was that the Bill of 2021 was based on the report of the Standing Committee on the Bill of 2010, which formed 'the backbone' of the new Bill. The Dam Safety Bill, 2019 piloted by Shekhawat in the very first session of the current Lok Sabha incorporated majority of the recommendations of the Committee contained in their 7th Report (15th LS). The Dam Safety Bill, first introduced in the 15th Lok Sabha on August 30, 2010, was referred to the Committee for examination and report. The Committee undertook study visits to some Dam sites, invited public memoranda, heard domain experts, examined official witnesses, stakeholders and finally presented a comprehensive report to Parliament in August 2011.

Dams are a critical infrastructure constructed with large investment for multi-purpose uses such as irrigation, power generation, flood moderation and supply of water for drinking and industrial purposes. An unsafe dam constitutes a hazard to human life, ecology and public and private assets including crops, houses, buildings, canals and roads. Therefore, the safety of dam is a matter of great concern to the general public and becomes a national responsibility to take necessary steps to ensure their safety. The Committee found many serious flaws in the Bill. Most glaring of it all was the Bill lacked penal provision, deficient definitional clauses, omission of upstream devastation caused by a dam, structure of dam safety organisation, the damage likely to be caused by the dams including landslide or moraine located outside the national territory, etc. All these recommendations and observations have been incorporated in the new legislation and the Minister assured the Parliament that many of the observations of the members would form part of the Rules, exercising the power of delegated legislation under the Dam Safety Act.

It would be worthwhile to recall briefly the history of this much awaited legislation. The Government of India wanted a legislative framework regulating dam safety. It constituted a Committee in 1982 to review the existing practices and to evolve unified procedure for safety of dams in India. The Committee in its report in 1986 recommended a unified



INDIA CURRENTLY HAS 5,745 LARGE DAMS, OF WHICH 393 ARE OVER 100 YEARS OLD AND MORE THAN 25 PER CENT ARE 50 YEARS OLD. THE AGING DAMS AND DAM FAILURES CAN CAUSE COLOSSAL DAMAGE TO LIFE AND PROPERTY NOT ONLY DOWNSTREAM BUT ALSO UPSTREAM IF SLUICE GATES ARE NOT OPENED IN TIME TO PREVENT WATER IMPOUNDING UPSTREAM AND CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGE

(The writer is former Additional Secretary, Lok Sabha and served the Standing Committee on Water Resources under the Chairmanship of Dip Gogoi, 15th Lok Sabha, which examined the Dam Safety Bill, 2010. The views expressed are personal.)



dam safety procedure for all dams underlining the necessity legislation on dam safety.

Bihar enacted the Dam Safety Act, 2006. Kerala amended its Irrigation Act incorporating a dam safety provision. However, some States favoured a Central uniform dam safety legislation. The undivided State of Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal adopted resolutions in their assemblies for an Act of Parliament. Accordingly, the Dam Safety Bill, 2010 was introduced in Lok Sabha in 2010. The Bill was referred to the parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources for examination and report. The Committee submitted its Report on the Dam Safety Bill, 2010, recommending wholesale amendments to the Bill. The Ministry of Water Resources, rechristened Water Power, withdrew the Bill and introduced a new Dam Safety Bill during the 16th Lok Sabha. But with the dissolution of the 16th Lok Sabha, the Dam Safety Bill, 2018 lapsed. The Government introduced the Dam Safety Bill, 2019 in the very first session of the 17th Lok Sabha which has since been passed by the Rajya Sabha also.

The Dam Safety Act, 2021, inter alia, provides for (a) constitution of the National Committee on Dam Safety to discharge functions to prevent dam failure related disasters and to maintain standards of dam safety and to evolve dam safety policies and recommend necessary regulations as may be required for the purpose; (b) establishment of the National Dam Safety Authority as a regulatory body to implement the policy,

guidelines and standards for proper surveillance, inspection and maintenance of specified dams and address unresolved points of issues between the State Dam Safety Organisation of two States, or between the State Dam Safety Organisation of a State and the owner of a dam in that State, and in certain cases, such as dams extending in two or more States or dams of one State falling under the territory of another State; (c) constitution of the State Committee on Dam Safety by the State Governments to ensure proper surveillance, inspection, operation and maintenance of all specified dams in that State and ensure their safe functioning; and (d) establishment of the State Dam Safety Organisation in States having specified dams which will be manned by officers with adequate experience in the field of safety of dams.

The Act makes it mandatory for every owner of a specified dam to establish operational and maintenance set up so as to ensure continued safety of such dams, to earmark sufficient and specific funds for maintenance and repairs of the dams, for undertaking pre-monsoon and post-monsoon inspections and special inspections during and after floods, earthquakes, etc., to carry out risk assessment studies at such intervals as specified by the National Committee on Dam Safety. The law casts an obligation upon the concerned State Dam Safety Organisation to keep perpetual surveillance, carry out inspections and monitor the operation and maintenance of specified dams under its jurisdiction to ensure their safety; and to classify

each dam under their jurisdiction as per the vulnerability and hazard classification in accordance with the regulations. The National Dam Safety Authority is required to table its Annual Report in Parliament and the State Dam Safety Organisation to submit its Annual Reports on safety status of dams to the concerned State Legislative and State Disaster Management Authority.

Anyone refusing to comply with the directions issued under the Dam Safety Act will be punishable with imprisonment of up to one year, or a fine, or both. If the offence leads to the loss of lives, the imprisonment will raise to two years. Every dam owner has to provide a dam safety unit to inspect the dam before and after the monsoon session, during and after every earthquake, flood, or any other calamity or sign of distress.

India currently has 5,745 large dams, of which 393 are over 100 years old and more than 25 percent dams are 50 years old. Aging dams and dam failures can cause colossal damage to life and property not only downstream but also upstream if sluice gates are not opened timely to prevent water impounding upstream and consequential damage. A dam may be constructed in a particular location of a State but it has consequences and safety implications for the upstream and downstream States, apart from environmental hazards. In exercise of its legislative power under Article 246 read with Entry 56 and Entry 97 of the Constitution and the dire long felt need for dam safety, Parliament has filled a long felt void by enacting the Dam Safety legislation.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE ENTIRE UP KNOWS THAT LAAL TOPI WAALE HAVE ONLY BEEN INTERESTED IN RED BEACONS AND NOT THE PROBLEMS OF PEOPLE.

—PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI



THE USE OF THIS KIND OF LANGUAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER IS WRONG. HE HIMSELF WEARS A KAALI TOPI (BLACK CAP) AND SO DOES HIS PARTY.

—AAP LEADER SANJAY SINGH

GDP euphoric; agriculture alone can sustain India

The country has to go beyond farm Bills. Farming itself needs sustenance for overall growth and cutting down the Government's expenses

India's GDP is rising, large corporates are aiding the recovery and popular decisions are helping the people have an ease of living. However, consumer spending and the Omicron variant remain concerns.

The GDP growth of 8.4 percent in the September quarter is higher than RBI monetary policy projection of 8.1 percent. Agriculture has sustained the growth during the most critical pandemic period.

Some of the decisions that cheered the masses were bringing down the price of railway platform tickets to ₹10 from ₹50, cut in petrol prices, bid to bring down edible oil prices and repeal of the Char Dham Devasthanam Management Act. Populism, politics and economic courses seem



SHIVAJI SARKAR

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

extremely intertwined.

The actions demonstrate that popular concerns and real informal economy decide the final outcome.

Simultaneously, the employment figures show increase in construction and food product manufacturing.

However, the fast-paced road construction has pushed the NHAI into a whopping debt of ₹3.38 lakh crore, up from ₹1.22 lakh crore in March 2018 and ₹2.49 lakh crore a year back.

The PMO has called upon the finance ministry to work out a rescue plan. Such high debt impacts banks and questions the sustainability of such a road construction spree. It also reveals that of late most private companies collecting tolls are suffering losses.



Tolls are increasing costs and prices. In short, it is becoming inflationary. Some states have started building roads parallel to the toll roads. It has drawn the ire of the NHAI.

The roads are being built to serve the increasing population pressure. But the projections made may require fast review. Expensive roads are impacting travel, transportation and freight costs making life dearer.

Its sustainability depends on the rise in the existing pop-

ulation. This has now become doubtful in light of falling fertility rates to below the replacement level and the recent NITI Ayog study on high poverty across the country. This indicates that the nation has to shift its stress from fast to sustainable development.

So, India is at a crossroads. It is witnessing a peculiar mix of economics driven by ever-changing politics. The free food dole for 80 crore people that was decided to be scrapped from November 30, is now extended till March 31

The corporate results tell us about the nature of economic recovery. It indicates that the recovery is driven by large firms. Not all companies have had the fortune of a V-shaped recovery. Companies with a revenue of ₹100 crore

have actually seen a fall in their September revenues compared to the same period in 2020 and 2019. The fall in sales of smaller companies that started before pandemic is yet to come back to normal.

The data reveal that 1295 of the 1369 manufacturing firms in inflation adjusted raw material expenses are showing negative 13 percent growth.

For all these changes, fiscal policy support would remain indispensable for growth. It means with consumer demand lagging, private companies lack the incentive to invest. Unless that situation is restored, the government would have to resort to unsustainable debt leading to high costs, inflation and concomitant problems.

The central government's

capital expenditure between April and October stood at ₹2.53 trillion, which is higher than in 2020-21 - ₹1.97 trillion. Most of these expenses are in public administration, defence and other services even as output of employment intensive non-farm sectors such as construction, trade, hotels, transport, communication and broadcasting lags below pre-pandemic level.

Agriculture still lacks attention but has been an important cushion in softening the pandemic's blow to the economy. It escaped contraction in 2020-21. Agriculture alone has contributed 4.5 percent of the total growth. Despite that nominal growth, and agricultural activities came down from 11.1 percent in the June quarter to 7.9 percent in the

September quarter. Overall agricultural income remains low. This, with the rising fertiliser shortages, will have the twin effects of rise in cultivation cost and drop in yield.

The country has to go beyond the farm bills. Farming itself needs sustenance for overall growth and reduction on government's expenses. It has to change focus from the construction-oriented expensive and questionable development model. If the farm sector is developed all other sectors would also prosper.

Let India change its paradigm and chart out a course for long-term low-cost expansive development model. Yes, agriculture has to be the pivot for the development process.

"Nepal's PM saddened by Bipin Rawat's demise"

Army Chief calls him true friend of Nepal Army

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has expressed anguish over the tragic demise of General Bipin Rawat, the first Chief of the Defence Staff, who died in a

helicopter crash, and extended his heartfelt condolences to the Indian government and the bereaved families. Deeply saddened by the tragic demise of Gen. Bipin Rawat, his wife and several defence officials in a helicopter crash. My heartfelt



condolences to the bereaved families and the Indian Armed

Forces, Deuba said in a tweet. The Mi-17V5 helicopter of the Indian Air Force (IAF) carrying the 63-year-old tri-services chief crashed near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday, killing 13 of the 14 people on board, including his wife and 11 other armed forces personnel. Describing Gen. Rawat as a true friend of the Nepal Army, the Chief of the Army Staff in the Nepal Army,

General Prabhu Ram Sharma said he was shocked by the tragic accident, and called up General Rawat's family over phone on Wednesday evening to offer condolences, a statement issued by the Nepal Army said. General Rawat enjoyed close and cordial ties with the Himalayan nation. On March 29, 2017, he was conferred with the title of honorary general of the Nepal Army by

President Bidya Devi Bhandari. The following year, he visited Kathmandu as Chief Guest for Nepal Army Day. Senior Nepal Army General Bal Krishna Karki will be attending Gen. Rawat's funeral ceremony in New Delhi. Gen. Rawat took charge as India's first Chief of Defence Staff on December 31, 2019, after serving as the Army Chief for a full three-year term.

General Bipin Rawat was a true leader, true friend of Israel, says PM Bennett

Jerusalem: Describing General Bipin Rawat as a "true leader and true friend" of Israel, the country's top leadership has expressed condolences to the government and people of India at the "tragic and shocking loss" of its first Chief of Defence Staff who died in a helicopter crash.

Rawat was a true leader & true friend of Israel. Much strength to @narendramodi and the Indian people at this difficult time", Bennett added. Defence Minister Benny Gantz, who in the past has served as the Israel Defence Forces' Chief of Staff, expressed condolences on behalf of the defence establishment and also "personal grief" on Twitter.

The Mi-17V5 helicopter of the Indian Air Force (IAF) carrying the 63-year-old tri-services chief crashed near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday, killing 13 of the 14 people on board, including his wife and 11 other armed forces personnel.

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett in a tweet said, "My thoughts & prayers are with the families of those who perished in tragic helicopter crash in India. May their souls rest in peace". "General Bipin

"I would like to extend condolences on behalf of Israel's defence establishment & to express my personal grief to the people of India & to the Indian defence establishment on the loss of Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat, his wife & others who perished in tragic accident", Gantz wrote. Foreign Minister Yair Lapid used same social media platform posting messages in Hindi and English.

Gen Rawat was strong proponent of India-US defence partnership: US

Washington: General Bipin Rawat, India's first Chief of Defence Staff who died in a helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu, was a strong proponent of India-US defence ties and helped deepen the strategic partnership between the two

countries, a senior US official has said. General Rawat, his wife Madhulika and 11 other people on board an Indian Air Force helicopter died in a crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday, the Air Force said. The copter carrying

General Rawat and his entourage crashed in apparently foggy conditions, killing the 13 people on board, the IAF and other officials said. One person survived the crash and is being treated at a hospital.

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Cost of each Tender Document: ₹ 1180/-
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 Telephone No.: +91 11 4920 7235 | E-mail: brpl.eauction@relianceada.com | Website: www.bsesdelhi.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
 Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13(2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Sam Mathew K/ Soosamma Mathew-Kaleeckal House Muzhukunnu Bazar PO Peravoor Via Kannur- 670673/LBKOM00001545021	(As Described in The Loan Document/ Property Document Covering Re Sy No- 244/5, old Sy No-148/7A/1, 21.40 Ares, Chamak Kalayil House, Elanthoor Village Kozhen Chery Taluk Pathana Mthitta D.T. Kerala Pathana Mthitta- 689543	August 30, 2021 Rs. 8,87,936.00/-	31/01/2021

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.
 Date: December 10, 2021
 Place: Ghaziabad & Noida
 Authorized Officer
 ICICI Bank Limited

GOVT. OF BIHAR OFFICE OF THE RESIDENT ENGINEER, BIHAR B BHAWAN, NEW DELHI

NO-709/Dated 9/12/21

Short Notice inviting Quotation
 The reputed firms are requested to submit sealed quotation for following work in Bihar sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022. Quotation will be submitted up to 20.12.2021 till 3:00 pm and opened on 20.12.2021 at 3:30 pm at the office of the Resident Engineer, Bihar Niwas Chankyapuri, New Delhi undersigned office has right to cancel quotation without any further information. Registration, GST, PAN No. and authorization of firm paper here enclosed. Details of items list can be obtained from the office of the Resident Engineer, Bihar Bhawan, New Delhi. The Earnest Money (NSC/ Term Deposit) should be deposited 5% of total contract value before issue of work order.

S. No	Particulars
1.	Supply fitting and fixing food service equipment in Bihar sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
2.	Supply fitting and fixing existing kitchen work of washing area Bihar sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022.
3.	Supply fitting and fixing existing kitchen of cooking area Bihar sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
4.	Supply fitting and fixing extended kitchen area Bihar sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
5.	Supply fitting and fixing extended kitchen area like section, hoods, duct etc Bihar sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
6.	Supply fitting and fixing extended kitchen area and existing kitchen area hoods, duct, exhaust fan etc Bihar sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022.
7.	Supply fitting and fixing fire fighting work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
8.	Supply fitting and M.S. tubulor structure work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
9.	Providing fitting fixing flooring, ceiling, puff roof and panneling work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
10.	Providing fitting fixing cement fiber board, cladding, fifty mm thick rock wall density 40 work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
11.	Supply fitting and fixing DGV glazing work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
12.	Supply fitting and fixing Decorative lights, hanging lights and mist fan work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
13.	Supply fitting and split A.C. 1.5 Ton , Tower standing A.C. 3.0 Ton , 2.0 Ton and horticulture work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
14.	Supply fitting and fixing restaurant chairs and table work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
15.	Addition and Alteration of VIP lounge at ground floor work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
16.	Addition and Alteration of near VIP lounge at ground floor work in Bihar Sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-2022
17.	Renovation work of 2nd floor office rooms of Bihar sadan, Dwarka, New Delhi for the year 2021-22

Sd/
 Executive Engineer-Cum-Resident Engineer
 Bihar Bhawa, New Delhi

जल संसाधन विभाग
 कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
 पूर्वी तटबंध प्रमंडल, सुपौल
 अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या-01/2021-22
 (केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
 पत्रांक 1526/सुपौल

1. कार्य का विवरण :-

क्रमांक/सुपौल	कार्य का नाम	प्राकृतिक राशि (लाख रु में)	अग्रज की राशि (लाख रु में)	परिमाण-विभक्त का मूल्य (अग्रज/मौलिक/मौलिक/मौलिक/मौलिक/रु में)	वेस्ट्रीन को देय बिड प्रोसेसिंग फी (अग्रज/मौलिक/मौलिक/मौलिक/रु में)	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
1.	पूर्वी कोशी तटबंध के किछी 50.40 पर कटाव निरोधक कार्य। (केवल अनियोजित अभियंताओं के लिए)	49.76	99,600.00	5,000.00	590.00	15.05.2022
2.	पूर्वी कोशी तटबंध के किछी 84.00 से किछी 87.00 के बीच कटाव निरोधक कार्य।	166.007	3,32,100.00	10,000.00	3540.00	15.05.2022
3.	पूर्वी कोशी तटबंध के किछी 87.00 से किछी 88.50 के बीच कटाव निरोधक कार्य।	72.11	1,44,300.00	10,000.00	3540.00	15.05.2022
4.	पूर्वी कोशी तटबंध के किछी 72.80 पर कटाव निरोधक कार्य।	187.19	3,74,400.00	10,000.00	3540.00	15.05.2022
5.	पूर्वी कोशी तटबंध के किछी 76.00 से किछी 84.00 के बीच कटाव निरोधक कार्य।	135.70	2,71,400.00	10,000.00	3540.00	15.05.2022

2. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक - 06.12.2021
 3. निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड करने एवं निविदा अपलोड करने की तिथि एवं समय(सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर) : दिनांक-15.12.2021 से दिनांक-20.12.2021 के 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
 4. प्री-बिड मीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक-18.12.2021 के 11:00 बजे पूर्वाह्न, मुख्य अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण एवं जल निस्सर्जन, जल संसाधन विभाग, लखीपुर के कार्यालय में।
 5. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 22.12.2021 समय 04.00 P.M (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर) रखन पदाधिकारी द्वारा बाद में घोषित की जायेगी। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
 6. वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 22.12.2021 के 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
 7. निविदा खोलने का स्थान : www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in
 8. निविदा की वेबसाइट : 120 दिन
 9. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, सुपौल।
 10. विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar पर देखा जा सकता है।
 कार्यपालक अभियंता, पूर्वी तटबंध प्रमंडल, सुपौल।
 मोबाईल नंबर :- 07463889474
 PR. No. 09802 (WRD) 2021-22
 नशा मुक्त हो जाए बिहार, सुरक्षित रहे घर परिवार।

जल संसाधन विभाग
 कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
 बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, नवगछिया।
 fcd.naugachia@gmail.com
 पत्रांक- 867 / नवगछिया, दिनांक-06.12.2021
 अल्पकालीन राष्ट्रीय स्पर्धा निविदा आमंत्रण
 (केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
 आमंत्रण सूचना सं-01-SBD/2021-22

1. कार्य का विवरण :-

क्रमांक/सुपौल	कार्य का नाम	प्राकृतिक राशि (लाख रु में)	अग्रज की राशि (लाख रु में)	परिमाण-विभक्त का मूल्य (अग्रज/मौलिक/मौलिक/मौलिक/रु में)	वेस्ट्रीन को देय बिड प्रोसेसिंग फी (अग्रज/मौलिक/मौलिक/मौलिक/रु में)	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
01	भागलपुर जिलान्तर्गत गोपालपुर प्रखण्ड के अतिन नंगा प्रसाद जमींदारी बांध पर कटाव निरोधक कार्य। (एजेण्डा संख्या- 180/496/2022)	456.00	9.50	10,000.00	5,900.00	15-05-2022
02	भागलपुर जिलान्तर्गत खरीक प्रखण्ड के अतिन नरकटिया एवं ननकार ग्राम के समीप लखीपुर-नारायणपुर जमींदारी बांध पर कटाव निरोधक कार्य। (एजेण्डा संख्या- 180/499/2022)	419.69	8.50	10,000.00	5,900.00	15-05-2022
03	भागलपुर जिलान्तर्गत इस्माइलपुर-बिन्दोली तटबंध के स्पर सौ-02 एवं 03 के बीच एवं स्पर-8N एवं 07 के बीच कटाव निरोधक कार्य। (एजेण्डा संख्या- 180/510/2022)	701.86	14.05	10,000.00	5,900.00	15-05-2022

2. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक- 06.12.2021
 3. निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक-16.12.2021 से दिनांक-21.12.2021 के 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
 4. प्री-बिड मीटिंग की तिथि, समय, एवं स्थान : दिनांक 16.12.2021 को 03:00 बजे अपराह्न में मुख्य अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण एवं जल निस्सर्जन, जल संसाधन विभाग, कटिहार के कार्यालय में।
 5. हाई कॉपी जमा करने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 22.12.2021 के 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक।
 6. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 23.12.2021 को 3:30 बजे अपराह्न (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
 7. वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : रखन पदाधिकारी द्वारा बाद में वेबसाइट पर घोषित की जायेगी। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
 8. निविदा खोलने का स्थान : सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर
 9. निविदा की वेबसाइट : 120 दिन
 10. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, नवगछिया।
 11. विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in एवं www.wrd.bih.nic.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
 बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, नवगछिया।
 मो :- 7463889298
 PR. 09868 (WRD) 2021-22
 नद्यों से बनानी दूरी है, क्योंकि परिवार जरूरी है।

Talks on Iran nuclear deal resume in Vienna amid tensions

AP ■ VIENNA

Negotiations between Iran and world powers aimed at salvaging a tattered 2015 nuclear deal have resumed in Vienna after a few days' pause, with tensions high after Tehran made demands last week that European countries strongly criticised.

European Union diplomat Enrique Mora, who chaired Thursday's meeting of all the deal's remaining signatories - Iran, the UK, France, Germany, Russia and China - said afterwards that he felt "a renewed sense of purpose on the need to work and to reach an agreement on bringing the (agreement) back to life". "Whether that will be confirmed and endorsed by negotiations on the details, we will see in the coming days," Mora said, adding that the positive impression "has to be tested".

He said that it is becoming "more imperative" with time to reach an agreement quickly. Iran's top negotiator in nuclear talks said he had insisted Tehran was serious in the negotiations, underlining that Iran was continuing talks based on its previous positions.

"Iran is serious about reaching an agreement if the ground is paved ... The fact that all sides want the talks to continue shows that all parties want to narrow the gaps," Ali Bagheri Kani told reporters after talks resumed in Vienna.

The United States has participated indirectly in the talks because it withdrew from the accord in 2018 under then-President Donald Trump. President Joe Biden has signalled that he wants to rejoin the deal. Washington plans to send a delegation led by Robert Malley, the special US envoy for Iran, to Vienna over the weekend. Diplomats from the UK, France and Germany had urged Tehran to come back with "realistic proposals" after the Iranian delegation made numerous demands last week that other parties to the accord deemed unacceptable. US State Department spokesman Ned Price said this week that the US hopes the next round of talks "proceeds differently".

Vaccine makers racing to update Covid-19 shots, just in case

Washington: Vaccine makers are racing to update their COVID-19 shots against the newest coronavirus threat even before it's clear a change is needed, just in case. Experts doubt today's shots will become useless but say it's critical to see how fast companies could produce a reformulated dose and prove it works -- because whatever happens with omicron, this newest mutant won't be last. Omicron is pulling fire alarm. Whether it turns out to be a false alarm, it would be really good to know if we can actually do this -- get a new vaccine rolled out and be ready, said immunologist E John Wherry of University of Pennsylvania. It's too soon to know how vaccines will hold up against omicron.

The first hints this week were mixed: Preliminary lab tests suggest two Pfizer doses may not prevent an omicron infection but they could protect against severe illness. And a booster shot may rev up immunity enough to do both. AP Better answers are expected in coming weeks and regulators in US and other countries are keeping a close watch. The WHO has appointed an independent scientific panel to advise on whether the shots need reformulating because of omicron or any other mutant. AP

Covid-19 helped make case for global health diplomacy

Toronto: The ease in which billions of people travel makes public health a security issue as major health events require coordination beyond national borders. If Covid-19 has taught us anything, it's that major health events require coordination beyond national borders. The pandemic, and others that will follow, has changed our understanding of health.

US 'weaponising' democracy, China on Biden's Summit

BEIJING: China on Thursday accused US of "weaponising" democracy and attacked Biden administration's initiative of Alliance for Future of Internet, saying it is aimed at maintaining America's cyber hegemony. US President Joe Biden is hosting Summit for Democracy from Thursday, bringing together leaders of governments and civil society and China, where Communist Party of China has been ruling country since People's Republic was founded in 1949, is not among list of invitees. China is furious that US has instead invited Taiwan. The self-ruling island is among 110 invitees to summit.

China claims Taiwan as part of its mainland. "It proves US is politicising, instrumentalising and weaponising democracy," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing here responding to a question about US pushing its proposal of Alliance for Future of Internet at Summit of Democracy to be held on December 9-10. "Facts show that so-called Summit for Democracy has nothing to do with global public good for democracy but rather it is about serving selfish interests of the US and maintaining its US hegemony," Wang said.

The invitees from Asia-Pacific region include India, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Pakistan, Maldives and the Philippines. Most European countries are also invited, including Serbia, but not Bosnia and Herzegovina or Hungary. China has been attacking summit, saying US cannot hold a patent for democracy and event is aimed at dividing world.

Write-ups in Chinese official media say that summit is part of a multi-faceted drive by US to put China in a negative light. On Thursday, Wang also targeted "Alliance for Future of Internet", saying "the so-called alliance for internet pursued by US is another example of how US is seeking technological monopoly and cyber hegemony and suppressing technological development of other countries".

G.A.V. DEGREE COLLEGE
 (Affiliated to MDU, Rohtak)
Patauda, Distt. Hajar
 Courses : B.A., B.Com., B.Sc. (Medical), B.Sc. (Non-Medical)
Vacancy Position for the following post :-
 Teaching : Principal-01 Assistant Professor / Lecturer in Physics, Chemistry, Maths- Each Two, Botany, Zoology, English, Hindi, Pol. Science, History, Geography, Economics, Commerce, Financial Accounting- Each One
 Non-Teaching : Head Clerk, Clerk, Librarian, Lib. Attendant, Lab Attendant, Mali, Chowkidar, Sweeper, Peon- Each One
 Eligibility :- As per UGC/MDU Norms.
 The interested candidates may submit their Bio-Data with zerox of all testimonials and one passport size photo in the college campus at Village Patauda, Distt. Hajarjar with in 21days of the advertisement. A copy of the above may be forwarded to DCCD, MDU, Rohtak also.
 Email : gavdegrecollege@gmail.com
 Ph. 9466879611, 9466879622
President

Coal stocks improve to 21 MT, enough for 10 days: Min

New Delhi: Coal stock at thermal power plants improved to 20.98 million tonne (MT) on December 5, 2021, which is sufficient to run the plants for an average 10 days, Parliament was informed on Thursday.

At present, the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) monitors fuel stocks of 136 coal-based thermal power plants with total generation capacity of over 166 GW. The coal stock available with power plants being monitored by CEA was 41.6 MT as on November 30, 2020, which decreased to 31.9 MT as on March 31, 2021, Power Minister R K Singh said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. Further, with increased generation and some interruption in supply of coal by companies mainly due to heavy rains and increase in prices of

imported coal, stock at the plants depleted to about 11.4 MT as on September 30, 2021, he stated.

Subsequently, he said with the concerted efforts of Ministry of Power, Ministry of Coal, CEA, Coal India Ltd (CIL) & Railways, the coal stock has started increasing and has now reached about 20.98 MT as on December 5, 2021, which is sufficient to run the plants for an average 10 days.

He also said the total actual coal stock in November this year at the plants was 13.65 MT against 28.51 MT stock to be maintained. In November 2020, the total coal stock at the plants was 29.7 MT against 26.9 MT dry fuel stock to be maintained.

Similarly, the total actual coal stock in October this year

at the plants was 7.87 MT against 28.13 MT stock to be maintained.

In October 2020, the total coal stock at thermal power plants was 27.1 MT against 27.2 MT stock to be maintained.

"During 2021-22 (Apr'21-Nov'21), the coal-based generation in the country increased about 16.1 per cent as compared to same period last year and 5.1 per cent as compared to same period during 2019-20.

"Thus, though the coal stock had depleted during some months, the coal-based generation has improved vis-à-vis same period in previous years and now the stock has also improved. Thus, as such, there is no shortage of coal in thermal power plants of the country," the Minister told the House. **PTI**

Imports made up 86% of India's gold supply between 2016-2020: WGC

Mumbai: Imports made up 86 per cent of India's gold supply between 2016-2020, and inbound shipments continue to grow despite high import duty, as per a report by the World Gold Council (WGC).

Since the first duty hike in 2012, India has imported some 6,581 tonnes of gold, averaging 730 tonnes per annum, according to WGC's 'Bullion Trade in India' report.

In 2020, India imported 377 tonnes of gold bars and more from over 30 countries, of which 55 per cent came from just two countries - Switzerland (44 per cent) and the UAE (11 per cent). One important change that has taken place in India's gold market is the growth in gold ore imports. The increase reflects the government's accommodative stance towards gold refining, the report said. **PTI**

Sensex ends in green for third day; ITC spurts 4.60%

Mumbai: Equity indices mustered gains for the third session on the trot on Thursday, propelled by energy, FMCG and infra counters amid a largely positive trend in global markets.

After a choppy start, the 30-share BSE Sensex gained momentum in afternoon trade to end 157.45 points or 0.27 per cent higher at 58,807.13. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty climbed 47.10 points or 0.27 per cent to 17,516.85. ITC was the top performer in the Sensex pack, jumping 4.60 per cent, followed by L&T, Asian Paints, Reliance Industries, M&M, Bajaj Finance, Dr Reddy's and Infosys. On the other hand, HDFC Bank, Titan, Nestle India, NTPC, PowerGrid and TCS were among the laggards, tum-

bling up to 1.67 per cent. Domestic indices surrendered to profit-booking in early session, but later gained ground owing to positive global sentiment," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. **PTI**

Rupee tanks to 16-month low of 75.60 against dollar on forex outflows

Mumbai: The rupee on Thursday declined by 10 paise to settle at a 16-month low of 75.60 against the US dollar amid foreign fund outflows from equities and a firm greenback in the overseas markets. Besides, concerns over the impact of new COVID variant on the global economy also weighed on investor sentiments, traders said.

Gold slips, silver drops ₹158

New Delhi: Gold prices slipped marginally by ₹6 to ₹47,156 per 10 gram in the national capital on Thursday on mixed global cues, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at ₹47,162 per 10 grams. Silver also declined by ₹158 to ₹60,230 per kg from ₹60,388 per kg in the previous trade.

"Spot gold prices for 24-carat gold at Delhi were trading marginally down by ₹6 despite of rupee depreciation," according to HDFC Securities, Senior Analyst (Commodities), Tapan Patel.

RBI gives scheduled bank status for Paytm Payments Bank

New Delhi: Paytm Payments Bank on Thursday said it has been given the scheduled bank status by the Reserve Bank of India. The bank has been included in the Second Schedule to the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 and the approval will help it to bring more financial services and products.

With the scheduled bank status, the bank can explore new business opportunities, including participation in government and other large corporations issued request for proposals, primary auctions, fixed-rate and variable rate repos, and reverse repos. Besides, it can participate in Marginal Standing Facility and will be eligible to partner in government-run financial inclusion schemes, according to a statement. **PTI**

Telecom industry seeks spectrum at reasonable prices, rationalisation of taxes: VIL CEO Ravinder Takkar

New Delhi: To become sustainable in the long run, the telecom industry is seeking adequate spectrums at reasonable prices with easy payment norms, rationalisation of taxes and levies and reduction in burden on the companies due to old litigations, a top official of Vodafone Idea NSE 14.69% Ltd (VIL) said on Thursday. VIL Managing Director and CEO Ravinder Takkar while speaking at India Mobile Congress said recent reforms announced by the government are steps towards addressing financial stress and legacy issues in the sector.

"Looking at the decade

ahead, there is a need to make industry sustainable in the long run...towards this future a few more steps taken more quickly will achieve this goal. Industry players are talking about first making adequate spectrum available at reasonable prices at easy payment terms. Second, rationalizing taxes and levies in line with the recommendation of NDCP 2018 and third, reducing the heavy burden of old legacy litigation in the sector," Takkar said.

He said once these issues are resolved, the industry will look at improving average revenue per user (ARPU) from "abysmally low levels". **PTI**

Govt issues SOP for use of drone in crop protection

New Delhi: The Government has released standard operating procedure (SOP) for use of drones for the purpose of spraying pesticides on agriculture crops, a move welcomed by industry body CropLife India on Thursday. Releasing the SOP, the agriculture Ministry said, in recent years, use of drones in agriculture has gained prominence and some states are actively engaged in checking the suitability of this new technology in Indian agriculture.

"Application of pesticides using drones has great potential as we move towards commercialization and achieving precision in agricultural crops," it said. According to the Ministry, the SOP for drone regulation for pesticide application covers important aspects like statutory provisions, flying permissions, area distance restrictions, weight classification, overcrowded areas restriction, drone registration, safety insurance, piloting certification, operation plan, weather conditions. **PTI**

Security event IFSEC India begins at Pragati Maidan

New Delhi: The International Fire & Security Exhibition and Conference (IFSEC) India Expo, South Asia's largest security, civil protection and fire safety show by Informa Markets in India commenced its 14th edition at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi on Thursday. The three-day exhibition brought together internationally renowned exhibitors, consultants, business experts and key government officials under one common platform. The event was inaugurated by Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma, MSME Minister Govt of India, Kaushal Kishore, Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, along with MS Upadhye, IPS, Chief Security Commissioner, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, Lt. Gen. Anil Chait, PVS, AVSM, VSM, former Army Commander & Chief of Integrated Defence Staff, Yogesh Mudras, Managing Director, Informa Markets in India and Pankaj Jain, Group Director, Informa Markets in India. **PTI**

Sale Notice

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

Case Details	Asset Details	Reserve Price (Rs)	EMD
ICICI Bank Limited vs Naushad & Anr, Case No.-CS (COMM) 2894/2019	Vehicle No-UP14HT3453, Make and Model-TATA 1512, Manu Yr-2019	Rs. 10,50,000/-	Rs. 1,05,000/-

Auction Date and time: 24.12.2021; from 11 am to 2 pm
Venue: Mohd Nasir Khan Parking Yard, Chinhat , Lucknow-226028
Contact Person- Avinash Kumar (8953652366)/ Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)
EMD: DD/PO of EMD amount to be made in favour of ICICI Bank Limited, payable at Delhi.

Terms of Sale

The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participants are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy themselves/ themselves/ itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids. All bidders are required to come at site with original DD/PO of EMD amount along with original KYC proofs to participate in the auction. Successfully approved bidder shall have to deposit sale amount (Excluding EMD amount) within 5 days from the auction date by the way of pay order/demand draft/RTGS/NEFT. In case if you fail to make the remaining sale amount within 5 days, your EMD amount will be forfeited. The intending bidders may visit at **ICICI Bank Ltd, Shal Towers, Plot No. 23, New Rohtak Road Karol Bagh Delhi - 110005** for details of the said hypothecated vehicle.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE (Through e-Tendering)

Name of work with its location	Comprehensive Annual maintenance Contract of BPAC of CEL make for one year.
App. Cost of the work	Rs. 14,31,469/- only
Address of the office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annex-1, DRM Office, New Delhi-110055.
Date & Time for upload the tender/closing of tender	Tender uploading/closing date & time- 05.01.2022 up to 15.00 hrs.
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.	See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T Branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.
No.: 558-Sig-16-M-TENDER-AMC-054-2021-22	Dated: 09.12.2021 2893/2021

Serving Customers with a Smile

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General Public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Preeti D/o Sh. Ashish R/o Village Gopalganj Thabi Railway Station Bihar** has been reported missing/kidnapped from Kilkari Rainbow Home, Kashmir Gate, Delhi since 11.01.2014. In this regard a **FIR No. 15/14 dated 12.01.2014 U/s 363 IPC** has been registered at PS, Kashmir Gate, Delhi. The description of missing/kidnapped girl is as under:

Name : Preeti, **Father's Name :** Sh. Ashish, **Age :** 12 years, (now 20 years) **Height :** At present not known, **Face :** Round, **Complexion :** Black, **Built :** Thin, **Wearing:** At that time Black Frock and Black Payjami

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
 e-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
 Ph.: 011-23014046 (Direct)
 23015229 & 23015218 Extn.-210
 Fax: 011-23011334
 DP/1771/N/2021

SHO P.S., Kashmir Gate Delhi Ph. : 011-23968730

UJVN Limited

H.O. : "UJJWAL", Mahanagar Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
 Telephone: 0135-2763808, Fax No.: 0135-2763508
 CIN No. U40101UR2001SG025866 Website: www.ujvn.com

R.O. No. 961 e-Tender Notice Dt. 09-12-2021

Office of the Executive Engineer (Civil-I), Lakshwar Multipurpose Project, UJVN Limited, Dakpathar (Dehradun), invites online bids from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below :

Tender No. 10/EE(Civil-I)/LMP/2021-22

Name of work - "Cleaning, Up-keeping, Gardening and minor repair works of Vyasi H.E.P. office at Dakpathar (Dehradun)."
 Estimated cost - Rs. 29,29,768.00 (Including all taxes).

Date of availability of bid document on website - 09-12-2021 at 17:00 Hrs. Last date for submission of bids on website - 30-12-2021 upto 16:00 Hrs. For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "http://uktenders.gov.in" **Executive Engineer (Civil-I)**

"Avoid Wasteful use of Electricity"

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-TENDER NOTICE No. 196-S/1/2021-22/TENDER NOTICE-TSO-III/FeMo Dated: 04.01.2022

E-Tender for and on behalf of the President of India, CE/TSP, Northern Railway, Headquarters Office, Baroda House, New Delhi-110001 invites the following tenders through E-Procurement System.

Tender No. 211-2687-2021-22-NR Due on 04.01.2022

Description of Item	Manufacturing & Supply of Ferro Molybdenum, as per Northern Railway Thermo Portion Plant Lucknow's standard specification TFP/FeMo/2020
Tender Value	Rs. 57,35,331/-
Tender Document Cost	Rs. Nil
Earnest Money	Rs. 1,14,710/-
Completion Period	6 Months
Time of Submission of Tender	Up to 04.01.2022 at 14.30 IST
Date & Time of Opening of Tender	On 04.01.2022 at 14.30 IST
Validity of Offer	180 days

Note: The complete information about E-Procurement tender is available on website www.ireps.gov.in and www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in 2891/21

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Appeal for Identification

General public is hereby informed that one person **Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: 55 Yrs., Height: 5'6", Sex: Male, Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Medium, Face: Round, Wearing: White linedar Jarsi and White Pajama & Barefoot, Place of Recovery: Found dead in front of Animal Hospital, Pul Mithai, Tis Hazari, Delhi on Road Side.**

In this regard **DD No. 22A, U/s 174-CR.PC, Dated 26.11.2021** has been lodged at **Police Station, Subzi Mandi, Delhi**. Any clue come to notice please inform undersign.

SHO P.S. Subzi Mandi, Delhi DP/1791/N/2021 Ph.: 011-23823161, 23827354

ESAF

REGD. OFFICE: ESAF Bhavan, Mamuthy, Thrissur- 680 651, Kerala.

GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that Gold ornaments pledged with ESAF Small Finance Bank and not redeemed by borrowers of branch/s listed below, inspite of repeated reminders and notices, will be auctioned as per details given below:

DATE OF AUCTION : 15-12-2021 TIME : 10 AM TO 4 PM

AUCTION VENUE : THROUGH E-AUCTION

AUCTION ADDRESS : <https://gold.matextnet.org/>

To register as bidder for the e-Auction with terms and conditions and full details of e-Auction please visit the above site

BRANCHES & LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBERS

NEW DELHI-ROHINI: 63210000567117, 672589.
NEW DELHI-MAYUR VIHAR: 63210000483814, 575661, 674585, 680133, 697641.

Customers who are interested to release the ornaments by paying total due amount, may do so on or before (2 Days before date of auction) at the respective branches.

Bidders who wish to participate in auction shall produce their KYC documents. GST No. is mandatory for registered firm/company. Bidders shall deposit a sum of Rs.50,000 as EMD before participating in auction.

Thrissur Sd/
 Date: 10-12-2021 Authorized Signatory

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Jyoti Luthra, Rajiv Luthra, H No-31 2nd Floor, Block-BH, Shalimar Bagh East, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004581605	Property No-31, Second Floor, Block- BH Tenure: 246 East Shalimar, Bagh, Delhi 110088	30/08/2021 Rs. 62,80,916/-	11-05-2021
2.	Neeraj Patodia, Vandana Patodia, C-191 2nd Floor Anand Vihar, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00001845745	House No:- A-236, Entire 2nd Floor, New Friends Colony, New Delhi	02/09/2021 Rs. 52,28,511/-	10-06-2021
3.	Prem Kumar Narang, Rimpri Narang, Pocket A 8/46 Kalkaji Extn, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00002959223	Fiat No-J3/249, Ground Floor, Janta Category Kalkaji Delhi	02/09/2021 Rs. 48,35,837/-	06-05-2021
4.	Anmol Sethi, Sneha Lata Sethi, Tower-15 Flat No-703, The Close South Nirvana Country, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00005354063	Shop No-C-3-308, Third Floor Block C, Nirvana Court Yard South City-II Sec-50, Gurgaon, Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 35,16,894/-	06-03-2021
5.	Avinash Rani, Davinder Kumar Wadhwa, Varinder Kumar Wadhwa, Davinder Kumar Wadhwa, E 462, G K-2, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00005438373	House No-E462, Block-E, Greater Kailash II, Delhi 110048	30/08/2021 Rs. 30,11,438/-	07-06-2021
6.	Sunita Sharma, Rishi Sharma, R 292 First Floor Greater Kailash, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00004981789	Entire First of Plot R-292, Block-R Part-I, Greater Kailash, Delhi,	02/09/2021 Rs. 27,64,211/-	27-01-2021
7.	Neeraj Priyadarshi, Usha Priyadarshi, D-135 Sushant Lok DIF Phase-3, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00002319193	Florence Villa-D-135, Sushant Lok, Phase-III, Gurgaon, Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 19,87,867/-	07-06-2021
8.	Vishal Chawla, Pooja Chawla, Pooja Sales C-149, Near Adrsh Public School, Vikaspuri, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00005307528	Flat No-149, First Floor, Block C, Vikash Puri, Delhi 110058	30/08/2021 Rs. 12,55,676/-	11-06-2021
9.	Neeraj Priyadarshi, Usha Priyadarshi, D-135 Sushant Lok DIF Phase-3, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00002319193	Florence Villa-D-135, Sushant Lok, Phase-III, Gurgaon, Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 10,25,896/-	07-06-2021
10.	Ram Gopal, Savita, D-759 Gali No. 5 Block-D Ashok Nagar Mandoli, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004842714	Plot No-48, Block-W, Sector-12, Noida, Uttar Pradesh	30/08/2021 Rs. 10,23,876/-	06-05-2021
11.	Sunita Sharma, Rajeev Sharma, R 292 First Floor Greater Kailash, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00005355138	Entire First of Plot R-292, Block-R Part-I, Greater Kailash, Delhi,	27/08/2021 Rs. 5,48,210/-	27-01-2021
12.	Iqbal Haider, Sayed Saleem Haider Naqvi, Accurate Engineering Works, 3/161 Rajendra Nagar Sector-2 Sahibabad, Uttar Pradesh, Ghaziabad. A/c No:- LBGH200005345745	House No- 3/161, Block-3, Sector-2, Rajender Nagar, Ghaziabad, UP	30/08/2021 Rs. 4,52,717/-	06-05-2021
13.	Ram Gopal, Savita, D-759 Gali No. 5 Block-D Ashok Nagar Mandoli, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004862788	Plot No-48, Block-W, Sector-12, Noida, Uttar Pradesh	30/08/2021 Rs. 3,89,282/-	06-05-2021
14.	Prem Kumar Narang, Rimpri Narang, Pocket A 8 /46 Kalkaji Extn, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00002962414	Property Bearing, 69/3 Block-C Okhla, Industrial area, Phase-II, Delhi 110048	04/09/2021 Rs. 35,009/-	06-05-2021
15.	Prem Kumar Narang, Rimpri Narang, Pocket A 8 /46 Kalkaji Extn, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004664237	Property Bearing, 69/3 Block-C Okhla, Industrial area, Phase-II, Delhi 110048	04/09/2021 Rs. 24,658/-	06-05-2021
16.	S K Nanda F & B Food Centre, Rama Nanda, Vijay Parkash Nanda, Veena Nanda, Narendra Prakash Nanda, Pratik Nanda, Surinder Prakash Nanda, S K Nanda F & B Food Centre 57, Mayapur Industrial area Phase 1, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00002736643	Plot No C2, Vishal Enclave, Rajouri, Garden, Delhi 110027	04/09/2021 Rs. 3,12,61,739/-	30-04-2021
17.	Prem Kumar Narang, Rimpri Narang, Pocket A 8/46 Kalkaji Extn, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00002961733	Property Bearing, 69/3 Block-C Okhla, Industrial area, Phase-II, Delhi 110048	04/09/2021 Rs. 2,577/-	06-05-2021
18.	Iqbal Haider, Sayed Saleem Haider Naqvi, Accurate Engineering Works, 3/161 Rajendra Nagar Sector-2 Sahibabad, Uttar Pradesh, Ghaziabad. A/c No:- LBDEL00004187499	House No- 3/161, Block-3, Sector-2, Rajender Nagar, Ghaziabad, UP	30/08/2021 Rs. 27,39,905/-	06-05-2021
19.	Jaasjit Singh, Sangita Singh, Spell Binders Production Pvt Ltd, House # 175, Sector # 9B, Chandigarh, Punjab. A/c No:- LBDEL00001049917	Plot No. 4621, Qutab Enclave, Phase-IV, Haryana Gurgaon	23/09/2021 Rs. 11,51,099.77/-	08-04-2021
20.	Mitul Tyagi, Jai Prakash Tyagi, Kunti, H-93 Patel Nagar III, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad, A/c No:- LBDEL00001875219	H-93, First Floor, Sector-7 Patel Nagar-3 Block-H, Gmp Ghaziabad	23/09/2021 Rs. 11,72,339.1/-	11-05-2021
21.	Mitul Tyagi, Jai Prakash Tyagi, Kunti, H-93 Patel Nagar III, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad, A/c No:- LBDEL00001964443	H-93, First Floor, Sector-7 Patel Nagar-3 Block-H, Gmp Ghaziabad	23/09/2021 Rs. 4,55,803.2/-	11-05-2021
22.	Chander Mohan Sethi, Sethi Estates Private Limited, Sethi Buildwell Private Limited, Max City Developers Pvt Ltd, B 7, Suraj Mal Vihar, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00002006350	House No- E 18 Pratej Vihar, Delhi	04/10/2021 Rs. 2,86,34,975/-	31-07-2021
23.	Meenakshi Dabral, Ankur Jakhwani, C-63 Mandikini Appt Pitampura, Japan. A/c No:- LBDEL00002006670	House No-B-0096, Tower No-B Espace Premiere, Sec-71-72, Nirvana Country- 2, Gurgaon 122002 Haryana	04/10/2021 Rs. 1,07,12,418/-	01-07-2021
24.	Nikon Filmlease Pvt Ltd, Vibhor Jindal, M 3 Pratap Bhawan, 5 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg Press area, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00002874313	Shop No-62 M, 6th Floor High Street, Condominiums Tiger, Court Block- 3H Wave City Centre, Plot No-CC-001 Sec 32 and 25a Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar 201301 Uttar Pradesh	04/10/2021 Rs. 1,67,73,206/-	06-07-2021
25.	Preeti Gupta, Tarun Kumar Gupta, 3626 Gali No- 5 Narang Colony, Narang Colony, Delhi, Tri Nagar. A/c No:- LBDEL00002879208	Plot No-367, First Floor Block-KP Pitampura Delhi	22/09/2021 Rs. 48,15,801/-	06-05-2021
26.	Ashok Kumar Chadha, Sunita Chadha, H No.1404 Tulip Grand Apartment, Tower C 2 Villi Ambarpur Barota, Sonapat, A/c No:- LBDEL00003050728	Flat No. 1104, 11th Floor Tower- C2 Tulip Grand Sector-35 Sonapat	23/09/2021 Rs. 18,63,510.1/-	06-04-2021
27.	Ashok Kumar Chadha, Sunita Chadha, H No.1404 Tulip Grand Apartment, Tower C 2 Villi Ambarpur Barota, Sonapat, A/c No:- LBDEL00003050737	Flat No. 1104, 11th Floor Tower- C2 Tulip Grand Sector-35 Sonapat	23/09/2021 Rs. 11,25,612.1/-	06-04-2021
28.	Surve Palli Karuna, S Srinivas Babu, H No.8460 Sec CH Pocket 8, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00003050899	Flat No. 8456, PKT 8, Sec-C GF, Vasant Kunj, Delhi- 110070	04/10/2021 Rs. 1,82,54,789/-	06-07-2021
29.	Preeti Gupta, Tarun Kumar Gupta, 367, Block KP, 1st Floor, Pitampura, North West, Delhi, North West. A/c No:- LBDEL00003762016	Plot No-367, 1st Floor Block- KP Pitampura Delhi	22/09/2021 Rs. 13,04,972/-	06-05-2021
30.	Himani, Manoj Kukreti, C/1/ 1901 GH01 Sector 16B, Greater Noida, Eco, Noida, Village 2 Greater Noida. A/c No:- LBDEL00004007153	Flat No.1901 19th Floor Tower C1 Supertech Ecovillage- 2 Plot No- GH01 Sector-16B Noida	22/09/2021 Rs. 7,99,005.02/-	06-05-2021
31.	Himani, Manoj Kukreti, C/1/ 1901 GH01 Sector 16B, Greater Noida, Eco, Noida, Village 2 Greater Noida. A/c No:- LBDEL00004102479	Flat No.1901 19th Floor Tower C1 Supertech Ecovillage-2 Plot No- GH01 Sector-16B Noida	22/09/2021 Rs. 27,66,087.68/-	06-05-2021
32.	Arjun Dixit, Rupesh Dixit, H No- C-13/F Dda Flats, Munrika J.N.U South West Delhi, New Delhi, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004350148	H No C13/F, 2nd Floor Dda Mig Flats Munirka Delhi	23/09/2021 Rs. 16,22,594.99/-	07-06-2021
33.	Rajiv Goel, Suman Goel, House No-J-31 South Ext Part-1 Andrewsganj Defence Colony, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004835904	Plot No-31, Block-J 1st and 2nd Floor, Roof Rights, South Extn Part-1, Delhi 110049	08/10/2021 Rs. 1,74,88,623/-	25-06-2021
34.	Arjun Dixit, Rupesh Dixit, H No- C-13/F Dda Flats, Munrika J.N.U South West Delhi, New Delhi, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004857771	H No C13/F, 2nd Floor Dda Mig Flats Munirka Delhi	23/09/2021 Rs. 10,99,320.99/-	07-06-2021
35.	Vicky Manju Gandhi, House No. 792, Ground Floor, Sec 9A, Gurgaon, Haryana, A/c No:- LBDEL00004896524	Property No-792 Basement and Ground Floor Sector- 9A Urban Estate Gurgaon Haryana	22/09/2021 Rs. 47,19,326/-	07-06-2021
36.	Abhishek Wadhwa, Satya Wadhwa, BW-85 B SFS Flat Shalimar Bagh, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004909529	Flat No- 85B 1st Floor, Dda SFS Cat-III Block- BW, Shalimar Bagh Delhi	23/09	



Bollywood
 'Shocked and saddened by the demise of General Bipin Rawat, his wife and the troops of the IAF.'
 —Karan Johar

Indian schools are restructuring their approach to education to compete with global standards, says SHOBHA SIVARAMAKRISHNAN

DO THE NEW

The Indian education system has witnessed a multi-fold change in the past few years. The change in the education requirements, environment and competition has necessitated a need for schools to restructure their approach to education. Upgrading their curriculum is the most important step in this direction. Schools are implementing curriculum that is relevant, updated and immersive to make education interactive, engaging and meaningful for students while aiding them in competing at a global level.

Over the years India has seen many reformations in the education system and owing to the pandemic, there has been a paradigm shift in the education system with the emergence of online classes, blended learning and a hybrid education model. Schools are delivering educational content that is at par with the global standards and curriculum focusing on developing critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills. A new method of teaching, assessment and training is also making students shine at a global level thus boosting their confidence and increasing opportunities.

Earlier in India, most of the learning was through rote methods where the focus was on memorising the topics rather than understanding them. However, over the years this teaching method has evolved and today schools focus on conceptual understanding and experiential learning which ensures students learn through research and various hands-on means which aid in applying their learning to real-world situations.

Curriculum is given prominence
 Schools are trying to move away from the vertically integrated stack like curriculum and classes, pen-paper assessment, as there is a lot more to education than these aspects.



Taking a cue from the global education system, schools in India have started building their in-house curriculum that meet international standards, keeping in mind the need to get students future-ready. With more students aspiring to pursue higher education in universities around the world, schools have realigned their teaching methods along with the content. This transformation has made students successful in gaining more prominence on the global level.

Along with the academic curriculum, students in many schools are also encouraged to take additional micro-courses like gardening, poetry, entrepreneurship and more which help them unwind and also explore shared interests. These courses also build life skills in students.

Inclusive learning and a multidisciplinary approach to education are the



other alterations undertaken by many educational institutions to be at par with schools around the world. Students are exposed to new and diverse learning experiences which enable participation, remove barriers and anticipate various learning needs and preferences.

Improvement in the infrastructure
 In an offline education model schools are considered as the second home of a child. A good school infrastructure with renewed spaces contributes positively to students' progress in learning. Good natural conditions such as lighting and ventilation, age-appropriate learning spaces offer flexible learning opportunities that students can adapt and personalise. Connections between learning spaces that are easy to navigate provide additional learning opportunities. Considering

this, the schools of today are designed to offer world-class facilities to the students which aid in their overall development.

Technology-based education
 Technology has revolutionised the field of education and has become an integral part of learning. It is included as part of the curriculum, as an instructional delivery system, as a tool to enhance the entire learning process. Education has moved from passive and reactive to advanced and interactive methods. Children are learning coding at the age of six-seven years. New-age technologies like AI, IoT and robotics have become a part of the curriculum at the school level. Students are encouraged to pick up projects in their area of interest in these subjects enabling them to compete with kids in their age group globally.

Tech-led education
 With the onset of the pandemic, schools have resorted to virtual learning and utilising the online learning platforms efficiently. This has reformed the education system in India where remote learning at the school level was never considered as an option. The new tech-led education model has also opened up newer opportunities for the students where they can apply to foreign universities and study remotely from their home city. This online mode of education has also enabled younger students to take up additional courses of their choice aiding their development.

NEP is a welcome change
 The introduction of NEP has transformed the image of the Indian education system. NEP is aimed at making learning more inclusive, vibrant and practical. According to the policy, there is increased flexibility in the choice of subjects for the students. The main objective of this new policy is to provide equal importance to curricular, co-curricular and vocational subjects. The NEP will focus on providing seamless opportunities for the students from government schools also. The government is looking at improving the infrastructure and education system of the government schools and providing equal opportunities for students in the rural areas and make them ready to take up any kind of challenge without inhibitions.

In a nutshell, the NEP aims at building a global best education system rooted in Indian ethos, where children from all walks of life benefit and get increased opportunities thereby transforming the Indian education system.

However, this transformation has to reach the rural areas to enable children to get increased opportunities to explore and fulfill their dreams.

(The author is the head of Ekya Schools Learning Centre.)



Rising to the occasion

Chef POOJA DHINGRA's book, *Coming Home*, documents the toughest time of her life, says AALIYA ASHWIN

Life is what happens when you are busy making other plans."

John Lennon's words couldn't have rung truer for most of us if we look back at the pandemic years. Each one of us had big plans when the clock struck midnight to usher in 2020 and chef Pooja Dhingra was no exception. Her bakery chain Le15 Patisserie was at a positive turning point, the chef says over a Zoom call to discuss how the pandemic impacted her deeply personally and professionally. "In March 2020, we had actually celebrated our 10th anniversary, and for the first time in my life I told myself, you should be proud of what you have achieved."

Then, life and the pandemic happened. For Dhingra, the pandemic meant making decisions she never thought she would have to make. "There was a deadly virus around the world, the world of restaurants was hit and I realised that we have to shut half our business down. But that was unfathomable... It was soul-crushing," Dhingra says and the twinge of regret is still evident despite the space of a year and a half since she made the decision. Her latest book *Coming Home* documents her experience of the toughest time of her life.

What she perhaps did not realise at that time was how much of a personal toll shutting down her cafe would take. "Every little piece of me was in this space. It was unimaginable to shut it down. The first two months were some of the darkest days I went through in my life when I feared not only for my business but also for my health and life." Then, there was



the love of the craft of baking itself, something that had been her joy and solace ever since she was 15. "I was an impatient child, and my *buja* first took me to the kitchen to bake brownies as a way to channelise my energy. When I first discovered how simple ingredients like butter, sugar, flour, eggs can go together, it was magical, and it drew me to bake more and more," the chef remembers.

Now, hit by the pandemic, having had to shut her bakery chain that was not just a business but something intrinsic to her identity, her coping mechanism kicked in. "I deleted every social media app from my phone for over a week and I slept and I watched *Friends*. I forgot what day it was, what time it was. I knew, I had to make the journey within,"

Dhingra mentions in her new book *Coming Home*.

But going through these tough times only made her stronger. "It (the pandemic) also made me realise that you can't operate from a place of fear. So, for me, that was a big, like, mental switch also, and about one finding the opportunity in a crisis."

For Dhingra, this pandemic was all about rediscovering her love for baking. Her journey during these times is one of perseverance. She describes her business goals for the New Year as, "World Domination". She would very much like to see her cafe Le 15 in other countries, to write more cookbooks, and to have podcasts. One of her personal goals is to climb Mount Fuji next year.

Next step

VIR DAS to develop and star in an American country music comedy series in his next international project where *Brooklyn Nine Nine's* ANDY SAMBERG is the executive producer

Vir Das is all set to write and be the executive producer of a brand new show for FOX. Titled *Country Eastern*, the series is a single cam comedy series which will also star Das. The show is about a young wealthy man from India who moves to American with his family. In an attempt to rebuild their lives in Memphis, Tennessee, he decides to pursue his passion and become a country music singer. The only issue is that he's bad at it.

Speaking of the series, Das said, "It's an exciting brand new project that I'm happy to announce that the series is now being developed. The writing of the series is currently on. I'm excited to be collaborating with such immensely talented names, each of whom has an envious body of work. It's a unique comedy and I'm looking forward to filming the series soon."

Das is set to co-write the show with Sam Laybourne, who is also the showrunner. Laybourne was recently the EP on *Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist* and has written shows like *Black-ish*, *Cougar Town* and *Arrested Development*.

Party Over Here, the production company founded by Lonely Island's Andy Samberg, Akiva Schaffer and Jorma Taccone and CBS Studios. Fox Entertainment and CBS Studios will co-produce the show. It has most recently produced acclaimed comedy *Pen15* for Hulu and also produced the critically acclaimed film, *Palm Springs* starring Samberg.

Das is also soon set to be seen in a Hollywood flick titled *The Bubble* being directed by Judd Apatow.



TRENDBLAZER

PARINEETI'S 10 YEARS IN CINEMA

Actress PARINEETI CHOPRA made her debut with the film *Ladies vs Ricky Bahl* and has been doing great work ever since then.

On completing her 10th year in cinema, she says, "I have been fortunate to work in some of the landmark films of Indian cinema and collaborate with some of the best directors, actors, technicians of our industry. When you love your work, time flies."

"I feel I have just started my journey. I'm raring to go for my next decade in cinema. I'm loving the kind of offers that are coming my way because I'm getting the freedom to express myself freely," Parineeti adds.



fairtalk

NUSHRRATT BHARUCCHA



"With each film, I try a new approach or method to get into the skin of the character. Because I never went to an acting school, or took any formal training, I have always learnt on the job. In *Chhorii*, my character is very layered, vulnerable, soft, impressionable, forgiving, yet fierce and fearless – a true survivor. Thus, getting Sakshi's emotional quotient right was important."

dailytalk

BABA SEHGAL



"*Bella Ciao* is a peppy protest anthem and is super catchy. I didn't anticipate my version of the song *Kela Khao* would become such a huge hit on social media. I was simply at home getting bored and made this track. It just struck a chord. *Money Heist* connects directly to your heart. That's why it's so popular. Even if I watch it after a few years, I will not forget a single frame."

HARTNETT TALKS MENTAL HEALTH

Pearl Harbor actor JOSH HARTNETT, who turned down an offer to play Superman in a \$100 million three-movie deal, has opened up about his decision to step back and avoid blockbusters at the height of his career to focus on his home life.

"It was the best thing for my mental health and my career to keep Hollywood at bay. Luckily, I think I hit onto it early on in my life – it's about creating a good home life and being able to do things that are wild and wonderful like making films, which is such a privilege," he shared.





CARRYING THE LEGACY FORWARD

KHUSHBU KIRTI
 grooves to the 90s music while exploring the classic taste of food at Saqi Bar

As you enter the stairs of one of the oldest hotels in Connaught Place — Hotel Alka — you're warmed by the love and warmth with which you're greeted by the staff. Everyone is helpful and seems like a close-knit family. I guess, that is one perk of running a successful business for such a long time, since its establishment in 1968.

Located in a prime place, in the outer circle of CP, Saqi Bar's decor, although with a slightly antique touch, looks classic. Given that an old Mughlai bars of Delhi, the Bollywood music, bar, wooden floors with velvet sofas and oval mirrors complemented the vibes it was emanating. I swayed to the old songs of the 90s that were playing on the side of the large bar. Some old gentlemen were chilling, as if retired from the worries of life. It felt like they would have been visiting the place every day of their life. I, automatically, felt welcomed.

The owner of the place, Shubham Agarwal, was sweet enough to brief us about the hotel and the restaurant's history along with suggestions for what we should eat, as we looked forward to dining there.

First, my friend and I were served with their *Thandai masala special*. The drink, laden with rich dry fruits and full cream milk, was so refreshing that it, as if, brought upon us a cloud of relief.

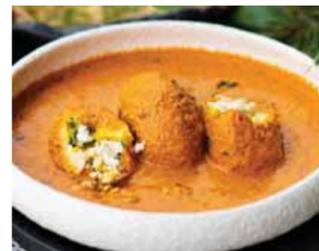
We were starving and so quickly indulged into the *Fish tikka*, chef's special, and its juicy and brilliant taste made us content. The fish was slippery, but in a good way, the flavours were right. And as MaterChef Dheeraj Choudhary informed us it was made of sole fish which is marinated with masala, sarso oil, haldi and topped with *achari* masala to elevate the flavour.

Masterchef Dheeraj also apprised us that Indian Tandoori and curry department was something he had specialised in. And, thus, our expectations of his signature *Coconut fish curry* and *Butter chicken* touched the pinnacle. However, the food outdid our expectations! The *Butter chicken* reminded me of Old Delhi delicacies and it clearly was some of the best I had had in a while.

Even though the ambience was not exactly chic and supplementing the con-



temporary times, the food compensated for it in every sense. We were told that the dish *Aaloo masala* was, true to its name, made of spice and potato. I did not venture in after



it in order to neutralise the fire in our mouths. But thandai helped more. The *Chicken sizzler* was another delicious dish. It was crunchy and tasted even better when dipped in hot gravy. Now, the dish was accompanied by warm and crispy french fries. And I had never experienced french fries with chicken gravy but, I believe, there's always a first, eh? And trust me when I say this, the combination tasted brilliant! I realised I had discovered a big thing for future eating-out adventures of mine.

We were, further, offered the *Dal Makhni*. I had decided to only save space in my stomach for dessert for I was already so full. But on chef's insistence, I tried the dal and, oh, how I enjoyed it. It was soft and decent, and rendered a vibe that, as if, you're eating something after a long time.

My favourite part of eating out is always the desserts. Of course, the *Moong dal ka halwa*, although mildly sweet, was scrumptious and juicy. Whereas, the *Gulab jamun* was extremely sweet, like chashni and warm, but as luscious as ever.

Finally, the *Matka kulfi* reminded me of my hometown, Lucknow, and took me to the old days when my grandmother and I ate matka kulfi together. The pleasant memory got a smile on my face.

It was time well spent. If you're on a budget, and care for extremely good food, Saqi Bar will, undoubtedly, make for the perfect choice.

Achieve an equilibrium

DR SIDDHANT BHARGAV has some tips to build and eat a balanced diet

In the midst of the pandemic, consumption of wholesome edibles remains a vital part of upholding your health. While there are no specific foods that can facilitate in shielding you from the virus, following a nutritious diet can enhance your immune system thus helping you to combat the symptoms.

A balanced diet delivers vitamins, minerals, and proteins that your body requires in the right proportion. These are essential nutrients that you must derive from food since your body is unable to produce them itself. Intake of a balanced diet also implies fuelling your body with the right number of calories it requires. This means that caloric intake must not be additionally high and neither should there be a scarcity of calories. Most of your day-to-day nutrients should come from the five food groups like fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy. The keystone of a healthy diet should be to substitute processed edibles with natural ingredients.

These simple tips can help you learn how to build and stick to a healthy and nourishing diet:

Protein: These nutrients lend you the energy to keep going while also bracing mood and cognitive functioning. Choose lean proteins, and ensure you have an assortment of the following sub-groups like poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds, legumes, and soy products. Limit processed foods and treated poultry.

Fat: Not all fats tend to be the same. While bad fats can ruin your diet and make you susceptible to some ailments, good fats guard your brain and heart. In fact, healthy fats—such as omega-3s—are vital to your physical and mental well-being.

Fibres: Intake of edibles rich in dietary fibres like legumes, grains, fruit, and vegetables can facilitate in lowering your risk for heart ailments, stroke, and diabetes. It can also improve your skin and move you closer to weight loss goals.

Calcium: Alongside contributing to osteoporosis, not getting enough calcium in your diet can also lead to bouts of anxiety, depression and sleep problems. It is important to include calcium-rich edibles in your diet, eliminate those that reduce calcium, and get enough of magnesium and vitamins D and K to enable calcium in performing its job.

Carbohydrates: These are one of your body's foremost energy sources. But most of them should come from complex, unrefined carbs like grains, fruits, and veggies rather apart from sugars and refined carbs. Eliminating white bread, starches and sugar from your diet will



help in prevent speedy spikes in blood sugar, variations in mood and energy and a fat accumulation, particularly around your waistline.

MAKING THE SWITCH TO A HEALTHY DIET

A better approach towards building a healthy diet is to make a few healthy diet alterations:

Make the right changes: When you cut back on unhealthy foods in your diet, you must ensure it is being replaced with healthier options. For instance, substituting trans fats with healthy fats can have a healing impact on your health.

Stay hydrated: Water aids in flushing out of toxins and waste from our systems. It is common to mistake thirst for hunger, hence staying well hydrated will also facilitate you in making healthier food choices.

Portion control is key: Start by reducing portion sizes of unwholesome foods. As you lessen your consumption of unhealthy edibles, you may find yourself craving them less or thinking of them as only sporadic indulgences.

Keep emotional eating under control: We might not always eat to content our hunger pangs. We might at times turn to food to release stress or cope with unpleasant emotions. By learning restored ways to uphold stress and emotions, can help you to regain control over your food intake and feelings.

Eating and building a wholesome diet is not about strict limits, or depriving yourself of the foods you love. Rather, it is about refining your well-being and enhancing your mood with the right food choices.

(The author is a fitness and nutritional scientist as well as co-founder, Food Darzee.)

R E C I P E S



CHOCOLATE DOSA

WHAT YOU NEED

- Dosa batter (without salt): 1 cup
- Nutella chocolate spread: 2 tbsp
- Yellow salted butter: ½ tsp

METHOD

- Take the Nutella chocolate spread and add butter. Heat it (you can heat it together in the microwave for five seconds or on indirect heat) to mix them both together and have a smooth chocolate spread.
- Preheat your flat dosa pan and grease

it with oil. It should be hot before pursuing the dosa batter.

- Pour a ladle of the dosa batter and spread thinly in a circular motion to make a round shape of the dosa.

- Let the dosa cook for one minute, then spread the Nutella mixture all around evenly. Do not flip the dosa on the side where the Nutella mixture is spread out.
- Fold the dosa in a cylindrical shape.
- Warm, chocolatey dosa is ready, best to be had with filter coffee.

Courtesy: Thalavaar Restaurant

SOYA CHUNK LOLLYPOP

WHAT YOU NEED

- Soya chunks (soaked and strained): 100 gm
- Boiled potato (peeled and grated): 2
- Onion (finely chopped): 2 tbsp
- Sugarcane sticks (4 inch each): 10
- Corn (fresh/frozen): 3 tbsp
- Kashmiri red chilli powder: ½ tsp
- Garam masala powder: ¼ tsp
- Salt to taste
- Chaat masala: ½ tsp
- Ginger-garlic paste: ½ tsp
- Bread crumbs: ¼ cup
- Maida: 2 tbsp
- Corn flour: 2 tbsp
- Pepper (crushed): ¼ tsp
- Water: ½ cup
- Godrej sunflower oil for deep frying

METHOD

- In a large mixing bowl, take chopped soya chunks, boiled potatoes, and add in onion, corn, chilli powder, garam masala powder, chaat masala, ginger-garlic



paste and salt.

- Add bread crumbs and mix well. Make maida paste, keep aside.
- Roll balls from the mixture dip in the paste.
- Insert a sugarcane stick and coat the balls with breadcrumbs.
- Deep fry in Godrej oil on medium flame till the veg lollipop turns golden brown. This oil will help to give a nice bright colour to the soya lollipop.
- Serve it with schezwan sauce.

Courtesy: Godrej Vikhroli Cucina

RICH CHOCOLATE PUDDING

WHAT YOU NEED

- Whole milk: 550 ml
- heavy cream: 80 ml
- Dark chocolate (finely chopped): 100 gm
- Rice flour: 10 gm
- Cocoa powder: 15 gm
- Corn starch: 15 gm
- Salt: 2 gm
- Vanilla extract: 5 gm
- Sugar: 100 gm

METHOD

- Combine sugar, cocoa, cornstarch, salt and rice flour in a medium saucepan. Gradually add milk and whisk until well combined. Place over medium heat.
- Cook, stirring constantly, until pudding is bubbling and thickens. Stir in the chopped chocolate and heavy cream.
- After the chocolate has melted, turn off the heat, add vanilla and whisk until well blended. Pour into dessert dishes.
- Let cool at room temperature and then refrigerate until ready to serve.

Courtesy: Chef Rajnish Dubey at Honey & Dough

30 BEST BARS COCKTAIL WORKSHOP

Creating your own cocktails can be an immensely thrilling process. 30 Best Bars India, the country's first-ever independent national yearly ranking of bars, in addition to being a platform that celebrates the best of Indian bar talent and culture, brings forth an exciting cocktail workshop through Aperol and Campari. Held at Cocktails and Dreams



Speakeasy, Gurgaon, a cocktail bar that has won countless hearts and clocked in at rank three in the inaugural edition of 30 Best Bars in 2019, the workshop will give beverage connoisseurs an opportunity to learn the art of crafting four deliciously interesting cocktails with their beverage expert on board, Susan Dias. Not only that, the workshop equips participants with the skills they need to host their very own Aperitivo Hour. The two-hour workshop has limited seats available. Come and experience the sublime magic of making cocktails! For registration and inquiries, contact 9734212868. **When:** December 11, 4 pm-6 pm **Where:** Cocktails and Dreams Speakeasy, Gurgaon **Price:** ₹ 2,500 per head (the cost includes the cocktails and appetisers.)

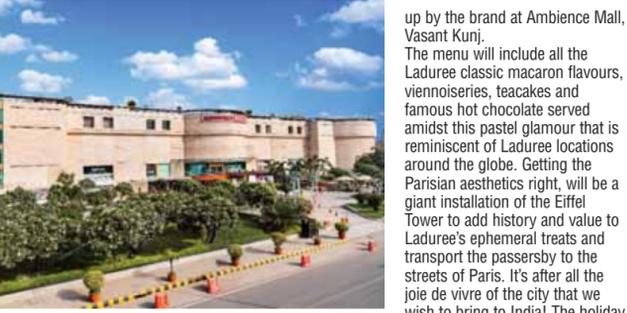
LISTINGS

JAIN MENU AT 1441 PIZZERIA

Pizza lovers, galore! The good folks at 1441 Pizzeria, which is known for its Italian wood-fired pizzas and unique concept of 'Make Your Own (MYO)' pizzas with unlimited toppings, have come up with a new menu to delight you further.

As per the latest development, the eatery has added exciting items to its menu with a Jain section to its classic menu in an endeavour to cater to the niche Jain audience. With special Jain sauce that

among others, that will surprise your taste buds. In addition to this, 1441 has introduced its bestselling starters and pastas in Jain variants, too, including *Jalapeno poppers*, *Chilli cheese bread*, and the much loved *Smokee cheese doughballs*, *Jain fusilli pasta* and *Jain spicy spaghetti pasta*. Apart from their *Classic margherita pizza*, dig into their new cheesy *Double cheese margherita pizza* and lose track of time (and calories).



LADURÉE CHRISTMAS POPUP CART AT AMBIENCE MALL

Ambience Malls take great pride in scouring the best in fashion, food and entertainment throughout the globe to bring it back to their visitors and shoppers in Delhi NCR. With a focus on adding more global appeal to their food offerings, they have tied up with

the iconic French Patisserie 'Laduree' Christmas popup cart for this festive month inside the mall, a charming space that will boast of a Delhi-Meets-Paris vibe. To add to the synergy of their launch and add bits of nostalgia & history to the holiday season with the taste of Laduree will be a pop

2ND ALL INDIA KOREAN CULINARY CHALLENGE

The Korean Cultural Centre India (KCCI) and Banarsidas Chandiwala Institute of Hotel Management, (BCHMCT) New Delhi are hosting their '2nd All India Korean Culinary Challenge'. On the day, the Indian finalists will be presenting their Korean (traditional and Indian fusion)

dishes to the eminent judges. Alongside Korean culture experiences, programmes and booth will be open to all the visitors at the campus. It will have multiple exciting and engaging events, to name some are Korean traditional play sets (The Squid Game contents), Dalgona Challenge Event, Kimchi Challenge Event, Korean traditional dress and instruments, various performance, flashmob, Taekwondo and many more. **When:** December 11 **Where:** Banarsidas Chandiwala Institute of Hotel Management





Head, Warner help Australia grab 196-run lead in Ashes opener

AP ■ BRISBANE

David Warner set up the innings with a chance-filled 94 and Travis Head took over with an unbeaten century after a mini-collapse in the middle order to guide Australia to 343-7 at stumps on Day 2, a 196-run lead in the Ashes series opener. Warner had a big reprieve on 17 off a no-ball from Ben Stokes, one of the many times the England allrounder overstepped but one of the few he was called for. Warner was also dropped in the slips on 48 and narrowly avoided being run out as he scrambled back to his crease on 60. But he ran out of luck after sharing partnerships of 156 with Marnus Labuschagne (74) for the second wicket and 23 with Steve Smith (12) for the third, finally out just after the tea interval when Ollie Robinson took two wickets

with consecutive deliveries. Robinson had Warner caught in the covers by Stokes and then bowled Cameron Green, who didn't play a shot to a ball that hit his off stump, in a period when Australia slid from 189-2 to 195-5. New wicketkeeper Alex Carey successfully blocked the hat-trick ball, his first delivery in test cricket, but was out for 12 as England clawed back to have the Australians at 236-6. Head and captain Pat Cummins combined in a 70-run stand that restored Australia's domination of the first two days at the Gabba, accelerating the scoring as England's fielding got ragged. The partnership ended when England skipper Joe Root picked up the wicket of his counterpart, having Cummins caught at leg slip. Head continued with Mitchell Starc and was on 96

when he attempted a sweep to Root, was hit on the arm and Burns couldn't reach as the ball ballooned down the leg side. He reached his century from 85 deliveries with a driven boundary off Chris Woakes in the first over with the new ball, an innings containing 12 fours and two sixes. Head was felled by a full-toss from Mark Wood when he was on 105, hit on the glove and helmet before falling to the ground, but recovered to finish unbeaten on 112 at stumps. Warner's survival and Stokes' delivery stride were the two main talking points on Thursday. Warner got his first reprieve from the TV umpire after being beaten by Stokes, bowling his first over in a test match since March. TV broadcaster Channel 7 showed Stokes had also overstepped the crease on his previous three deliveries and not

been called by the umpires. The Ashes broadcaster later revealed Stokes had overstepped the front crease 14 times in the opening session on Day 2 and had only been called twice for a no-ball. Cricket Australia said a technology problem at the Gabba meant that the third umpire, Paul Wilson, couldn't review TV replays of every delivery to check if bowlers were overstepping the crease, leaving it to the on-field umpires to make the calls. Robinson returned the best figures for the England bowlers, taking 3-48 from 18 overs on an extended second day, and also having a chance put down. Left-arm spinner Jack Leach picked up the key wicket of Labuschagne, but was otherwise punished by the Australian batting lineup and returned 1-95 from 11 overs.

We couldn't have had two white-ball captains: Ganguly

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

BCCI president Sourav Ganguly on Thursday said that once Virat Kohli refused to continue as India's T20 captain, the selectors made up their mind to hand the ODI reins to Rohit Sharma as the national team couldn't afford "too much leadership" with two separate captains in the limited-overs format. The BCCI on Wednesday named Rohit the captain of the ODI side going into the 2023 ODI World Cup and Ganguly, in an interaction with PTI, opened up on the issue, asserting that the incumbent was spoken to and duly accepted the decision. "We had requested Virat not to step down as T20 captain but he didn't want to continue as captain. So, the selectors felt that they cannot have two white ball captains in two white-ball formats. That's too much of leadership," BCCI president and former India captain told PTI. Kohli stepped down as T20 captain after India's disastrous World Cup campaign in October-November. Ganguly said the selectors felt that multiple leaders in the white-ball format would lead to confusion and that's why the Chetan Sharma-led committee suggested that it's better to have one leader.



"A leader who led the side with grit, passion & determination. Thank you Captain @imVkohli," the Board tweeted on the day after completely omitting any reference to him in the press note that announced Rohit's elevation to ODI captaincy
—BCCI thanks Kohli

"I don't know (about confusion) but that's what they (selectors) felt. That's how this conclusion was arrived at -- that let Rohit captain in white ball and let Virat be the red-ball skipper," Ganguly added. So how does he see Rohit performing as ODI skipper? Ganguly said that he wouldn't like to make any predictions but is confident of the new skipper's abilities. "It's very difficult to predict. I wish him all the best and hope he does a good job," he said. But was it taken into consideration that Kohli has been a good ODI skipper with over 70 per cent win record in 95 games that he was in charge. Yes, we did consider that but if you

look at Rohit's record in whatever ODIs he has captained for India, it's very good. Bottom line, there can't be two white ball captains." The sensitive question of not winning any ICC Trophy during Kohli's tenure at the helm was also asked but the Board president refused to divulge the details of the discussion. "I can't explain more about what all was discussed and what selectors have said, but this is primary reason for having Rohit as white ball captain and Virat accepted it," he revealed. On behalf of BCCI, it was the president himself and the chairman of selectors, who spoke to Kohli and intimated the BCCI's decision. "Yes, I have spoken to Virat personally and chairman of selectors Chetan Sharma has also spoke to him on the issue," he signed off.

Quality that Virat has as batter and leader is required in our team: Rohit

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A batter of Virat Kohli's calibre and the qualities that he brings along with his leadership skills are very much required in the team, said India's new white ball captain Rohit Sharma. Rohit, who was already appointed T20 International captain, has also replaced Kohli as ODI captain. He feels that a captain's job is 20 percent on the field and rest at the planning stage where he would like his men to be



prepared for the worst, keeping crunch situations in major ICC event encounters in mind. "A batter of his quality is always needed in the squad. To have an average of 50 plus in the T20 format, it is crazy and unreal. Obviously, with the experience, he batted and bailed India out so many times from difficult situations," Rohit said during YouTube show 'Backstage with Boria'. For Rohit, a captain is as good as his team and it's impor-

tant for the world to know what the role of a captain is. "A captain is there to ensure right players are playing, right combination is playing and obviously few tactical things that you need to look after," he stated. For him a captain needs to walk the talk with his performance but otherwise stand at the back and put an arm around teammates. "Captain needs to stand at forefront while performing and for everything else needs to stand at the back."

VIJAY HAZARE TROPHY HIGHLIGHTS

Tomar, Sharma floor Goa as Rajasthan make it two in two

PTI ■ RANCHI

Rajasthan crushed Goa by 84 runs to secure their second successive win and lead the Group E table in the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on Thursday. First it was their in-form opener Abhijeet Tomar who set it up, top-scoring for Rajasthan with his 92 to notch up a challenging 257/8 after Goa elected to field. Then Rajasthan leftarm spinner floored the Goa batters with his 5/12

to bowl them out for 173 in 42.3 overs. Tomar, who scored an unbeaten 104 in their win over Punjab on Wednesday, carried on from where he left and held on despite wickets falling at the other end. Tomar hit four sixes and five boundaries and looked set for a second successive century before falling short by eight runs in the 46th over. Ravi Bishnoi propped up the total at the death with two sixes for his 10-ball 20 not out.



Goa's chase went terribly wrong as Rajasthan leftarm spinner Shubham Sharma bowled with utmost guile and precision. Gaikwad scores another ton, Venkatesh stars with 112 for MP. Maharashtra run machine Ruturaj Gaikwad scored a second successive hundred in as many days to lead his team to a thumping eight-wicket win over Chhattisgarh in a Group D match of the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on

Thursday. The Maharashtra skipper on Wednesday left the job unfinished getting out for 136 in their high scoring chase against Madhya Pradesh, but this time he paced his innings beautifully on way to an unbeaten 143-ball 154 and hunt down 277 with three overs to spare. The 24-year-old smashed five sixes and 14 boundaries and was in total control of the chase, making him a strong prospect for a debut call up in the upcoming ODI series in South Africa.

Indian women's hockey team's ACT campaign ends due to Covid case in squad

PTI ■ DONGHAIE (SOUTH KOREA)

The Indian women's hockey team was on Thursday forced out of the ongoing Asian Champions Trophy after one of its player tested positive for COVID-19, joining Malaysia which was also compelled to withdraw after being hit by the dreaded virus here. A day after the cancellation of its matches against defending champions Korea and China respectively, an Asian Hockey Federation source told PTI that the Indian team is no

longer competing in the event. The side is currently in quarantine and the identity of the player who has tested positive has not been revealed. "Last edition's runner-up India are out of the tournament due to a positive case in the squad. India will no longer participate any further in the tournament," the AHF source said. While India were scheduled to take on hosts Korea on Wednesday, they were slated to meet China on Thursday.



Mandhana ideal choice as Mithali's successor: Shantha Rangaswamy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Smriti Mandhana is the ideal candidate to lead India after ODI and Test skipper Mithali Raj retires following the conclusion of the Women's World Cup in New Zealand next year, said former captain Shantha Rangaswamy. Harmanpreet Kaur has been the T20 captain since 2016 but her inconsistent run as a batter doesn't make her an automatic choice

to replace Mithali in the longer formats. Mandhana, on the other hand, has established herself as among the best batters in the world. "Smriti is the ideal choice after Mithali retires. She has been an excellent performer for India and should be given the opportunity to lead the country," Shantha, who led India to their first ever Test win back in 1976, told PTI. Shantha, who also happens to be a BCCI Apex Council member, feels captaincy has impacted Harmanpreet's batting which she thinks is key for India's success. Mandhana, who has played four Tests, 62 ODIs and 84 T20s, was last seen in the Women's Big Bash in Australia where he also scored a hundred against

Melbourne Renegades. Harmanpreet, who has been battling with form and fitness over the last 12 months, also did well in the Big Bash and it remains to be seen if she can carry that form to the highest level. India's next assignment will be the away series against New Zealand before the World Cup in March-April. India had finished runners-up in 2017. With the Women's Challenger concluding on Thursday, Shantha said the competition showed there is no dearth of talent in the country. "The event has unearthed a lot of talent which augurs well for women's cricket. It also shows that we are ready for a Women's IPL," she added.

Canada joins US and allies in Beijing Olympics boycott

AP ■ TORONTO

Canada will join the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia in a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics over human rights concerns, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said. The announcement came after the White House, the Australian government and the UK government confirmed diplomatic boycotts of the Winter Games in February to protest Chinese human rights abuses. China has vowed to react with "firm countermeasures." Trudeau on Wednesday said his government has been talks with allies about it in recent months. "We are extremely concerned by the repeated human rights violations by the Chinese government," Trudeau said. "They should not be surprised we will not be



sending any diplomatic representation." The diplomatic moves by Canada, the U.S., Britain and Australia do not affect their athletes' ability to compete in the games. Rights groups have called for a full-blown boycott of the Beijing Winter Games, citing Chinese human rights abuses against its Uyghur minority in the northwest Xinjiang province, which some have called genocide.

Mary Kom, Amit Panghal among bigwigs missing from list of national campers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Six-time world champion M C Mary Kom and Asian Games gold-medallist Amit Panghal are among the top names missing from the list of boxers finalised for the 13-day national camps for men and women that will get underway at separate locations from December 11. In fact, none of the five male boxers who competed in the Tokyo Olympics, including Manish Kaushik, Ashish Chaudhary, Vikas Krishan and Satish Kumar, have made the list of 52 men who will train from December 11 to 24 at Patiala's National Institute of Sports (NIS). Of these, Vikas is currently nursing a shoulder injury, which required surgery. The women's camp will be held at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) Centre in Rohtak on the exact same dates.

Barcelona out of Champions League, snow extends group stage

PTI ■ MUNICH

Barcelona's 17-year streak of advancing to the Champions League knockout rounds each season ended with an exit from the group stage that failed to finish on time because of snow in Italy. Barcelona fell to a 3-0 loss on Wednesday at Bayern Munich that dumped the five-time European champion into a dismal — and deserved — third place in Group E. "We start a new era, from zero, from here," Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez, who rejoined a club in crisis last month, told broadcaster DAZN. Bayern's perfect six straight wins started with a 3-0 win at Camp Nou in September, and a repeat result at home let Benfica rise above Barcelona — and into the round-of-16 draw on Monday — by beating Dynamo Kyiv 2-0. Only 15 of the 16-team lineup in

the knockout stage were known on Wednesday night. The Atalanta-Villarreal game to decide who will finish runner-up in Group F was postponed by heavy snow in the northern Italian city of Bergamo. The group was already won by Manchester United before it drew 1-1 Wednesday with last-place Young Boys at Old Trafford. UEFA later asked Atalanta and Villarreal to try again on Thursday evening. A grim evening for Spanish sides saw Sevilla join Barcelona in being eliminated, failing to advance from the wide-open Group G where all four teams kicked off in contention. Lille, the team lowest-ranked by UEFA in the group stage, seized top spot by beating Wolfsburg 3-1 in Germany. Canada forward Jonathan David scored the second goal for Lille. Salzburg beat Sevilla 1-0 to advance to the round of 16 as runner-up. The consolation for third-place Sevilla is a switch across to the second-tier Europa League where it is the record six-time title-holder. Defending champion Chelsea



Petersburg's leveler deep into stoppage time for a 3-3 draw in Russia that let Juventus secure top spot with a 1-0 win at home to Malmo. Juventus will be in the pot of seeded teams with the other group winners in Monday's draw, where the unseeded pot now includes Chelsea and Paris Saint-Germain. BARCELONA SLUMP Before Lionel Messi left for PSG, in all 17 years of his first-team career at Barcelona the club took its place among the elite in the round of 16 each February. They won four Champions League titles in that era. In the club's first post-Messi season, the Europa League playoffs now beckon after a group-stage campaign that brought more 3-0 losses (three) than goals scored (two). The decline also extends at home and to the club's finances. A current seventh place in La Liga is

outside the European qualification spots and years of big spending on wages mean there is no quick fix for the prodigal son who returned last month to coach the club. "We need to work hard, many things that put Barcelona in this situation. But this is our reality. I cannot say anything else," Xavi said. Bayern won its group with a 22-goal tally that was more than twice as many as the other three teams combined. Goals from Thomas Müller, Leroy Sané and Jamal Musiala against Barcelona ensured Bayern matched Ajax and Liverpool who completed their six straight wins on Tuesday. Bayern was joined by Salzburg in playing in empty stadiums just like 2020 in European soccer during the first waves of the COVID-19 pandemic. Salzburg's first entry into the

knockout rounds follows several years as junior partner to fellow Red Bull affiliate Leipzig, which placed third in its group Tuesday and will switch to the Europa League. ROUND-OF-16 DRAW The round-of-16 draw is on Monday at 11:00 GMT at UEFA headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland. There are restrictions in the draw. Teams that already played each other in the group stage and teams from the same country cannot be drawn together. Pot 1 has Manchester City, Liverpool, Ajax, Real Madrid, Bayern Munich, Manchester United, Lille and Juventus. Pot 2 has Paris Saint-Germain, Atlético Madrid, Sporting Lisbon, Inter Milan, Benfica, Atalanta or Villarreal, Salzburg and Chelsea. First-leg games are played over two midweeks from Feb. 15-23 and return games are from March 8-16.