

**WORLD 7**  
BIDEN REVOKES TERRORIST DESIGNATION FOR HOUTHIS

**MONEY 8**  
LARGE FISCAL DEFICIT CAN BE INFLATIONARY: CRISIL

**SPORT 10**  
SYDNEY SIXERS WIN BBL TITLE

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**USUALSUSPECTS**  
SWAPAN DASGUPTA

## Farm stir a ruse for Opp to unseat Modi

The ongoing agitation involving farmers from Punjab, Haryana and, to a lesser extent, western Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, has attracted support from the unlikelyst of quarters. Predictably, the Akali Dal in Punjab and the fragmentary remnants of Chaudhury Devi Lal's empire have endorsed a movement aimed at safeguarding the interests of big farmers. The Congress, naturally, will support any movement that disturbs the tranquillity of the Narendra Modi Government. Less understandable, however, is the support the agitation has secured from the larger Left-liberal ecosystem, from individuals and organisations that, in the past, decried the stranglehold of the kulak lobby on India's agricultural policies.

The reasons are perhaps obvious. Just as last year's movement against the Citizenship Amendment Act had brought together individuals and political parties whose connections with fast-tracking citizenship applications from Hindu and Sikh refugees from neighbouring countries were tenuous, the target has always been the Modi Government. Last year, it was the Muslim community that provided the crowds and the rioters in Delhi and the border districts of West Bengal. This time, a small group of people with questionable links have taken control of the farmers movement, with logistical planning outsourced to professional agitators.

The farmers agitation has secured valuable support from intellectuals and media, notably those who have remained unreconciled to the defeat of the Congress and the advent of the Modi Government since 2014. It is interesting to note that whatever the issue — and these have ranged from demonetisation, the Ayodhya verdict and the surgical strikes to the anti-CAA stir and the farmers agitation — the faces who have opposed the Government standpoint have remained more or less the same. This includes economists and others who had earlier vociferously recommended the very same reforms the Government enacted in the previous session of Parliament. They justified the U-turn on the ground that public consultations on the changes should have been more elaborate, never mind the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown.

This is both curious and, at the same time, dreadfully predictable. It suggests that the real target of Opposition wasn't the specific measures of the Government but the existence of the Modi Government itself. It is this visceral Opposition to the Modi Government that explains the inordinate haste with which journalists with a track record of battling against the Prime Minister and the BJP spread the obviously fake news of a farmer being shot dead by the police as he attempted to ram the metal barricades with his fast-moving tractor. The fake news could have triggered a riot. It is therefore unfortunate that the Editor's Guild thought it necessary to issue a statement that, in effect, seeks to gloss over this wilful misdemeanour.

The blind Opposition has touched ridiculous extremes. On the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, a portrait of the stalwart of the nationalist movement was unveiled in Rashtrapati Bhavan. It was a painting by the eminent Bengali artist Paresh Maity. However, the tweet of this occasion was followed by members of the same ecosystem questioning the authenticity of the person depicted in the painting. It was made out that the person portrayed in the painting was that of Prosenjit Chatterjee, a well-known Bengali film star who had played the role of Netaji in a film on Gumnami Baba. The fake news here too may have acquired the status of conventional wisdom not one of Netaji's grandnephews tweeted the original photograph on which the painting was based.

The incident may be trivial and is likely to be forgotten before the week ends. However, it reveals the sheer desperation of an extra-parliamentary Opposition that has been trying to create disturbances against the Modi Government, almost incessantly since 2014. So far, their political success has been patchy but they have been unrelenting in the hope that some issue or another is bound to click. The efforts by any Opposition force to move against the Government is a democratic right and cannot be questioned. What, however, does need highlighting is the fact that their efforts are linked to a well-defined political purpose.

The efforts by any Opposition force to move against the Government is a democratic right and cannot be questioned. What, however, does need highlighting is the fact that their efforts are linked to a well-defined political purpose. It is this agenda that needs to be simultaneously highlighted, not least because a section of the media are participants in this game.

# Farmers throw Oct 2 challenge

Rakesh Tikait says kisan will sit on protest till Gandhi jayanti; Chakka jam peaceful at KMP, Punjab, Haryana; scattered demonstrations in other States

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait on Saturday said that the farmers will stay put at borders of the national Capital till October 2, demanding to repeal the Centre's agri-marketing laws.

"We will sit here till October 2," said Tikait, who is leading the ongoing farmers' protest at Ghazipur border, one of the protest sites. Tikait also said that they had received inputs regarding some miscreants who will try to disrupt peace during the chakka jam on Saturday.

"Because of these inputs, we had decided to call off the 'chakka jam' in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand," the 51-year-old Tikait, credited with reviving the farmers' stir, said.

"Nobody can touch the farmlands, the farmers will protect it. Both farmers and soldiers should come forward for it," Tikait said.

Interacting with security personnel who were on the other side of the barricading, Tikait said, bowing his head and folded hands, "My pranaam (a respectful salutation) to you all. Now you all will protect my farms."

Loud rustic protest songs blared from speakers, the

Tricolour fluttered atop trucks and tractors, and commuters mostly waited patiently as farmers blocked the KMP Expressway on Saturday as part of their three-hour "chakka jam" to press their demand for repeal of the three new agricultural laws. The call for the nationwide "chakka jam" between 12 pm and 3 pm was given by the farmer unions protesting at the Delhi borders of the Centre's agricultural laws.

"I came to the stretch at 11 am. There were very few people then, but the number swelled in no time. The purpose is to peacefully do just what is instructed to us by our leaders — block the road till 3 pm," said Mukesh Sharma, a local farmer supporting the movement.

Biscuits and fruits were distributed among the protesting farmers sitting on the road. Those coming to the stretch with their vehicles were politely informed about the protest and requested to turn back.

"We don't want to cause any inconvenience to the people," said Ajit Ahluwalia (29), from Haryana's Hisar.

"That's precisely the reason why the call given was for three hours only. Security forces have been blocking ours and theirs passage for so many



BKU leader Rakesh Tikait holding a spade waves a Tricolour during the protest against Centre's new farm laws at Ghazipur border in New Delhi on Saturday

days. We expect the 'aam aadmi' to cooperate with us for some hours at least. And the truth is they are," he said.

Some vehicles, carrying people with emergency health conditions, were allowed to pass without any delay.

The 136-km Kundli-Manesar-Palwal (KMP) was built to decongest the ever-busy roads of Delhi, especially by reducing the number of trucks entering the national Capital, thus helping to curb pollution. The commuters, mostly wait-

ing patiently, said they knew about the "chakka-jam" but had to be out due to social and professional engagements.

While Satnam Sandhu (42), a private contractor, had to attend a business meeting; Sonu Ahuja and his family

were going for his cousin's wedding. "We are farmers ourselves, and support the farmers' movement completely. I have gone to the Singhu Border many a times for the protes," said 36-year-old Ahuja.

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## 25 countries in queue for 'Made in India' vaccines

15 nations already supplied with jabs against Covid-19, says Jaishankar

PTI ■ AMARAVATI

India has so far supplied Covid-19 vaccine to 15 countries and another 25 nations are in the queue at different levels for the job, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here on Saturday.

He said there are three categories of countries which are keen to get the vaccine from India — poor, price sensitive nations and other countries which directly deal with pharmaceutical companies that make the antidote.

"I think right now we have already supplied to about 15 countries (as per my recollection). I would say there would be another about 25 countries which are at different stages in the pipeline. But what it has done is today it has put India on the map of the world,"

Jaishankar told reporters in a Press conference.

The Minister said some poor countries are being supplied the vaccine on a grant basis while some nations wanted it on par with the price that the Indian Government pays to the vaccine makers.

Some countries have direct contracts with the Indian vaccine producing companies and have negotiated commercially, he said.

The Centre has already given the nod for two Covid-19 vaccines — Covaxin of city-based Bharat Biotech and Covishield of Oxford, being manufactured by Serum Institute of India in Pune, which are being administered to frontline workers from January 16, under Emergency Use Authorisation.

Drug maker Dr Reddys recently said it will approach the Drug Regulator for the EUA for Russian vaccine Sputnik V in March.

Jaishankar said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's idea was to establish the country as the "Pharmacy of the World",

taking advantage of the domestic capabilities and the way India emerged as IT leader during the Y2K issue.

AI can predict with 90% accuracy if a person will die from Covid or not

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Artificial intelligence (AI) cannot replace a doctor's assessment of medical condition of a person infected with deadly virus, but it can definitely help the fraternity with up to 90 per cent certainty to determine whether an uninfected person will die of Covid-19 on catching the infection, a study has said.

Also, once admitted to the hospital with the infection, the computer can predict with 80 per cent accuracy whether the person will need a respirator, researchers at the University of Copenhagen have found. In doing so, the computers can also help decide who should be at the front of the line for the vaccines.

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## 22 deaths after jab not linked to complications arising out of vaccination: Health Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Twenty-two people have so far died after taking the Covid-19 vaccines in India, but the Government has claimed that they didn't succumb to any complication arising from vaccination. Making this claim, the Health Ministry on Saturday said so far over 56 lakh persons have been inoculated.

"There have been 22 deaths subsequently, but these are not linked to the vaccination," the Health Ministry said.

The Government has also asked States and UTs to com-

plete the first dose administration to all health-care workers by February 20 and mop-up rounds by February 25.

Of the 56,36,868 beneficiaries vaccinated, Additional Secretary in the Union Health Ministry Manohar Agnani said 52,66,175 are health-care workers and 3,70,693 are frontline workers.

He further said that 54.7 per cent of the healthcare workers registered on the Co-WIN app have been vaccinated.

"No new case of hospitalization or death reported in the past 24 hours," he said.

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## Breaking glass ceiling, 34 CRPF women join elite CoBRA force

Will undergo 3-month training; all-women brass band also formed

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CRPF women warriors broke the proverbial glass ceiling on Saturday as the first batch of 34 women personnel entered the elite CoBRA Battalion, an exclusive anti-Naxal force under the Central paramilitary force. The CRPF also formed an all-women brass band on Saturday.

These women will undergo three months of strenuous pre-induction training before joining operations on the ground for the Combat Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA).

"The Central Reserve



Police Force has yet again taken another step toward women's empowerment by allowing entry of its Mahila personnel in the elite CoBRA wing during the 35th Raising Day celebrations of 88th Mahila Battalion. Notably, 88th Mahila Battalion of CRPF has the distinction of being the first all Mahila battalion in the world. In another first, an all Mahila brass band was also formed on this occasion of momentous significance," the CRPF said in a statement.

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## Coup protests expand, Myanmar blocks Net

AP ■ YANGON, MYANMAR

Myanmar's new military authorities appeared to have cut most access to the Internet on Saturday as they faced a rising tide of protest over their coup that toppled Aung San Suu Kyi's elected civilian Government.

Numerous internet users noted a slow disappearance of data services, especially from mobile service providers, that accelerated sharply late Saturday morning. Broadband connection also later failed, while there were mixed reports on whether landline telephone service and mobile voice connections were still working.

Netblocks, a London-based service that tracks internet disruptions and shutdowns, said Saturday afternoon that "a near-total internet shutdown is

now in effect" in Myanmar, with connectivity falling to just 16% of normal levels.

The broad outage followed Friday's military order to block Twitter and Instagram because some people were trying to use the platforms to spread what authorities deemed fake news. Facebook had already been blocked earlier in the week — though not completely effectively.

The communication blockages are a stark reminder of the progress Myanmar is in danger of losing after Monday's coup plunged the nation back under direct military rule after a nearly decade-long move toward democracy. During Myanmar's five decades of military rule, the country's communication with the outside world was controlled.

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## Registration for H-1B lottery from March 1

Biden Admin decides to revert to lottery system for H-1B visas

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The registration process for the H-1B visa application for the next fiscal year will begin on March 1 and the successful applicants through a computerised draw of lots would be notified by March 31, a federal agency has announced.

The notification by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) on Friday came a day after the Biden administration announced that it is delaying the H-1B policy of the previous Trump admin-

istration on the allocation of the popular foreign work visas by continuing with the lottery system until December 31, 2021, to give the immigration agency more time to develop, test and implement the modifications to the registration system.

The USCIS announced that the initial registration period for the fiscal year 2022 H-1B cap will open at noon Eastern on March 9 and run through noon March 25.

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. The technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China.

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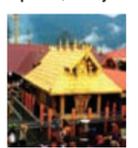
## CAPSULE

**MAHA: ABDUCTED NAVY SAILOR BURNT ALIVE**  
Palghar: A 26-year-old Navy sailor who had been abducted in Chennai on January 30 was set on fire by the kidnappers in jungles of Maharashtra's Palghar district and he died of injuries, the police said on Saturday.

**CONG: WILL RESTORE SABARIMALA CUSTOMS**  
Thiruvananthapuram/Kottayam:

Ahead of State Assembly polls, the Congress-led United Democratic Front in Kerala said on Saturday if the UDF was voted to power, it would pass a legislation on Sabarimala to protect the customs of the shrine, a move dubbed by the ruling Left front as to "fool the people of the State".

**POLICE TORTURE: VICTIM DIES IN GUJ HOSPITAL**  
Bhuj: One more victim of the alleged police torture at Mundra police station in Gujarat's Kutch district died on Saturday while undergoing treatment at a hospital in Ahmedabad, taking the number of the victims to two, an officer said.



**HOME THEATRE**

# A talkathon on relationships



**MALCOLM & MARIE**  
Netflix  
\*ing: Zendaya, John David Washington  
Rated: 5/10

**M**alcolm & Marie reminds one of a movie that's closer to home. Many would remember the 1964 movie and Anil in *Yaadein* played by Sunil Dutt. *Yaadein*, a black and white film is all about a man who reminisces his indiscretions when, one day he comes home to find that his wife and son are not there. This movie only had Sunil Dutt with a silhouette of Nargis at the end. *Malcolm & Marie* may not be about a lone man but it is about relationships, a movie that spends 106 minutes of running time in trying to get it's lead — Malcolm played by Washington — to apologise to his partner, a woman he loves, for not thanking her for her contribution in his life at his debut movie as a director. The entire movie is strangely cathartic and yet exhaustive as the only two people here go

back and forth talking about their relationship, art, politics and how White people see a coloured person and sees everything with a tainted vision and turning it into a racist or political issue. It is taxing to see these characters go back and forth with highs and lows on a repeat like a broken record. Still the acting by Washington is brilliant. His almost 10 minute tirade of what he thought of the review by a White lady of Imani, a coloured person who struggles with addiction, is an absolute joy to watch even though the four letter word finds its way at 50 times if not more. In fact, that is the high point of *Malcolm & Marie*; this and the climax. Zendaya, the only other character her plays her part rather well and matches Washington to bring out Marie's need to be thanked for her role. Watch this for its roller coaster emotions that has well-fleshed out characters. — Shalini Saksena

# It is very confusing

**BLISS**  
Amazon Prime Video  
\*ing: Salma Hayek, Owen Wilson  
Rated: 4/10

**H**ere is another movie that not only exhausts one, in trying to decipher what is happening, it is confusing since one tries to discern between reality and fiction. While some may find the narrative of this film easy enough to follow from the word go, others, who hate loose ends will want to know the answers to questions that remain unanswered. One would have thought that a movie starring Salma Hayek and Owen Wilson would be far more entertaining and fun to watch but *Bliss*, unlike its title is anything but that. Interestingly, despite the major drawback of this movie, it manages to capture one's attention and hold it all through the 103 minutes. There is something that captures imagination. Curiosity killed the cat and the need to see how things end keeps one glued. Allow yourself to be drawn into the roller coaster ride that its characters go through and let the drama unfold however confused it may leave one at the end. — Shalini Saksena



# Plan Your Day



**Look good, feel good**

**Venue:** Potenza Wellness, D-7, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016  
**When:** February 14, 2021  
**Time:** 9:30 am to 6:30 pm  
If you are dating or single, take this Valentine's Day an opportunity to pamper yourself and your partner with some Beauty, Health and Wellness Rituals. Although these are important throughout the year but they are all the more important on a day dedicated to love. Still don't know where to go? We have the answer for you, located in the heart of the capital, Potenza Advance Wellness introduces the most advanced machines and non-invasive, painless beauty, health and wellness treatments easy on your pocket. Now you don't have to fly abroad to wellness centres to get yourself and your loved one pamper because Potenza has brought the internationally acclaimed technology to India during a time in history when wellness is most appreciated and needed by us. Bring your partner at Potenza Wellness, experience our exclusive Hyper Baric Oxygen Therapy (introduced for the first time in India), enjoy the effortless process of rejuvenating and overall well-being in a pressurised chamber like an aeroplane, while watching your favourite Netflix show with your loved one (The HBOT Chamber seats four people at the same time) Potenza Wellness has made this Valentine Week even more special with their V-Day offers on their exclusive services. **Offers: Bring your buddy:** pay for one & get 50% discount on buddy **Get Advanced Hydra facial** at offer price: ₹7,500 **Get Cryo Slimming Therapy for Facelift** at offer price: ₹25,000 Take 5 sessions of Pain Management Therapy and **get 5 complimentary.**

**Maldives Calling**

**T**he 104.8 ISHQ FM, India's only romantic radio station, is back with its annual Valentine's Day campaign. 'Mohabbat in Maldives' is a month-long campaign that gives an opportunity to Delhiites and Mumbaiers to win an all-inclusive couple's holiday to the dream destination Maldives. The campaign which started on February 5, 2021 will give couples a chance to battle it out through a series of contests centred on music, Bollywood and travel. Two lucky couples — one from Delhi and one from Mumbai will win an all-expense paid romantic getaway to the Maldives. Speaking about the campaign, Rahul Kumar Shaw — CEO, Television & Radio (104.8 Ishq) — TV Today Network said: "The month of Love is important for us and Ishq FM is the Mecca of romance amongst the radio stations in India. We are happy to announce our third Valentine's Day campaign — Mohabbat in Maldives. This year, we are giving a chance to couples to go to the Maldives, which has become Bollywood's favourite holiday destination. With such offerings our endeavour is to stay true to our brand's commitment of providing innovative and exciting content to our listeners." Tune-in, to get a chance to win this dream romantic vacation to Maldives only on 104.8 ISHQ FM. Do the Ishq Baby!

**India Craft Week**

**Venue:** British Council and Bikaner House in New Delhi  
**When:** February 18 to February 21, 2021  
**Time:** 11 am to 7pm  
Hailed as India's Official and the second-largest craft week in the world after its international counterpart — London Craft Week, India Craft Week (ICW) is a liberated initiative/event to bridge our nation's iconic heritage, skilled craft-people, independent makers, and contemporary brands, allowing them to narrate their untold stories. It is the only platform in India to bring artisan, designer, & luxury brand on a single platform. In order to give sustainable livelihood & exposure to craft communities post-pandemic, New Delhi based social venture craft village has joined hands with British Council to kick-start the third chapter of India Craft Week — good stories untold. The showcase this year brings a community of over 100 craftspeople, makers, craft brands, museums, organisations, and figureheads while embracing multiple artistic genres. In addition to the exhibits, cross-talks, workshops, installations, and Craft Cinema — a chance to immerse oneself in the crafting history of architecture that the centuries-old city has to offer.



# TELLY TALE

**CHAMCHAM FINALLY TURNS BRIDE**

Colors' popular show *Namak Issk Ka* which capture the journey of *nachaniya* Chamcham's (played by Shruti Sharma) has enticed viewers. As she takes on society and



their judgments and shows us the kind of prejudices that a dancer in her position has to deal with, she comes across Yug (Played by Aditya Ojha). In an ironic and completely unexpected turn of events, Yug who has always looked down upon dancers ends up leaving his own bride and marries Chamcham! Shruti Sharma's stunning transformation from being a *nachaniya* to *Dulhaniya* is a sight to behold. Chamcham's look is completely different from what we have seen brides dress this season. Dressed in pastel shades with some exquisite Kundan jewelry in a dull-gold finish, Chamcham's look is sure to inspire the brides in the upcoming wedding season!

**JOAQUIN INSPIRES RAGHAV**

Zee TV recently launched *Hamarwali Good News*, which presents a heart-warming story showcasing a unique role reversal between a daughter-in-law — Navya (Srishti Jain) and her mother-in-law — Renuka (Juhi Parmar) to give their family the much-awaited Good News. Over the last couple of weeks, we've seen a lot of drama take place at the Tiwari house, especially with Aditya (Raghav Tiwari) losing his job as well as Renuka — Mukund's (Shakti Anand) ongoing divorce drama. With several dramatic and emotionally draining sequences being shot, the shooting schedules have been impacting all the actors, especially Raghav Tiwari. However, the actor reveals to us how Hollywood actor Joaquin Phoenix has been helping him unwind and stay sane. As Raghav Tiwari who plays the role of Aditya mentioned: "In the current scenario,

Aditya is in a huge predicament after losing his job and seeing his parents fight and going for a divorce. All this has made him very volatile, and he has become very aggressive. He is frustrated and while Navya tries to be his saviour, he is in a downward spiral. Aditya is seen fighting with everyone, removing his frustration at his wife and mother as well as breaking down in front of them. These sequences were one of the most challenging ones for me and I must say as an actor I enjoyed shooting for them. However, to showcase all these emotions properly, I had to resort to method acting and I imagined myself in these scenarios, immersed myself in them completely and then my natural reactions came out. Obviously, it did affect me, especially after having to cry and burst out from one scene to another. There was no stopping point and it did impact my personality a bit."

However, it looks like Hollywood star Joaquin Phoenix's piece of advice really helped him out. As Raghav added, "We've seen many actors get affected by their characters beyond a point of no return like Heath Ledger and it can happen to anyone who resorts to method acting. However, I always had Joaquin Phoenix's advice in my mind. He had once said that while we should get into the skin of your character to showcase the exact raw emotions, we should also remember to cut off from it and accept reality. He had said that when we accept the reality, it will help us get back to



our normal selves the moment the director calls cut and that's what I did. Apart from this piece of advice, I have a very supportive cast including Srishti, Shakti ji and Juhi ji. All of them helped me unwind and I must say this sequence has been one of my favourites to shoot." While Raghav is enjoying the shoot, looks like a lot of new twists and turns are set to come in Renuka and Mukund's life after Vrunda (Samiksha Bhatnagar) exposes Sumitra's long kept secret. What will happen next?



**RAJEEV DISGUISES AS A TUTOR**

Capturing the true essence of slice of life, light-hearted comedy, Sony SAB's *Tera Yaar Hoon Main* is set to witness Rajeev's new *andaaz*. While Rajeev (Ssudeep Sahir) and Daljeet (Sayantani Ghosh) are trying to strike a balance to make their kids get along, a new challenge has made its way in their lives. The upcoming episodes will witness Daljeet and Rajeev joining hands to make their sons and get rid of deceitful Shakti who has made his way into their house.

The union of both the Bansal and the Bagga families have not been easiest so far. Adding to this rift is Rishabh (Ansh Sinha) and Barry's (Viraj Kapoor) ongoing rivalry. While Rajeev and Daljeet are finding ways to strike a balance with one another, Shakti (Mohit Dagg) after getting hurt by Rajeev's scooter, persuades dadaji (Rajendra Chawla) to let him stay in their house. On the other hand, both Barry and Rishabh decide to participate in a mathematics competition and Daljeet takes this opportunity to keep an eye on Shakti at all times. Rajeev disguises as a mathematics tutor and starts prepping Barry for the competition while Daljeet finds her own sneaky methods to help Rishabh.

While the parents are busy befriend each other's sons, Shakti is trying to find the truth behind Daljeet and Rajeev's marriage. Will Rajeev and Daljeet win over Barry and Rishabh? Will Shakti find any evidence against Daljeet's marriage with Rajeev?

Ssudeep Sahir, essaying the role of Rajeev said, "It was such a refreshing change to don a disguise for the upcoming episodes on the show. It is always fun to play a different character, you get to try something new. For this character, I even touched upon my Punjabi. I will be essaying the role of Punjabi mathematics tutor and the viewers must get ready to witness Rajeev in a never seen before avatar. While it took me a while to get into the look but the final outcome was good and I am sure the episodes further will be entertaining for our viewers."

# 'Bidaai changed my life'

MUSBA HASHMI speaks with KINSHUK MAHAJAN about his role in Star Plus' latest offering *Pandya Store*, the attraction of playing it and how his life has changed after Sapna Babul Ka...Bidaai



**■ What is your role in Pandya Store?**

I play Gautam Pandya, a shopkeeper. He is a kind-hearted and family oriented person. He keeps his family's dreams and happiness above his needs. His father is no more with them and his mother is bed ridden, so the responsibility of taking care of the family lies on his shoulders. The story revolves around how he runs the store and during the process gets to know that Pandya Store is mortgaged. He then gets married to Dhara, who then helps him in running the store.

**■ What attracted you towards the role?**

The simplicity of the character. There is no need of over-the-top acting, it all comes so natural. Also, Gautam is a person who wants to see everyone happy and that was one of the reasons what got me attracted towards this character.

**■ What all preparations did you have to do?**

I had to shed five kgs to fit into the shoe of the character. Also, I had to work on my dialect a bit. Though it was not that difficult because the show is pan India. I had to learn to speak slowly and not just rush into words. And lastly, I have to work a bit on my body language as well.

**■ You have played both negative and positive characters. Which one do you prefer to play?**

I would like to play more positive characters because a hero is always shown in that light. Though negative characters offer more scope to show your acting skills, but

**I would like to play more positive characters because a hero is always shown in that light. Though negative characters offer more scope to show your acting skills, but having said that my priority is always to play protagonists**

and genres. The more types of characters you play, the more refined your craft gets.

**■ Were you concerned about losing your positive image in the minds of the audience?**

The audience liked the characters I played. I have been fortunate enough to have got the audience's support in whatever role I played. There were no concerns at all. Also, the more negative comments you get for your role, it means you are able to justify your character and strike the right chord with the audience. It is like a validation for your work and we take it in a healthy and positive way.

**■ How did acting happen to you?**

I did an acting course and then went on to do theatre for two years. In 2007, I got my first break in *Dhoom Machao Dhoom* and I shifted to Mumbai for the shoot. Then I went on getting more and more shows and this is how I reached here. Ups and downs are always there in every field, but I was lucky enough to keep on getting shows after shows.

**■ Was there a moment when you felt like quitting?**

Not at all. I was mostly busy with work and even if when I was not, that gap was not that big enough to demotivate me. In that gap, I focused on reinventing myself and my craft and never lost hope.

**■ Do you mind giving auditions?**

No. Today, we don't call it audition, we call it look test instead. But it is more or less the same thing and without it things will not work. I never shy away from giving auditions.

**■ How has your life changed after Sapna Babul Ka...Bidaai?**

The popularity quotient went up. I started getting more respect in auditions. A lot of things definitely changed for the better once the show became a hit. My life changed after the success of the show.

having said that my priority is always to play protagonists. Also, my face suits best for positive characters so I mostly get cast for such roles only.

**■ With that being said, did you have any apprehensions in taking up the negative roles?**

Not at all. I believe an actor should explore all kinds of roles

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# FARMERS 'CHAKKA JAM' Security upped at city borders

50 detained at Shaheedi Park for staging protest

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Saturday intensified security at all border points of the city as thousands of personnel including paramilitary forces were deployed to deal with any situation emerging out of the nationwide 'chakka jam'.

Police also detained around 50 people near Shaheedi Park in central Delhi for allegedly holding a protest in support of the 'chakka jam' call given by the farmers.

Police forces were also deployed at important junctions across the national capital including Red Fort and ITO which witnessed violence on January 26 during the tractor parade by the protesting farmers in which over 500 police personnel were injured and a protester died.

Drone cameras were pressed into service to keep a tight vigil at protest sites. Multi-layered barricades, barbed wires and nail-studded roads at the protest sites are also part of the precautionary measures taken by the police force.

"In view of the violence that took place on January 26, adequate security arrangements have been put in place by the Delhi Police at the borders so that miscreants are not able to enter the national capital. Police teams are monitoring content



Police detain left-wing activists during a protest to support the ongoing farmers agitation against Centre's farm reform laws, at Shaheedi Park in New Delhi on Saturday

on the social media to make sure rumours are not spread against the police. The protesters are camping at the borders of Delhi. We are in touch with the police force of other states also," said Chinmoy Biswal, the Public Relation Officer (PRO) of Delhi Police on Friday.

Thousands of farmers have been camping at several Delhi border points, demanding a complete repeal of the three farm laws — the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation

Act, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act — and legal guarantee of minimum support price for their crops.

Enacted in September 2020, the government has presented these laws as major farm reforms aimed at increasing farmers' income, but the protesting farmers have raised concerns that these legislations would weaken the minimum support price (MSP) and "mandi" (wholesale market) systems and leave them at the mercy of big corporations.

The government has maintained that these apprehensions are misplaced and has ruled out a repeal of the laws.

# 10 metro stations closed during road blockade

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Following "chakka jam" called by farmers agitating against the new agri laws, the Delhi Metro on Saturday closed ten of its stations, including Mandi House and ITO and reopened them after the protest ended at 3 pm.

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) in a series of tweets in the morning informed commuters that multiple stations have been closed.

"Security Update Entry/exit gates of Mandi House, ITO and Delhi Gate are closed," it tweeted. It later also tweeted that entry and exit gates of Vishwavidyalaya station were also closed.

"Entry/exit gates of Lal Quila, Jama Masjid, Janpath



Lal Quila metro station closed in view of the nationwide chakka jam, in support of ongoing agitation against Centre's farm reform laws in New Delhi on Saturday

and Central Secretariat are closed. Interchange facility is available," the DMRC said.

"Entry/exit gates of Khan Market and Nehru Place are closed," it tweeted.

After the Republic Day violence, the Delhi Police has deployed additional measures, including tightening security and intensifying vigil at the city's border points, to deal with any situation emerging out of the "chakka jam", officials had said.

During the 'Chakka jam' on Saturday, farmers shouted slogans and parked their tractors-trolleys in the middle of highways at several places in Punjab and Haryana to block roads. In Rajasthan too, farmers protesting against the Centre's new agri laws and other issues blocked roads at several places.

The DMRC in the evening tweeted that entry and exit gates of all 10 metro stations had been re-opened, and nor-

mal service were resumed.

"Security Update Entry/exit gates of all stations are open. Normal service has resumed," it tweeted.

Farmer unions on Monday had announced a countrywide "chakka jam" on February 6 during which they had declared that they would block national and State highways between 12 noon and 3 pm to protest the internet ban in areas near their agitation sites, harassment allegedly meted out to them by authorities, and other issues.

However, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of the farmer unions, on Friday had said the protesters will not block roads in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand during the "chakka jam".

## Police warn of strict action against travellers found with cartridges at IGIA

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Saturday urged travellers at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport to re-check their belongings and warned of legal action against those found with ammunition, a day after 11 cartridges were found in the baggage of a passenger at the airport.

A total of 13 cases, where ammunition has been found in the baggage of passengers during security check, have already been registered this year at the IGI Airport police station under sections of Arms Act.

According to Rajeev Ranjan, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), IGI airport, as per legal provisions, an First Information Report (FIR) is registered against such passenger for the possession of ammunition illegally without a valid license issued for Delhi or all India and the passenger has to face criminal proceedings before the court of law.

"Such lapses affect the journey of the passenger badly as they cannot embark on their journey and their co-passengers and family members also face an awkward situation," said the DCP. A passenger at IGI's Terminal-3, who was travelling from Delhi to Maldives by a private airlines, was found carrying 11 cartridges of .32 bore in his check-in baggage on Friday.

"During questioning, the passenger had told the police that the recovered cartridges belonged to his licensed weapon and had also produced his valid arms license issued in his name with area validity for Haryana," a senior police official.

In another instance, a woman travelling from Terminal-3 was also found in possession of one live ammunition during screening of her baggage and she could not produce valid documents for it, he said. In both the instances, cases were registered under sections of the Arms Act at IGI Airport police station.

## SKM stages symbolic protest in Gurugram

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

In view of farmers' nationwide "chakka jam" (road blockade) against three farm laws, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) in Gurugram staged symbolic protest at Krishna Chowk near Bheghera flyover on Palam Vihar road in Gurugram on Saturday.

Around 200 protesters and leaders from political parties sat in the middle of road blocking the movement of traffic. They raised anti Government slogans against the newly passed three agricultural laws.

"As per the schedule we will protest here for three hours from 12 pm to 3 pm. The Government is adamant in favour of these three black laws. SKM will protest against these three farm laws till it's roll back," said Chaudhary Santokh Singh, President SKM Gurugram.

Meanwhile, the traffic was disrupted as the protesters specially women made human chain towards Bheghera flyover to disrupt traffic movement. They also sat at the Krishna chowk to disrupt the traffic



Protesters shout slogans in support of farmers; chakka jam protest against farm laws in Gurugram on Saturday

movement towards Palam Vihar and Delhi.

The protesters at the site were also distributing anti Government pamphlet in which they had mentioned cons of these three black laws.

A number of police personnel were deployed to handle the traffic movement and prevent any untoward incidents. The Gurugram police have made adequate arrangements in view of the farmers'

"chakka jam", said senior officials.

"We have diverted the traffic and keep asking commuters to avoid visiting Palam Vihar Road towards Krishna Chowk and Bheghera Flyover. A number of police check points are installed to check vehicles. We have asked the protesters to lift their protest but they were not ready to listen to us. The protest till now was peaceful and no untoward incident was

reported," said Rajeev Kumar, ACP (Udyog Vihar).

Apart from this, the Gurugram roads including the Delhi-Jaipur Expressway, Kundli-Manesar-Palwal and State highways were remained unaffected from nationwide "chakka jam".

The Farmers had announced nationwide "chakka jam" (road block) over three farm laws for three hours between 12 pm to 3 pm

## AAP announces candidates for MCD bypolls

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Saturday announced the names of the candidates for the five seats of the upcoming municipal by-elections which will be held on February 28.

"All these candidates have worked for the people of Delhi in their respective areas. To honour their contribution in taking forward the development work and pro-people policies of the Kejriwal Government the AAP has selected them," the party said in a statement.

The candidates are Dharendra (Bunty Gautam), Ward Kalyanpuri 8E, Vijay Kumar, Ward Trilokpuri East 2E, Mohammad Isharaq Khan, Former MLA Seelampur, Ward Chauhan Bangar 41 E, Ram Chandra, Former MLA Bawana, Ward Rohini C32N, Sunita Mishra, Ward Shalimar Bagh — North 62 N.

## Government launches social media handles of 'Switch Delhi' campaign

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has launched various social media handles for its Switch Delhi campaign to sensitize Delhiites on the need to switch to "Electronic Vehicles" (EVs), the environmental and financial benefits and the benefits that can be availed by consumers under Delhi's electric vehicle policy.

The 'Switch Delhi' campaign was launched earlier this week by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for informing motivating and encouraging Delhiites to accelerate the adoption of EVs in the national Capital.

The Dialogue and Development Commission of Delhi (DDCD) will be leading the social media outreach of the campaign.

"These media handles will be used as a medium for connecting directly with the public, addressing grievances of

people trying to claim subsidies or any other issues they have in buying EVs, and the handles will also share success stories and testimonials of EV buyers to motivate Delhiites.

DDCD will also be responding to queries and misconceptions people have on EVs via the social handles," the government said in a statement.

Social media outreach is one of the major components of the eight-week mass awareness campaign of the Delhi government on promoting the use of electric vehicles in Delhi. It will be an important tool in making the CM's clarion call a mass movement across Delhi, it said.

Delhi's Electric Vehicle Policy was well-received because it sets an ambitious vision for Delhi to drastically reduce air pollution from vehicles and become one of the top cities of the world in terms of the adoption of EVs.

## BJP passes resolution lauding Union Budget

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday passed a resolution describing the Union Budget as a historic one. The BJP in Delhi State has 14 district executive committees. All members in their respective areas lauded the union Budget 2021-22 and said this will lead to development works focusing building infra and health care.

At the meeting in Shahdara district, the national general secretary and MP, Dushyant Gautam, said it is a unique Budget as it takes care of all sections of the society despite the country going through critical times because of the corona pandemic. He said for the first time there is a tax-free Budget.

Gautam also said keeping in the mind people's healthcare due to the pandemic, the Government has presented a well thought Budget that takes care of all sections of the society and will lead to the goal of self reliance. He said India has shown the world that it can tackle such difficult situation with determination and planning.

The former Union Minister and ex-Delhi BJP President, Vijay Goel, while

addressing the workers, said the budget will prove to be a milestone for the country. It has provision to ensure that MSP is at least 1.5 times the cost of production across all commodities, he said that adding it has made a whopping provision of ₹35,000 crore for vaccination.

The East Delhi Member of Parliament Gautam Gambhir said this budget will prove to be path breaker and has been made keeping in mind interests of one and all. In the Northeast executive committee's meeting, former Delhi BJP president, Manoj Tiwari said this budget will provide economic stability to the country and a time will soon come when India will lead the world.

In the Mehrauli's district meeting, the MP Ramesh Bidhuri said the budget has taken special care of farmers and made provisions to ensure their income grows appreciably. Similar attention has also been given to senior citizens, women and youth of the country, he added.

In the Northwest district, Hansraj Hans said this is a historic budget as it has been made after passing through a critical phase of pandemic.

## Over 1 lakh people given Covid jabs so far in Delhi

123 new cases in city; positivity rate dips to 0.19 %

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi on Saturday crossed one lakh mark in Covid-19 vaccination in first phase.

While the vaccination of frontline workers also started, the District Magistrate of several districts in the national Capital came forward to vaccinate themselves. According to Delhi Government's health department, with 9,510 beneficiaries vaccinated, the government achieved target of one lakh vaccinations.

In the National Capital, senior administration officers set an example of leadership taking the lead in the ongoing vaccination programme as DMs of South West district Dr Naveen Agarwal, North District Isha Khosla, West District Neha Bansal, North West district Chetha Yadav, North East district Pankaj Kumar vaccinated themselves. G Sudhakar, District Collector, Municipal Corporation Delhi (MCD) has

also taken the vaccine. "Several police personnel have also come forward for vaccination. The District administrators reposed their faith in the vaccines and sought to inspire confidence in the general public regarding the safety and efficacy for the same," a government official said.

According to health department data, 9,216 people vaccinated on Friday, 9,464 on Thursday, 7,365 on Wednesday, 9,356 on Tuesday and 7,893 on Monday vaccinated this week.

To create awareness among on Corona vaccination programme, Delhi Government has taken a number of measures. From counselling to mobilizing the health workers, frontline workers and promoting feedback for the acceptance of the vaccine.

Meanwhile, Delhi reported 123 fresh Covid-19 cases with four deaths, 63,322 tests conducted, 0.19 per cent positivity rate recorded and 151 recovered. So far, the capital recorded 6,35,916 positive cases, the cumulative positive rate 5.73 while the fatality rate was 1.71 percent with total 1,174 active cases, according to health department.

Delhi has total 977 containment zones.

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# Naqvi: Rejected politicians, bogus Bharat bashing brigade defaming India

**Kanpur:** Senior BJP leader and Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Saturday said "rejected politicians" and the "bogus Bharat bashing brigade" are involved in a criminal conspiracy to defame the country.

Speaking to reporters here, Naqvi said, "Such criminal syndicate of misinformation and Bharat bashing has always been defeated by the commitment of the people of India."

"Such people created a ruckus on the so-called intolerance in the country, raised questions on surgical strike on Pakistan, created confusion over CAA, and opposed steps taken for the well-being of people during the COVID-19 pandemic," Naqvi said.

Now, the 'gumrahi' (misleading) gang has hijacked the farmers' agitation and doing politics over it, he said, adding that some people in the country still have "feudal arrogance".

In a statement, Naqvi said the people of the country, while rejecting all criminal conspiracies and political hypocrisies of some vested interests, have expressed trust in the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

People gave a massive mandate to the BJP-led NDA in 2014 and again in 2019. The masses have supported the policies of the prime minister by giving "tremendous support" to the BJP in assembly, panchayat and local bodies elections in different states and union territories, he said.

"On one hand, the Bharat bashing brigade raised false and fake propaganda of so-called insecurity among minorities, on the other hand PM Modi worked tirelessly to make all sections of society including minorities an equal partner of mainstream development," he said.

"Prime Minister Modi's commitment to 'sabka sath, sabka vikas' has always exposed these characters. The entire world is admiring Modi's commitment towards inclusive development," he added.

Naqvi said, "When our security forces destroyed terrorist camps by conducting a surgical strike, then some people outside the country and leaders of the grand old party, demanded proof. It was an amazing 'jugalbandi'." **PTI**

# Negative powers trying to create misconceptions over farm laws will fail, says Jitendra Singh

**Jammu:** Asserting that the "negative powers" attempting to create misconceptions over the new agri laws would fail, Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday said the Centre is working with an open heart to address the ongoing farmers' agitation.

He, however, insisted that the new laws are "pro-farmer" and can never result in losses to them.

"The government is working with an open heart to address this issue (farmers agitation). All the laws which have been enacted are pro-farmer and even the earlier governments were discussing implementing such types of laws in the country," the minister of state in the Prime Minister's Office told reporters at the BJP headquarters here.

He said several Opposition leaders had spoken in Parliament in support of such types of laws earlier.

"Now they are raising concerns on such things which are not part of these laws. Nobody can say that these laws can result in losses to the farmers," Singh said.

Responding to a question about many international personalities like pop star Rihanna speaking about the farmers' agitation, he said, "Nobody can say these laws can result in losses to the farmers."

"Government is prepared to address the misgiving and misconceptions and this is the

directive from the Prime Minister. I have full faith that the misunderstanding of the farmers will be addressed and the attempts to create misconceptions by negative powers will fail," he said.

Asked whether IAS officer Shah Faesal has a genuine change of heart or some type of backdoor talks are going on with him since he had started showering praises on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the recent times despite being vocal in his criticism of abrogation of Article 370 and bifurcation of the erstwhile state into two Union Territories in August 2019, Singh said, "There is no issue discussing such a thing. The important thing is that there is heart transformation."

Singh congratulated the people of Jammu and Kashmir for getting back 4G mobile internet service after 18 months and said "media and students suffered because of lack of this facility".

Praising the Union budget for focusing on key sectors like health which was given a grant of over Rs two lakh crore by 137 per cent enhancement and infrastructure development like highways and railways, he said at a time when Modi's New India will illuminate at the global level, Jammu and Kashmir has also been in the focus to ensure that it will shine alongside other parts of the country as well. **PTI**

# Navy man burnt alive in Palghar after ransom demand not met

**TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**

In a shocking incident, an Indian Navy sailor was abducted from Chennai and burnt alive in the forests of Palghar, near Mumbai, by three unidentified miscreants after he refused to pay up a ransom of Rs 10 lakh to the abductors.

The victim navy man - identified as Surajkumar Mitlesh Dubey - was found on early Friday in half-burnt, semi-nude condition in a forested area. He was rushed first to the Cottage Hospital at Dahanu and then onto the Sion Hospital in north-central Mumbai, where he succumbed to burns.

In his dying declaration, Surajkumar - hailing from Daltonganj in Jharkhand - said that he was posted on INS Agrani in the run-up to the incident. He was abducted from Chennai on January 30 and held captive there by three unknown persons, while he was returning to his work station after his vacation.

Upon his arrival from Ranchi to Chennai to join duty on January 30, Surajkumar was accosted at gunpoint outside the Chennai airport and whisked away to an unknown location

where he was captive for 3 days.

The abductors allegedly demanded a ransom of Rs. 10 lakh from him. When he refused to pay up the ransom, he was abducted and brought to the jungles of Vevji within the limits of Gholwad of Talasari in Palghar district. Giving the details of how the police traced Surajkumar in the forests, Investigating officer in-charge of the case Sarjerao Kumbhar said: "After he refused pay them the ransom, they poured petrol on him and set him on fire in the jungles before decamping from there. Some local people alerted us after seeing him in a half-burnt condition."

The police have meanwhile registered a case of murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping of ransom, robbery and sections of the Arms Act against three unknown persons and have launched a massive search for the three abductors who eventually set the victim on fire.

In a related development, Surajkumar's body has been sent for a post-mortem. The police have informed his family in Jharkhand and the Naval authorities in Mumbai have been informed of his death.

# Cong protests at petrol pumps in Assam

**Guwahati:** Assam Congress on Saturday staged protests in front of petrol pumps across the state against rising prices of petrol, diesel and LPG.

Protests were held in different blocks of the state by the district Congress committees, party sources said.

Assam PCC general secretary Bobbeeta Sharma said when UPA was in power the price of international crude was high but the Congress government led by Dr Manmohan Singh ensured that it did not affect the common man. It had kept petrol and diesel prices low and affordable.

The international crude oil price is low during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rule but its benefit has not reached

the common man, she said.

The skyrocketing prices of petrol and diesel have led to the increase in the price of essential commodities, she said. "People are devastated by the prevailing situation of increased joblessness due to the sudden demonetisation and the Covid-19 driven lock-down", she said.

The BJP government at the Centre has proved to be "anti-poor and anti-people" and has made no effort to control increasing petrol and diesel prices and that of essential commodities, Sharma alleged.

"The prime minister who is arriving in Assam tomorrow has to answer all these questions that affect each and every common man", she added. **PTI**



Tourists visit the Solang valley after a fresh spell of snowfall in Manali on Saturday

# Ravi Shankar Prasad donates ₹11 lakh for Ram Temple

**PTI ■ PATNA**

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Saturday contributed Rs 11 lakh for the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya.

Prasad handed over the cheque to Mohan Singh and Rajesh Pandey, representatives of Sri Rama Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra trust.

Singh, who is RSS regional general secretary (kshetra karyawah) of Bihar and Jharkhand and Pandey, the prant Prachar Pramukh of South Bihar RSS, received the cheque at the organisation's state headquarters here.

Prasad, the union minister for law and justice, electronics

and information technology and communications, said I am extremely happy that I am making an announcement of contributing Rs 11 lakh for the construction of a grand Ram temple at Ayodhya, Prasad said.

I was the lawyer for Ram Lalla in Allahabad High Court where we won (the case). It would be great if I had the opportunity to argue the case in Supreme Court but since I was the (union) law minister, I could not argue the case, Prasad said.

Its a matter of pride that I will be going out to collect donations for the purpose of constructing a grand Ram temple, he added.

# Registration for H-1B lottery from March 1

**From Page 1**

During the registration period, prospective petitioners and representatives will be able to fill out petitioner and beneficiary information and submit their registrations, the USCIS said.

The agency said if it receives enough registrations by March 25, it will randomly select registrations and send selection notifications by March 31.

The successful applicants would be able to join their new jobs in the US on October 1, when the American fiscal year starts.

As mandated by the Congress, USCIS can issue a maximum of 65,000 H-1B visas in a year. It can also issue another 20,000 H-1B visas to foreign students who have completed higher studies from a US university in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

The quick announcement by USCIS on the next year's H-1B registration process comes a day after it said that it is delaying the implementation of the Trump administration policy of allocation of H-1B through a wage and skilled based process.

The Trump era rule was scheduled to go into effect on March 9. On January 7, the USCIS announced to do away with the traditional lottery system in deciding the successful applicants for the H-1B visas.

The USCIS had said it would prioritise wages to protect the economic interests of American workers, and better ensure that the most highly skilled foreign workers benefit from the temporary employment programme.

In a statement on Thursday, the USCIS, however, said that it is delaying the rule's effective date until December 31, 2021. The USCIS can issue a maximum of 65,000 H-1B visas in a year. It can also issue another 20,000 H-1B visas to foreign students who have completed higher studies from a US university in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

# AI can predict with 90% accuracy if a person...

**From Page 1**

The diseases and health factors that, according to the study, have the most influence on whether a patient ends up on a respirator after being infected with Covid-19 are in the following order of priority: BMI, age, high blood pressure, being male, neurological diseases, COPD, asthma, diabetes and heart disease.

The research can also be used to predict the number of patients in hospitals who will need a respirator and determine who ought to be first in line for a vaccination. The results of the study were published in the journal Scientific Reports - Nature. The result is from a newly published study by researchers at the University of

Copenhagen's Department of Computer Science.

Since the Covid pandemic's first wave, researchers have been working to develop computer models that can predict, based on disease history and health data, how badly people will be affected by Covid-19.

"We began working on the models to assist hospitals, as, during the first wave, they feared that they did not have enough respirators for intensive care patients. Our new findings could also be used to carefully identify who needs a vaccine," explains Professor Mads Nielsen of the University of Copenhagen's Department of Computer Science.

The researchers fed a computer programme with health data from 3,944 Danish Covid-19 patients. This trained the computer to recognise pat-

terns and correlations in both patients' prior illnesses and in their bouts against Covid-19.

"Our results demonstrate, unsurprisingly, that age and BMI are the most decisive parameters for how severely a person will be affected by Covid-19. But the likelihood of dying or ending up on a respirator is also heightened if you are male, have high blood pressure or neurological disease," explained Mads Nielsen.

"For those affected by one or more of basic parameters, we have found that it may make sense to move them up in the vaccine queue, to avoid any risk of them becoming infected and eventually ending up on a respirator," said Nielsen.

The research was carried out in collaboration with Rigshospitalet and Bispebjerg and Frederiksberg Hospital.

# Coup protests...

**From Page 1**

Suu Kyi's five years as leader since 2015 had been Myanmar's most democratic period despite the military retaining broad powers over the government, the continued use of repressive colonial-era laws and the persecution of minority Rohingya Muslims.

The blockages are also adding greater urgency to efforts to resist the coup, with Saturday seeing some of the largest street protests against the takeover. In one of the bigger ones, about 1,000 protesters - factory workers and students prominent among them - marched down a main street in Yangon, the country's biggest city, and were met by more than 100 police in riot gear.

Members of the crowd shouted "down with dictatorship" and other slogans. They marched with their hands in the air, formed into three-fingered salutes, a symbol of defiance adopted from protesters in neighboring Thailand, who borrowed the gesture from the "Hunger Games" movie franchise.

The demonstration ended peacefully with no clashes reported. It dispersed around the time communications were cut, and it was unclear if the marchers later regrouped.

Similar-sized demonstrations took place in at least two other areas of the city, and likewise were tense but peaceful. People at a protest at Yangon's City Hall presented flowers to the police.

Other reports that slipped through the communications blockade said protests were held in other areas, including Mandalay,

the country's second-largest city.

Telenor Myanmar, a major mobile operator, confirmed it had received Friday's order to block Twitter and Instagram. In a statement, Twitter said it was "deeply concerned" about the order and vowed to "advocate to end destructive government-led shutdowns."

"It undermines the public conversation and the rights of people to make their voices heard," its spokesperson said.

Since the coup, social media platforms have been major sources of independent news as well as organising tools for protesters.

Amnesty International said that to shut down the internet while the country was coping with the coup, people displaced by years of civil conflict and the COVID-19 crisis was "a heinous and reckless decision."

Those opposed to the coup and the arrests of activists and politicians have also been gathering at night at windows and on balconies around Yangon to make a cacophony of noise in protest by banging on pots and pans.

The action was not limited to aggrieved citizens on the street. On Friday, nearly 300 elected lawmakers from Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party who met in an online meeting declared themselves as the sole legitimate representatives of the people and asked for international recognition as the country's government.

They were supposed to have taken their seats Monday in a new session of Parliament following November elections when the military announced it was taking power for a year.

# J&K records 65 new Covid cases

**Srinagar:** Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday recorded 65 new coronavirus cases that raised its tally to 1,24,850, officials said.

The union territory did not report any death due to the infection in the past 24 hours, they said. Of the fresh cases, 15 were recorded from the Jammu division and 50 from the Kashmir division, the officials said. They said Srinagar district recorded the highest of 26 cases which included 11 travellers.

While eight districts of the UT did not report any fresh case, 10 others had fresh cases in single digits, the officials said. Pulwama reported 10 COVID-19 cases.

The number of active cases is 631 in the union territory, while 1,22,275 patients have recovered so far, the officials said. **PTI**

# Breaking glass...

**From Page 1**

The 34 women personnel from the 6 Mahila Battalions of CRPF who joined the CoBRA will undergo a strenuous CoBRA pre-induction training of three months, it said.

The training will reinforce their physical capabilities and tactical acumen by imparting next-level training in firing and special weapons, tactical planning, fieldcraft, explosives, and jungle survival skills among others, the CRPF said.

After the completion of their training, the batch of these 'Mahila Warriors' will be posted in the Naxal areas alongside their male counterparts.

Mahila personnel of CRPF forming the first all-women brass band will also undergo a training course to acquire the requisite skills on the music instruments. The CRPF already has an all-women pipe band.

Director-General of CRPF, Dr AP

Maheshwari, in his address, said that the Force has a history of empowered women warriors who have not just brought laurels to the Force but have also made the country proud by conspicuous gallantry both at home in India and abroad in several UN peacekeeping missions.

Maheshwari said that while this gender neutrality adds to the diversity of the force, empowered women make an empowered family which eventually empowers the nation.

Raised on February 6, 1986, 88 Mahila Battalion has completed 34 glorious and eventful years in the service of the nation. The battalion has served across the length and breadth of the country and abroad in the UN peacekeeping missions. Seven bravehearts of the Battalion have made supreme sacrifice at the altar of duty. The women warriors of this battalion are proud recipients of several gallantry medals including the highest peacetime gallantry award-the Ashok Chakra, it added.

Several highways, including the Chandigarh-Zirakpur, Amritsar-Pathankot, Tarn Taran-Kapurthala, Ferozepur-Fazilka, Muktsar-Kotkapura, Bathinda-Chandigarh, Fazilka-Malout, Ludhiana-Jalandhar, Panchkula-Pinjore, Patiala-Kaithal, Jind-Karnal, Karnal-Kaithal, Bhiwani-Hisar, Ambala-Chandigarh, Ambala-Hisar and Mansa-Sirsa were also blocked by the protesting farmers. Protests were also held at Shambhu near Ambala and at many toll plazas in both States. Traffic was also disrupted at the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal expressway. Protesting farmers said ambulances, army vehicles and school buses were allowed during the "chakka jam". Though police authorities diverted traffic at many places, commuters faced traffic snarls.

Kokrikalan said they blocked roads at 33 places in 15 Punjab districts, including Sangrur, Barnala and Bathinda.

"Around 6,000 to 7,000 protesters on an average took part in 'chakka jam' at each place," claimed Kokrikalan while commenting on

the protest by the BKU (Ekta Ugrahan). Farmers carried placards with slogans "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan" and "Kisan Ekta Zindabad". They also raised slogans against the Centre for not acceding to their demand of repealing the farm legislations.

In the morning, farmers started assembling at their earmarked protest sites in both States. They parked tractor-trailers and other vehicles on roads. Women took part in the agitation in sizeable number at several places, including in Punjab's Sangrur and Ludhiana.

"The Government should repeal the three laws as they are not in the interest of the farming community," said a protester at the Shambhu border. Punjabi actors Binnu Dhillon, Dev Kharoud and singer Pammi Bai took part in a protest in Patiala. In Phagwara, Bharti Kisan Union (Doaba) leader Kirpal Singh Moosapur said protesters squatted near a sugar mill and raised slogans against the BJP-led Centre.

Protesters also honked horns for one minute, said Moosapur.

# 22 deaths after jab not...

**From Page 1**

He added that 13 States and UTs, including Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh, have vaccination coverage of 60 per cent among health care workers while 12 States and UTs, including Delhi, Punjab and Assam, have less than 40 per cent vaccination coverage among health care workers. He said Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan on Saturday reviewed the performance of vaccination drives with all States and UTs.

"He advised States/UTs to improve coverage, beneficiary turn out per session and minimize vaccine wastage", Agnani said. "The State health secretaries have been asked to analyze the daily variation in the number of average vaccinations and take necessary steps to increase them. States/UTs were advised to ensure 100 per cent saturation of people who have already been registered on CoWin digital platform."

"They were also asked to organise simultaneous vaccination sessions/day in the health facility wherever possible. Each State/UT was advised to devise a State specific strategy to achieve this target", said the Ministry. "Every State/UT must schedule all health-care workers for vaccination at least once before February 20, 2021 and immediately thereafter organise mop-up rounds for them. Similarly, all frontline workers must be scheduled for vaccination at least once before March 6, 2021 and immediately thereafter organise mop-up rounds for them," the Ministry said.

**Public Notice**  
To be known to all that, Madhu Bala D/S, First Floor, Dilshad Garden, Delhi has applied for cancellation of the DDA Janta Flat No. P-10/B-1, First Floor, Pocket P-10, Dilshad Garden, Delhi from lease hold to free hold in DDA. The Original Demand-Cum-Allotment letter of the above flat has been lost. An NCR to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch in vide S.O. No. 430/2014 LR No. 103899/2021 dated 04/02/2021. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above address/Ph: 9810625260 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to, Director (L&H) or Director (H-1) Block, 3/Floor, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to bring to the notice of the general public that one ID card of Mr Mahesh Kumar issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. having ID Card no. 14775 has been found missing and/or lost on 15.01.2021. Anyone, who finds the said ID card, is requested to return the said ID card to the manager Debt Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited SD tower first floor sector 8 Rohini New Delhi 110085. Therefore, all the customers of ICICI Bank limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorised person holding the said ID card no. 14775. Please take further notice that anybody making payment to any person holding the said ID card shall do so at his/her own costs, risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any payment.  
Date: 07.02.2021 For ICICI Bank Ltd. Place: Faridabad.

**THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS**  
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I, Imarana Khatoon, D/o Mohammad Chand, R/o J-76/1, Flat No. 108, Abul Fazal Enclave-1, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025 declare that my name has wrongly been mentioned in my school certificate as Km. Emrana Khatoon where as my correct name is Imarana Khatoon for all purposes.  
PD(8905)A

# 52 political parties knock at EC door for registration



RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the Assembly polls due in five states — Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Assam, Kerala and Puducherry — in April-May this year, at least 52 political parties are knocking at the door of the Election Commission (EC) for registration. As per the EC, more than 52 political parties have approached the poll body for registration in the past three months. Interestingly, over a dozen outfits are from those states where assembly polls are due in the coming months. As per the Act, registration of political parties is governed by the provisions of Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. An association seeking registration under the said Section has to submit an application to the Commission within a period of 30 days following the date of its formation, as per the guidelines prescribed by the Commission in exercise of the powers conferred by Article 324 of the Constitution of India and Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

According to the Election Commission of India, for registration, there must be at least 100 members present in the

new political party. Each member of the proposed party should possess a Voter ID card. Possessing a Voter ID card implies that the particular member is above the age of 18.

National Democratic Party of South India is based in Tamil Nadu. Bharath Socialism Party's office is located in Tamil Nadu and its president is C Arumugam. Bharatha Makkal Kazhagam is also Tamil Nadu based political party. United Republican Party of India is also office in Tamil Nadu. Bhartiya Yuva Ekta Shakti Party is Uttarakhand based party and Neha Singh is the president. Jan Sahara Party's office is located in Uttar Pradesh. Swatanta Abhiyakti Party is from Gujarat. Rashtra Samanya Praja Party is from Telangana. Jan Sahara Party's office is in Delhi. Rising People's Party office in Nagaland. Pehchan People's Party is based in Rajasthan.

The political parties which applied for registration include Makkal Munnetra Peravai, Nava Kerala People's Party, Makkal Rajiyam Katchi, Bhartiya Hind Party, Praja Shakti Democratic Party, Bhagidari Party (P), Sarvlokhit Samaj Party, Apni Janta Party, Makkal Thilagam Munnetra Kazhagam, Vastavik Bharat

Party, Sudharvadi Party, Kisan Vishwa party, Majaloom Samaj Party, Bahujan Lokrajya Party.

The number of registered unrecognised political parties has increased two-fold from 2010 to 2019, according to a report by Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR). From 1,112 such parties in 2010, the number of unrecognised registered parties has increased to 2,301 in 2019. "Between 2018 and 2019, it increased by over 9.8 per cent while between 2013 and 2014, it increased by 18 per cent," the report said. Either newly registered parties or those which have not secured enough percentage of votes in the assembly or general elections to become a state party, or those which have never contested elections since being registered are considered unrecognised parties.

Experts claim there are different reasons for the mushrooming of such parties. People have political ambitions and it's quite easy to register political parties. This is why so many such parties register. Besides these parties might also be used for money laundering as they are exempted from income tax.

Besides, Bharat Vaibhav Party, Samajwadi Lok Parishad, Indian Movement Party, Sangjukta Anchalik Dal Asom, Krantikari Parivartan Party, Uttarakhand Navnirman Party, Azad Hind Krantikari Party, Bihar Justice Party, Sudharvadi Party, Kisan Vishwa party, Majaloom Samaj Party, Bahujan Lokrajya Party, Bhagidari Party (P), Sarvlokhit Samaj Party, Apni Janta Party, Makkal Thilagam Munnetra Kazhagam and Vastavik Bharat Party applied for registration.

# SARS-CoV-2 mutations could develop in cases of chronic infection: Study



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

SARS-CoV-2 mutations similar to those in the new UK variant could arise in cases of chronic infection, where treatment over an extended period can provide the virus multiple opportunities to evolve, scientists have said.

Writing in Nature, a team led by Cambridge researchers said they were able to observe SARS-CoV-2 mutating in the case of an immune-compromised patient treated with convalescent plasma. In particular, they saw the emergence of a key mutation also seen in the new variant that led to the UK being forced once again into strict lockdown, though there is no suggestion that the variant originated from this patient.

Using a synthetic version of the virus Spike protein created in the lab, the team showed that specific changes to its genetic code - the mutation seen in the B.1.1.7 variant - made the virus twice as infectious on cells as the more common strain.

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is a beta-coronavirus. Its RNA - its genetic code - is comprised of a series of nucleotides (chemical structures represented by the letters A, C, G and U). As the virus replicates itself, this code can be mis-transcribed, leading to errors, known as mutations. Coronaviruses have a relative-

ly modest mutation rate at around 23 nucleotide substitutions per year.

Of particular concern are mutations that might change the structure of the 'spike protein', which sits on the surface of the virus, giving it its characteristic crown-like shape. The virus uses this protein to attach to the ACE2 receptor on the surface of the host's cells, allowing it entry into the cells where it hijacks their machinery to allow it to replicate and spread throughout the body. Most of the current vaccines in use or being trialled target the spike protein and there is concern that mutations may affect the efficacy of these vaccines, they said.

Professor Ravi Gupta from the Cambridge Institute of Therapeutic Immunology & Infectious Disease, who led the research, said: "What we were seeing was essentially a competition between different variants of the virus, and we think it was driven by the convalescent plasma therapy."

"This effect is unlikely to occur in patients with functioning immune systems, where viral diversity is likely to be lower due to better immune control. But it highlights the care we need to take when treating immunocompromised patients, where prolonged viral replication can occur, giving greater opportunity for the virus to mutate."

# PM hails country's judiciary for safeguarding people's rights

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday hailed the country's judiciary, saying that it has performed its duty well in safeguarding people's rights, upholding personal liberty, and also in the situations when national interests need to be prioritised.

He also said that the Supreme Court has conducted the highest number of hearings via video-conferencing in the world during the coronavirus pandemic.

Modi was speaking after virtually releasing a commemorative postage stamp on the completion of 60 years of the Gujarat High Court.

"Every countryman can say that our judiciary has worked with firmness to



uphold our Constitution. Our judiciary has strengthened the Constitution by its positive interpretation," Modi said.

"The Supreme Court has conducted the highest number of hearings through video-conferencing in the world during the pandemic," he

added. Judiciary has performed its duty well in terms of safeguarding the rights of the people, upholding personal liberty and whenever such situations have arisen in which national interests need to be prioritised, the PM said.

# Hackers claim Army personnel's data leaked, Airtel denies claim

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A hacker group has allegedly leaked data of Army personnel using Bharti Airtel network in Jammu & Kashmir, however, the company has denied any breach in its system.

The group, with the name of Red Rabbit Team, hacked some Indian websites and posted the data on the web pages of those portals.

The hackers shared some links of those web pages on Twitter in a comment over a tweet of cyber security researcher Rajsheshkar Rajaharia and tagged several media organisations.

The query sent to the Indian Army did not elicit any reply but an Army official said "We are not aware of any such information but it appears to be

malicious intent of some inimical elements."

When contacted, Bharti Airtel spokesperson denied any breach of his server.

"We can confirm there is no hack or breach of any Airtel system as claimed by this group. Multiple stakeholders outside of Airtel have access to some data as per regulatory requirements. We have apprised all the relevant authorities of the matter to, therefore, investigate this and take appropriate action."

"This group has been in touch with our security team for over 15 months now and has made varying claims in addition to posting inaccurate data from one specific region," the spokesperson said.

The links shared by the hacker were initially accessible with mobile number, name and address of subscribers but

stopped working after some-time.

Red Rabbit Team in a message to PTI claimed that it has access to pan-India data of Bharti Airtel through a shell uploaded on the company's server and will leak more data soon.

Rajaharia said that hackers have failed to show any credible evidence of possessing pan-India data of Bharti Airtel and it is also unclear on the way they got subscriber's data.

"The hacker group failed to show evidence that they have a whole India database. Their claim of shell upload may be also fake. The video of SDR portal seems real but only a short portion of data may leak via this. It is still unclear how they got access to whole Jammu and Kashmir subscriber data," he said.

# Prahlad Patel co-chairs ASEAN-India tourism Ministers' meet via videocon

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism, Prahlad Singh Patel co-chaired the 8th Meeting of ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers with his Cambodian counterpart Dr Thong Khon through video conferencing on Friday, a statement from the ministry said. The meeting was in conjunction with the 24th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers (MATM).

At the outset, the ministers expressed their sympathy for the loss of lives and livelihood for people in the region as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The ministers reiterated the need for cooperative efforts in mitigating the impact of the pandemic on the tourism sector.

Patel appreciated the efforts of the Prime Minister for not only containing the COVID-19 pandemic but also lending a helping hand to other countries by supplying medicines and medical equipments.

Patel highlighted India's historical and cultural links with ASEAN countries and reiterated that ASEAN is a key market for Buddhist Tourism in India which generates major tourist traffic for the Buddhist Circuit, and the Ministry of



Tourism has substantially invested to upgrade infrastructure in the circuit.

The Ministry of Tourism organises the International Buddhist Conclave (IBC) to create awareness about India's Buddhist Heritage and to increase foreign tourist traffic to Buddhist sites and invited the ASEAN member countries to participate in the same as and when held.

Patel talked about the importance of wellness and medical tourism and emphasized that India is emerging as a preferred country for medical treatments due to advanced quality healthcare, affordable costs, lesser waiting time and easy medical visa process.

He also touched upon the ministry's road map to revive tourism activities post Covid by highlighting initiatives such as

SAATHI (System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for Hospitality Industry) and the Incredible India Tourist Facilitator (ITF) Certification Programme, an online learning platform with the objective of creating a pool of well trained and professional tourist facilitators across the country.

The initiative by Ministry of Tourism to organize a series of webinars under the theme Dekho Apna Desh to showcase the diverse culture, heritage, undiscovered destinations and unusual facets of popular tourist spots has become very popular, the minister said.

He expressed satisfaction over the deliberations and said he looked forward to strengthening the ASEAN-India partnership and cooperation in tourism.

# Senior BJP leaders highlight budget measures in nationwide campaign

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A number of Union Ministers and other BJP leaders on Saturday addressed Press conferences across the country and many others will do so in the coming days as the ruling party launched a nationwide campaign to highlight various aspects of the "pro-people" Budget.

In Andhra Pradesh, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said the Modi government has given priority to the health and welfare measures following the COVID-19 outbreak while Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said the budget aims to ensure empowerment of all sections of society while boosting 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' exercise.

BJP's chief spokesperson Anil Baluni said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar will speak to reporters in Mumbai and Pune respectively on Sunday.

# Up to 50% reduction in heavy metal pollution in Ganga possible: Study

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

A team of scientists from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur has found that Ganga river can get rid of the heavy metal pollution by a minimum of 50 per cent in a short time span of a few months if industrial wastewater discharge is cut down for 51 days.

In contrast, inputs from agricultural runoff and domestic sewage like nitrate and phosphate remained almost the same as these sources were not impacted by the nationwide confinement.

Based on these observation, they dismissed the general perception that the Covid-19 pandemic induced lockdown improved all water quality parameters of the Ganga river and instead asserted that the different pollutants should be considered individually.

Researchers in their article,



titled "A Time-Series Record during COVID-19 Lockdown Shows the High Resilience of Dissolved Heavy Metals in the Ganga River," said that they could quantify the impact of restricted anthropogenic activities on the water chemistry resilience of large rivers following Covid-19 induced lockdown with minimal human action.

In the normal times, it is

estimated that industrial wastewater contributes nearly 20 per cent of the total volume of wastewater generated in the Ganga Basin.

The research was supported by the Indo-US. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF), a bilateral organization under the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and U.S. Department of States. It is published in 'Environmental

Science and Technology Letters.

"We therefore conclude that the Ganga river has a high resilience toward dissolved heavy metal concentrations and that the river system would revert toward pristine dissolved heavy metal concentrations in a short time span of a few months following reductions of industrial wastewater discharge," said the team of scientists comprising Tanuj Shukla, Indra S Sen, Soumita Boral and Sanjeet Sharma.

"We further emphasise that Covid-19 lockdown improved only the dissolved heavy metal load of the Ganga river, and not all the vital parameters of river water quality, as claimed previously," they added.

"Therefore, the statement that the Covid-19 pandemic improved all water quality parameters of the Ganga river is incorrect, and the different pollutants should be considered individually," the scientists asserted.



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### A Panel Discussion on UNION BUDGET 2021

Sunday, February 07, 2021. 5:00 - 6:30 pm

Guest of Honour



**Dr. S. C. Vats**  
Chairman - VIPS

Eminent Panelists



**Prof. Arun Kumar**  
Malcom Adishesiah Professor  
Institute of Social Science



**Mr. Shiv Kumar**  
MD (Retd.) State Bank of  
Bikaner & Jaipur SBBJ



**Mr. Abheek Barua**  
Chief Economist HDFC  
Bank Ltd.



**Mr. Vijay Sardana**  
Techno - Legal Expert, Advocate,  
Delhi High Court & Corporate  
Director Boards



**Mr. Dhananjay Sinha**  
Systematix Group  
Director & Head Institutional  
Research



**Prof. Rattan Sharma**  
Professor Emeritus - DSB

Theme Address



**Dr. Rajiv R Thakur**  
Director - Delhi School of Business



**Prof. Sidharth Mishra**  
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# Nadda launches Rath Yatra in Bengal, attacks Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day before Prime Minister Narendra Modi was to visit Haldia to inaugurate a host of Central projects in Bengal, BJP national president JP Nadda on Saturday inaugurated the first leg of the much hyped Privartan (Rath) Yatra at Krishnagar from where he launched a scathing attack on the Mamata Banerjee Government for deceiving the people of the State in the name Maa-Maati, Maanush (mother earth and humanity).

Launching the Praivartan Yatra from the abode of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Nadda said "10 years ago Mamata didi came to power riding the slogans of Maa-Maati, Manush promising around development for the people of Bengal ... but after 10 years the condition of Bengal has only gone down... People have come to understand how you (Chief Minister) have looted Bengal and hurt its pride. The Maati (land) was humiliated and Maanush (people) were pushed to insecurity."

The BJP leader said "the people had brought you to power with great hopes but you have betrayed them ... instead of restoring democracy you have perpetrated dictatorial rule," alleging "such is the condition today that whosoever raises a voice against you is harassed or jailed."

Attacking the Chief Minister for her innate dislike for the word "Jai Shri Ram" Nadda said "why do you hate Ram so much," wondering "whether you do this to get votes."

Referring to the invectives the Chief Minister showered on him Nadda said "you sufficed a number of invectives against my name," and added how Banerjee had hurt the social culture of Bengal. Referring to the BJP president Banerjee had told a public rally that "some people called Nadda, Chadda, Gadda ... are coming to Bengal to disturb us..."

Earlier leading a massive road show in North Bengal town of Malda, Nadda said how the Chief Minister had "in her stubbornness, ego and arrogance, did great injustice to the 70 lakh farmers Bengal by

not rolling out PM's Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana in the State."

When around 25 lakh people urged the Centre, then "Mamata ji said I will also implement Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana," he added saying "Mamata ji, elections are around the corner, what's the point of repenting when birds have already fled (the damage has already been done)?"

Saying that Lotus was bound to bloom in Bengal and "BJP will definitely come to power here," Nadda said "only BJP can restore Bengal to its former glory."

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister is scheduled to visit industrial city of Haldia in East Midnapore on Sunday. He will launch some key infrastructural projects, BJP sources said. At a programme he will dedicate to the nation the LPG import terminal built by BPCL, the Prime Minister tweeted adding he will also dedicate to the nation Dohbi-Durgapur Natural Gas Pipeline section of the Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga project."

## 4 men booked for rape following court orders in Uttar Pradesh

**Chitrakoot (UP):** Police have registered a case against four people for allegedly raping a 35-year-old Dalit woman in Chitrakoot district in Uttar Pradesh, following a court's orders.

SHO of Karvi police station Virendra Tripathi on Saturday said that in compliance with the orders of the court, a case of gangrape was registered against four persons under various sections of the IPC and the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

A woman working at a government hospital has been made an accused for hatching conspiracy.

The accused are yet to be arrested.

The SHO said the woman accused on November 9, 2020 had taken the Dalit woman to Chitrakoot and then to Devangana Marg where she was raped by the four men.

The SHO said the Dalit woman has alleged that when she had gone to lodge a complaint at Kotwali police station, she was turned away. **PTI**

## J&K Apni Party defeats Gupkar candidates in Srinagar, Shopian for DDC chief picks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party candidates were elected chairpersons of the newly elected District Development Councils of Srinagar and Shopian in the Kashmir valley while BJP candidates were elected in Jammu and Kathua districts and CPI(M) candidates bagged the post of Chairperson in the Kulgam district on Saturday.

With the election of DDC chairpersons in these five districts the pace of development in rural areas is expected to gain fresh momentum in the coming months. In Srinagar and Shopian Apni Party candidates defeated their nearest rivals from the Peoples' Alliance for Gupkar Declaration in a close contest.

District Election Officer (District Development Commissioner) Srinagar, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary said Apni Party candidate Aftab Ahmad Malik won the post of Chairperson DDC Srinagar securing 10 votes while Malik's rival bagged only

three votes. Bilal Ahmad, also an Apni Party candidate for vice-chairperson post managed to secure nine votes while his rival from Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Manzoor Ahmad Bhat bagged only four votes.

DEO Srinagar said that thirteen (13) out of the total fourteen (14) elected DDC members participated in the meeting. He said the elected member from Harwan-IV constituency could not take part in the meeting due to a health condition.

In Shopian, JKAP candidate Bilquees Akhtar, who had won DDC election from Zainapora-1 block, secured 8 votes while her rival candidate from PAGD secured 6.

The post of the vice-chairperson was decided through a draw of lots in favor of AP's Irfan Manhas after a tie.

In Kulgam, all the 14 DDC members participated in the election process and elected Mohammad Afzal Parry as Chairperson (Party affiliation, CPIM) and Shazia Jan (Party affil-

iation National Conference) as Vice-Chairperson of the District Development Council, Kulgam.

President of the APNI party Syed Altaf Bukhari addressing a press conference in Srinagar extended thanks to the voters for reposing faith and giving them the opportunity to serve them.

In Jammu district, BJP candidate Bharat Bushan, former MLA and DDC member from Bhalwal was elected for the post of chairman and Suraj Singh, DDC member for Khour for vice chairman. The post of chairman in Jammu district is reserved for Scheduled Castes.

In Kathua district, the BJP candidate Col (Retired) Maan Singh, DDC member from Basohli was elected unopposed for the post of chairman and Ragunandan Singh alias Babloo, DDC member from Kathua, for vice chairman. All the elected candidates were later administered oath of office and secrecy by the district election officers respectively.

## Pre-bid meeting of Raj MLA housing project organised

**Jaipur:** A pre-bid meeting of the MLA Housing Project and a meeting of the Land Settlement Committee (LNC) was held under the chairmanship of Housing Commissioner Shri Pawan Arora in the board room located at the Rajasthan Housing Board headquarters.

In the pre-bid meeting of MLA Housing Project, 17 big companies including Tata Project participated and showed interest to work in the project. In the meeting of the Land Settlement Committee, 55 cases related to land acquisition of Jaipur, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Udaipur and Sirohi were disposed of.

Housing Commissioner Mr. Pawan Arora said that a pre-bid meeting was organized on Friday in Jyoti Nagar, Jaipur to resolve the queries of the interested bidders for the construction of a multi storeyed flat.

The deadline for submission of bids is set to March 2, 2021 in respect of the project attended by a total of 17 reputed construction companies, including Tata Project, Capacite Infraproject, in the pre-bid meeting. The technical bids of this project will be opened on March 8, 2021 and the financial bids of the applicants who succeed in the technical bids will be opened on March 15, 2021.

The proposed site of construction was also inspected by the interested bidders attending the pre-bid meeting. MLA Nagar (50 out of 54 houses constructed in the east in the west

has been demolished by the board. Work on the remaining houses is in progress. It is noteworthy that 160 multi-storey houses will be constructed here for the MLAs.

This project will be completed in a period of 30 months. The estimated cost of this project is Rs 250 crores. Meeting of Land Settlement Committee held under the chairmanship of Commissioner Disposal of 55 cases related to land acquisition of Jaipur, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Udaipur and Sirohi Housing Commissioner Mr.

Pawan Arora informed that in the meeting of the Land Settlement Committee, it was decided to give 15/25 percent to the account holders in lieu of the unclaimed land of the account holders. He told that due to cancellation of cases related to land acquisition for a long time, the account holders will get their compensation on time and the board will get land for various schemes.

Settlement of 43 cases of Bikaner & Shivbadi scheme He said that 43 cases related to Shivbadi scheme of Rajasthan Housing Board in Bikaner were pending for many years. A special committee was set up for the disposal of these cases, which studied all aspects of the case in time and presented the report. In the meeting held today, the decision to allot land in all these 43 cases was resolved. **PNS**

## Dreaded JeM terrorist caught in Jammu

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

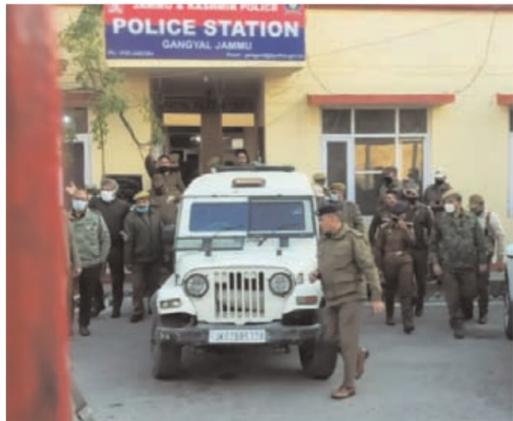
A dreaded terrorist of Lashkar-e-Mustafa, a front organisation of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), was caught alive in a daring operation by the joint teams of Jammu and Anantnag police in the general area of Kunjwani on Saturday afternoon.

The terrorist, claiming to be the Chief of the newly launched terrorist outfit, was moving in a private car when he was tracked down by the police teams near Vishal Mega Mart in Kunjwani area on the outskirts of Jammu.

Inspector General of police, Jammu range Mukesh Singh in a tweet said the terrorists were planning to carry out a terror attack in Jammu.

SSP Jammu, Sridhar Patil said, "The terrorist, identified as Hidayatullah Malik, was armed with a pistol and grenade at the time of the arrest". We are going to carry out searches at a few more places on the basis of interrogation of the arrested terrorist to expose the terror module of the terror outfit and prevent any terror strike in the area.

SSP Jammu also confirmed



that before Hidayatullah Malik was arrested he had attempted to target the police teams.

"Without suffering any collateral damage he was captured alive from his car", SSP told reporters outside the Gangyal Police station where the terrorist was taken soon after he was arrested.

"At the time of the incident he was traveling in a car bearing registration number UP80BN 2708",

## 24 IPS officers shifted in Bengal

**Kolkata:** In a smart move ahead of the Election Commission announcing the Bengal election dates, Chief Minister on Saturday introduced massive reshuffling in the IPS ranks shifting 24 senior personnel in and out of their posts.

To begin with Kolkata Police Commissioner Anuj Sharma was shifted as the ADG, CID. His position will be taken by Soumen Mitra known for his uprightness and professionalism. He will be assisted by Tanmoy Roy Chowdhury as the Additional Commissioner of Police.

Similarly Javed Shamim was made the new ADG, Law and Order while Sri Sudhakar was shifted as the Commissioner of Police, Howrah. While Supratim Sarkar has been made the Commissioner of Police Bidhannagar, Ajay Nand has been appointed as the CP of Barrackpore a place likely to remain tensed during the elections. Senior IPS officer Siddhinath Gupta has been appointed the ADG Southern Range another sensitive zone from the point of view of electioneering.

The transfers have been ordered in an apparent view to avoid criticism regarding alleged politician-police nexus in the State, sources said adding. **PNS**

## Man gets life term for raping minor girl in UP

**Based on a complaint filed by the girl's father, a case was registered against the man under relevant sections of the IPC and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act**

**PTI ■ BALLIA (UP)**

A court in Ballia district in Uttar Pradesh has sentenced a young man to life imprisonment for raping a three-and-a-half-year-old girl, police said on Saturday.

Superintendent of Police of Ballia Vipin Tada said the man raped the girl in a village in the Chitbadagaav police station area on September 5, 2019.

Based on a complaint filed by the girl's father, a case was registered against the man under relevant sections of the IPC and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

The police officer said, "Additional District Judge Shiv Kumar on Friday held the accused person guilty, and sentenced him to life imprisonment. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 on him."

## 3 new Covid cases push Andamans tally to 4,997

**Port Blair:** After remaining COVID-19 free for four days the Andaman and Nicobar Islands has reported three new coronavirus cases, an official said on Saturday.

The three new COVID-19 cases were detected in South Andaman district on Friday, pushing the coronavirus case-load to 4,997, the official said.

The union territory had zero COVID-19 active cases from February 1 to February 4, he said. Of the 4,997 COVID-19 cases in the archipelago, 4,932 people have recovered from the disease and 62 have died due to the infection, the official said. **PTI**

## Over 6.73 healthcare, frontline workers inoculated in UP till date: Official

**Lucknow:** Over 6.73 lakh healthcare and frontline workers have been given the first dose of anti-Covid vaccine in Uttar Pradesh till date, a senior official said on Saturday.

The number of people inoculated against the pandemic disease in Uttar Pradesh till Saturday is highest in the country, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad said.

The first dose of Covid vaccine is being given to people in the state and on Friday, a total of 84,109 healthcare and frontline workers were given the vaccine shots, he added.

Out of the people inoculated on Saturday, 47,714 were healthcare workers and 36,395 frontline workers, he said, adding altogether 6,73,201 people have been given the first shot of the vaccine in the state so far. The frontline workers, whose vaccination started on Friday, will now be given inoculated on February 11, 12 and 18. **PTI**

## Ratan Tata frowns on Bharat Ratna award campaign for him

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Renowned industrialist, philanthropist and former chairman of Tata Sons, Ratan Tata, on Saturday strongly disapproved of a campaign launched by a motivational speaker on social media, rooting for Bharat Ratna award for him.

A day after Dr Vivek Bhindra, a motivational speaker, launched a campaign on twitter making a case seeking bestowal of the highest civilian award him, the veteran industrialist - in a brief statement put out on his twitter handle - asked the social media campaigner to discontinue the campaign.

"While I appreciate the sentiments expressed by a section of the social media in terms of an award, I would humbly like to request that such campaigns be discontinued," 83-year-old Tata said, as he took exception to then #BharatRatnaForRatanTata #RequestByDrVivekBindra launched by the motivational speaker.

"Instead I consider myself fortunate to be an Indian and

to try and contribute to India's growth and prosperity," the former Tata Sons chairman said.

In his campaign that he had launched on twitter seeking Bharat Ratna for Ratan Tata, Dr Bhindra had tweeted: "A well-renowned philanthropist, @RNTata2000 has always believed in giving back to society. We confer the country's highest civilian award Bharat Ratna for Ratan Tata. Join us in our campaign #BharatRatnaForRatanTata #RequestByDrVivekBindra."

Along with his tweet, Dr Bhindra had put out an image and quote of Tata. Tata's quote read thus: "Business Need to go beyond the interest of their Companies to the communities they serve."

Dr Bhindra's tweet elicited instant support from the twitter users. While one twitter user KL Yadav said: "An honor to the gem of India sir @RNTata2000"

The real hero of our nation", the other one by Tapasvi Mishra read: "This legend deserves the #BharatRatna more than anybody else.....Sir Ratan Tata true gem of India"

Neither Tata himself nor Tata group had ever tom-tommed about the philanthropic work done by them. It may be recalled that soon after the outbreak of Covid-19 in the country Tata had in April last year pledged Rs 500 crore towards manufacturing of personal protective equipment, respiratory systems, testing kits, setting up modular treatment facilities and training of health workers. Tata Sons had also announced an additional support of Rs 1,000 crore, taking the total commitment to Rs 1,500 crore.

"The COVID 19 crisis is one of the toughest challenges we will face as a race... At this moment, the need of the hour is greater than any other time," Tata had tweeted then, along with a statement put out by the Tata Trusts.

A recipient of two of the highest civilian awards of India Padma Vibhushan (2008) and Padma Bhushan (2000), Tata is the chairman of the Tata Trusts that are among India's oldest, non-sectarian philanthropic organisations that work in several areas of community development.

**SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
E-TENDER NOTICE FOR PROVISION OF FOIS

Sr. No. (1) E-Tender No.: 75-ST-TENDER-2020, Date: 01.02.2021.  
Work: "Provision of FOIS connectivity at Kanika MCL Sliding from HGR, LCOM I & II from BRJN station, BOCM I, II, III, VI and LCOM - III from LJKR Station".  
Tender Value: ₹ 72,01,759.63 (₹ Seventy Two Lakhs One Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty Nine point Six Three Paise Only).  
Earnest Money Deposited: 0 (As per Railway Board Letter No. 2020/CE-I/CT/3E/GCC/policy, Dt. 30.12.2020).  
Submission of Tender: Upto 15.00 hours on 01.03.2021.

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

Div. Signal & Telecom. Engg.-I  
CPRI/10/433 CIC/Bilaspur.

## One new corona case in Mizoram, tally rises to 4,381

**Aizawl:** Mizoram on Saturday reported a single COVID-19 case as a 45-year-old Border Security Force (BSF) jawan tested positive for the infection, pushing the state's tally to 4,381, an official said.

The patient has come from Uttar Pradesh and he is asymptomatic. Mizoram now has 27 active COVID-19 cases, while 4,345 people have recovered from the virus. The coronavirus recovery rate in the state is 99.18 per cent, the official said. **PTI**

Government of Maharashtra District Sports Office, Bhandara

Chhatrapati Shivaji District Sports Complex, Near Bus Stand, Bhandara-441904.

**Notice for Tender**

District Sports Officer, Bhandara, Government of Maharashtra invites proposals from reputed and experienced companies to participate in competitive bidding process for procurement of gym and open gym equipment. For the detailed tender document, interested bidders should visit <https://mahatenders.gov.in>.

Tender Submission will be online and deadline to submit the proposals is 01.03.2021 Upto 17.00 hrs.

Sd/- (Sanjay Sabhis)  
District Sports Officer, Bhandara.  
DGIPR/2020/2021/2238

**GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER WATER RESOURCES & GROUND WATER SURVEY CIRCLE SIHAVA BHAWAN CAMPUS, CIVIL LINES, RAIPUR (C.G.)**

**e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**  
**eProcurement Portal: <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>**  
**( 1st Call )**

System Tender No. : 71244 /NIT No. : 23/SAC/2020-21, Raipur, Dated : 03.02.2021  
Online Tenders are invited for The Following Works up to 24.02.2021 at 17:30 Hour (IST) :-  
Name of Work : RENOVATION OF HEAD WORK, WASTE WEIR & HEAD SLUICE AND REMODELING & C.C. LINING FROM R.D. 0 TO 1620 M. OF MAIN CANAL, CONSTRUCTION OF 08 NOS. STRUCTURE (04 NOS. V.R.B., 01 NO. AQUADUCT, 02 NO. SYPHON & 01 NO. FALL), 02 NOS. INLET AND REPAIR OF OLD STRUCTURES OF GOTTIYARDH TANK SCHEME IN ABHANPUR BLOCK OF RAIPUR DISTRICT.

Probable Amount : RS. 120.26 Lakhs  
of Contract

The details can be viewed and downloaded online directly from the Government of Chhattisgarh Integrated e-Procurement Portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) from Date 10.02.2021, at 17:31 Hours (IST) onwards.  
**NOTE:-** All eligible/interested contractors/bidders are mandated to get enrolled on the Integrated e-procurement portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) and get approval on specific vendor class from PWD under Centralized Contractor/Supplier Registration in order to download the tender documents and participate in the subsequent bidding process.

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**  
Water Resources Division, Raipur  
for, Superintendent Engineer, Water Resources & Ground Water Survey Circle, Raipur (C.G.)

R.O. No:- 86894/11  
R.O. Date:- 05/02/2021

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**

General Public is hereby informed that a unidentified dead body of a male Namely Unknown S/O Unknown, R/o Unknown Age: about 75 years, Height: 5'5", Complexion: Dark, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: Orange & Blue coloured shirt, was found dead on 03.02.2021 from Near Parcel Office, New Delhi Railway Station. The dead body has been preserved for 72 hours at the mortuary of Dr. RML Hospital. In this regard a FIR/DD No.47-A, dated 03.02.2021 u/s 174 Cr.P.C. has been lodged at P.S. Nabi Karim, Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

**SHO**  
**P.S. Nabi Karim, Delhi**  
Ph: 011-23531734, 23521081  
DP/642/CD/2021

**NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY**  
E-mail :- [dycmmcon@ner.railnet.gov.in](mailto:dycmmcon@ner.railnet.gov.in) Fax No. 0651-2282448  
INTERNET :- [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

**Tender Notice NO. 05, Dated : 05.02.2021**  
**Invitation of tenders through e-procurement system**  
Dy. Chief Material Manager/Con. North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur and on behalf of the President of India. Invites tenders through e-Procurement system for the supply of the following items.  
Complete description of the item and other condition are available on website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Sr. No.	Tender No. Due Date	Brief Description of Stores	Qty. Required	Earnest Money (₹)
01	17205057 Dt. 03.03.2021	Relay Non AC Immune plug in type style QN1 DC neutral line 24V, 12F-4B contacts.	8738.00 Nos	618650.00
02	17215003 Dt. 06.03.2021	SMPS based integrated power supply systems as per RDSO Specification No. RDSO/SPN/165/2012 (ver 3.0) with latest amendment if any.	14.00 Nos	323990.00
03	17195161B Dt. 05.03.2021	Relay AC Immune plug in type style QBCA1 DC biased point contactor for 24V, 2F(HD)4B contacts.	768.00 Nos	58910.00

1. Above tenders are available on IREPS site i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). The firm desires in participating against e-tender are advised to electronically regd. themselves on the above website for which they would require to obtain class-III digital certificate (if already not obtained) from certifying agencies authorized under govt. of India IT Act 2000. Manual offers will not be accepted. 2. Advertised tender of Dy. Chief Material Manager/Con. NER, Gorakhpur, are being opened through EPS i.e. (E-Procurement System) only. Firms desiring to participate in Dy. Chief Material Manager, NER GKP should obtain necessary digital certificate and get themselves registered with CRIS/ New Delhi. Necessary details in this regard can be obtained from the website <https://www.ireps.gov.in> 3. In case of difference between English and Hindi version of the tender notice the English version shall prevail 4. Head of allocation towards cost of Earnest money & SD money is 00844556. 5. Above items are reserved to be procured from RDSO approved sources only.  
CPRO /S-53 Dy. Chief Material Manager/Con. Gorakhpur  
**"About any passenger amenity complain SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955"**  
**"Do not cross unmanned level crossing using mobile phone."**

**Sanesh Industrial Investments Limited**  
CIN: L74899DL1980PLC060079  
Regd. Office : Delton House 4801, Bharat Ram Road 24, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002  
Phone: 011-23273907

Notice is hereby given that the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2021, inter-alia to consider and approve the Un-Audited Financial Results for the Quarter ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2020.

For Sanesh Industrial Investments Limited  
Date: 06.02.2021 Sd/-  
Place: New Delhi Vivek Gupta  
(Director)

**Delton Cables Limited**  
CIN: L31300DL1964PLC004255  
Regd. Off.: Delton House, 4801, Bharat Ram Road, 24, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002, India  
website: [www.deltoncables.com](http://www.deltoncables.com)

NOTICE is hereby given that the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2021, through video conferencing inter-alia to consider and approve the Un-audited Financial Results for the Quarter ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2020. This information is also available on the website of the Company i.e. [www.deltoncables.com](http://www.deltoncables.com) and also on the website of the BSE Limited i.e. [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com).

For Delton Cables Limited  
Date: 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 Sd/-  
Place: New Delhi Vikas Rawat  
(Company Secretary & Compliance Officer)

# UN envoy condemns Myanmar coup

## Calls for immediate release of detained leaders

**United Nations:** In a first contact between the UN and Myanmar Army since generals seized power in a bloodless coup, the Secretary General's special envoy on Myanmar spoke with the country's deputy military chief and expressed "strong condemnation" of its action and called for the immediate release of all detained leaders.

Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar, Christine Schraner Burgener, spoke overnight with Deputy Commander-in-Chief Vice-General Soe Win in capital Nay Pyi Taw, Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, told reporters at the daily press briefing on Friday. Through the virtual meeting with the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of Myanmar, Burgener "reiterated the Secretary-General's strong condemnation of the military's action that disrupted the democratic reforms that were taking place in the country," Dujarric said.

Dujarric said Burgener also reiterated her call for the immediate release of all detained persons.

She emphasised the need to advance progress on key areas

on the safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable repatriation of the Rohingya refugees, the peace process, accountability and particularly engaging with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the ongoing case.

Dujarric added that Burgener and the deputy military chief had "quite a long" and "a very important" conversation since it was the first contact the UN had with the military authorities since the coup on February 1.

The 15-nation Security Council, the most powerful organ of the world organisation, issued a press statement Thursday on the situation in Myanmar three days after the military seized power in the Southeast Asian nation.

The Council members expressed "deep concern" at the declaration of the state of emergency imposed in Myanmar by the military on February 1 and the arbitrary detention of members of the Government, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint and others.

"They called for the immediate release of all those detained," the press statement said.

Dujarric described the Council statement as a "very



Protesters flash the three-fingered salute while they gather to march on Saturday

positive first step" in terms of a "unified" voice from the organisation's body entrusted with keeping peace and security. He added that the Secretary General continues to have various contacts and his Special Envoy also continues to have her contacts.

Burgener has spoken to various representatives of the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), including the bloc's Secretary-General to "ensure that we're all working with the same goal."

As the Security Council deliberated a statement on the situation in Myanmar, India

played the role of an "important bridge" among various views and engaged very constructively to ensure a "balanced" outcome that strongly underlined the importance of the democratic process and transition while not being condemnatory in nature, sources have said.

An initial draft statement, prepared by the Council president for the month of February the UK, had called on the Security Council members to "condemn the military coup," according to a report in the Politico.

In the final Council state-

ment, the language was changed to not have any mention of a coup.

India, into the second month of its tenure as non-permanent Council member, engaged "very constructively" during deliberations over the press statement.

Sources told PTI that India played the role of an "important bridge", bringing together various views and wanted to ensure an outcome which was balanced. It also wanted a statement which was not "condemnatory" in nature, but one which helped the process and not become counter-productive. PTI

# China asks US to rectify 'mistakes' of Trump Admin's aggressive policies

**Beijing:** In its first contact with the Biden administration, China on Saturday asked the US to rectify the "mistakes" of former President Donald Trump's aggressive policies towards Beijing and flagged Taiwan as the most important and sensitive core issue for it.

China resents US support for Taiwan, which Beijing views as a rebel province that must be reunified with the mainland, even by force.

During his tenure, Trump pushed aggressively on all aspects of US-China ties, including with his relentless trade war, challenging China's military hold on the disputed South China Sea, its constant threats to Taiwan, the mass detention of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, branding coronavirus as "China virus" after it emerged from Wuhan in December 2019 as well as Xinjiang and Tibet issues.

Newly-appointed US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and senior Chinese diplomat Yang Jiechi on Saturday held what observers here say as blunt and outspoken conversation over the phone during which both sides sought to highlight the issues of concerns that will shape the ties between the top two economies of the world in the next four years.

Yang, a member of the Politburo of the ruling

Communist Party of China and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC, is Beijing's point man for Washington.

While Blinken told Yang that the Biden administration will hold China accountable for its abuses of the international system and raised with him the issue of human rights violations in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong and Myanmar, the Chinese diplomat said both sides should respect each other's core interests and choices of political system.

Yang said the US "should rectify its mistakes made over a period of time," in an apparent reference to hardline policies pursued by the Trump administration towards China, pushing the ties between the two countries to a new low.

He said the US should work with China to uphold the spirit of no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation.

The Taiwan question, the most important and sensitive core issue in China-US relations, bears on China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, state-run Xinhua news agency quoted Yang as telling Blinken.

China considers Taiwan as part of its mainland and apprehends that the US is stepping its engagement with Taipei with military and political assistance.

The US should strictly

abide by the one-China principle, Yang said, adding that Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet-related affairs are all China's internal affairs and allow no interference by any external forces.

Any attempt to slander and smear China will not succeed, and China will continue to firmly safeguard its sovereignty, security and development interests, Yang said.

He urged the US to play a constructive role in promoting peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region involving the disputed South China Sea, where America looks to step up its engagement with allies to contain Beijing.

China claims almost all of the 1.3 million square-mile South China Sea as its sovereign territory. China has been building military bases on artificial islands in the region also claimed by Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

On the Myanmar coup, Blinken and Yang presented different views.

While Blinken condemned the military coup in Myanmar and threatened sanctions against the military government, Yang stressed that the international community should create an enabling external environment for the proper settlement of the Myanmar issue. PTI

# Trump impeachment trial confronts memories of US Capitol siege

**Washington:** The impeachment trial of Donald Trump is more than an effort to convict the former president of inciting an insurrection. It's a chance for a public accounting and remembrance of the worst attack on the US Capitol in 200 years.

In the month since the Jan. 6 siege by a pro-Trump mob, encouraged by his call to "fight like hell" to overturn the election, defenders of the former president say it's time to move on.

Trump is long gone, ensconced at his Mar-a-Lago club, and Democrat Joe Biden is the new president in the White House. With the trial set to begin Tuesday, and a supermajority of senators unlikely to convict him on the single charge, the question arises: Why bother? Yet for many lawmakers who were witnesses, onlookers and survivors of that bloody day, it's not over.

One by one, lawmakers have begun sharing personal accounts of their experiences of that harrowing afternoon.

Some were in the Capitol fleeing for safety, while others watched in disbelief from adjacent offices. They tell of hiding behind doors, arming themselves with office supplies and fearing for their lives as the rioters stalked the halls, pursued political leaders and trashed the domed icon of democracy.

"I never imagined what was coming," said Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., recounted in a speech on the House floor.

Memory is a powerful tool, and their remembrances, alongside the impeachment proceedings, will preserve a public record of the attack for the Congressional Record.

Five people died and more than 100 people have been arrested in a nationwide FBI roundup of alleged ringleaders and participants, a dragnet unlike many in recent times. While that is sufficient for some, assured the perpetrators will be brought to justice, others say the trial will force Congress, and the country, to consider accountability. AP

# Situation in Ethiopia's Tigray now extremely alarming: UN

**Nairobi:** Life for civilians in Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region has become "extremely alarming" as hunger grows and fighting remains an obstacle to reaching millions of people with aid, the United Nations said in a new report.

And the UN special adviser on genocide prevention warned Friday that without urgent measures the risk of atrocity crimes "remains high and likely to get worse."

The conflict that has shaken one of Africa's most powerful and populous countries — a key US security ally in the Horn of Africa — has killed thousands of people and is now in its fourth month.

But little is known about the situation for most of Tigray's 6 million people, as journalists are blocked from entering, communications are patchy and many aid workers struggle to obtain permission to enter.

One challenge is that Ethiopia may no longer control up to 40 per cent of the Tigray region, the UN Security Council was told in a closed-door session this week.

Ethiopia and allied fighters have been pursuing the now-fugitive Tigray regional government that once dominated Ethiopia's government for nearly three decades. AP

# Welcoming ICC ruling, Palestinian family hopes for justice

**Gaza City:** The father of a Palestinian boy killed in an Israeli missile strike in 2014 expressed renewed hope for justice Saturday after the International Criminal Court paved the way for a possible war crimes probe into Israeli military actions.

The court ruled Friday that its jurisdiction extends to the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war, including the Gaza Strip where Subhi Bakr's 10-year-old son Mohammed and three of the boy's cousins were killed as they played soccer on a beach.

"Better late than never," said Bakr, walking Saturday on the beach where the boys were killed during the 2014 war between Israel and Gaza's rulers, the Islamic militant group Hamas.

The ICC ruling opened the door for possible war crimes probes into Israeli military actions during that war and Israeli settlement construction on war-won land. Hamas could also come under scrutiny for indiscriminate rocket fire into civilian areas of Israel.

The international tribunal's chief prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, has yet to launch an official investigation. In 2019, Bensouda said there was a "reasonable basis" to open a war crimes probe, but she

# Nepal to get 5L vaccine doses from China under grant assistance

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

China will provide 5,00,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccines to Nepal on a grant basis, officials here said on Saturday, supplying the first batch of vaccine aid for the Himalayan nation.

During a telephonic conversation with his Nepali counterpart Pradeep Gyawali on Friday evening, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi assured that China would accord priority to Nepal in vaccine cooperation, according to a press statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here.

Wang announced that China will provide 5,00,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccine to Nepal on a grant basis, it said.

According to a report by the official Chinese news agency Xinhua, during the phone conversation with Gyawali, Wang said China attaches great importance to Nepal's urgent need of Covid-19 vaccines and has decided to provide the first batch of vaccine aid for the country.

# Biden revokes terrorist designation for Houthis

**Washington:** President Joe Biden's administration is moving to revoke the designation of Yemen's Houthis as a terrorist group, citing the need to mitigate one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters.

President Donald Trump's administration had branded the Iranian-backed Houthis as a foreign terrorist organisation, a move that limited the provision

of aid to the beleaguered Yemeni people, who have suffered under a yearlong civil war and famine.

A State Department official confirmed the move Friday after members of Congress were notified of the admin's plans. The official, who wasn't authorized to speak publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity, said the removal changed nothing about the Biden administration's views

of the Houthis, who have targeted civilians and kidnapped Americans.

"Our action is due entirely to the humanitarian consequences of this last-minute designation from the prior admin, which the UN and humanitarian organisations have since made clear would accelerate the world's worst humanitarian crisis," the official said. AP

# Turkish president takes action at protest-rocked university

**Istanbul:** Turkey's president has ordered the establishment of two new departments in the country's most prestigious university, which has been rocked by weeks of demonstrations protesting his appointment of a new rector with government links.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's decision, published in the Official Gazette Saturday, says law and communications faculties are to be launched in Bogazici University. Critics say the establishment of new departments would allow the presidentially appointed rector to staff them with government

loyalists.

For over a month, students and faculty have led mostly peaceful protests against the new rector, Melih Bulu, who has links to Erdogan's ruling party. They are calling for Bulu's resignation and for the university to be allowed to elect its own president.

In an open letter to Erdogan, protesting Bogazici students called the decision to open new departments intimidation and "petty tricks."

"Your attempts to pack our university with your own political militants is the symptom of

the political crisis you have fallen into," the letter said.

Police have detained hundreds of demonstrators at the university and in solidarity protests elsewhere, some taken away following raids of their homes. Most were later released.

Top government officials have said terrorist groups are provoking the protests, and Erdogan has called the protesting students terrorists. Istanbul governor's office press statements have listed detention numbers with alleged links to outlawed leftist and Kurdish militant groups. AP

**Notice for Request for Proposal**  
No. RMSA/AptitudeTest/20-21/1317/2020/24 Dated: 06/2/2021

This Samagra Shiksha, Assam invites proposal affixing court fee stamp of minimum value Rs 8.25/- containing (a) Qualification expression & Technical Proposal and (b) Commercial Proposal in separate file/folder for Aptitude Test at secondary level through e-procurement system of Govt. of Assam i.e. <https://assamtenders.gov.in>

Detailed bid document may be seen at "<https://assamtenders.gov.in>" for eligibility, scope of work, RFP terms and conditions etc. The RFP document can be purchased by registering at "<https://assamtenders.gov.in>" from 07/2/2021, 1.00 P.M to 18/2/2021, 1.00 P.M. and making payment of non-refundable RFP Fee of Rs. 3,000/- (Rupees Three Thousand) only in the form of Demand Draft in favour of Mission Director, RMSA, Assam payable at Guwahati.

**Important Dates and Milestone of the RFP:**

Sl	Particulars	Date & Time	Particulars	Date & Time
1.	Publishing Date & Time	07/2/2021, 1.00 PM	-	-
2.	Document Download Start	07/2/2021, 1.00 PM	Document Download End	18/2/2021, 1.00 P.M
3.	Pre-Bid Meeting	11/2/2021 1.00 PM	-	-
4.	Bid Submission Start	08/2/2021, 11.00 AM	Bid submission end	18/2/2021 2.00 PM
5.	Technical Bid Opening	18/02/2021 3.00 PM	-	-
6.	Financial Bid Opening	To be intimated to the technically qualified entity at a later date.	-	-
7.	Earnest Money Deposit(EMD):	INR 1,45,000/-	-	-
8.	RFP FEE :	INR 3,000/-	-	-

- The bid document can be downloaded from the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>
- The bid document shall have two covers: (i) Technical Bid & Commercial terms (ii) Financial Bid.
- Online mode of submission of Technical and Financial Bids are mandatory. Manual submission of Financial Bids will not be accepted
- However original copy of the Tender Fee ,EMD and Technical Bid along with Rs. 8.25 court fee stamp to be submitted at State Mission Office, Samagra Shiksha, Assam (RMSA, Assam) , Kahilipara, Guwahati-19 before the last date and time of bid submission.
- Samagra Shiksha (RMSA, Assam) reserves the right to amend or cancel the bid document without assigning any notice or reason thereof at any stage of the bid. Moreover, in case of non-availability of sufficient bidder (or less than three bidder), authority has the right to take decision without prior notice.

Sd/- Executive Director  
Samagra Shiksha, Assam, (RMSA & SSA, Assam)

Janasanyog /CF/4600/20

# Aid groups hail US taking Yemen's Houthis off terror list

**Cairo:** Aid agencies working in war-torn Yemen on Saturday welcomed plans by President Joe Biden's administration to revoke the terrorist designation of Yemen's Houthi rebels in order to mitigate one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters.

David Miliband, head of the International Rescue Committee, said those designation would have done nothing to address terrorism in the Arab world's poorest country, and would only hinder much-needed aid deliveries to Yemenis living in Houthi-held areas.

"This is a further, vital, correct decision to bring hope to Yemen's crisis-stricken population," he said. "The next steps

are to raise aid flows, negotiate a permanent cease-fire, and get the diplomatic process moving to establish a sustainable political settlement."

For years, the Iranian-backed Houthis have ruled the capital and Yemen's north where the majority of the population lives, forcing international aid groups to work with them. Agencies depend on the Houthis to deliver aid, and they pay salaries to Houthis to do so.

Mohamed Abdi, Yemen director for the Norwegian Refugee Council, said the move represents a "sigh of relief and a victory for the Yemeni people," that sends a "strong message" that the US cares first about the interests of Yemenis. AP

**UJVN LIMITED**  
H.O.: "UJJVAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006, Tel: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508, CIN No. U40161UR2001SGC025865, Website: www.ujvn.com

पत्रिक सं. 112 Time extension Notice दिनांक 06.02.2021

Due to unavoidable circumstances the due dates of e-tender Notice No. 09/EE(E&M)/Asan Barrage/2020-21 for Procurement of safety and security equipment invited by Office of the EE (E&M), Asan Barrage, is extended as below:

Last date for submission of bids on website :13/02/2021 upto 1700 Hrs

Submission of documents in hard copy: 15/02/2021 upto 1400 Hrs.

Opening of bid on e-portal: 16/02/2021 at 1230 Hrs

All other terms and conditions of bid shall remain unchanged.

For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "<http://uktenders.gov.in>"

Executive Engineer (E&M)

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

**Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation, Jaipur**  
**E - BID NOTICE**

निम्न की नकारा-रकम का ई-ऑक्शन वेबसाइट [transport.rajasthan.gov.in/rsrtc](http://transport.rajasthan.gov.in/rsrtc) एवं [rsrtc.procure247.com](http://rsrtc.procure247.com) के माध्यम से जहाँ है, जैसी है की रिश्तित में किया जाना है जिसका विवरण निम्न प्रकार है :-

S. No.	Event's Name	EMD deposit start date	EMD deposit end date	BID Start Date	BID End Date
1	SCRAP Group A	23.01.2021	11.02.2021	11.02.2021	12.02.2021
2	SCRAP Group B	23.01.2021	11.02.2021	11.02.2021	12.02.2021
3	SCRAP Group C	23.01.2021	11.02.2021	11.02.2021	12.02.2021
4	SCRAP Group D	23.01.2021	11.02.2021	11.02.2021	12.02.2021
5	SCRAP Tyre/Tube Group A	23.01.2021	10.02.2021	10.02.2021	11.02.2021
6	SCRAP Tyre/Tube Group B	23.01.2021	10.02.2021	10.02.2021	11.02.2021
7	SCRAP Tyre/Tube Group C	23.01.2021	10.02.2021	10.02.2021	11.02.2021

नोट : 1. ई-ऑक्शन में शामिल होने से पूर्व बोलीदाता द्वारा EMD राशि जमा करना अनिवार्य है।  
2. ई-ऑक्शन का सम्पूर्ण विवरण एवं सर्वे वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध है।  
पत्र.संवाद/सी/9470/2020-21 Financial Advisor

**Office Of Executive Officer**  
**Nagar Panchayat, Swargashram Jonk,**  
**Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand Email: [eonpjonk@gmail.com](mailto:eonpjonk@gmail.com)**

Letter - 793 Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) Date- 06 February, 2021

Office of Executive Officer, Nagar Panchayat, Swargashram, Jonk, Pauri Garhwal on behalf of "Governor of Uttarakhand" invites following tenders under two bid system through E-tendering Process. Detailed eligibility criteria, EMD, ITB, and other terms & conditions of the tender document can be seen at <https://uktenders.gov.in>. Any amendment in future against the tender shall be uploaded on <https://uktenders.gov.in>

Dates	Supply of manpower for managing solid waste during Maha Kumbh at Haridwar.	Supplying Vehicles and machinery for collection & transportation of solid waste at Haridwar during Maha Kumbh 2021.
Document Download Start Date	07.02.2021, 10.00 AM	07.02.2021, 10.00 AM
Last date of receiving queries	09.02.2021 upto 05.00 PM	09.02.2021 upto 05.00 PM
Pre-bid conference	11.02.2021, 04.00 PM	11.02.2021, 02.00 PM
Proposal Due Date	13.02.2021 upto 04.00 noon	13.02.2021 upto 12.00 PM
Opening of Technical Bids	13.02.2021 upto 05.00 PM	13.02.2021 upto 03.00 PM
Cost of Tender Document	Rs. 5900/- (Rs Five Thousand Nine Hundred Only)	Rs. 5900/- (Rs Five Thousand Nine Hundred Only)

Executive Officer, Nagar Panchayat, Swargashram, Jonk

# Large fiscal deficit can be inflationary: Crisil

**IAN S ■ NEW DELHI**

The large fiscal deficit that has been proposed in Union Budget 2021-22 could be inflationary in nature but not an immediate threat, said Crisil Research.

Accordingly, the budget has replaced fiscal consolidation as a priority with expansion, well into the medium term.

Besides, the fiscal glide path "itself has become foot-loose" with a deficit at 9.5 per cent for FY21, 6.8 per cent in FY22 and 4.5 per cent by fiscal 2026.

"A large fiscal deficit could be inflationary but given there are under-utilised capacities and the economy continues to grow below potential, this may not be an immediate threat," Crisil Research said in a note.

"But sticky inflation, especially core, and surplus liquidity sloshing around can potentially breed trouble."

In terms of the growth, Crisil Research said the thrust on public investment will be positive for growth, not only in the short but also the medium term as it has a higher multiplier effect than revenue spending and augurs well for jobs.

Besides, the note said the quality of expenditure is improving, with capex rising and revenue expenditure staying below trend.

"Receipts, on the other hand, are estimated to remain 27 per cent below the trend in fiscal 2022. To be fair, this also partly reflects the somewhat conservative revenue targets for fiscal 2022."

"Government revenue, particularly tax collections, go up due to either base effect or rate effect.

Nominal gross domestic product (GDP) in fiscal 2022 is estimated at 10 per cent below the trend seen before the pandemic."

According to Crisil Research, the government, for good reasons, has also not introduced tax proposals. Thus, while the base has shrunk, rates have not changed.

"This will lead to under-performance of revenue continuing beyond fiscal 2022, unless compliance goes up substantially."

In addition, the note cited off-budget expenditures such as Food Corporation of India's loans from the National Small Savings Fund and government's fully serviced bonds will now be accounted for when calculating the fiscal deficit.

"Excluding these two items, the fiscal deficit could have been lower by 0.5-1 per cent in fiscal 2021 and 0.6 per cent in fiscal 2022. That is to say, in the more transparent schema, the fiscal consolidation path may stretch longer."

# Sitharaman extends cash benefit to Assam tea workers

**PTI ■ GUWAHATI**

Ahead of the assembly polls in Assam, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday distributed ₹3,000 each to 7.47 lakh tea garden workers in the State, totalling ₹224 crore.

The Union finance minister was in the city to participate in the programme to offer financial assistance to tea workers under the third tranche of the Assam Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar Mela Scheme.

Before 2014 Lok Sabha polls, Narendra Modi ji had wished to work for the upliftment of tea garden workers and accordingly several schemes were launched after the NDA came to power, the Union minister said.

As part of the third tranche of the flagship scheme, an additional amount of ₹3,000 each will be credited to the bank accounts of 7,46,667 workers.

Each tea worker had earlier received ₹5,000 in two phases.

The incentive was made through direct benefit transfer (DBT) mode to 6,33,411 bank accounts of tea gardens in 2017-18 and 7,15,979 accounts in 2018-19 across 752 tea gardens.

Sitharaman said, all middlemen have been eliminated with introduction of the DBT mode in various schemes and the Centre will continue to support tea gardens in Assam in future.

"PM Modi favoured using technology for the benefit of people while implementing the schemes and so the concept of DBT was introduced. Due to this, middlemen were totally eliminated and the benefits reached directly to the beneficiaries," she said.

Sitharaman said that the Union budget for 2021-22 has allocated Rs 1,000 crore for the welfare of women and children of tea gardens in Assam and West Bengal as per the request

of the BJP-led government in the northeastern state.

"After bank accounts were opened for tea garden labourers, some issues cropped up. But when I instructed the bankers in February last year to correct the anomalies they worked tirelessly, even during the COVID-19 crisis, and everything is on track now," she said.

Speaking on the occasion, Assam Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that Rs 224 crore will be spent on transferring the third tranche of the scheme to the beneficiaries.

"We spent Rs 158 crore in the first year and it increased to Rs 202 crore during the second year.

The scheme won't stop here at Rs 3,000 each as we have already begun the process to send such an amount every month," he added.

Elections to the 126-member Assam Assembly are due in March-April this year.

# Lower customs duty on gold to curb smuggling, benefit retail jewellers

**IAN S ■ NEW DELHI**

The Union Budget 2020-21 proposal to reduce customs duty on gold and silver will curtail the increasing trend of smuggling of these precious metals in the country, India Ratings and Research has said.

Accordingly, the Budget has proposed to reduce the customs duty on gold and silver to 7.5 per cent from 12.5 per cent.

"The move will also improve the government's overall revenue from the sector," Ind-Ra said in a report.

"The duty reduction will support sectoral demand in the long term, as jewellery costs will come down and customers' purchasing power will improve."

Besides, the report said the majority of the gold jewellery demand in India is price sensitive. "Overall demand stalls for any sharp rise in gold prices. Consequently, amid a sharp rise in gold prices, revenue for the top organised players declined by average 32 per cent YoY in 1HFY21."

As per Ind-Ra's estimates, unofficial imports of gold range between 150-180 tonnes compared to the official gold import numbers of 600-700 tonnes for FY20.

"Ind-Ra believes that reduction in import duty thus is favourable for the domestic organised jewellery players."

"The move will also improve the government's overall revenue from the sector. The duty reduction will support sectoral demand in the long term, as jewellery costs will come down and customers' purchasing power will improve."

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# Four more States complete ease of doing business reforms

**IAN S ■ NEW DELHI**

Four more States - Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab have undertaken "Ease of Doing Business" reforms stipulated by the finance ministry.

With this, these States have become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources and have been granted permission to raise additional ₹5,034 crore through Open Market Borrowings.

The total number of states that have undertaken the stipulated reforms to facilitate ease of doing business has gone up to 12.

Earlier, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Telangana have also reported completion

of this reform, which was confirmed by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

On completion of reforms facilitating ease of doing business, these twelve states have been granted additional borrowing permission of Rs 28,183 crore.

The ease of doing business is an important indicator of the investment friendly business climate in the country. Improvements in the ease of doing business will enable faster future growth of the state economy, a finance ministry statement said.

Government in May last year had decided to link grant of additional borrowing permissions to states that undertake the reforms to facilitate ease of doing business.

# Vaccine rollout increases hopes for air transport: Ind-Ra

**IAN S ■ MUMBAI**

The start of vaccination drives in several countries globally along with higher fleet deployment levels will support the recovery of the air transport sector in the coming months, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said.

Accordingly, the agency's India logistics sector report said: "While passenger numbers for airlines are still down on a YoY basis, the start of vaccination drives in several countries globally and the Indian government allowing 80 per cent of fleet to be deployed are key positives recently."

"While both these developments should be supportive of a recovery in operating cash

flow and liquidity in coming months, this will likely be offset at least partly by ongoing higher fuel prices."

According to the report, since resumption of operations on May 25th, domestic air traffic continued to sequentially improve in December 2020.

The domestic passenger traffic rose 15 per cent MoM in December 2020, although was down 43 per cent YoY.

"In the domestic operations, passenger load factor stood at 65-78 per cent during

December 2020."

"However, approval for vaccines and governments undertaking vaccination drives in major countries will likely raise consumer confidence in air travel and be supportive of a recovery over the medium term."

On an overall basis, in December 2020, key metrics for the wider logistics sector continued to report a sequential recovery.

"India's port volumes grew 4 per cent YoY, while E-way bill generation increased 16 per cent YoY during the month."

"Railway volumes also rose 9 per cent YoY in December 2020, though they remained down 2 per cent YoY in April-December 2020."

# After 2-day spike, petrol & diesel prices remain unchanged

**IAN S ■ NEW DELHI**

Petrol and diesel price rose on Saturday after two consecutive days of sharp increase where pump price of the auto fuels rose by 65 paise per litre.

The pause came on a day when global crude prices rose by close to 1 per cent to reach this year's high level of \$60 a barrel.

Petrol, diesel and other oil product prices in India are determined on the basis of petroleum product price in the global markets and not crude price. But movement in benchmark crude has a bearing on pricing across the product categories.

With price on the pause on

Saturday, the retail price of diesel remained at Rs 77.13 a litre in Delhi while petrol prices remained at new high level of Rs 86.95 a litre in the capital. The retail price of the two products had risen on February 4 and 5, increasing the prices by 65 paise per litre.

Across the country as well, the fuel prices remained at Friday's level.

Though firm global crude and product price is the reason for the increase in retail price of petrol and diesel in past days, it is interesting to note that even though crude has been hovering just over \$55 a barrel for a long time, OMCs had gone in for both a pause in price of auto fuels as well increase in its retail prices on consecutive days.

Crude price have remained firm for last few weeks in wake of unilateral production cuts announced by Saudi Arabia and a pick up in consumption in all major economies globally. The petrol and diesel prices have increased 12 times in 2021 with the two auto fuels increasing by Rs 3.24 and Rs 3.26 per litre respectively so far this year.

The last few increases in pump prices in petrol and diesel has taken its price to record levels across the country in all major metro cities and other towns. The last time the retail price of auto fuels were closer to current levels was on October 4, 2018 when crude prices had shot up at \$80 a barrel.

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**



General public is hereby informed that one male name & address unknown. Age: about 30 Yrs, Height- 5'7", fair complexion, thin build, round face, wearing a red & blue T-shirt, grey colour jacket. Blue jeans & black & blue sport shoes in feet has been found dead at Haiderpur Water Treatment Plant, Delhi on 31.01.2021.

**Unknown**

In this regard a DD No. 40-A, dt. 31.01.2021 has been lodged at PS KNK Marg, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved at BSA Hospital Mortuary for identification.

Any person having any information or clue about this deceased may kindly inform to the following.

**S.H.O., P.S. KNK Marg, Delhi**  
Ph.: 011-27571162, 8750870327

DP/655/RD/2021

**GDA will create land bank by freeing hundreds of acres of land from the land mafiyas**

**GHaziabad:** At present, about 355 acres of GDA land in the metropolis is occupied by the land mafia. The GDA administration has prepared a blueprint to get this land occupied. To mark the land, the land acquisition department of GDA is presently engaged in scrutinizing the land records. After the land washout from the occupation of landfields, the GDA will create a land bank where the entire record of the land will be kept with due diligence. After this land will be used in various schemes of Ghaziabad. The GDA is churning with its subordinate officers to washout the land with the use of land and occupation of land mafia. In this regard, GDA Vice President Krishna Karunesh has issued instructions to the Engineers of GDA Enforcement Zone Engineering Division to instruct them that not even one inch of GDA land should be in the possession of mafias.

**Punjab & Sind Bank loss zooms to ₹2,375 cr in Q3 as provisions spike**

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Punjab & Sind Bank on Saturday said its net loss in December quarter 2020-21 spiralled to ₹2,375.53 crore on higher provisions for bad loans.

The lender had posted a net loss of ₹255.49 crore in the same period a year ago. In September quarter also, the bank had a loss of ₹401.27 crore.

Total income in the quarter under review also fell to ₹1,982.52 crore from ₹2,077.01 crore in the same period of 2019-20, Punjab & Sind Bank said in a regulatory filing.

Net income fell 9.1 per cent to ₹1,763.10 crore and income on investments was down 12.1 per cent to ₹455.42 crore.

The bank's gross non-performing assets (NPAs) remained high at 13.14 per cent of the gross advances as of December 31, 2020, compared to 13.58 per cent by the year-ago same period.

In value terms, gross NPAs or bad loans stood at ₹8,489.89 crore by the end of December 2020 as against ₹8,923.49 crore earlier.

Net NPAs came down significantly at 2.84 per cent (₹1,638.25 crore) as against 8.71 per cent (Rs 5,417.79 crore). Provisions for bad loans and contingencies spiked to Rs 2,924.69 crore during the quarter, as against Rs 494.30 crore. Of this, provisions for bad loans were Rs 1482.17 crore, which was higher than Rs 464.01 crore a year ago.

**Nabard disburses ₹16,500 crore under RIDF in first 10 months of FY21**

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) on Saturday said it has sanctioned ₹30,200 crore and disbursed ₹16,500 crore for various rural infrastructure projects across the country under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) in the first 10 months of the current financial year.

The RIDF, which was set up in 1995, is a dedicated fund to create social assets in rural India.

"In FY21, the sanctions to the RIDF stood at ₹30,200 crore as against the corpus of ₹30,000 crore. The disbursement for the current financial year as on January 31, 2021 stands at ₹16,500 crore," Nabard chairman G R Chintala said in a statement.

Since the inception of the fund, Nabard has disbursed ₹3.11 lakh crore for different rural infrastructure projects, it said.

Chintala said this fund has constituted around 10 per cent of gross capital formation in rural areas. Over the years, the RIDF has become a dependable source of funding for states and union territories for building.

**IST LIMITED**  
CIN: L33301HR1976PLC008316  
Regd. Office: Dharuhera Industrial Complex, Delhi- Jaipur Highway No.8, Kapriwas, Dharuhera, Rewari (Haryana)-123106  
Head Office: A-23, New Office Complex, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Defence Colony, New Delhi- 110024  
Phone No.: 011-24694291-92  
Fax: 011-24625684  
Email: istgroup.ho@gmail.com  
Website: www.istindia.com

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Regulation 29, 33 and 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2021, *inter alia* to consider, approve and take on record the Un-audited Financial Results of the Company for the quarter ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2020.

Notice for the Board Meeting is also available on the website of the Company www.istindia.com and also on the website of BSE limited www.bseindia.com

For IST Limited  
Sd/-  
Date: 06.02.2021  
Place: New Delhi  
Bhupinder Kumar  
Company Secretary

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified deadbody of male Age : Approx. 35 years, Height : 5'5", Complexion : Sallow, Build : Normal, Face : Round, wearing blue colour checkdar shirt and blue colour jeans pant, was found dead on 02.02.2021 at Mcdonald, near ISBT Kashmere Gate, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 04A dated 02.02.2021 u/s 174 Cr.P.C. has been lodged at P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this found person may kindly inform to the following:-

**SHO : P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi**  
Tel. No. 011-23968730

DP/928/N/21

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified body of a male namedly **Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown was found Unconscious Condition on 03.02.2021 at 10:56 PM at Dr RML Hospital Casualty, New Delhi. During the treatment the doctors declared him dead. Dead Body has been preserved in Dr. RML Hospital, New Delhi**

mortuary for identification. In this regard DD No. 45A, dated 03.02.2021 has been lodged at Police Station, North Avenue, New Delhi. Identification of unidentified dead body of male is as under:

**Name: Unknown, Age: about 30 Years, Height: 5'8", Face: Long, Built: Strong, Complexion: Shallow, Hair: Balck, Wearing: Light blue shirt and black pant.**

If anyone have any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be inform undersigned.

**SHO**  
Police Station, North Avenue, New Delhi  
Ph.: 011-23093040, 23093294

DP/218/NDD/21

**HINDUSTHAN URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED**  
Regd. office: 7th Floor, Kanchenjunga, 18, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi-110001  
Email: investors@hindusthan.co.in, website: www.hindusthanurban.com  
CIN No. L31300DL1959PLC003141, Phone No.: 011-23310001-05

**NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to provisions of Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47(1)(a) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 *inter-alia* to consider, approve and take on record the Un-audited Financial Results (standalone and consolidated) of the Company for the third quarter and nine months ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2020.

Further, we wish to inform you that in accordance with SEBI (Prohibition of Insider Trading) Regulations, 2015, the trading window for dealing in the shares of the Company has been closed with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2021 till 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 (both days inclusive). This notice is also available on the website of BSE Limited (www.bseindia.com) where the shares of the company are listed and on the website of the Company (www.hindusthanurban.com).

**FOR HINDUSTHAN URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED**

Sd/-  
M.L. Birmiwala  
President-Finance & Secretary

Dated: 06.02.2021  
Place: New Delhi

**WESTERN RAILWAY**

**E-Procurement Tender Notice No. S/05/2021 Dated : 03.02.2021**

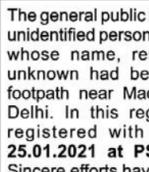
S.N.	Short description of Item	Quantity	T.O.D.
84	Lever for 13 T Bogie Brake	300 Nos.	15.02.2021
85	Pin Cottered	2020 Nos.	15.02.2021
86	Circlip 85X4H	191 Nos.	16.02.2021
87	Gadus S5 V42 P2.5 Grease	684 Kg.	18.02.2021
88	Automatic Soap Dispenser	25 Nos.	18.02.2021
89	Common Pipe Bracket	150 Nos.	19.02.2021
90	Contact for time relay VCB	13 Nos.	22.02.2021
91	Circuit breaker main compressor	54 Nos.	22.02.2021
92	Circuit breaker DC	52 Nos.	22.02.2021
93	Circuit Breaker Battery Charger	27 Nos.	22.02.2021
94	Sub kit POH-1 for Tap changer.	48 Set	22.02.2021
95	LED Singal Lighting Unit Aspect Route,Shunt & Calling on	331 Nos.	24.02.2021
96	LED Signalling Light Unit Aspect Red, Yellow & Green	233 Nos.	24.02.2021
97	3D-2D Echo Machine with Doppler	1 Nos.	24.02.2021
98	Parking Brake cylinder for parking brake system	107 Nos.	25.02.2021
99	Circuit breaker DC supply	61 Nos.	25.02.2021
100	Copper Catenary Wire 19/2-10mm 65Sq.mm	122500 Mtr.	26.02.2021
101	FRP Seat cum Back Rest	275 Nos.	26.02.2021
102	IMS Rake for MRVC-II EMU Rake	9 Nos.	26.02.2021
103	Set of Indication Lamp and Illumination Push Button	66 Set	26.02.2021
104	Spheri Bloc for Gear Case Torque Arm	580 Nos.	26.02.2021
105	Switch for Headlight	52 Nos.	26.02.2021
106	Flap Door for BCNA Wagon	1132 Nos.	26.02.2021
107	Ceamic Hybrid Ball Bearing 6305	164 Nos.	27.02.2021
108	Metallised Carbon Strips	746 Nos.	27.02.2021
109	Circuit Breaker Scavenger Blower TM	11 Nos.	27.02.2021
110	Crowned Gear Coupling	8 Nos.	27.02.2021

Note for Sr. No.97 : A pre-bid meeting is being organised on 09.02.2021 at 15.00 hrs. with potential suppliers on Zoom. The Zoom ID is 83682518410 Password is 9wJBJ. Interested vendors may get the specification and tender details from www.ireps.gov.in. For any clarification vendor may contact to Shri S.B. Mishra (Dy CMM / Admn) on 9004490769.

Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website www.ireps.gov.in and www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in.

0638 For Principal Chief Materials Manager  
Like us on : facebook.com/WesternRly / Follow us on : twitter.com/WesternRly

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**



The general public is hereby informed that an unidentified person about 55-60 years of age whose name, residence, and family is unknown had been found dead on the footpath near Madras Colony Mori Gate, Delhi. In this regard, a vide has been registered with DD No: 20A, dated 25.01.2021 at PS Subzi Mandi, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to identify the deceased person, but no clue has come to light so far.

The description of the UIDB is as under:  
**Sex: Male, Age: about 55-60 years, Height: 5'6", Complexion: Wheatish, Wearing: Grey colour jacket and grey colour pant.**

If anyone has any information about his relatives, kindly inform the SHO/Subzi Mandi, Delhi.

E-mail : cbc@cbl.gov.in  
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax : 011-24368639

**SHO**  
P.S. Subzi Mandi, Delhi.  
Ph. No. 011-23823161

DP/925/N/2021

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person **Namely: Unknown, S/o Unknown R/o Unknown Age : About 30-35 years, Height : 5'8", Complexion : Fair, Face: Long, Built: Normal, Wearing: Dark grey colour track suit & blue colour lower and checkdar underwear has been found dead in accident between K.M. Pole No. 2/23 G to 2/25 G at Ghaziabad to New Delhi rail line, near Ganesh Nagar, Delhi on 04.02.2021. In this regard a case vide DD No. 1A dated 04.02.2021 has been lodged at Police Station Anand Vihar Railway Station, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved for 72 hours in GTB Hospital Mortuary, Delhi.**

Any person having any information or clue about this dead found person may kindly inform to the following:-

**SHO : P.S. Anand Vihar Railway Station, Delhi**  
Tel. No. 011-22145602, 8750871314

DP/53/RLY/2021

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**

**Tender Notice**

The Dy. Chief Engineer/Const/SERD-II, Northern Railway, 2nd floor, NDCR Building, State Entry Road, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under **Single Packet System** for the under noted work:-

Name of work and location	Hiring of 01 No Non AC vehicle such as Jeep, Gypsy, Tata Sumo type of vehicle for AXEN/C/SERD-II for 24 months.
Completion period of the work	24 (Twenty Four) months.
Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 10.95 lakhs
Earnest Money to be deposited	Rs. 0.00 only
Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tenders may be uploaded upto 11.30 hrs on 02.03.2021 on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the Technical cum Commercial cum financial Bids of which will be opened at 11.30 hrs on 02.03.2021.
Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document	The detailed e-tender document is available on www.ireps.gov.in from 09.02.2021 to 02.03.2021. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.
Tender Notice No. 58-Acs/HV/02Y/Dy.SERD-II Dated 06.02.2021	272/2021

Serving Customers With A Smile



# WHO IS THE ANIMAL HERE?

Bludgeoned to death, set ablaze and separated from offsprings. These heinous inhuman crimes are not unheard of but the cruelty of it crosses all limits when the victims don't have a voice to show their pain. MUSBA HASHMI talks to experts to find a solution for cruelty against animals

Your phone beeps — a notification on the family WhatsApp group — you open it to only see: An elephant was set on fire by the villagers. You were just recalling the incident that your phone beeps again. The message reads: A dolphin was beaten to death by a group of boys. As if this was not enough to make you cry, the phone beeps once again and now there's a news article explaining how five men trapped and killed a leopard to eat its flesh and sell its jaw and paws.

These mere one-line incidents are enough to leave you in tears and make you question the existence of humanity.

While these cases might be horrific or big enough to make headlines, there are several incidents of animal cruelty and abuse that happens day in and out and goes mostly unnoticed.

"I live in Bhati, a village near Delhi and coming across cases of animal cruelty is a daily thing for me. Cattle are prominent in my area and I have seen how male calves are chased away from the village because otherwise they will feed on its mother's milk which they are not allowed to. This is not all. When the cow doesn't give milk, it is beaten like anything and sometimes even given injections so that it gives milk. In a country like ours, where we consider cow as our *Mata* and depend on it widely for dairy and livestock, we don't even have proper facility for their burial and neither do we have ambulance facilities. Have you ever heard of a cremation place for animals? The dead body is either given for skinning purpose or is thrown on the streets where it rots for days. This cruelty is an example of the hypocritical world we live in," Manavi Rai, an animal lover who devotes 24/7 to dog rescuing and care giving, says.

To add to this, the law for prevention of crimes against animals is of 1969 and demands ₹50 fine in case of animal cruelty. But the recent laws demands a fine of ₹500 if your pet defecates on the road, she says and asks which is the bigger crime?

"Every day dogs are being raped by humans. I came across a case where a dog was raped by a rickshaw *walla* for two weeks in his house. The dog has now been rescued by an animal shelter. The problem here is with people's mindset. I wonder if we will be able to stop it ever," Rai adds.

Not to mention, that children in my area play with puppies as if they are balls, she says. "When I go and stop them, they think of me as a mad person. They laugh and call me names. When I try to feed the dogs, the villagers tell me that I should stop because these dogs defecate near their houses. I want to ask them, even when I didn't feed them where did they defecate? The answer is near the drains where their chil-

dren themselves do," she tells you. We only have tolerance for animals as long as they are giving us money and once they stop they are thrown out like a waste.

"The biggest torture that I have ever seen is with bulls. In my area, most of the bulls have wounds and marks all over their bodies. They are beaten because they are of no good for the villagers. It is just like some people mourn the birth of a daughter, in animals they mourn the birth of a male because it will neither give milk nor help them earn money in any other way," she tells you.

The plight of animals is extremely bad. We have turned the forests into concrete structures, she says. "There is no place for animals to live. All the RWA societies offer parks for their children to play, but for animals they are not even allowed to be in the society. A few months back a dog named Buddy was beaten to death, no one knows what happened to that case. Recently, two boys in Ambala tied a dog to their motorcycle and dragged it for a few kilometers; we don't know what happened to it as well. This is disheartening to see such cases happening day in and out and no proper action is taken most of the times," she adds.

The eye opener for Rai was when she got a call from people informing her about an injured calf and asking for help. That's when she realised that people don't even bother about sick or injured animals. "It was 12 in the night and they called me thinking that because I run a dog shelter maybe I will help that calf as well. I went to the location and I was told that since it's too late in the night, municipality people won't come. The calf will be left there to suffer and finally die. And in the morning after it has already died, the municipality people will come and take away its body. I was shaken up by their words. That was an eye opener for me and that's when I realised that we pray to her, drink from her, earn from her, but when that animal needs us we don't even have a proper hospital or even emergency services and most of the people are not even bothered about these animals. The only choice for me was to book an auto out of my pocket, call 22 boys from the village to lift the calf and bring it to my shelter. The next day I called an ambulance from a *gaushala* to transport that calf to a hospital only to realise that an ambulance in India means a bad conditioned truck with about six to seven cows stacked up one another so bad that one of them may even die out of breathing problems on the way to the hospital," she explains.

Rai is not the only one who has seen such crimes happening against animals, Aman Dubey, a 24-year-old PR professional, has witnessed similar things.

"Back in November, I was going back



**THE MAXIMUM PUNISHMENT FOR MAIMING AND KILLING ANIMALS IS IMPRISONMENT OF THREE MONTHS AND/OR A PENALTY OF ₹100. THE OFFENCES ARE NOT EVEN COGNIZABLE, THE RESULT BEING THAT A MAN WHO EVEN KILLS A WILD ELEPHANT PRACTICALLY FACES NO PENAL CONSEQUENCE AT ALL. HOWEVER, THE PROPOSAL OF AMENDING THE LAW PROPOSING PENALTY UP TO ₹75,000 OR THREE TIMES THE COST OF THE ANIMAL WITH JAIL TERM UP TO FIVE YEARS OR BOTH WILL PROOVE TO BE A BREAKTHROUGH**  
— POOJA SAREEN, ADVOCATE, WOMEN & ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVIST



Manavi Rai, an animal lover who runs dog shelters, helps an injured calf in Bhati village

to home in Jangpura Extension, New Delhi after my cycling routine and on my way back I saw an old man kicking a dog repeatedly for a mere reason — the dog was barking at him. This was not all, that man started verbally abusing the dog and next he picked up stones and started throwing it to chase the dog away," he tells you.

Now these cases leave us wondering what is it with these crazy minds who take to such crimes, proving that they doesn't have even the slightest of mercy left in them, let alone humanity.

Pulkit Sharma, a clinical psychologist,

who every once in a while peeks in the minds of such cruelty-driven people tells you that it is the frustration in their lives that leads them take to a life of crime.

"First, these people are the ones who are frustrated in their lives and they see animals as soft targets to take out their frustration. Such people often steps back when their target fights back, but animals here are their easy targets that can't do anything to them in return. Also, they know that the law isn't strong enough to convict them in case of animal abuse. Second, there are some people who find happiness in

other's sufferings. They take pleasure in it. These types of people need medical help," he tells you.

He adds that the need of the hour is to bring our children closer to the Nature and animals by teaching them empathy and compassion from an early age. "If we will teach them empathy and compassion towards one and all in their school curriculum, they will grow up to be better human beings. This way we can bring about a change in the society," Sharma says.

Pooja Sareen, Advocate, Women & Animal Rights activist, says that in order to prevent such heinous crimes, there is a need for stern laws. "Central and State Governments should consider the feasibility of urgently bringing an ordinance/legislation substantially enhancing the penalties prescribed under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and to make such offences non-bailable and cognizable. Government should also provide for special courts to try offences against animals and violation of forest laws. There should be more laws, stern punishments, fines should be substantially imposed and the fear against animal criminality should be increased amongst all," she says.

The reason behind the increase in such cases, she says, is that The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960 is too outdated and insufficient. "The maximum punishment for maiming and killing animals under this act is imprisonment of three months and/or a penalty of ₹100. The offences are not even cognizable, the result being that a man who even kills a wild elephant practically faces no penal consequence at all. Apparently, because of this lacuna of law it is easy to escape the laws. However, the proposal of amending the law proposing penalty up to ₹75,000 or three times the cost of the animal with jail term up to five years or both will be a breakthrough and will help in reducing these crimes extensively," she adds.

The most common of all, Sareen says, is cruelty against street dogs. "Now and then the cruelty against animals is always in the news. It is dismaying that it is only news which is forgotten the next day. Videos such as catching fish through coca cola and egg white, poured in fish holes grab our attention and go viral on Internet. We watch it with much interest. There are no bans or fines on such heart rendering practices. Such inhumane videos should be banned out rightly. Not only that, we often watch videos on whale catching, snake trapping, white ivory smuggling, animal skin poaching, hunting and others, but we don't initiate any action against it. Society at large is to be educated on animal rights and to protect animals against such ill practices," Sareen says.

## EXTINCTION OF HUMANITY

■ A total of 655 elephants were killed between 2009-10 and 2016-17 poisoning killed 44, poaching 101, train accidents 120 and electrocution 390

■ In 2017, five adult elephants and a calf were crushed to death by a train in Assam. The elephants were hit by the Guwahati-Naharlagun Express when the herd was trying to cross the rail line.

■ In October, 2017, a Vellore student threw

a month-old puppy from the terrace of his house, killing it on the spot.

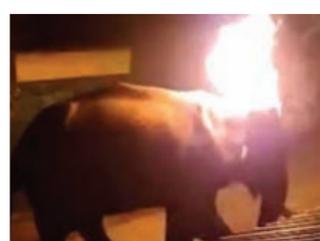
■ In January, 2018, 11 monkeys were found killed in Rajasthan. Forest officials said they were beaten with sticks and then splashed with an abrasive chemical, probably an acid.

■ In March, 2018, several carcasses of stray dogs were found scattered in the lanes of Mhada quarters in Kalamna, Nagpur.

Reports suggest that the strays were poisoned by the local meat sellers as the dogs would steal meat from their shops.

■ In April, 2018, two stray dogs were beaten by the locals. The dogs were unable to even sir after the attack. Later, one of the two dogs died in the hospital due to multiple fractures.

■ According to reports, a pregnant goat that went missing in July, 2018 and was later



found dead by the owner was stolen and abused by the accused at a deserted house, following which the animal died. One of the accused even met the owner of the goat and admitted that he had raped her and said that he had a nice time.

■ In July, 2018, a 35-year-old man was arrested for allegedly having sex with a dog. The accused lured the dog into his house and tied its mouth with a rope. A couple of men passing by saw the

accused luring the dog and sensed something wrong. After following him to his house, they broke open a window and caught the man having sex with the dog.

■ In 2020, a pregnant elephant was fed a pineapple loaded with crackers. She died after suffering for a few days.

■ In 2020, a man injured his neighbour's cow by feeding it explosives. The mouth and jaw of the cow was heavily injured.

1st Test, Day 3  
Live from 9:30am IST  
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK

# India undergoes painful Root canal

Big Joe lands 'double blow' as Virat's attack gets 'Root'ed to reality

## MOST RUNS BY AN ENGLISHMAN IN TESTS

Player	Mat	Runs	HS	Ave	100	50
Alastair Cook	161	12472	294	45.35	33	57
Graham Gooch	118	8900	333	42.58	20	46
Joe Root	100	8467	254	50.39	20	49
Alec Stewart	133	8463	190	39.54	15	45
David Gower	117	8231	215	44.25	18	39

## TOP TEST SCORES IN INDIA BY AN AWAY CAPTAIN

Player	Runs	Ground	Date
Clive Lloyd (WI)	242*	Mumbai	23 Jan 1975
Joe Root (ENG)	218	Chennai	5 Feb 2021
Alastair Cook (ENG)	190	Kolkata	5 Dec 2012
Alvin Kallicharran (WI)	187	Mumbai	1 Dec 1978
Inzamam-ul-haq (PAK)	184	Bengaluru	24 Mar 2005

## ENGLAND BATSMEN'S TOP TEST SCORE IN INDIA

Player	Score	Ground	Date
Joe Root	218	Chennai	5 Feb 2021
Mike Gatting	207	Chennai	13 Jan 1985
Graeme Fowler	201	Chennai	13 Jan 1985
Alastair Cook	190	Kolkata	5 Dec 2012
Kevin Pietersen	186	Mumbai	23 Nov 2012

## MOST DOUBLE CENTURIES IN TESTS

Player	No of 200s
Sir Donald Bradman	12
Kumar Sangakkara	11
Brian Lara	9
Wally Hammond, Virat Kohli, Mahela Jayawardene	7
Marvan Atapattu, Virender Sehwag, Javed Miandad, Younis Khan, Ricky Ponting, Sachin Tendulkar	6
Joe Root, Graeme Smith, Rahul Dravid, Alastair Cook	5

## KEY NUMBERS

- 1 England skipper Joe Root became the first cricketer to score a double century in his 100th Test. Former Pakistan skipper Inzamam-ul-Haq, who hit 184 against India in Bengaluru in 2005, held the previous best score by a player in a 100th Test.
- 2 Root (3,873 runs) also went past Mike Atherton on the list of most prolific English captains in Test cricket with only Alastair Cook (4,844) ahead of him.
- 3 Root's innings in Chennai was the second highest score of all time by a visiting captain in India.
- 4 As it turns out, Chennai is a happy hunting ground for English batsman in a sense because three of their highest scores in the country have come in that city.
- 5 Only Virat Kohli (7), Brian Lara (5), Don Bradman (4), Michael Clarke (4), and Graeme Smith (4) have scored more double centuries as captains. No English captain has scored more than two Test double centuries.

## 'Half Eng batsmen can't ever play spin like Root'

PTI ■ CHENNAI

A great stroke-maker himself, star all-rounder Ben Stokes is in awe of Joe Root's ability to play spin bowling, saying on Saturday that half of England team's batsmen can't tackle the tweakers like their captain does.

Playing in his 100th Test, Root compiled his fifth double century on the second day of the opening Test, reaching the milestone with a six off seasoned spinner R Ashwin.

"Yeah, it makes us all feel, you know, pretty rubbish (laughs), the way he, how easy he makes batting look. And yeah, I was quite surprised he ran down the wicket and hit a six to bring up a double (century)," Stokes said during a virtual press conference.

"He is in phenomenal form and just makes things look very, very easy and the way that he plays spin, dominates spin and it's incredible to watch. I don't think half the England batsmen ever play spin in the way that he does."

"He's just got options, he has got an option for everything that's thrown at him and yeah, it is just a delight to watch him at the moment," Stokes added.

about his skipper who is enjoying an incredible run of form.

Thanks to Root's monumental 218 and Stokes' knock, England reached 555 for eight by stumps, and the all-rounder had no qualms in admitting that his team was in a very strong position.

"Yeah, it's nice coming back in with a (knock like that), with a bit of time off and now spending some time out in the middle, but all in all I think we're in a very strong position as a team."

"Batting first and after putting ourselves in and being 500 or whatever we are (555/8), still with two wickets remaining (going into) day three is very strong position," Stokes said.

He said the England team was not at all thinking about declaration on Saturday evening.

"There were no thoughts whatsoever of a declaration tonight because I'll be stupid if we won the toss and bat first, you just get as many runs as you can out here in India."

"And if we can bat for another hour tomorrow, you know, we would be very happy with that," he added.

pacer did change his skipper Virat Kohli's facial complexion, which remained grumpy for the most part of the day.

Ishant (2/52) bowled as best as he had in any unfavourable conditions, something that the scoreboard wouldn't perhaps tell.

The veteran of 98 Tests finally got a couple of wickets at the end of the day but his performance with old ball on one of the flattest tracks will be remembered for a long time.

The pace never dropped even when he was well past bowling his 20th over as the tattered old ball would consistently tail in.

But Ishant, Ashwin and Jasprit Bumrah (2/81)'s good work was undone once again by rookie Washington Sundar.

And Shahbaz Nadeem (2/167) for all his experience at the domestic level for a decade and half, probably understood that he

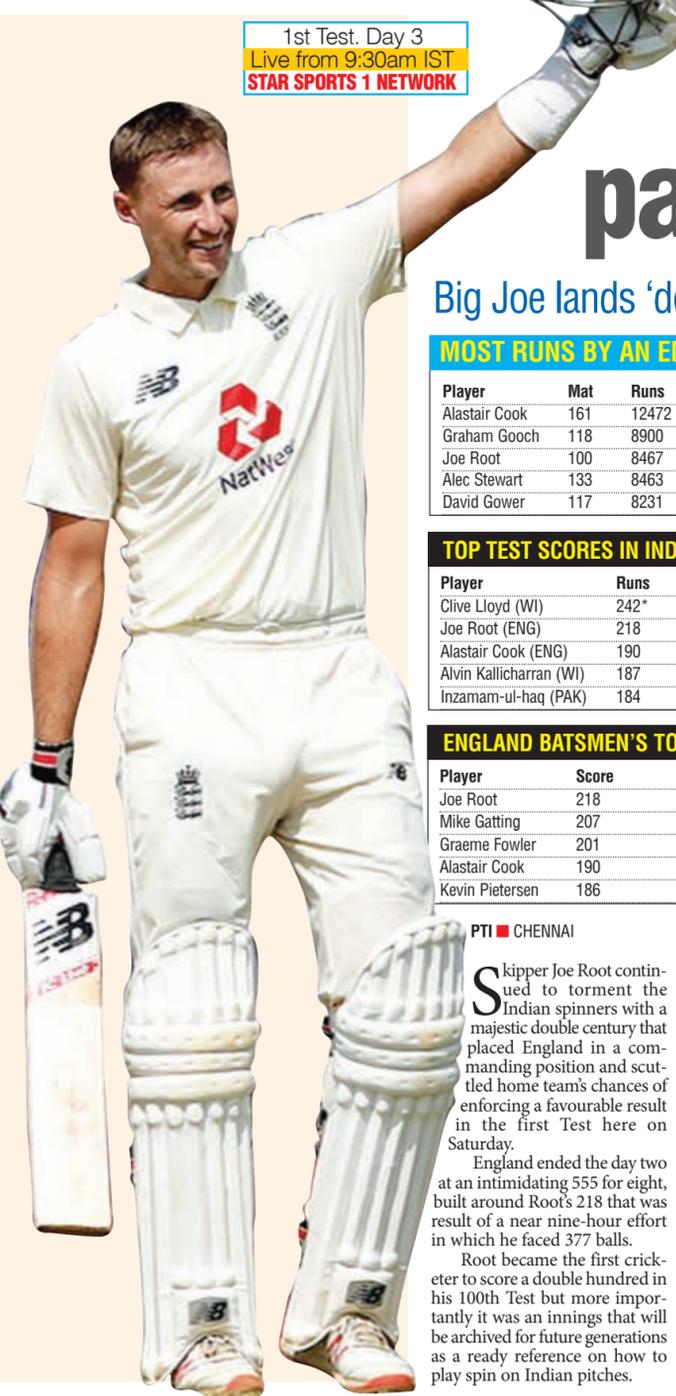
probably is a bit less-skilled when facing a team full of quality players of spin.

His wickets column would read that he had got Stokes and Root but it was well after they had accomplished what they had set out to do.

Root and Stokes showed how to stay low and try and take the ball below the eye-line. Since the duo couldn't build a lot of pressure from one end, the onus was always on either Ashwin or Ishant or Bumrah to strike and keep the pressure.

Root's strike-rate against pacers was in mid-30s and against spinners, it was in the high 70s, underlining his dominance against Washington and Nadeem.

They gave away easy singles and doubles to Root, who scored 130 runs in singles, doubles and that odd triple apart from hitting 19 boundaries and two sixes.



PTI ■ CHENNAI

Skipper Joe Root continued to torment the Indian spinners with a majestic double century that placed England in a commanding position and scuttled home team's chances of enforcing a favourable result in the first Test here on Saturday.

England ended the day two at an intimidating 555 for eight, built around Root's 218 that was result of a near nine-hour effort in which he faced 377 balls.

Root became the first cricketer to score a double hundred in his 100th Test but more importantly it was an innings that will be archived for future generations as a ready reference on how to play spin on Indian pitches.

The pace of his innings on the second day was a bit in contrast to how he played on the first day when he was the enforcer and Dom Sibley the grafter.

On the second morning, it was Ben Stokes who entered the stage and made it his own with big hitting. He smashed 82 off 118 balls with 10 fours and three sixes and let Root rotate the strike in their 124-run stand.

England didn't declare after being well past 500 which was like driving home a point and piling on the misery on an Indian team which has now been shaken up on a track where nothing happened for two days.

While Root will be lauded for sure for his second double hundred in last three Test matches, it was Stokes, whose counter-attack deflated the home team.

He started by coming down and lofting Ravichandran Ashwin over long for a six and then used the giant stride to slog sweep the senior off-spinner for a boundary.

In fact, Ashwin (2/132), who was brilliant over two days, was only a bit rattled when Stokes gave him the charge. Although Root hit Ashwin for two sixes — the second one bringing up his fifth

career double hundred for the England captain — it was Stokes who gave him and the other spinners a big charge.

Also the only one who played Ishant Sharma with some degree of confidence was Stokes. While Root defended well against the veteran pacer, it was Stokes, whose on-drive and square drive off successive deliveries from the

## Vijay Hazare from Feb 20

Kolkata, Surat, Jaipur, Bengaluru, Indore among venues

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The BCCI will be organising the Vijay Hazare Trophy from February 20 to March 14 across six cities, with the teams entering the bio-secure bubble from February 13 in order to undergo three Covid-19 tests.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Saturday released the schedule with Surat, Indore, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Jaipur being five of the six venues. Eight Plate Group teams will be playing their matches at various grounds across Tamil Nadu.

As per the BCCI protocol, the players will undergo three RT-PCR tests in their respective bio-bubble and three more on arrival before the start of the knock-out stages (pre quarter-finals) from March 7.

According to the BCCI notification, Elite Group A will comprise Gujarat, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Tripura, Baroda, Goa. The venue will be Surat.

Group B consists of Tamil

Nadu, Punjab, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Andhra Pradesh with venue being Indore.

The Group C matches will be held in Bengaluru with hosts Karnataka, UP, Kerala, Odisha, Railways and Bihar being the six teams.

The Group D states are Delhi, Mumbai, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Puducherry and matches are scheduled in Jaipur.

The Group E matches will be held in Kolkata with hosts Bengal clubbed alongside Services, Jammu and Kashmir, Saurashtra, Haryana, Chandigarh.

The Plate Group matches will be held across various grounds in Tamil Nadu and the teams are Uttarakhand, Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim.

### MAJUMDAR RETAINED SKIPPER

Bengal on Saturday retained Anustup Majumdar as the captain for the upcoming Vijay Hazare.

Majumdar will have wicket-keeper-batsman Shreevats Goswami as his deputy as the selectors named a 21-member squad which includes last season's captain Abhimanyu Easwaran.

## Stokes' counter-attack forced Nadeem to alter his line

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The manner in which Ben Stokes reverse swept him out off the rough forced him to change his plans, said left-arm spinner Shahbaz Nadeem, who is ready to go back to the nets to sort the technical problems that has crept into his bowling.

Playing his second Test, Jharkhand's domestic stalwart Nadeem gave away 167 runs in 44 overs but as a consolation removed Stokes, who smashed 82, and Joe Root, who scored his fifth double hundred.

"I was trying to bowl into the rough outside the off-stump but he counter attacked by playing the reverse sweep. Yeah it did (force me) to change my line and length a little bit," said Nadeem, who was unable to keep pressure on the England batsmen while Ashwin was toiling away at the other end.

"I then tried to bowl on the wicket and got him out."

One of the main reasons was six no balls that he bowled so far and Nadeem admitted that he is having some technical difficulties.

"I think I was jumping late



(on load up) on to the crease whereas I should time my jump a bit early. So that created a bit of problem.

"On the first day, it was

## Win will be perfect gift for Root: Ben

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Joe Root is one of the best batsman in the world, an incredible athlete and above all an inspirational captain, is how England vice-captain Ben Stokes described his skipper on the momentous occasion of his 100th Test match.

Insisting that he was privileged to have headed over Root his 100th Test cap, Stokes said a winning start to the four-Test series would be a perfect gift for Root.

"I'll certainly be doing whatever I can with bat, ball and in the field over the next five days



to try and secure the win that we all desperately want in the first Test against India," he said.

"It would be the perfect way to round off a very special few days for Joe (Root)."

more of a problem and today it was comparatively less. I need to go back and work in the nets to sort the problem," said the 31-year-old veteran of 117 first-class games.

Nadeem said that the manner in which Joe Root played the sweep shot had made it difficult to set a specific plan for him.

"Root is a great batsman and

has been in great form of late. He is sweeping very well and you need to plan well whether you want to bowl on stumps or outside the off stump.

"Obviously, you will have problems when a batsman starts sweeping you but then you need to stick to your plans. Wait for your time so that he makes a mistake."

## Sixers clinch back-to-back BBL titles

AFF ■ SYDNEY

England's James Vince blasted 95 and later took a crucial catch as the Sydney Sixers downed the Perth Scorchers for their third title in Australia's Big Bash final in Sydney on Saturday.

Vince's fireworks propelled the Sixers to 188/6 and they restricted the Scorchers to 161/9 to win by 27 runs.

Coming on the back of an unbeaten 98 against the Scorchers, Vince again blizzed the Scorchers' bowling, surviving two dropped catches in the 80s before he was dismissed just five short of a century in the Sixers 188 for six.

Vince crowned his night with a sensational diving catch at short extra cover to dismiss big-hitting Mitch Marsh for 11 and put the defending champion Sixers firmly on top in the 15th over.

Vince earlier overcame the unsettling run out of opening batting partner Josh Philippe for nine in a huge mix-up.

He failed to make contact and retreated back to his crease while Philippe charged down the pitch leaving both batsmen at the same end.

Vince went on his run rampage and was dropped on 82 by Marsh running backwards when he skied Aaron Hardie into the night air and then was narrowly missed by diving Cameron Bancroft before he was finally out.

He sliced Fawad Ahmed to Marsh at short third man to end his blistering 60-ball knock.

Only a week ago Vince was stranded on 98 when AJ Tye ended his team's finals qualifier game with a bouncer that was called wide in the Sixers' nine-wicket win in Canberra.

The Scorchers and Sixers, both three-time champions, are the only two clubs to have won multiple titles in Australia's T20 competition.

So successful have the Sixers and the Scorchers been that only three BBL finals have come and gone without either taking part.

## Smith bags third Allan Border Medal

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Former captain Steve Smith claimed his third Allan Border Medal while Beth Mooney bagged her maiden Belinda Clarke Award, the top two honours of the Australian Cricket Awards.

Smith was honoured for his performances in all three formats of the game, while Mooney bagged the recognition in the Australian women's game for the first time.

The awards were decided by a voting process for the period 2020-21.

Smith was surprised to receive the honour, insisting that he felt his poor outing in the Test series against India had ruined his chances of winning the award.

"It's a great thrill, plenty of hard work has gone into it (but) I didn't expect it; I thought Marnus (Labuschagne) or Pat Cummins were the front runners because they both had exceptional years," he said.

"I didn't feel I had the biggest Test summer, which normally holds the most votes. I think my one-day cricket was pretty good last summer. "I'm just really honoured to have



won my third AB Medal and hopefully I can keep producing results for Australia," he added.

It was double celebration for Smith as he also won the men's ODI Player of the Year with 28 votes ahead of Finch (23) and leg-spinner Adam Zampa (19).

Smith amassed 568 runs at 63.11 with centuries in Bengaluru and twice at the SCG within three days, as well as a knock of 98 in Rajkot.



Ashton Agar bagged the men's T20 Player of the Year, beating fellow leg-spinner Zampa and Finch.

Money is the ninth Australian woman cricketer to win the award since its introduction in 2002.

The 27-year-old left-hander batswoman also won the women's T20 Player of the Year award.

Cummins won the Test player of the year award with 16 votes ahead of Josh Hazlewood's and Marnus Labuschagne.

## Spinners help SA back in game

AFF ■ KARACHI

George Linde took three wickets and Keshav Maharaj two as South Africa and Pakistan wrestled for advantage on the third day of their second Test in Rawalpindi on Saturday.

Pakistan closed the day on 129-6 with an overall lead of 200 and four wickets intact on a tacky Rawalpindi stadium pitch which has cracks to help slow bowlers.

Linde (3-12) and Maharaj (2-74) rattled Pakistan's top order before Faheem Ashraf (29) and Mohammad Rizwan (28 not out) saved Pakistan's blushes during their 52-run sixth wicket stand.

Linde removed Ashraf caught in covers, leaving Hasan Ali not out on nought when bad light ended the game.

The day could have ended in South Africa's domination had Ashraf and Rizwan not been dropped off the two spinners.

Pakistan would hope another 50 runs on day four could win them the match and



the series, having won the first Test in Karachi by seven wickets.

Hasan said batting wouldn't be simple given the conditions.

"Even chasing 200 won't be easy on this pitch," he said. "We will try to get to 240 to 250 and with our spinners it won't be easy."

The highest target chased in the previous ten Tests at this venue is 220 which Sri Lanka chased to beat Pakistan by two wickets in 2000.

Linde said South Africa were "hungry to win".

"Obviously we have to win this Test to level the series," he explained. "I think anything under 300, we will take that for a chance."

Earlier, Hasan's 5-54 — his second five-wicket haul in Tests — restricted South Africa's first innings to 201, giving the home team a lead of 71.

1st Test, Day 4  
Live from 10:00am IST  
SONY TEN 2 NETWORK

# 24TH SLAM ON SERENA'S MIND

Williams, chasing Margaret Court's all-time record, has lost four Grand Slam finals since her last win in 2017, but insists she is now used to the pressure



AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Serena Williams on Saturday said her long chase for a record-equaling 24th Grand Slam trophy has been on her mind ahead of next week's Australian Open. The 39-year-old has not added to her glittering collection since beating her sister Venus

in the Australian Open final in 2017 when she was pregnant with daughter Olympia.

Williams, chasing Margaret Court's all-time record, has since lost four Grand Slam finals, but insisted she was now used to the pressure.

"It's definitely on my shoulders and on my mind," said the seven-time Australian Open champion. "I think it's good to be on my mind... I'm used to it now."

The American has been in aggressive form in Melbourne, dropping just one set in three matches in the Yarra Valley Classic before withdrawing from a semi-final showdown with world number one Ashleigh Barty due to a shoulder injury.

She said the decision to pull out

was precautionary and was "super-confident" the problem wouldn't overly trouble her.

"I think at my age, my career, I really just try to go on how I'm feeling physically and not put myself in a bad position in general for my health," she added.

Williams has appeared strong physically in Melbourne and, unlike some of her peers, unfazed by the mandatory 14-day hotel quarantine imposed for players travelling to Australia.

"I didn't have really any negatives," she said. "I realised that my life is one big quarantine because I don't really leave the house much."

"It wasn't much different than what I normally do," she added. "It was just being forced to do that, not

having any other options. I think it was the best thing for all the players to do."

Williams is in the same Australian Open quarter as world

number two Simona Halep and three-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka, but was focused on her opener against Laura Siegemund of Germany. "She has had lots of great

wins over top players," she said of the world number 51. "She has a different game. She mixes up the pace a lot. "It will be a really good match for me to get in there early and play my best."

## Muguruza, Barty in decider

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Two-time Grand Slam winner Garbine Muguruza crushed Marketa Vondrousova for the loss of just one game on Saturday to set up a Yarra Valley Classic final with world No 1 Ashleigh Barty.

Last year's Australian Open finalist Muguruza smashed 20 winners and broke the 21st-ranked Vondrousova's serve five times en route to a 6-1, 6-0 win in 53 minutes.

"I'm very happy to get through. It's good to play the top players and I'm expecting another tough battle against the world number one," said the Spaniard.

Muguruza has shown the form that put her top of the rankings in 2017, dropping just 10 games in four matches so far including her quarter-final thrashing of America's Sofia Kenin — her conqueror in last year's Australian Open final.

She will next play Barty, who reached the decider with a walkover after Serena Williams pulled out due to a shoulder injury.

Elise Mertens of Belgium will play Estonia's Kaia Kanepi in the final of the Gippsland Trophy



after world number three Naomi Osaka withdrew with a shoulder injury.

Kanepi beat Russia's Ekaterina Alexandrova 6-3, 7-6 to reach her first WTA final since 2013.

Meanwhile, 2016 Australian Open champion Angelique Kerber was knocked out in the quarter-finals of the Grampians Trophy by Maria Sakkari.

Greece's Sakkari will next play Estonia's Annett Kontaveit who progressed after two-time Grand Slam winner Victoria Azarenka withdrew due to injury.

## Russia vs Italy in ATP Cup final

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Daniil Medvedev battled back from a set down to topple Alexander Zverev and power Russia into the ATP Cup final on Saturday where they will meet the Matteo Berrettini-led Italy.

The world number four needed to dig deep against the German world number seven, finally coming through 3-6, 6-3, 7-5 on his fourth match point after a marathon battle on Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne.

He sealed the tie after Andrey Rublev, who won five ATP titles last year as he raced up the rankings, also pulled off a come-from-behind win, grinding down Jan-Lennard Struff 3-6, 6-1, 6-2.

Italy beat last year's finalists Spain with Berrettini and Fabio Fognini winning their singles ties.

"It was a crazy match. I was happy to win even though there were a lot of things I didn't like in the match," said Medvedev, who has enjoyed a perfect preparation for next week's Australian Open.

"But most important was getting the win for our country."

Zverev, who needed a medical timeout for a tight lower back towards the end of the second set, heads into the Australian Open having beaten world number 12 Denis Shapovalov and pushed top-ranked Novak Djokovic deep into a third set, before his defeat to Medvedev.

Rublev had dropped just seven games before meeting Struff, defeating



Guido Pella and Yoshihito Nishioka along the way.

He was handed a wake-up call by the aggressive German, who took the first set before the world number eight clicked into gear.

Russia will face Italy on Sunday after they came out on top of the other semi-final against Spain, who were again without the injured Rafael Nadal.

Berrettini sealed his country's spot with a 6-3, 7-5 victory against Roberto Bautista Agut, after Fognini clawed past Pablo Carreno Busta 6-2, 1-6, 6-4.

"It's an unbelievable feeling," Berrettini said. "The job is not done yet, but we are really happy for what is happening."

Serbia beat Spain in the final of the inaugural and hugely popular tournament last year in Sydney — launched as a rival to the Davis Cup.

## Barella, Perisic put Inter on top

AFP ■ FLORENCE

Nicolo Barella and Ivan Perisic scored in either half as Inter Milan moved top of Serie A on Friday with a 2-0 win at Fiorentina.

Antonio Conte's side pulled one point clear of AC Milan to keep the pressure on their city rivals who host lowly Crotone on Sunday.

Inter bounced back after their midweek Italian Cup semi-final, first leg defeat to Juventus in the San Siro.

Italy midfielder Barella curled in the opener from a distance after half an hour with Achraf Hakimi setting up Perisic for the second seven minutes after the break to give Inter a first league win in Florence in seven years.

Conte sat out a touchline ban but Inter controlled the game against 12th-placed Fiorentina who were without injured French midfielder Franck Ribery.

"We're not thinking about putting pressure on anyone, just our own journey," said Conte's assistant Cristian



Stellini.

Fiorentina could thank goalkeeper Bartlomiej Dragowski for key saves, denying Barella early, with the Polish international also keeping out Hakimi, Perisic and Lautaro Martinez in the second half.

At the other end of the pitch Samir Handanovic saved from Giacomo Bonaventura and Cristiano Biraghi before the break.

Inter play Lazio next weekend before a derby clash with Milan on February 21.

## Bayern continue winning run

AFP ■ BERLIN

Bayern Munich head to the Club World Cup with five successive wins under their belt after Kingsley Coman's first-half winner handed the Bundesliga leaders a 1-0 victory at Hertha Berlin on Friday.

The win maintain Bayern 7 points lead at the top as second-placed RB Leipzig win 3-0 away to crisis-hit Schalke on Saturday.

Coman found the net with a deflected shot on 21 minutes to give Bayern all three points in snowy Berlin, just hours before they left for next week's tournament in Qatar.

Bayern face African Champions League winners Al-Ahly in Monday's semi-final in



Doha.

Yet they first had to get past a Hertha side buoyed by the return of former coach Pal Dardai last month and the arrival of former Germany midfielder Sami Khedira

on a free transfer from Juventus. Khedira, though, played only 10 minutes as a substitute as Bayern battled to a narrow win.

A bright start from the home side was snuffed out when goal-

keeper Rune Jarstein brought down Leroy Sane in the box on 11 minutes.

Yet the Hertha stopper redeemed himself immediately, diving to his right to save Robert Lewandowski's penalty.

Ten minutes later, Jarstein was left flapping at the ball as Coman's shot deflected off Niklas Stark and looped into the net.

Both Jarstein and his opposite number Manuel Neuer made several saves before half-time, as an entertaining game swung from end to end.

Hertha had a brilliant chance to equalise two minutes from time, as Mathews Cunha beat the offside trap and found himself one-on-one with Neuer.

Yet the Brazilian's chip over the Bayern keeper trickled wide of the post, prompting howls of anguish from the Berlin bench.

Chola					
CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED					
Corporate Office: 1st Floor, 'Dare House', No.2, N.S.C. Bose Road, Chennai-600 001					
Branch Office: 1st & 2nd Floor, Plot No.6, Main Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110 005.					
POSSESSION NOTICE Under Rule 8 (1)					
WHEREAS the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 hereinafter called the Act and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rules 9 of the Security Interest [Enforcement] Rules, 2002 issued demand notices calling upon the borrowers, whose names have been indicated in Column [B] below on dates specified in Column [C] to repay the outstanding amount indicated in Column [D] below with interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.					
The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers in particular and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties mortgaged with the Company described in Column [E] herein below on the respective dates mentioned in Column [F] in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 9 of the Rules made there under.					
The borrowers in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties mentioned in Column [E] below and any such dealings will be subject to the charge of M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited for an amount mentioned in Column [D] along with interest and other charges.					
Under section 13 [8] of the Securitisation Act, the borrowers can redeem the secured asset by payment of the entire outstanding including all costs, charges and expenses before notification of sale.					
SI No.	NAME AND ADDRESS OF BORROWER & LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER	DATE OF DEMAND NOTICE	OUTSTANDING AMOUNT	DETAILS OF PROPERTY POSSESSED	DATE OF SIBOLIC POSSESSION
A	B	C	D	E	F
1.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001370976 ANIL JAIN, MEENAKSHI JAIN, Both residing at : D-9, Street No-25, Madhu Vihar, New Delhi - 110092.	05.10.2020	Rs. 74,10,001.48 as on 28/02/2020	Entire Upper Ground Floor Without Roof Rights 'Said Floor' Property Bearing No.1/11470, New No. M-27, Area Measuring 100 Sq.Yds out of Khalsa No.120 situated in the area of Village Udhampur, In The Abadi of Gali No.4, Subash Park Extn., Naveen Shadara, Ilaqa Shadara New Delhi.	04.02.2021
2.	(Loan No. X0HEELD00001660983 ASHA RANI, RAMESH KUMAR ARORA, Both residing at : 19 G/F, MIG Peera Garhi, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110087	05.10.2020	Rs. 94,02,645.51 as on 28/02/2020	DDA Flat Bearing No.19, On Second Floor Cat-SFS-II, Situated At Nagin Lake Apartments, Peera Garhi, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110087.	04.02.2021
3.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001286711 ASHOK KUMAR, MRS.REKHA, Both residing at : H.NO. C-95, 2nd Floor West Gorakh Park, Shahrada, New Delhi-110032.	05.10.2020	Rs. 70,80,614.66 as on 28/02/2020	Property No.C-95, On Second Floor Portion Area Measuring 70 Sq.Mtrs., Situated At Dda Colony, New Jafraabad, West Gorakh Park Extn., Shadara, New Delhi-110032.	04.02.2021
4.	(Loan No. X0HEELD00001645249 GURVINDER SINGH, SARABJEET, Both residing at : H.No. C-109, Second Floor, Moli Nagar, New Delhi-110015.	05.10.2020	Rs. 67,07,188.96 as on 28/02/2020	Entire First Floor Without Roof Rights Of Portion Of Property Bearing No. 107, Area Measuring 70 Sq. Mtrs., In Block No. H-1, Situated At Vikas Puri, New Delhi-110018.	04.02.2021
5.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001145844 KANCHAN SINGAL, 37 New Lalypal Colony Extn, New Delhi-110051. SACHIN SINGHAL, Shop No-341 Ground Floor Katra Peran Tilak Bazar, New Delhi-110006.	05.10.2020	Rs. 51,08,919.75 as on 28/02/2020	Entire Third Floor Portion Of Property No.37, Admeasuring 100 Sq.Yds., Out Of Rect. No.11, Killa No.6, Situated In The Abadi Of New Lalypal Colony Extension., In Area Of Village Khurel Khas Shadara, Delhi.	04.02.2021
6.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001211890 KIRTI SAINANI, SUNIL KUMAR SAINANI, Both residing at : WZ-3121 SF Mahindra Park, Rani Bagh Saraswati Vihar, New Delhi-110034.	05.10.2020	Rs. 67,45,632.97 as on 28/02/2020	Second Floor Without Roof Rights Of Property Bearing No.Wz-3121, Old No.Wz-6e/1-A, Area Measuring 74.5 Sq.Yds., Out Of Rectangle No.28, Killa No.8, Situated In The Area Of Village Shakur Pur Now Abadi Known As Mahindra Park, Shakur Basti Delhi - 110034.	04.02.2021
7.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE0000044129 PANKAJ ARORA, DEEPTI DOGRA, Both residing at : 64A Block-U And V Shalimar Bagh, New Delhi-110088.	05.10.2020	Rs. 2,06,50,524.45 as on 28/02/2020	Entire Ground Floor Without Roof Rights (Said Floor), Part Of Property Bearing No 08, Block-A, Admeasuring 180 Sq. Mtrs. Situated At Sector-19, Rohini, New Delhi.	04.02.2021
8.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001076635 RAJEEV CHAWLA, ANJANA CHAWLA, Both residing at : H.No-E-53 1IInd Floor Kirti Nagar, New Delhi -110015.	05.10.2020	Rs. 1,19,00,297.69 as on 28/02/2020	Second Floor without Roof Rights Right Portion Of Property No.53, Block - E Area 150 Sq.Yds., Out Of Total Area 300 Sq.Yds., Situated In Kirti Nagar, New Delhi.	04.02.2021
9.	(Loan No. X0HEELD00001470539 RAMBIR SINGH YADAV,INDIRA , Both residing at : H-48, Kunwar Singh Nagar Nangloi, New Delhi-110041.	05.10.2020	Rs. 64,47,490.34 as on 28/02/2020	Property No. H-48, Measuring 88 Sq. Yds, Out Of Khalsa No. 13/7, Situated At Village Safipur Ranholla, Abadi Known As Kanwar Sing Nagar, Laxmi Park In Block-H, Delhi.	04.02.2021
10.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00000921896 RATTAN SINGH, KAUSHAL CHAUHAN, Both residing at : A 30 Citizan Enclave Rohini Sector 14 Ex, New Delhi-110085.	05.10.2020	Rs. 1,50,89,174.12 as on 28/02/2020	Society Built Up Mig Ground Floor Flat Bearing No. 30 A, Situated In The Citizen Co-Op. Group Housing Society Ltd., Plot No. B-3, Sector -14 Extension, Rohini, Delhi 110085.	04.02.2021
11.	(Loan No. X0HEELD00001546865 ROHIT, JAI DEEPA, Both residing at : H. No. 1/5895/4 Kabool Nagar, East Rohtash Nagar, New Delhi -110032.	05.10.2020	Rs. 93,20,011.90 as on 28/02/2020	Property bearing No.1/5895/4 & Old No.630/10, Area Measuring 70 Sq.yds., Part of Khalsa No.382, situated at Village Sikdharpur, in the Abadi of Kabool Nagar, Shadara Delhi.	04.02.2021
12.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00000984594 ROSHANARA ABOUR RUB, FA-328/5, Plot No-91, 3rd Floor, Man sarover Garden, New Delhi-110015.	05.10.2020	Rs. 65,62,570.51 as on 28/02/2020	Entire Third Floor, with roof rights, built on property bearing No. FA-328/5, Old Plot No. 91, admeasuring 92.00 Sq. Yrds, situated in the area of Village Bassa Darapur, Colony known as Mansarovar Garden, New Delhi.	04.02.2021
13.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001322287 SANDEEP PUROHIT, SANTOSH PUROHIT, Both residing at : H.No. A.395, Near SBI Palam Vihar Gurgaon, Haryana-122001	05.10.2020	Rs. 1,09,03,410.14 as on 28/02/2020	Duplex Unit bearing No.395-A, Ground Floor, covered Area 1100 Sq.fts., in Block-A situated in residential Colony known as Palam Vihar and Village Chauma and Carterpur, Tehsil and District Gurgaon.	04.02.2021
14.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00000490157 SANJEEV GULLAH, ANJU GULLAH, Both residing at : G-5/1-2, 2nd Floor, Block-g, Pkt-5 Sector-11 Rohini, New Delhi -110085	05.10.2020	Rs. 92,93,231.04 as on 28/02/2020	Entire Second Floor With Roof/Terrace Rights (Said Floor) of The Freshhold Property Bearing No.62, Admeasuring 90 Sq.Mtrs, Block & Pocket -14, Situated in Layout Plan Of Rohini Residential Scheme New Delhi.	04.02.2021
15.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001268540 SANJIV JAIN, AARTI JAIN Both residing at : C-139, Ashoka Enclave -2, G/F SEC-37, Faridabad, Haryana - 121 003.	05.10.2020	Rs. 75,43,930.39 as on 28/02/2020	Ground Floor Flat without roof rights measuring 1460 sq.ft., Plot bearing No.C-139, measuring 309 sq.yds., situated at Ashoka Enclave Extn. No.II, Sector-37, situated in the revenue estate of Village-Palla, Tehsil and District-Faridabad.	04.02.2021
16.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001319799 SHIV KUMAR, MRS. KUSUM, Both residing at : 4463 Gali No. 10, Jai Mata Market Budh Nagar Tri Nagar, New Delhi -110035.	05.10.2020	Rs. 1,03,24,601.74 as on 28/02/2020	Entire first floor without roof/terrace rights of property bearing No.370 Built Up On Area Measuring 116 Sq.Yds Out Of Khalsa No.541/19, Situated in the area of Village Chowkri Murababad known As Onkar Nagar - B, Tri Nagar Delhi. Boundaries: East: Property No. 371, West: Property No.369, North: Gali 10Ft, South:Road 40Ft.	04.02.2021
17.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001071588 TARUN KISHORE MAZUMDER, ANTARA MAJUMDAR, ANUP KISHORE MAZUMDAR, All are residing at : Gh-587/320, Block GH 587 Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110087.	05.10.2020	Rs. 1,41,79,050.41 as on 28/02/2020	Flat Bearing No. 132, In Pocket-1, Block- A, Situated At Madipur, Paschim Puri, New Delhi.	04.02.2021
18.	(Loan No. X0HEELD00001443534 VISHAL GUPTA, HIRA GUPTA, Both residing at : D-362 Laxmi Nagar Gali No 4, New Delhi -110092.	05.10.2020	Rs. 71,11,946.66 as on 28/02/2020	Property Bearing No. D-362 (Ground- Floor & Ff With Roof Rights), in Block-D, Area Measuring 43 Sq. Yds., Out Of Khalsa No. 220, Situated In The Abadi Of Gali No. 13 & 14, Laxmi Nagar, Village Shakapur Khas, Ilaqa Shadara Delhi.	04.02.2021
19.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00000603969 BRJ BHUSHAN GIRI 10/87, Sector 3, Rajender Nagar 7, Ghaziabad - 201 001. ABN THERMOPACK PRIVATE LIMITED, NIRMALA GIRI 20/2/6, Site 4, Ind Area Sahibabad Ghaziabad - 201 001.	20.03.2020	Rs. 88,18,902.34 as on 28/02/2020	Property bearing No.10/87, Admeasuring 177.79 Sq.Mtrs., in Block 10, situated at Sector-III, T.H.A. Housing Colony, Rajender Nagar, Ghaziabad.	05.02.2021
20.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001035521 1.MANVENDER BABBAR 2.SEEMA BABBAR F-136/F, Ground Floor, Laxmi Nagar, Opp Of Balbhawan School, Village Khurel Khas Ilaqa, New Delhi -110091.	05.10.2020	Rs. 1,73,16,117.45 as on 28/02/2020	Area Measuring 212 Sq.Yds, Entire Ground Floor Portion Built Up Property Bearing No.F-136/F, Out Of Rect No.59 Killa No.11/2 (59/11/2) Situated At Laxmi Nagar Village Khurel Khas Ilaqa Shadara Delhi.	04.02.2021
21.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00001251815 1. SANDEEP KUMAR, 2. MRS HEMLATA, 3. SUNITA DEVI, 4. SUNIL KUMAR, C-148, Gali No-19, Khajoon Khas, New Delhi-110094.	05.10.2020	Rs. 1,00,06,909.25 as on 28/02/2020	Property No.C-280, & New No. C-148, Area Measuring 100 Sq.Yds Out Of Khalsa No.177, Block -C, Gali No.19, Khajoori Khas Colony, Shadara, Delhi.Boundaries: East: Property No. C-149, West:Property No. C-147, North:Gali, South:Property Of Others	05.02.2021
22.	(Loan No. X0HEELD00001807139 & X0HEELD00002184191 1.RAVINDRA YADAV, H No -A-62 Sec-C-3, Tronica City, Road Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh 1-201102. 2. DAISY HOME, B- 71, Sector -93-B, Noida, Uttar Pradesh -201301. 3.USHA YADAV, H No -A-62 Sec-C-3, Tronica City, Road Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh 1-201102.	05.10.2020	Rs. 79,51,967.99 as on 28/02/2020	Plot No. "A-62" Sector -C-3, Admeasuring 250 Sq.Mtrs.,... Situated Within Industrial Town Ship At Tronica City Fargana/Tehsil Ghaziabad, District Ghaziabad. Boundaries: North: A-59, South: Road-5, East: A-63, West: A-61.	05.02.2021
23.	(Loan No. X0HEDHE00000239351 1.ABHIMANYU SINGH, House No 31 Block G 1st Floor Palamyihar Gurgaon, Haryana-122001. 2.TRINITY EDUCATION SERVICES PVT LTD, No.1, 3rd Floor, Jishna Market Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019. 3.AJAY SINGH CHAUHAN, House No 31 Block G 1st Floor Palamyihar Gurgaon, Haryana-122001.	05.10.2020	Rs. 1,94,21,051.30 as on 28/02/2020	Premises/Unit No.FF-5 Measuring 912.78 Sq.Fts In Block-C, Situated At 'Omex Plaza' Village Fazipur, Jhasra & Ghasola, Sohna Road, Gurgaon.	06.02.2021

Date : 06.02.2021  
Place: Delhi

AUTHORISED OFFICER  
M/s. Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited



# For me, its qismet under the burkha

■ **What is keeping you busy these days?**

I have a film — *Bawri Chori* — coming up on Eros now. We shot it in December 2019 and it is about a girl who goes looking for her husband because he hasn't returned home for years and has abandoned her. She didn't go to find him to bring him back, but to kill him. I found that

story very interesting and shot it in London entirely. Then there is a Madhur Bhandarkar's film — *India Lockdown*. I am playing a pilot there. There's also Shaad Ali's *Call My Agent*. It's for Applause Entertainment and Banijay and it is going to come out soon.

■ **From Lucknow to Mumbai, how would you describe your journey as?**

It is a unique one. It's a journey that I didn't imagine. I am grateful to Mumbai for whatever that it has given me. It's been a rewarding journey. I am also grateful to the industry for accepting and embracing me. It is also because I haven't planned too much in life. I followed the leads and surrendered to life, so whatever was coming across I took that up. During my journey, a lot of people got attached to me. I feel lucky in terms of the associations that I had and for everything that I have achieved so far.

■ **It's rare that you talk about your struggles and you always say how grateful you are for everything. Does that mean you don't want to glorify it?**

All of us face challenges and strug-

**A lot has changed after doing Lipstick Under My Burkha. It has been my most important career choice. I believe that every project comes with its qismet and the same was with Lipstick... I would always be grateful to Ekta and Alankrita for making me a part of that project**

gle to find things and I am no different. I say grateful because we often forget to thank people or God. The year 2020 has made me realise that I have to stop complaining and start doing more. So many people have lost their lives at the drop of a hat. It made me realise why should I have to bad mouth anyone or talk about my struggles, when I should be grateful for the things that I have. I have always been

a believer of sending out positivity because it will always come back to you.

■ **Lipstick Under My Burkha has been a turning point in your career. How has life changed for you?**

A lot has changed. It is my most important career choice. I believe that every project comes with its *qismet* and the same was with *Lipstick*... I would always be grateful to Ekta and Alankrita for making me a part of that project. It has changed how I look at myself also. Initially, I wanted to be a heroine, but with this project I realised I will be able to play characters also. And after that one thing lead to another. With *Khuda Hafiz*, I realised I can do action and with *Accidental Prime Minister*, I realised I can do political drama. So more than anything else, it is about diversifying yourself. Because otherwise, you will become boring.

■ **Is there a checklist that you follow before taking up projects?**

Not really. The only thing that I make sure is to not repeat roles. I just want to go out and keep experimenting. Every time someone wants to slate me in a particular genre, I go out exploring a new character and they go like: *Arey abhi to ye kar rahi thi, ab kuch*

*aur kar rahi hai.*

■ **One thing that makes you feel uncomfortable on the sets?**

Nothing at all. I love being on the sets. In fact, if I am not working, I feel something is incomplete within me.

■ **You have explored different mediums. Which one do you enjoy the most working in?**

It has to be theatre. No one judges you there, you can make mistakes, learn from it and be yourself.

■ **Social media is both impactful and threatening. Do you have to be careful before posting something on social media these days?**

I stand for the things I believe in. Posting on social media doesn't make sense to me. I believe if you support something, you should be doing something about it and be there for that thing. If I am not doing that, it means that things doesn't make a difference in my life.

But, if you ask about my photos and stuff, I want to keep it fun. I do have to be careful because I don't want to post something that will bite my back. I don't want to get into unnecessarily troubles because that will distract me from my work.

## Talktime

AAHANA KUMRA

*A self-made woman, Kumra believes in diversifying herself. She speaks with Musba Hashmi about what is keeping her busy these days and why she doesn't talk about her struggles, among other things*

## ADIDAS

### Runners Captain

### ANKITA GAUR tells

### MUSBA HASHMI

### her experience of

### participating in

### marathons during

### pregnancy, how

### safe it is and her

### association with

### Hi-Energy

### Challenge



**If you have been a runner all your life, then running during pregnancy is healthy. I have been seeing my friends abroad who were runners and delivered healthy children. So, before participating in TCS World 10K Bengaluru, I took my doctor's advice and she said if I am doing something for 10 years, I shouldn't stop it**

## 'Appreciating music intricacies has made me a better musician'

Vocalist AISHWARYA VIDHYA

RAGHUNATH, who performed at HCL

Concert's Baithak, speaks with SHALINI

SAKSENA about her experience of performing

online and where Carnatic music stands today



■ **What were the ragas performed?**

The *ragas* rendered were Nattai, Nattaikurinji, Dhanyasi (elaborated), Manjari, Kambhoji (elaborated), Varali and Yamunakalyani. But in particular there were two main *ragas* — Dhanyasi and Kambhoji.

■ **What was the reason why you chose these two?**

In Carnatic music there are a bunch of legendary musicians — the Trinity; they are called the Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri. The important thing for me while presenting a concert is to give representation to each of their compositions. I did this through Dhanyasi, a composition by Syama Sastri's Meenalochana Brova and for Kambhoji it was Tyagaraja's Evari Mata. These two ragas are close to my heart. They are very dynamic and the mood portrayed by these two are different as well. Dhanyasi is meditative and soul-stirring. Kambhoji is spirited and dynamic. I wanted to show the contrast of both.

■ **How did you come onboard for this performance?**

It was HCL Concerts who contacted me. I have, in the past, performed for them under the auspices of Madras Music Academy. This interaction for Baithak was the first of its kind.

■ **How was your experience performing on a virtual platform?**

For all the musicians, the last year — the lockdown and the pandemic — all of us have learnt how to embrace the new normal. Initially, it was different. A lot of us were performing over our smartphones and figuring out audio, network and bandwidth. There are so many things that come into play for the music to come across. But later, when studios opened, it became easy due to better quality sound. It is good to perform in a studio and be able to reach out to so many people. Music has a strong magic that keeps people together.

■ **Were there any apprehensions?**

None at all. I was happy to be part of this concert. It was great to perform with violinist Charulatha Ramanujam and BC Manjunath on mridangam. Both are exemplary musicians. It was wonderful to collaborate and be part of Baithak. We were excited to be part of it and perform together.

■ **How did your life journey as a vocalist begin?**

I grew up listening to music. My paternal and maternal grandmothers were instrumental in my interest. I was put to sleep with music; I was fed music. A lot of music was running the household all the time. When I was three, they took me to a guru. When I began learning, I had yet to learn how to read. My guru told me that my lessons would be oral. My ears were trained to grasp nuances and intricacies which, sometimes the book can't convey. I was taken to lots of concerts. Listening was an integral part of my growing up days. Understanding musicians' chemistry; their communication on stage and understanding people's perception, all this shaped me. Also, gurus were gracious. I accompanied them on stage as early as when I was seven. Sangeetha Kalaratha Seethalakshmi Venkatesan, Padma Bhushan PS Narayanaswamy, Vegavahini Vijayaraghavan and RK Shriramkumar shaped me what I am today.

■ **Do you think you have an edge and you don't have just book knowledge?**

I don't know if I am a better musician. But in terms of skillsets that I have acquired, the ability to pay more attention to details, intricacies and look beyond just the notations since music can't be imitated or copied, my ability to appreciate music more has shaped me better.

■ **Where does Carnatic music stand today?**

Yes, the music is looking up. There are a lot of people interested in Carnatic music. Globally people are able to learn from the comforts of their homes. This is the reason why this has managed to reach every corner of the world. People can now learn it via WhatsApp, Skype or even FaceTime. The advantage is that they are able to learn from wherever they are from the guru of their choice. A lot more people are looking at the technical and grammatical intricacies of this music and trying to understand this music.

# RUN INTO FITNESS

What do you expect from a five-month pregnant lady? Definitely not running marathons. Meet Ankita Gaur, a Bengaluru-based engineer, who is redefining the terms of pregnancy.

From running a 10K marathon in December last year to now becoming a part of ADIDAS Hi-Energy Challenge with a seven-month pregnancy, running comes naturally to Gaur. "Running is not a big deal. It comes naturally to everyone, one just have to explore it," she says.

Not that Gaur was always interested in running. Swimming was her first love. "My sister and I were always encouraged by our parents to take part in sports. I was initially into swimming. My sister was district level athlete, but I was never into running. It happened nine years back when my friend, who is now my husband, introduced me to long-distance running. He used to guide me as I was clueless about the

sport. I was into a corporate job and hence, wanted to live a healthy life without having to invest too much time or money. That is when I thought of taking running seriously because it involved no expensive equipments and was easy. And like I mentioned before, it comes naturally to everyone. If you can walk, you can run too," she says.

It was in 2014 when Gaur ran her first race in Bangalore and finished podium that triggered her love for running. "It was like a motivation for me. I have been running since then and there's no looking back," she says.

Running during pregnancy, contrary to the popular beliefs, she says, is healthy. "If you have been a runner all your life, then running during pregnancy is healthy for you. I have been seeing my friends abroad who were runners and delivered healthy children. So, before participating in TCS World 10K Bengaluru, I took my doctor's advice and she said if I am doing something for 10 years, I shouldn't stop it

because it is like a part of my life. All one has to do is to cut it down or bring it down to a point where you are comfortable with it. A lot of doctors now suggest that pregnant women should do yoga or some kind of exercise because it is healthy for the child," Gaur tells you.

She adds that the only thing one has to keep in mind is to not be competitive. "I told myself don't see it as a competition instead see it as a part of your daily routine. I was a marathon runner so I can easily run 42 km, but now keeping in mind my body, I have cut it short to 5 km. Also, I take breaks in between and start walking to not push myself beyond a certain point," she tells you.

It took Rai some time to convince her family and friends that running won't cause her any harm. "My mother was apprehensive about it initially and told me that it was not a good option. My in-laws were also not sure about it. There were people on social media who asked me why I am not resting it out. But I explained to them that

it was safe and I have been doing it under my doctor's supervision. It took some time to finally make them understand that it was safe and was a part of my fitness routine. But the good thing was I got so many messages from women who were inspired and they told me that they will try to be fit as well," she tells you.

Ask Gaur, how she tide over days when she doesn't want to run even a single mile and she is quick to answer — my friends convince me to come. "There are days when I just don't have the motivation to go for a run, but here comes the role of my friends from the running club. They insist that I should join them for a while and once I do, I start enjoying it. Also, when you make friends you start looking forward to meeting them. That also helps," Gaur, who is given the title of ADIDAS Runners Captain, explains.

She tells you that they were the first people to start a run club in Bangalore in 2015. "It was not ADIDAS Runners

## WEEKLY NATTER

### YAMI GAUTAM BEGINS PREP FOR DASVI

Yami Gautam is currently on a roll. A while back, the actor wrapped up the shoot of horror-comedy *Bhoot Police*. Currently, she is prepping for her role in Dinesh Vijan's *Dasvi* which also stars Abhishek Bachchan and Nimrat Kaur. While details about her character are kept under wraps, we have learnt that she will be seen in a never-seen-before avatar. To get under the skin of her character, Yami is taking lessons in Haryanvi as she will be speaking the North-Indian language in the film.

Talking about it, Yami says: "This is the first time that I will be playing a Haryanvi character onscreen. It is a completely different challenge for me. I am currently working on learning the language. I love taking up new challenges which help me push my creative horizons. I hope I can surprise my audience."

The versatile actor, who has multiple blockbusters to her credit, grabbed the attention of the audience with her role as a free-spirited girl in *Ginny Weds Sunny*. Going ahead, she has a packed schedule. Having started her film career with the critically and commercially successful *Vicky Donor*, she has become a name to reckon with and has emerged as one of the most sought-after actors in showbiz.

Yami has also been roped in for Behzad Khambata upcoming directorial *A Thursday* which will mark debut in the OTT space and Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury's *Faraar*. Apart from these, she will also be seen in three more projects where she will be seen playing interesting characters. One of the most bankable actors, she is all set to surprise her fans.

### ARJUN MATHUR HAS HIS HANDS FULL

Last seen in Tisca Chopra's short film *Rubaru*, Emmy Nominated actor Arjun Mathur has been currently busy shooting for ZEE5's *Silence*. While there's a lot of excitement amongst fans to see more of Arjun on digital platforms and the big screen, we do have an important update for you about the good looking actor.

If the sources are anything to go by, Mathur has been approached by various directors for some big budgeted projects. However, owing to his super hectic, busy schedule, he had to let go of some. Nevertheless, we further hear that Arjun has already said yes for three out of these five projects that came his way. Looking forward to take up such challenging roles, the actor is here to win hearts yet again.

Confirming the same, Mathur revealed: "It's very exciting for any actor to be offered a variety of scripts and characters. For me, it's always been about taking up content-driven roles that made me feel challenged as an actor. I'm working on a few new projects this year and am really looking forward to the official announcements being made soon."



### 'DON'T COME TO MUMBAI UNPREPARED'

Actor Rajkumar Rao, noted for his nuanced performances, says cinema is changing and aspiring artistes must prepare first before coming to Mumbai.

"The only talent I had is that I fell in love with my art. I fell in love with acting as a kid. I was never chasing fame or money. I thought to myself that this is something I really love and I want to do for the rest of my life. With that dream, I started doing theatre in Delhi and later joined the film institute in Pune because I didn't wanted to come to this city unprepared," said Rao.

"I wanted to train myself first. This is something I often tell budding actors — (don't do it) just because your friends believe you can mimic and you have good looks and you should go to Mumbai. Do not come to Mumbai unprepared, especially now, when cinema is changing. We need talent here now. So train yourself first and then come to this city, as there are so many wonderful opportunities. The only talent I had was not to give up and keep chasing my dream without having any plan B," said Rao, while interacting with the media at the launch of Satyam Srivastava and Rajeev Garg's book, *Neelkanth*.

Talking about the book, the actor said: "It's a mystery thriller about a cop in Delhi, so the concept of this book itself excited me a lot. After knowing both of them and after knowing its basic storyline, I am looking forward to reading it." /AWS

# the pioneer agenda

Sometimes I think that there's a fine line between impressionistic and messy  
—Lady Gaga



FROM THE INSIDE

## Faith overcomes all

Faith enables one to learn not only from one's own experience, but also from the experiences of the others

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## Preparing for Dhyana

One is bound to be confronted with distraction during meditation. Train your mind to disengage from those thoughts

New-age technologies are ushering in a digital-first attitude among companies and users, says DR. V KUMAR, as he lists the prominent ones that are making a strong impact on business and society

# IT'S A WHOLE NEW WORLD



Long before the COVID-19 pandemic upended businesses and daily lives, a radically different family of technologies had been set in motion. These technologies, then nascent, showed much promise in changing how things can be done and how lives can be led. Now, fast-forward into the pandemic world, these technologies are ushering in a digital-first attitude among companies and users.

Artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), blockchain, robots, drones, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are a few of the founding members of the family of new-age technologies (NATs). These NATs are located at the intersection of business and human lives thereby transforming our world right in front of us in ways, in which we cannot entirely foresee. Yet, we can see them in action in many spheres of our lives. Let us meet two of these technologies making an impact on business and society.

### AI: PREDICTING THE FUTURE

Sample this. When searching for information, our first stop inevitably is Google. And in most cases, the search results yield us what we are looking for, or at least point us in the right direction. What if, Google knew exactly what we want, the form in which we want it, and give it to us as we need it? Better still, what if Google can learn over time, our changing needs, and preferences, and customise the search results accordingly. Essentially, it would be a 'personal Google' that delivers results entirely applicable to you, and only you. Well, while we are not there yet, that is what Google aims to become, according to its co-founder Larry Page. Currently, all the text, image, and map searches from Google are powered by AI, and we must understand that. And beyond Google, many other companies possess such capabilities. The host of digital voice assistants such as Alexa (by Amazon), Siri (by Apple), Cortana (by Microsoft), and Google Assistant (by Google) that have befriended us and helping us solve real-world challenges are another example of AI.

The AI technology draws from multiple disciplines such as information systems, knowledge management, statistics, decision sciences, advanced computing systems, motion studies, and so on to deliver everyday solutions that meet our needs. Further, by analysing vast sets of personal information, AI can suggest personalised offerings, which generally include advertisements and strategic discounts to influence the consumers directly. Does this sound familiar? Yes, Netflix, Amazon, Pandora, and eBay, and many more companies use AI to provide the "recommended for you" listing as we spend time online. Such features are important, now more than ever, as our needs and preferences are constantly changing.

Today, AI allows businesses to examine these instant changes and adapt to the fast-paced environment by quickly determining the right product configuration and pricing strategy, thereby presenting companies with a competitive edge. AI is also used by firms such as L'Oréal, UK to monitor customer sentiments on social media by personalising their social media interactions with consumers based on tracked consumer preferences and develop tailored offerings. AI has also been used in language

management (e.g., Grammarly can assist with content recommendations), advertising content development (e.g., McCann's AI tool aids the creative team in scripting commercials), ensuring service consistency (e.g., Uber Eats uses AI to optimize delivery times), driverless vehicles (e.g., Tesla's self-driving features), and so on. In the knowledge economy that we are in, data appears to be the currency. Companies are now able to collect, store, process, and (re)use information through AI. This has thrust us further into new frontiers, and AI is part of that new frontier.

### IoT: THE BEDROCK TO CONNECT PHYSICAL-VIRTUAL

Picture this. You are ready to leave for home after a long day at work. You look around your work desk, many of your coworkers have already left for the day with their workstation lights turned out. As you walk down the office corridor, the lights turn back on automatically (powered by motion sensors) to help you navigate your way to the parking garage. On your way home, you decide to stop at the grocery store to pick up a few essential items. As you shop, you are not sure if you have milk in the refrigerator. No problem — using your smartphone you look into your smart refrigerator to check on what you have. As you turn into your street, using your car Bluetooth, you activate the lights at the front of the home. Even before you get off from your car, you unlock your front door using your smartphone. Not just that, with the press of a few more buttons, you turn on the air conditioning in your room, turn on the water heater for your hot shower, thaw some frozen food in your refrigerator for your dinner, and activate the coffeemaker to end your dinner with a nice, hot coffee. After you enter your home, with a press of a few more buttons, you lock your entrance door and turn back on the home security system and surveillance cameras, turn on your music system that playing your favorite radio station, and look forward to a nice relaxing evening. Sound like bliss, right?

Through our daily lives, we see devices controlled through sensors and remotely located software such as connected streetlights, self-driving vehicles, smart home security systems, connected wearable devices, and much more. These devices collect, communicate and process information in real-time through the Internet to perform or aid in performing certain defined tasks. This elaborate and growing network of devices connected through the Internet is referred to as the Internet of Things (IoT).

Where can we see IoT at work, you may ask. Just look around you. In our personal lives, IoT devices can be working in the background of many routine chores, while constantly enhancing the performance of devices and eliminating human involvement such as wearable devices (e.g., Apple Watch), automated driving (e.g., Tesla), home automation (e.g., Samsung Smart Refrigerator), and so on. In companies, IoT allows large-scale data capture possible that can be further utilised to influence the devices and objects in the real world such as asset monitoring (e.g., Bosch's smart tires), location-based marketing (e.g., beacons used by Kenneth Cole and Heathrow International Airport providing localized content), preventive



“ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI), MACHINE LEARNING (ML), BLOCKCHAIN, ROBOTS, DRONES, AND THE INTERNET OF THINGS (IOT) ARE A FEW OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY OF NEW-AGE TECHNOLOGIES (NATS). THESE NATS ARE LOCATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF BUSINESS AND HUMAN LIVES THEREBY TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD RIGHT IN FRONT OF US IN WAYS, IN WHICH WE CANNOT ENTIRELY FORESEE



maintenance (e.g., monitoring sensor health and optimizing production adopted by ABB and Hitachi), smart energy systems (e.g., Honeywell and Verizon), and so on.

Looking even further, IoT serves whole industries in instituting best practices. IoT allows firms to monitor devices, control usage, and proactively initiating maintenance requests, thereby leading to increased productivity, improved efficiency, and reduced operating costs. Such implementations include supply chain operations (e.g., companies like DHL and Cargotec use IoT for overall logistics management), inventory management (companies like Amazon and Walmart use self-driving vehicles for efficient floor operations), fleet management (e.g., shipping companies like Maersk monitors its entire fleet of ships and containers in real-time using sensors), and so on. Finally, at the national level, IoT allows countries to actively manage national resources such as energy sources (e.g., cities like Miami and Paris installing connected streetlights), urban city planning (e.g., India's Smart Cities initiative), and governmental services to citizens (e.g., Los Angeles' 'Quake Alert' system for earthquake and tremor detection, and Barcelona's smart devices for water, lighting, and parking services).

AI and IoT are just two NATs that are making our lives better and enabling companies to perform faster and better. The other NATs of prominence include robots (e.g., ElliQ, the elder care assistant robot; Dash, Walmart's autonomous shopping cart; and ROAR, Volvo's robotic refuse collector, to name a few), machine learning capabilities (e.g., Shopify uses ML solutions to determine the closest and most efficient fulfilment centers for the businesses, Hitachi uses ML/AI solutions to monitor and combat food waste in hospitals, and FICO uses ML to develop its credit rating and to assess risks for individual customers, and so on), drones (e.g., used in aerial photography, surveillance systems, flora/fauna management, crop estimation, yield assessment, irrigation leak detection in agriculture, aerial surveys and progress tracking in construction sites, delivery, and so on), and blockchain (e.g., cryptocurrency such as Bitcoin and Peercoin; data management activities such as contract management and planning network infrastructure; data authentication activities such as document verification and notary services; financial services such as online payments and currency exchange; business processes such as supply chain management and digital content management; and so on).

While the varied uses and applications of NATs seem exciting for companies and users, are they necessary? That is, why do we need NATs, and why now? There are three main reasons for this.

### EMBRACING THE DIGITAL FRONTIER

NATs help us embrace the digital frontier which is markedly different from conventional business practices. That is, companies have dabbled with individual implementations of NATs from early on such as online chatbots, recommendation engines, and so on. But what has changed now is an integrated implementation of NATs wherein multiple technologies such as AI, ML, robots, etc. are used in a unified man-

ner and within a specific area of operation. Amazon, for instance, uses a confluence of AI, robots, ML, drones, IoT, and blockchain to offer, deliver and develop solutions that are already changing the business landscape. Such concerted effort in implementing technology opens several possibilities for data-driven business and marketing strategies.

### PROMOTING MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

NATs enable us to promote meaningful connections between people and between people and companies. It must be noted that each of the NATs while maintaining their uniqueness, also portrays a high degree of interconnectivity. That is, unlike other technologies in the past, the NATs cannot be neatly compartmentalised into organisational silos. Put differently, while each of the NATs is impressive and effective individually, they also lend themselves easily to be paired with other NATs. For instance, consider Google. YouTube uses AI for understanding and suggesting recommended videos based on viewer preferences and history while using ML techniques to ensure that brands are not listed next to offensive content. Further, Google uses AI and IoT in tandem to reduce the colling costs of its data center; and has developed Google Wing, a drone, that has been used to deliver essential supplies during the COVID-19 pandemic in the USA. So, one company can gainfully incorporate all NATs for delivering value to users and themselves. Such a scenario represents an exciting time for users and marketers where new technology solutions overlap, even blurring the lines where one technology platform ends and the other begins. And this feature is what drives the establishment of meaningful connections.

### NATS INFLUENCE ON MARKETING

The age of technological transformation has well and truly begun, with recent developments in marketing that have embraced technology and firmly placed it at the center of business operations. With the introduction of NATs, companies can now interact with users through various touchpoints and often at several points in a day. Further, these NATs also enables firms to facilitate and monitor interactions among users, thereby securing themselves an opportunity to collect real-time data about users and their needs. Subsequently, this knowledge is being used to develop personalised offerings and implementing customer-centric marketing strategies that result in the creation of customer engagement. Such a transformed marketplace signifies the true convergence of marketing and NATs, thereby kickstarting an age of exciting and breathtaking technology experiences.

The NATs are shifting the business schema at a rapid pace leading us to a world of tomorrow, one month from now, next year, five years from now. This age of reckoning will be revisited by all in the future, as we do now when considering other evolutionary periods in our history. What we do know is that the NATs and their future advancements are poised to alter the very fabric of our lives, and it's going to be a whole new world!

The writer is an author and has recently published Intelligent Marketing: Employing New-Age Technologies with SAGE Publications India

# FAITH OVERCOMES ALL

Faith enables one to learn not only from one's own experience, but also from the experiences of others who are more spiritually evolved, says HINGORI



The impediments to spiritual growth are many, beginning with the mind and the influence of planetary motions ranging all the way to the lack of appropriate spiritual guidance. The awareness of these roadblocks is certainly the first step to overcoming them but most definitely not the simplest one. In fact, the solution to almost all impediments is one simple word that has proven to be the most difficult task, faith. Faith in your guru, faith in destiny, faith that you will grow in your own time and every step you take is in some way leading you to it. This faith comes from a complete surrender to your guru. To follow, without question everything he advises you. This surrender and faith will lead you to realise you are one with the consciousness supreme and all life. It is when you reach this understanding that you have truly evolved. The thought of complete surrender is undoubtedly scary because with this surrender comes thoughts of the fear of the unknown, and complete faith in something that we mistakenly believe we have absolutely no experience in

which may lead us down a path of self-destruction. You aren't entirely wrong about the 'self-destruction', but I mean it in a positive way here, because as we destroy our perceptions, impediments, biases, conditioning and tendencies, we align to the aspirations of not only the *Isthul Sharir* or the gross body, but also those of the *Sukshma Sharir* or the subtle body and the *Karna Sharir* or the causal body. Faith enables you to learn not only from your own but also from the experiences of others more evolved than you.

While faith is like walking across a bridge you cannot see over a chasm extending deep down below you, it is the faith that exists after all that it takes to overcome all impediments to spiritual growth. The first step to lifting the veil of maya is to accept the illusion that is maya, for which you need to have faith in the higher existing reality. Realising that 'I' means nothing and everything at the same time, that is to say every living being is an extension of the supreme consciousness. The ego-self attached to every aspect of the physical world is one we must learn to detach from in

WHILE FAITH IS LIKE WALKING ACROSS A BRIDGE YOU CANNOT SEE OVER A CHASM EXTENDING DEEP DOWN BELOW YOU, IT IS THE FAITH THAT EXISTS AFTER ALL THAT IT TAKES TO OVERCOME ALL IMPEDIMENTS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH

order to transcend the five senses and experience the beyond. Begin with acknowledging the oneness of all human beings, treating everyone exactly the same not only in your behavior towards them but even in forming opinions about them in your own thoughts. Once you achieve this, and don't expect it to be instantaneous, you progress to seeing all other living organisms as one with you, and eventually you find yourself realising the divinity within yourself and identifying as an extension of the supreme consciousness, the true reality. When we realise the true nature of reality, we know that all we see around us is created by our mind through our memories and tendencies that exist within, the reality is just formless etheral energy. In *Yoga Vashist* it is said, "When we see a mirage, we do not see hot air rise up, when we see the hot air, the mirage disappears. When one is seen as the truth the other is not". It is upto you to accept the supreme consciousness in its etheral state to be the reality to be able to live the veil of *maya* and look beyond.

It isn't easy to just discard everything you've been taught, only to believe something you haven't experienced, something you can't see. I remember struggling with this very task, analysing every aspect of spirituality, trying to find logic in everything I was told, a *Gurudev* had one simple instruction for me, "*Buddhu ban ja*" or become a simpleton. Spirituality is not a concept within the grasp of a logical mind, it exists beyond the known into the unknown and unfathomable.

There are other ways to overcome the impediments as well. As you may already know, while there are multiple *chakras*, or convergence points for the *naadis* or energy pathways, of which seven are most important. An element of spiritual growth is the rise of the '*kundalini*' or energy coiled at the base of the spine towards the higher *chakras*. There are various ways for you to help your *Kundalini* rise through the *chakras* including meditation, *Mantra Vidya*, *Seva* and improving your *Guna* mix.

*Mantra Vidya* or reciting *mantras* is one of the most successful ways of overcoming impediments. The art of *mantra* believes that if you use the right words to train your mind, to sharpen its focus and channelise the divinity in the universe, you can rise above every negative tendency that holds you back and go past the shackles of your limited conscious mind to attain liberation. Being initiated into a *mantra* by a *siddh guru* enables you, by his grace, to attain *siddhi* of the given *mantra* in a very short period of years or months as opposed to multiple lifetimes, which would be the case if you found the *mantra* for yourself.

*Seva* or selfless service for others can take countless forms. You could feed a group of homeless people, finance the education of children who cannot afford it, teach children yourself, feed animals, plant seeds to grow trees, even leave a handful of sugar out for ants to feed on!

Overcoming the five senses, improving your *guna* mix and all the above-mentioned techniques help create a greater magnetic field in the higher *chakras* that helps us to move up and stay there.

Overcoming these impediments is not a onetime task, and is certainly not easy. It requires a commitment to consistently work towards the upliftment of your *aatma*. Having said this, the right guidance will help you speed the process and make the instruction much simpler to follow.

The writer is the author of Hingori Sutras series of spiritual books



**HIDDEN SOULS**  
 PRAMOD PATHAK



## Why Gandhi is relevant

Talking about Gandhi one week after the nation has observed his martyrdom may be a bit out of tune, but Gandhi is ever relevant. The reason I write about Gandhi risking the displeasure of the social media troll brigade ready to fire on anything that doesn't fit with their scheme of things is because there is need to know Gandhi better. Gandhi is certainly not in fashion when voices trying to justify his assassination are getting louder. But Gandhi is not just an Indian phenomenon. Gandhi is global and transcends time and space. Whether one likes or not Gandhi has a worldwide following. History can be tampered or tempered but not the truth. It was truth that was the main thrust of Gandhi's philosophy. It was truth that was *Dharma* for Gandhi and it was truth that was the basis of his *Satyagraha*. Yes, truth in these times of post truth has taken a backseat, but, nevertheless, truth must prevail. Even if the head may have its doubts in accepting it, the heart does acknowledge the truth and accept its permanence. Gandhi's ideas have become even more relevant today as we witness confusion and chaos all around. Protests that are the order of the day are becoming violent and *Satyagraha* in practice has become an antithesis of the philosophy. Gandhi must be understood as Ram catches the imagination of the nation. Understanding Ram is equally important in these times of *Kaliyuga* when power and pelf become the sole means of sustenance. Ram was an epitome of sacrifice and values. He was that quintessential embodiment of character which is almost extinct today. It was Ram's character that made him proceed for the exile even when the people of Ayodhya where solidly behind him and wanted him to stay. It was Ram's character that made him turn down the request of Bharat, his brother, who had the mandate to rule Ayodhya. Bharat, the king designate, went all the way to the place where Ram was living in exile and appealed to him to reconsider his decision to decline the throne of Ayodhya. Something that cannot be imagined today, when there is a mad scramble to assume power anyhow. And remember it was not just Bharat who wanted Ram to rule but everyone in Ayodhya. Still, Ram chose to carry out his word. When lies are the norm Ram walks that extra mile to uphold the sanctity of the spoken word. Gandhi and Ram both have to be understood in the right perspective. Gandhi did not have any attraction for occupying position of power, nor did he claim any favour for carrying out what he thought was his duty. For Gandhi Ram did not belong to any particular religion but symbolised oneness of God. His Ram signified both *Ishwar* and *Allah*. This is what he felt — *Ishwar Allah tero Naam, sabko sammati de Bhagwan*. That is You are the God, You are the *Allah*; let good sense prevail on everybody. From that transcendental approach to the sectarianism of the present times, we certainly have come a long way and the wrong way. As values crumble under the weight of ambition it is time to realise what Gandhi stood for. And Gandhi did not say anything new. He only emphasised the spirit of Hinduism that was represented by Swami Vivekananda. Catholicity is inherent in Hinduism and Gandhi practiced it. Liking or disliking Gandhi maybe matters of personal choices, but Gandhi still stands tall.

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## Tame temper for a better life

Anger steals valuable resources from the working memory and puts us in a fight or flight mode, says R GIRIDHARAN, as he suggests ways to keep cool



Anger is a product of a three-way interaction between the nervous system, the endocrine system and the circulatory system. Each time one gets angry, the adrenal glands get over active and release hormones in the blood stream. The aroused amygdala stimulates the adrenal glands to release hormones and once these hormones are released into the blood stream, the blood pressure as well as the pulse rate increase providing one with the energy to deal with the perceived crises. However, every such episode creates an imbalance in the body and causes long term damage.

If your anger is a longstanding one, you may require more elaborate methods to keep it under check. Louise Hay lists some very powerful methods for the purpose:

● **Exercise 1 — Write a Letter**

Think of someone who you are still angry with. Perhaps it is an old anger. Write this person a letter. Tell them all your grievance and how you feel. Don't hold back. Really express yourself. Use additional paper if you need it.

After you finished the letter, read it once. Then fold it and on the outside write: "What I really want is your love and approval." Then burn the letter and release it.

● **Exercise 2 — Mirror Work**

Take another person, or the same person, you are angry with. Sit down in front of a mirror. Be sure to have some tissues nearby. Look into your own eyes and see the other person. Tell them what you are so angry about.

When you are finished, tell them, "What I really want is your love and approval." We are all seeking love and approval. That's what we want from everyone, and that's what everyone wants from us. Love and approval brings harmony into our lives.

In order to be free, we need to release the old ties that bind us. So once again look into the mirror and affirm to yourself. "I am willing to release the need to be an angry person." Notice if you are really willing to let go or do you still want to hang on to the past.

● **Exercise 3 — Reframing**

Reframing is another method to drain out suppressed anger. There is no absolute reality in the world, everything is subjective reality, a reality from a particular view point. Perspective therefore defuses the event.

The second step would be to analyse the event or events from the perspective of all concerned that is get into the shoes of the offender.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the situation relevant now?
- Are the people still in my life?
- Are those people having the same impact and power?
- What can I learn from the event and become better person.

A good reflection is what you need to fix a volatile issue. So, tie your shoelaces and embark on the voyage towards taming the temper. Your mind and soul will talk to your body more often and pots of nectar are waiting to be served.

A more pleasing personality means more success. Robust health comes as a collateral.

The writer is an author, behavioural trainer, and sports commentator

## Choose God over self

We must be respectful and grateful to the Lord for all that He does for us. For, only He knows the big picture, writes AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

What is the cosmic set-up? There is God — the omnipresent, the omnipotent and omniscient. We learn from *Bhagavad Gita* that God is everything (7.19), i.e. He is the Master of the universe. Then, there are gods and goddesses — special souls, who oversee the divine arrangement under the superintendence of God. (9.10) They reward and punish us souls according to our *karmas*. We should not forget *grahas* like the Sun, the Moon, etc. They affect our lives.

We, souls, come next. We remain in this position in the hierarchy eternally, except some souls maybe promoted to the level of gods and goddesses for exceptional *karmas*. Wise persons realise their limitations. These facts indicate that we should seek help from God, who is forever prepared to help. Not only the higher authorities, we need generous help from the material nature also. The material nature is extremely important to us for existing well in our material bodies.

Let's look at this from another angle. When we are born, we are helpless. We need parental care to survive. When we grow up and get married, onus falls upon us to have a good family life and grow a support group consisting of reliable people around us.

God has provided the material nature for exploitation, not in the way some are presently doing, i.e. ignoring the needs of the climate, polluting the atmosphere, water bodies, etc. We are supposed to cooperate with others to co-exist well. Instead, we choose to be narrowly selfish, i.e. one rule for me and another for the rest. The result of such behavior increases the degree of difficulty for us to live in this world.



Gods and goddesses, who oversee the workings of the material creation, deserve our respect for the task they have been entrusted. They occupy a very important position in the creation. Lord Krishna has spoken several times in *The Gita* about them and has counselled to please them. (3.11-12) Somewhat similar is the situation with the *grahas*. We can gain a lot by acquainting ourselves with their movements and positions. When they are favourable for us, we benefit. Contrarily, if the movements of the *grahas* are unfavourable, the ill effects on us individually can be counteracted somewhat by worshipping the unfavourable *grahas*. Similarly, wearing particular stones depending on the birth date of an individual is helpful in many cases.

Next we come to the system, i.e. how everything functions. There are guidelines for us souls, which have been clearly laid down in scriptures like *The Gita*. (16.24) We must be dutiful,

follow *dharma* and use all our unique resources including goodness, mental ability and others for the common good. We must contribute to the common pool, because it is for our benefit. We should never try to become masters, because there is only one Master, i.e. God. We must be respectful and thankful to the Lord for all He does for us. We need God for showing us the direction we should be taking, because only He is aware of the big picture. Only He can pinpoint our exact role in the present life. And the fastest way to improve the quality of our lives is by serving the God and His system.

Therefore, let us accept God wholeheartedly and take His shelter as He has instructed. (18.62) Then, we will be really selfish, i.e. we will do ourselves unbelievable favour. Yes, we should do that.

Bishnoi is a spiritual writer and can be reached at spiritual@ajitbishnoi.com

# UK citizenship offer a twist in Hong Kong tale

Once known as world-class trade centre, Hong Kong is currently encountering an ever-aggressive mainland China. It is gradually slipping into an abyss. The locals are trying to safeguard their basic freedom against the backdrop of the imposition of the draconian National Security Law in June last year. Since then, millions are protesting on the road to register their utmost displeasure against the sudden curtailment of their rights and freedom.

In the wake of massive overhauling of the legal administration of Hong Kong, the UK, the former colonial master of the city, proposed a citizenship offer to the islanders in the middle of last year. Indeed, the offer is not only crucial for those suffering in Hong Kong, but it also reflects a strong concern on what is unfolding in the island territory.

The decision has also demonstrated the legacy of British control for nearly a century over this part of China. When Hong Kong was handed over to China by then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to Deng Xiaoping, President of China then, there was a call for issuing this kind of unique citizenship offer from Britain. However, such measures were not considered by the Government of the UK during that time in July 1997.

What has provoked the current Boris Johnson regime to make the citizenship offer to millions of Hongkongers? On November 11, 2020, the Chinese parliament decided that any Hong Kong legislator who promote or support Hong Kong independence, refuse to recognise China's sovereignty over Hong Kong, seek foreign countries to interfere in the affairs of Hong Kong, or endanger the national security of Hong Kong will be held guilty of the breach of the parliamentary oath and will be disqualified from the membership of the Hong Kong Legislative

Council with immediate effect.

The decision of the National People's Congress (NPC) eventually disqualified four members of the Hong Kong Legislative Council. Back home in London, it was advocated that this sudden move of Beijing was a ploy to gag all voices critical of the policies adopted by the mainland authorities over the years.

Truly speaking, this new rule set by the bosses in China has become another tool to suppress the concerns of the locals in Hong Kong. Today, the British Government feels that this decision of the NPC are in contravention of the legally binding historic Sino-British Declaration signed on December 19, 1984 in Beijing. The Declaration which came into effect on May 27, 1985 clearly outlines the administrative arrangement of Hong Kong after the withdrawal of the UK on July 1, 1997. What has been highlighted by the Westminster today is that China has violated its earlier commitment of providing considerable autonomy to this former colonial territory.

In fact, this high degree of autonomy and freedom of speech for Hong Kong was very much guaranteed under the Paragraph 3 and Annex I of the joint Declaration. The British Government noted that this is for the third time the Chinese Government has breached the legally binding Declaration since the handover of the territory in 1997.

The first such instance took place in 2016, the second, when Beijing imposed the National Security Law in June 2020 and third in November 2020. This clearly indicates what Beijing is aiming to pursue in Hong Kong.

The root of the current crisis spearheaded by the Umbrella Movement and various democratic protests lie in the blatant violation of the Basic Law or Mini Constitution under which the NPC had agreed to respect



In this July 7, 2019, thousands of protesters carrying the British flag march near the harbour of Hong Kong AP/File

the autonomy of the territory. In fact, since the formal transfer of the territory, it has been administered as the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR).

Further, the mainland authorities have also committed to maintain a unique administrative system called "One Country, Two Systems", under which Beijing will follow the Communist pattern and this former colony will carry on with the capitalist system of economy and polity. And this autonomy, wherein basic rights and freedoms were to be enjoyed by the Hongkongers will be continued for another fifty years i.e. till 2047. Clearly, many locals were happy that they will be able to have a free life even under the Communist China and will not be affected by the opaque and authoritar-

ian regime of Beijing.

The decision to offer citizenship to millions of Hongkongers is indeed affected by choices made some decades ago. It was a commitment that Britain shared with China to maintain the status quo in Hong Kong until 2047. But then China has violated the fundamental rights of freedom of the islanders much before the due date. Apparently, all these started taking place with the coming of Xi Jinping to power in the year 2012. And now with his life-time presidency, the international community could hardly expect any positive development in Hong Kong.

After removing two-term limits for the office of the President, Xi has become the most powerful head of the state after Chairman Mao

Zedong. His expansionist trend, in fact, started with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) through which he aims to extend China's economic prowess much beyond Asia. The aggression of the Chinese state has increased manifold. And one of the strongest manifestations of it is Hong Kong.

With the coming of the citizenship offer from Britain, the counter reactions are pouring in from the mainland and the pro-establishment figures in Hong Kong. Regina Ip, a member of the Executive Council and Legislative Council of Hong Kong, has already issued a call for issuing curbs on dual citizenship in the island. She has argued that those who obtain foreign nationality should be stripped of the right of abode. Even she is advocating that Beijing

should put an end to its special treatment of Hongkongers and impose its own nationality law on the city. The irony is that though she is trying to make a strong case of China's full intervention in Hong Kong, the lawmaker is not receiving adequate support from even the pro-Beijing bloc in the city Council.

Providing sanctuary to some millions of Hongkongers will not solve the crisis in the city. But certainly, this step will offer an immediate relief to some of the troubled citizens of the territory. Even the MPs in the British House of Commons openly approved the citizenship offer to Hongkongers. How serious London is about the current situation in its former colony is very much evident the way various government dignitaries are responding to it. Particularly, Dominic Raab, the Foreign Secretary, expressed his anguish by saying, "This is a special, bespoke, set of arrangements developed for the unique circumstances we face and in light of our historic commitment to the people of Hong Kong."

This is how he says China could be cohesively forced to allow the British Overseas Nationals to come over to the UK. In fact, he termed China's current steps in Hong Kong as a "flagrant assault" on the freedom of speech and the right of peaceful assembly across the island. The good part of the concerns raised over Hong Kong in the UK is that these moves by the Johnson Government almost enjoy support from the Labour's side as well. The Labour Party said it welcomed the Government's action but said there must be no discrimination on those allowed into the UK on the basis of income or other factors.

Even the party had gone one step ahead and said that the UK also had the responsibility to consider the responsibility of those who were not able to relocate or who wished to stay in Hong Kong.

The Labour Party's shadow Foreign Secretary Lisa Nandy urged the Government to work with its international partners through the UN to force an enquiry into police brutality in Hong Kong and also called for the UK to re-examine its commercial relations with China. This will be an added support for Johnson to act swiftly and handle Chinese actions in Hong Kong effectively.

How is the Xi regime reacting to this citizenship offer by the UK? Precisely, after the British citizenship offer, the Sino-British relationship has come to almost a deadlock. This month the Chinese Government announced that it will no longer recognise British National (Overseas) passport as a valid travel document or as a form of identification.

This declaration from Beijing has come days before a new visa route for Hong Kong residents is to be opened in the UK. While reacting to the announcement coming from authoritarian Xi regime, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) in London said it was disappointed but not surprised by the decision. But for Beijing, London's Hong Kong interventions simply reflect its age-old colonial mentality only.

For Johnson, on one hand, his Government has just moved out of the EU and stalled further immigration from other parts of Europe to the UK. And now, the same Government has decided to welcome more than three million Hongkongers to the same land.

However, as the UK is out of the EU stranglehold, it is a testament of the principle that the country is now free to decide who comes in and who goes out. Let's wait and watch how this new saga of migration from Hong Kong to the UK unfolds.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)

**On one hand, the Boris Johnson Government has just moved out of the EU and stalled further immigration from other parts of Europe to the UK. And now, the same Government has decided to welcome more than three million Hongkongers to the same land. What has provoked Johnson to make the citizenship offer to millions of Hongkongers?**



MAKHAN SAINIK

## PERSPECTIVE

# Multidisciplinary ecosystem for 21st century education

**As long as we keep resisting all the changes needed to overhaul the outdated legacy of the 20th-century educational ecosystem, we wouldn't be able to prepare our next generation for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century**



PIYUSH KAMAL

We often forget people are primarily designed for action, not for listening to lectures, not for manipulating symbols, and not for memorising facts. Perhaps that's the reason we still continue to deploy these three methods while imparting most of our primary and higher education. In fact, educators have known this at least since philosopher of education John Dewey advised in 1938:

*"There should be brief intervals of time for quiet reflection provided for even the young. But they are periods of genuine reflection only when they follow after times of more overt action and are used to organise what has been gained in periods of activity in which the hands and other parts of the body, besides the brain, are used."*

The history of liberal education has so far made us believe that the purpose of education should be to give people the knowledge and skills to be independent thinkers. However, the idea that education should increase intellectual independence is a very narrow view of learning. It ignores the fact that knowledge depends a lot on others as well.

Learning, therefore, isn't just about developing new knowledge and skills. It's also about learning to collaborate with others, recognising what knowledge we have to offer and what gaps we must rely on others to help us fill.

In a community of knowledge, an individual is like a single piece in a jigsaw puzzle. Understanding where you fit requires understanding what you know and what others know that you don't.

Learning your place in a community of knowledge requires becoming aware of all the knowledge outside of yourself. And that's where the interdisciplinary approach of acquiring liberal education becomes more relevant, where skills like empathy and the ability to listen become more valuable to work well with others. This also means teaching critical thinking skills, not focus-

ing just on facts, facilitating communication, and exchanging ideas.

This is the value of a liberal education proposed in the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) as opposed to learning that you need to get a job.

So far, the educational institutes of the 20th century have had a great run in signaling certain qualities like intelligence, diligence, compliance, and conformity to potential employers. As a result, there is a widespread clamour among students to get themselves validated through a higher degree, as it presumably increases the probability of landing a well-paying job.

The undercurrent of this line of thought usually gets a strong expression when students are told to score exceptionally well on the standardised test. It makes them eligible to pursue further studies in the prestigious STEM — Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics — field where every other stream finds itself at the mercy of the STEM field to attract the rest of the talented lot.

As long as we don't find any fault in subscribing to a free market doctrine — where only skills and experiences that are directly convertible to income are considered useful — the need for the education system to make itself sufficiently market aligned remains the top priority, where it doesn't find any problem in serving as a certification agency.

Historically, vocational training institutes have been doing the same, fulfilling the industry-specific demand for a particular set of skills — exemplifying the utilitarian model of education.

Should the entire curriculum be made hostage to occupational prospects existing in the current job market?

The premise that acquiring knowledge only helps someone grab a high-paying job is very limited in its scope.

A doctor who is not exposed to the concept of empathy might suc-

ceed in becoming a good doctor. However, s/he will fail to become an exceptional healer having widespread respect among his patients.

An architect who is yet to inculcate a habit of appreciating the history of beautiful artistic expression through monuments might become a professional architect. However, s/he will fail to become an exceptionally creative designer capable of making someone stop and appreciate the expression of beauty.

Therefore, as proposed in NEP 2020, rather than making students choose only one subject for further studies, the focus should be on identifying their strengths through continuous multidisciplinary exploration so that they could spend a majority of their time on subjects that aligns perfectly with their interest.

Once the interest based on their strength is identified correctly, student invariably ends up on the path of deep learning. And in the process, they become consistently good at producing exceptional results.

The purpose of higher education is more than just creating high paying job opportunities for students. According to the National Education Policy, quality education has an inherent responsibility to play an enabling role in personal accomplishment, constructive public engagement, and productive contribution to society.

The broader objective is to engage faculty and students with local communities to learn a thing or two about real world problems while functioning in collaborative, inclusive, and cross-disciplinary ways.

For instance, students opting to do their major in social work might gain a lot in having interdisciplinary dialogues on the topics of homelessness, poverty, and crimes with students pursuing their majors in criminal jurisprudence. The analysis of multiple deep-rooted problems from a completely different vantage point invariably throws more contextual and sustainable solutions.

This method of approaching socio-economic problems from a multidisciplinary perspective is a welcome change from the privileged expert-silo perspective.

The intent is to design diverse courses that allow students to experience relevant local community service as part of their curriculum so that it helps them become socially conscious citizens.

And as envisaged in the NEP, this is made possible by combining the conceptual knowledge with practical engagement having real-world implications through fieldwork, internship, workshop, and student research project. Even the pedagogy for courses strive for significantly less rote learning with an increased emphasis on communication, discussion, and opportunities for cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary thinking.

Compared to other scientists, Nobel laureates or nationally recognised scientists are much more likely to be musicians, sculptors, painters, printmakers, woodworkers, mechanics, electronics tinkerers, glass-blowers, poets, or fiction writers.

Spanish Nobel laureate Santiago Ramón y Cajal, the father of modern neuroscience, says that "it appears as though they are scattering and dissipating their energies, while in reality they are channeling and strengthening them."

In fact, the main conclusion of work that took years of studying scientists and engineers, all of whom were regarded by peers as true technical experts, was that those who did not make a creative contribution to their field lacked aesthetic interests outside their narrow area.

As psychologist and prominent creativity researcher Dean Keith Simonton observed, "rather than obsessively focus(ing) on a narrow topic," creative achievers tend to have broad interests.

This breadth in interest often supports insights that cannot be attributed to domain-specific expertise alone. For instance, electrical engineer

Claude Shannon, who launched the Information Age, took a course on philosophy to fulfil a requirement at the University of Michigan.

In it, he was exposed to the work of self-taught 19th-century English logician George Boole. He was the one who assigned a value of 1 to true statements and 0 to false statements and showed that logic problems could be solved like math equations. It resulted in absolutely nothing of practical importance until seventy years after Boole passed away when Shannon did a summer internship at AT&T's Bell Labs research facility.

He recognised that he could combine telephone call-routing technology with Boole's logic system to encode and transmit any information electronically. It was the fundamental insight on which computers rely. It just happened that no one else was familiar with both those fields at the same time.

In liberal education, exploration is not just a whimsical luxury; it is a central benefit. Learning stuff is of secondary importance than learning about oneself; the emphasis is on developing all capacities of a human being — intellectual, physical, emotional, aesthetic, and moral — in an integrated manner.

With the visible change in this emphasis, even the assessment needs to introduce a criterion-based grading system to optimise the learning goals, where the learning goals aren't cast in iron. Students are assessed not only on academic aspects but also on the broad capacities and dispositions that are the goals of liberal education.

Along with critical thinking, the faculty makes it a point to complement the curriculum learnings through the magic of analogical thinking, keeping students' needs in mind.

The pedagogy of analogical thinking takes the new and makes it familiar, takes the familiar, puts it in a new light, and allows humans to reason through problems they have never seen in unfamiliar contexts. It also allows us to understand what we

cannot see at all. For instance, students might learn about molecules' motion by analogy to billiard-ball collisions; principles of electricity can be understood with analogies to water flow through plumbing.

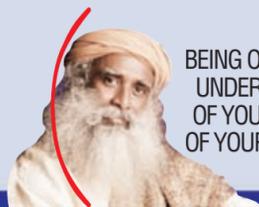
Concepts from biology serve as analogies to inform the cutting edge of artificial intelligence: "neural networks" that learn how to identify images from examples (when you search cat pictures, for instance) were conceived as akin to the neurons of the brain, and "genetic algorithms" are conceptually based on evolution by natural selection — solutions are tried, evaluated, and the more successful solutions pass on properties to the next round of solutions.

We live in a society where the gap between the ideal and practice is so immense that we could park a fleet of Boeing 777 in the existing space. Given that we don't have a very encouraging track record of implementing the ideals engraved in well-intended policy documents, the actual implementation of holistic and liberal learning by adopting a multidisciplinary approach as proposed in the NEP 2020 will require us to go beyond our usual method of commitment and execution.

Since the stakeholders (parents, teachers, and employers) involved in this whole scheme of things do suffer from a skewed mindset, it is imperative to bring visible changes in their perspective. The speed with which we can correct the existing skewness in their perception would decide the ultimate fate of implementing the National Education Policy (NEP 2020).

As long as we keep resisting all the changes needed to overhaul the outdated legacy of the 20th-century educational ecosystem, we wouldn't be able to prepare our next generation for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

(The writer is an educator and former IRS officer)



BEING ON THE SPIRITUAL PATH MEANS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE SOURCE OF YOUR TROUBLE AND THE SOURCE OF YOUR WELLBEING ARE WITHIN YOU —SADHGURU



**YOUR YEAR AHEAD**

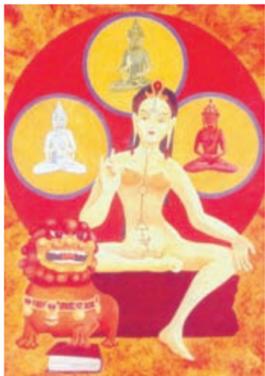
MADHU KOTIYA



**ARIES** March 21-April 19

This week your health will be good. You are outgoing and energetic and some quick movements will keep you busy and you will enjoy doing so. You will have the drive and determination to move forward. Do not force things, as that is likely to backfire on you. On the profession front, this is not the right time to take important decisions. You may feel as if your energy is blocked. Secret motives, undercover information could make you tensed up. There is a need to go deep into the matter and find a solution for your anxieties, fears and psychic blocks so that they will no longer haunt you. On the personal front, this week will be filled with romance and passion. The time and energy you have invested in the past will now give you rich dividends.

**Lucky number 13**  
**Lucky colour Maroon**  
**Lucky day Wednesday**



**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

Suppressing your emotions will impact your body negatively. Be careful about how, when, and where you vent your emotional reactions. Anything that reduces your stress level will be helpful now, that could be a five-minute walk. Your emotions are the gateway to opening up your spiritual life. Professionally, this is a great time to take some time off from work, if you can, to relax. Meditation, solutions, commitments and confrontations can and should be made now. This will bring positive changes in your career. On the relationship front, those committed will enjoy a happy, generous, fair and balanced relationship for at least a while. You and your partner should have a fair contribution to the relationship.

**Lucky number 12**  
**Lucky colour Brown**  
**Lucky day Thursday**



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

This week your health graph will improve. If you are dealing with a serious illness already, new and improved healing system or new doctor will bring hope. Think positively and expect the best, and do not hesitate to ask for healthcare if you need it. Your life will get a new meaning if you reach out to spiritual practices and have immense faith in God. On the career front, keep the office and personal life separate. You are likely to try a different tactic or may even choose to leave the job that you're currently in. Due to sensitive time, if you plan to stay back then look for alternate ways to make your work easier. In the matter of heart, mild conflicts with the loved ones are indicated. Allow your partner to have his or her space for a healthy relationship.

**Lucky number 11**  
**Lucky colour Golden**  
**Lucky day Monday**



**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

This week you will easily overcome past problems that you've been facing and it will soothe tensions in your relationships. On the career front, a little sorrow arises but you will overcome the situation and also understand the necessity for that brief sorrow. As peace and joy enter your career sector, you will see that the previous change simply energised you to enter a more profitable phase. The week looks promising in terms of finance. The money will be coming your way through different sources. Your dream may come true, maybe not in the form you expected. On the personal front, various events are likely to happen that will guide you in a direction that is most auspicious for you. Don't lose hope when things are not as per your planning. Destiny knows what is right for you.

**Lucky number 7**  
**Lucky colour White**  
**Lucky day Monday**



**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

This week health issues may bother you. Take one moment at a time, think positively, and know that it may take a while to get to the bottom of what is happening. Believe in yourself, ask questions, and educate yourself as much as you can. Keep working and things will be fine. On the work front, big ideas coupled with determination will help you achieve your targets. Choose your projects wisely. This is a period of increased studying and learning. Join a course to further your knowledge. Artistic interests will draw your attention. On the love front, know that love doesn't know of age. Love can mean that someone is about to sweep you off your feet. Give them a chance. Existing relationships find ways to bring more charm in their life.

**Lucky number 10**  
**Lucky colour Yellow**  
**Lucky day Sunday**



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

This is a good time to improve your health. You will keep a positive attitude which is very important and supportive of good health. You will feel loving toward everyone and everything. Share that good energy, others might need it too. Going for a walk or doing yoga with your friend or partner is good for your health and wellbeing. Professionally, you will be wise to follow established social structures and traditions. Some of you may consider starting your own business or join the family business. You feel happy being self-employed than working for others. You may meet someone new through your work, or feel attracted to your working colleagues. On the love front, those in a committed relationship, be sure that your communication is as clear as it can be.

**Lucky number 20**  
**Lucky colour Grey**  
**Lucky day Friday**



**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

You are on a fast track. Be careful when exercising; there could be minor injuries or sprains. If you are in the process of healing from an injury, don't overdo it, or you may end up in shape worse than you were earlier. On the work front, use your energy in creative pursuits. There may be some constraints in the workplace. You will experience stagnation/retirement or job is very demanding which you find it difficult. Worrying about your job is not going to help matters. Focus on what you can control, and try to leave your anxiety by the wayside. On the personal front, conflicts, a difference of opinions are foreseen in the relationship area. There are restlessness and unreliability. Learn to value others opinions and words.

**Lucky number 2**  
**Lucky colour Green**  
**Lucky day Friday**



**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

This week stress may take a mighty toll. Look at ways to ease your risk factors and to deal with stress. If all else fails, think about changing your lifestyle and the things you're spending your money on. On the career front, you need to take care of emotional matters and relationships with colleagues and boss, which had given you tense moments in the past. The situation will improve and you must make the best use of this time to repair and improve your contacts and enhance your career. The changes you make at this time will lead to interesting money-making opportunities later on. On the relationship front, try to give your partner some breathing space. A lifestyle change may not please everyone but it should lift your spirits.

**Lucky number 16**  
**Lucky colour Orange**  
**Lucky day Tuesday**



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

This week be on a lookout as there may be information about your health that has not yet come to light. If you feel that something is amiss with your health, believe in your concerns and advocate for yourself. Be sure that you are supporting yourself as best you can with diet, exercise, nutrition and vitamins/minerals. On the career front, you miss a wonderful opportunity which has the potential to bring satisfying improvement in your status. Focus on your strengths, on what you do have and can do, not what you can't do and don't have. On the love front, know that a little effort goes a long way if you're looking to improve your love life today. This is a good time to look hard at yourself as to whether you are being realistic with regards to love.

**Lucky number 3**  
**Lucky colour Sky Blue**  
**Lucky day Thursday**



**CANCER** June 21-July 22

This week your life is likely to get affected by worry, stress, and anxiety. Be sure to take good care of yourself and to the best of your capabilities. Balance in exercise, food and water intake, and getting adequate rest is a must. Breathing exercises and meditation are particularly useful for you now. On the career front, some unexpected event may surprise you. You may decide to leave your job if you are currently working, even if it is a good job because your heart is no longer in it. You want to follow your dream, no matter what it is. On the personal front, you will be able to establish a solid family line and become a pillar of a wide network of family members. You are practical and grounded.

**Lucky number 8**  
**Lucky colour Red**  
**Lucky day Saturday**



**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 21

This week you must manage your stress level to stay in good health. Deal with any problems that come up physically. Ensure you get enough rest. If you need healing, ask for it. Hearty talk with friends will go a long way toward keeping you healthy and sane. On the professional front, conflict with a superior will lead you to change track. Try not to close all doors, unless you have another opportunity. You need to be patient as this is a temporary situation. Self-improvement projects will be successful and bring you added confidence. You will make progress by making corrections. Try to be adjusting with the current environment; success is within your reach. On the personal front, committed relationship will need to take action for survival.

**Lucky number 5**  
**Lucky colour Indigo**  
**Lucky day Saturday**



**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

Your firm approach towards life can help solve the problems. Restless mind and aggression will bring increased BP problems and hypertension. You have an intelligent and sensitive nature, and you may suffer if there is no channel to vent your ideas and feelings. On the career front, go ahead with creative ideas. This is the right time for making deals, connections and collaborations. Increase in your confidence is indicated. Don't rush, finish what you have started before you decide to call off. On the relationship front, your logical nature may spoil your connection with your partner. Avoid heated arguments. You need to be grounded and firm in your decisions. Your partner may be very demanding. You need to be honest with him/her.

**Lucky number 9**  
**Lucky colour Magenta**  
**Lucky day Sunday**

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**ASTROTURF**  
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

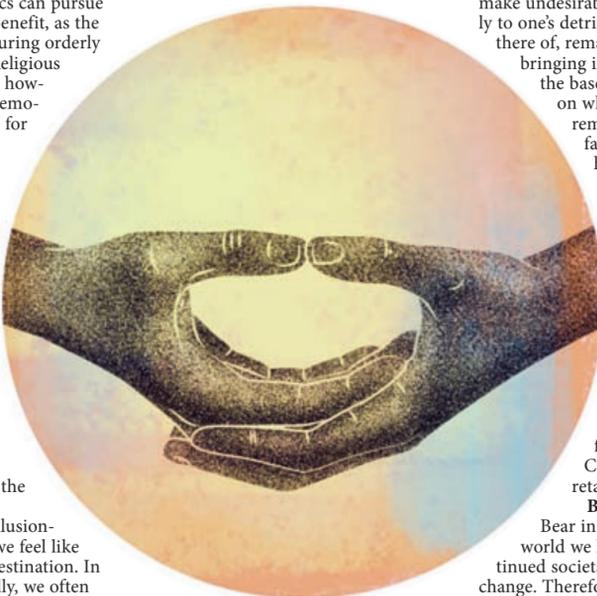
# Preparing for *Dhyana*

**D**hyana does not warrant trying to forcefully stop our thoughts immediately when the process is taken up. Remember, mind is invariably loaded with a bundle full of thoughts, difficult to be stifled to one's asking. The inlaid thoughts will continue to knock us from within. So, one is bound to be confronted with distraction, and all the more during meditation. Following withdrawal of senses from the outer world, the indwelling thought impressions come into active play. So, as you begin, you are bound to be flooded with thoughts, and therefore, needs to be accepted as a necessary part of the process. All that is needed is to train our minds to remain disengaged from those thoughts. It is important to note here that only when you pay attention to something that it could affect you. But following the process in right earnest does eventually drive away all inconsequential thought impressions out of our reckoning, as would be otherwise repeatedly chasing us from within.

**Religious belief not mandatory:** The process does not call for having any religious or spiritual belief either.

Even atheist or agnostics can pursue the process and draw benefit, as the process is all about securing orderly functioning of mind. Religious or spiritual belief does, however, help invoke one's emotions, and thereby calls for a sense of love towards our cherished destination. That helps pursue the process with ease and comfort and greater intensity.

**Avoid guilt consciousness:** It also needs to be remembered that we are all born imperfect, and therefore, we are all fallible. Our impressionable minds often get caught up in the tempting influences of the glare and glitter of the seeming world, often illusionary. Following which, we feel like making it our dream destination. In the process, unmindfully, we often



make undesirable choices, and evidently to one's detriment. The impressions there of, remain in our minds, often bringing in a sense of guilt. For, at the base level remains the ideal on which life stands, which reminds us of our own fault line. It would be, however, desirable not to carry any sense of guilt for some wrong done earlier. Better try to ensure that the mistakes do not recur through repeated auto suggestion. Otherwise, you may fall into a guilt trap, which may otherwise add to your negative imprints, already overloaded from before. Consequently, it may retard your efforts.

**Be ready for change:** Bear in mind, the transitory world we live in, is subject to continued societal churning, leading to change. Therefore, change is inevitable,

and accordingly, we need to be prepared to wilfully adjust to its callings. Also, never forget that hurdles have to come in the way. Without getting unnerved, one would need to continue the efforts. We are very much empowered to intelligently take on the oddities and hazards coming our way, with ease and comfort. We just need to be alert enough to consciously invoke our indwelling empowerment tool — the faculty of discriminate intelligence — well in time and put them to use. This may help intelligently negotiate with challenges coming our way.

**Loving the process:** Before we begin, first, one needs to firm up the mind and resolve to pursue *dhyana* process in right earnest. Second, have faith in one's own self, and induce a sense of love towards what you are pursuing. It will not simply motivate you to carry forward the task in right earnest, but also make you put in your whole. Remember, unless you love doing what you intend to, you may fail to put in qualitative effort, nor would you enjoy it.

**Yama and Niyama:** Now coming back to the eight-fold path, first in line,

comes *Yama*. This calls for consciously restraining all unseemly conduct — negative and immoral in nature. The second step, *Niyama*, calls for submitting oneself to a set of moral discipline, as guided by our Guru and the scriptures. In this context, it is pertinent to note that unless the intent is pure, and the means adopted are right, one would lack the spirit necessary to carry forward the process in right earnest.

**Asana:** Towards the third step, one needs to acquire a posture suited to effortlessly follow the process, is what the word *asana* means. This, however, would be possible, only when one is physically fit and bodily agile. Remember, but for due support from gross-body platform, mind and the element of consciousness, would not manifest. In fact, the gross body is perceived as temple of God, as the soul (the consciousness element) dwells within.

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