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5 States buck waning Covid trend

Cases spike in Kerala, Maha, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, MP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Just when the coronavirus cases begun to dip, five populated States — Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh — have started experiencing an upsurge in daily cases.

Daily Covid-19 cases in the country climbed to about 14,000 after nearly 22 days taking India's tally to 1,09,77,387, while the recoveries surged to 1,06,78,048.

Only two States, Maharashtra and Kerala, account for 75.87 per cent of total number of active Covid-19 cases. At the same time, 78 per cent of the new deaths were reported from just 5 States, the Union Health Ministry said.

Health experts have called for dual efforts to address the emergence of the virus by ramping up vaccinations and implementation of safety protocols to curb transmission.

"In the past week, Maharashtra has exhibited a spike in the number of daily new cases, accounting for highest number of daily new cases in the country today. In last 24 hours, 6,112 daily new case has been reported in the State," the Centre said, adding that infections have increased by 37 per cent in Mumbai as the State capital recorded 823 cases on Friday, the highest single-day spike in infections since December.



A municipal worker takes visual evidence of a commuter not wearing a face mask in order to give her a penalty at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in Mumbai on Saturday AP

Meanwhile, the Ministry said 18 States/UTs have not reported any Covid-19 deaths in the last 24 hours. These are Telangana, Haryana, J&K (UT), Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Assam, Chandigarh, Lakshadweep, Manipur, Meghalaya, Ladakh (UT), Mizoram, Sikkim, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.

The Ministry added that a total of 1,07,15,204 Covid-19 vaccine doses have been administered through 2,22,313

sessions, as per the provisional report till 8 am on Saturday. These include 63,28,479 healthcare workers (first dose), 8,47,161 healthcare workers (second dose) and 35,39,564 frontline workers (first dose).

Dr Rahul Bhargava, Director-Bone Marrow Transplant Programme, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram, said Covid inappropriate behaviour, air travel and high density population in Maharashtra and Kerala are causing upsurge in the cases.

The Government had also lifted air travel from the countries

which had variants.

It's not only Maharashtra and Kerala, but in the last seven days, Chhattisgarh too has seen a rise in daily active new cases. In the last 24 hours, 259 daily new cases have been reported.

"Similarly, Punjab has also shown a sudden spike in the number of daily new cases reported in last 7 days with 383 daily new cases in last 24 hours," said the Ministry in a statement.

Dr Jugal Kishore, Head of Department of Community Medicine from Safdarjung

Hospital, said lockdown is not a solution to the crisis.

"This shows that the State Government has not been able to strengthen its health infrastructure as well as inculcate Covid-norms."

He also emphasised on focussing on the areas where sero-surveillance surveys have been negative. "Those susceptible of the virus should be given priority while implementing the anti-Covid norms as well boost health system."

Speaking at a webinar organised by the International Centre, Goa, Director General of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Dr Shekhar Mande said, "In Kerala and in some parts of Maharashtra the number has been increasing in the past few days and that might be a reflection of the fact that people have become complacent and believe that the worst is behind us. The worst is not over and unless we follow all precautions, we will not be able to get over the pandemic so easily."

Rajeev Jayadevan, scientific adviser and former president of the Indian Medical Association, said the variations in cases were expected, given how viruses behave in a large geographical area.

Jayadevan also said what India is witnessing could be called a "stochastic spread" of novel coronavirus, where no uniformity in daily outcomes could be determined.

India, China agree to disengage at all spots

Reiteration came during 10th round of talks between Corps Commanders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and China on Saturday emphasised their commitment to ensuring peaceful disengagement from the stand-off sites in Ladakh at the earliest. The flashpoints include Hot Springs, Gogra, and Depsang Valley.

This reiteration came during the tenth round of talks between Corps Commanders of the two armies at Moldo border meeting point at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Chushul. The two military officials along with their respective delegations also reviewed the pullback process from the southern and northern banks of the Pangong Tso (lake).

Both armies on Thursday completed the withdrawal of tanks and troops at the Pangong friction point. This is seen as the first step in bringing peace and tranquility at the LAC after the ten-month-long stand-off. The process started in a synchronised manner on February 10.

As per the agreement between the two sides, the



military officials were to meet 48 hours after the complete pull back from Pangong. The meeting on Saturday between Lt General PK Menon and Major General Liu Lin was the first one since the pull back.

Besides taking stock of the situation post the withdrawal at Pangong lake, the two commanders also discussed ways to disengage from Hot Springs, Gogra, and Depsang valley, sources said here.

They said India will insist on a faster disengagement process in the remaining areas like Hot Springs, Gogra, and Depsang to bring down tension in the region.

Officials were hopeful of early agreement to mutually pull back troops from Patrolling Point 15 and 17A in Gogra as normalcy was restored to a large extent in the adjacent Pangong region.

However, a mutually acceptable plan to disengage from the Depsang plains could take longer, sources said. This region in the past also saw stand-offs and intervention at the higher levels were resorted to defuse tension, they added.

Sources said the tension in the Depsang Plains was due to China blocking Indian patrol parties from accessing Patrol Points (PP) 10, 11, 11A, 12 and 13. That was due to the reason that the Indian patrols have to go beyond a feature called bottleneck area on foot.

China's Galwan video shows Indian Army Captain's bravery



In this image taken from video footage run by China's CCTV, Indian and Chinese troops face off in the Galwan Valley on the disputed border between China and India AP

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

China, in a video released on social media as part of psy-war, showcased the bravery of an Indian Army officer during the Galwan Valley clashes in Eastern Ladakh.

The officer of Bihar Regiment, who hails from the Senapati district of Manipur and was commissioned in 2018, was seen leading his men from the front in Galwan Valley during the confrontation against the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). He is a Captain in the Indian Army.

The name of the Captain has been withheld on request

from the Indian Army.

He received a Mention in Despatches during Republic Day this year. He was seen walking unarmed towards the Chinese PLA to stop transgression into Indian territories. India lost 20 soldiers in the clash. China released this video on Friday as part of its psy-war to depict India's aggression during clashes in Galwan Valley. The video went viral on all the platforms of social media.

The video was released after China for the first time accepted it lost four soldiers during the clash. The video came a day ahead of military commanders meeting to de-escalate tensions at the LAC.

Reforms to give kisan tech, resources: Modi

Private sector should become Govt's partner in self-reliant India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday stressed the Centre and States should work together and make cooperative federalism more meaningful which, he said, should "trickle down to districts in order to promote growth."

The PM also made a strong case for giving the private sector "full opportunity to become a part of Government's Aatmanirbhar Bharat programme."

Addressing the sixth meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog, Modi said farm reforms are to give technology to agriculture.

Highlighting need to change in agriculture sector, he

pointed out that the country still imported grain worth ₹65,000 crore that can be put in farmers pocket. Modi said farmers need to be given incentives to invest in agriculture.

The Prime Minister urged to focus on storage and processing of agricultural products to reduce wastage. He stressed on the need to export processed foods rather than raw foods to increase profits.

Modi said reforms are very important for country's farmers to get the necessary economic resources, better infrastructure and modern tech-

nology.

The Prime Minister said that the private sector should be given full opportunity to become a part of Government's Aatmanirbhar Bharat programme.

"Centre and States should work together for the nation's progress... Government has to respect and give due representation to the private sector for economic progress," Modi said.

The Governing Council presents a platform to discuss inter-sectoral, inter-departmental and federal issues. It comprises the Prime Minister, Chief Ministers of States and Union Territories with legislators and Lieutenant Governors of other UTs.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy reiterated that the Central Government was obliged to grant Special Category Status to Andhra Pradesh as per the commitment given in Parliament as a precondition to bifurcation.

1-month relaxation in age for nursery admission in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has directed schools in the national Capital to grant a 30-day relaxation to students in the age criteria for nursery admissions.

"It is reiterated that age relaxation of up to 30 days may be granted at the level of the heads of the school in both the minimum and maximum age limit. Therefore, any parent seeking age relaxation in respect of their ward, may approach the school principal through a manual application for his or her consideration," the Directorate of Education (DOE) said in a letter to schools.

The age criterion has been fixed by the DOE every year since 2018 and relaxations have been granted in previous sessions too.

For admissions in nursery, KG and class 1 there is an upper limit. The child cannot be more than four years of age for admission in nursery as on March 31, for KG it is five years and for class 1 it is six years.

Centre, States need to devise tax mechanism to cut fuel prices: FM

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Amid an outcry over record high petrol and diesel prices, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said the Centre and State Governments will have to together work out a mechanism to bring retail rates to reasonable levels.

As much as 60 per cent of the retail price of petrol, which shot above ₹100-mark in some places in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and is at an all-time high elsewhere in the country, is made up of Central and State taxes.

Taxes make up for about 56 per cent of the record high diesel rates. Sitharaman, who had increased Central Excise duty on petrol and diesel by a record margin last year to mop up gains arising from international oil prices plunging to two-decade low, remained non-committal on cutting taxes to give relief to consumers.

"This is a very vexatious

issue. An issue in which no answer except reducing the price (of fuel) will convince anyone. I know I am treading on an area and whatever I may say, to bring in the reality into picture, will only sound like I am obfuscating. I am avoiding my answer. I am shifting the blame," she said addressing a gathering at an event organised by the Chennai Citizens' Forum here.

She went on to explain the tax structure and how production cuts by oil cartel OPEC and its allies had led to a rally in the international oil prices, leading to a hike in retail rates in India.

She, however, said the answer may lie in bringing petrol and diesel under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, which will end the cascading impact of taxes and bring uniformity.

Currently, the Central Government levies a fixed rate of excise duty while states levy different rates of VAT.

Army dream job destination for Jammu youth!

PNS ■ JAMMU



More than 40,000 youth from 10 districts of Jammu division have so far enrolled themselves to become "proud" soldiers in order to serve the country.

Each day large number of youth hailing from frontier districts of Rajouri, Poonch and landlocked districts of Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban, Reasi, Samba, Udhampur, Kathua and Jammu have been lining up outside Sunjwan Military station in Jammu to participate in the first Army recruitment rally in this region after a prolonged lockdown and Covid-19 restrictions.

Efforts made by the Kashmir-based terrorist outfits to radicalise the youth across Jammu division have failed as thousands of youth from terrorism-infested districts are coming out to join the Indian Army. Before participating in the rally, the youth were provided training by the local Army units in remote areas so

as to build their stamina and prepare them mentally and psychologically to compete with the youth from urban centres. Far greater number of youths from rural pockets are taking part in the drive compared to their counterparts from urban centres.

In the absence of employment opportunities in remote areas, joining Indian Army remains a dream job for the majority of the youth.

The Army recruitment rally for various categories of soldiers is being organised under aegis of Tiger Division at Sunjuwan Military Station from February 15 to March 6.

Major General Vijay B Nair, General Officer Commanding, Tiger Division, on Saturday reviewed the conduct of the recruitment rally.

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Saturday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to provide additional economic resources to Chhattisgarh and sought a special package to develop industry in the forested, tribal-dominated and mineral-rich state.

Speaking at the sixth meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog held under Modi's Chairmanship, Baghel called for cooperation from the Centre for the Bodh Ghat multi-purpose irrigation project, again called for lifting of more rice from the state and spoke against plans to disinvest the Nagarnar Steel Plant.

The Chief Minister pressed for subsidy on vermi compost made from cow dung.

He said a coal block should be allotted to Chhattisgarh's public sector unit as the state has large reserves of mineral coal. He also called for a revision of royalty rates on minerals.

Baghel sought approval to set up a cargo hub in Raipur and to provide port facilities to promote exports and develop industries. He said Chhattisgarh should get inland transportation grant for industrial activities to ease transportation cost as it is



landlocked.

The Chief Minister said Chhattisgarh should be allowed to produce ethanol from surplus paddy. This will save India foreign exchange. He said transportation and milling costs would be saved if ethanol production was allowed from paddy instead of rice.

Pointing out that 92 lakh tonnes

of paddy have been purchased from over 20 lakh farmers at support price, he told the Centre to take the pending 16 lakh tonnes of rice from the state for the Central pool.

The Chief Minister sought assistance from the Prime Minister for the Bodhghat multi-purpose irrigation project on Indravati river proposed by the state government.

The Prime Minister was requested to provide subsidy to vermi compost producing farmers of the state like it is done for chemical fertilizers. Baghel said Chhattisgarh was moving towards organic farming by promoting vermi compost.

He said in-principle approval for works worth Rs 392 crores have been given to build roads and culverts

in phase 3 of RPLWE scheme in Naxalite areas. But the Rural Development Ministry says this will be approved only on completion of 50 percent of the sanctioned works.

Pointing to security considerations, the Chief Minister called for a relaxation of the conditions.

The Chief Minister said the state is yet to get Rs 3,700 crores from the Centre as GST compensation. An additional levy of Rs 4,140 crores on coal is pending from private coal mines operating in the state before 2014. Also, Rs 5,600 crores of rice have not been received under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana for PDS.

He said the existing excise duty should be retained as the imposition of agriculture infrastructure development cess in the Union Budget was likely to cause an additional loss of Rs 900-1,000 crores to Chhattisgarh.

Baghel suggested that in the monitoring indicator of the transformation of Aspirational District Programme, education in local dialect, reduction of malaria and anemia, purchase of forest produce on support price, promotion of folk art, folk dance and archeology, organic farming as well as forest rights lease should be included.

HOME THEATRE

Oh boy! What a climax



BEHIND HER EYES
Netflix
***ing: Simona Brown, Eve Hewson, Tom Bateman, Robert Aramayo, David Ferguson**
Rated: 7/10

There are many out there who love watching series and wait for new ones to be released because they have watched the old ones too many times. They love the whole concept of binge watching in order to find out how it all ends. Most times the series comes in seasons and one has to wait for the next and the next and the next before one finds how it all ends.

But sometimes one hits a jackpot and we come across limited episodes season. The good part is that there aren't many episodes six to eight and therefore easy to go through at one go even if they have 50 minutes per episode run time.

The synopsis of *Behind Her Eyes* is good enough to sink its teeth in you and one is hooked even though it is not fast paced. However, it doesn't mean that the thrill, mystery and intrigue is missing here. In fact, all these are there in abundance and keeps the attention. How can one go wrong with a story where there is a psychiatrist who is married to a person who can do astral projection and had undergone treatment where she befriends a man who has night terrors? Definitely a subject-story worth sitting down and watching. A bit convoluted but the end result — climax

is worth the gasp of surprise and do a double take with 'what the hell'!

The best part is that before the climax twist reveals itself, one keeps wondering what is the point of this parallel story and how are the two linked. But director Eric Richter Strand, this British series which moves smoothly into horror gad some fantastic performances by the leads.

Eve Hewson gives brilliant performance here. Despite the fact that you hate her, she endears herself such is the beauty with which she plays her part. Simona Brown is just as good if not better. Playing a divorced mom of an eight-year-old, she plays Louise with excellence. Tom Bateman who okays the psychiatrist, David Ferguson, does his part rather brilliantly. As a trouble stressed husband, he plays his part convincingly.

The horror here is mostly psychological rather than anything else. It is the events that occur that are extremely distressing. Also, there are a few questions that remain unanswered which is a bit of a downer given that there may not be another season since it does say limited series even though with the twist that comes at the end, one wished there was more to come.

So unless the makers decide to go independent of the book, a 2017 novel by the same name by Sarah Pinborough, the last episode ends where and how it does.

Do not miss this dark psychological thriller.

— Shalini Saksena

Dark gripping fare

I CARE A LOT
Netflix
***ing: Rosamund Pike, Peter Dinklage, Eiza González, Chris Messina, Dianne Wiest**
Rated: 5/10

We saw her in *Gone Girl* — a psychological thriller — where she played Amy the girl/wife who goes missing and the husband is the prime suspect in her disappearance and probable murder. Here, in *I Care A Lot*, Pike manages the audience to root for her even as she ruthlessly goes about destroying lives of countless senior citizens by putting them in care homes while she appoints herself as their guardian and takes control of their money.

I Care A Lot is the kind of movie that makes you cringe and wonder what kind of a system allows one person to rule and control others and second

that money makes the world go round — corruption is universal and a few bucks thrown here and there is enough to get away with almost anything.

Pike who plays Marla, a power hungry, greedy, manipulative sociopath who also happens to be gay essays the role rather well. Not caring about how it affects the lives of others, she guts lives ruthlessly and without a care or even remorseful — her *mantra* that she hates to be not rich — and hence this scam that she is going may sound ridiculous and the plot unrealistic, but Pike, via her acting, keeps the interest, a revisit of *Gone Girl* days.

It is refreshing to see a film that doesn't have your typical good hero who wins in the end. A dark twisted thriller that makes for an interesting watch. But if you hate such subject movies, stay as far away as possible.

— Shalini Saksena



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The curation is an attempt at gathering varied forms of visual imagery, reaching out to independent streams of creative transformations of the same lines and colors, aimed to widen the pictorial reach and take the viewer to another dimension.

The show is being led by the intense work of GR Santosh, poignant with the tantric philosophy which intrigued him and set him on spiritual quest. A spontaneous abstract work of Gurdeep Singh is integrated to merge together like the differently

colored petals of a single flower. The elegant, sophisticated lines of Gujral in his figurative, the dense cross-hatch of Jogen Chowdhury, the mystic 'young couple' of Neeraj Goswami, to the poised woman portrayed by Chandra Bhattacharya, the figurative are supplemented by the folk inspired animal figures of Manoj Dutta and a vibrant landscape of Bhagat Singh.

The refinement of technique and its rustic manifestations, complexity of the pictorial metaphors and simplified readability of the pictorial script are integrated to merge together like differently coloured petals of a single flower.

The group show brings together works created by these master artists as their responses to the life altering occurrences they have dealt with.

Niraamaya Wellness Retreat

After acute COVID-19 illness, recovered patients may continue to report a wide variety of signs and symptoms including fatigue, body ache, cough, sore throat, difficulty in breathing, etc. However, with personalised treatment a patient can be completely treated.

Niraamaya Wellness Retreats provides a holistic comprehensive post covid care program aimed to help these patients who are struggling to regain their physical activity levels, reduce dependence on supplemental oxygen, improve quality of life and most importantly cope better with the emotional and psychological impact of the disease. What is Post Acute Covid Syndrome? Also known as "Long Covid" the "Post Acute Covid Syndrome" refers to a set of symptoms that can persist in Covid-19 survivors long after they have



seemingly recovered from Covid-19 infection. Typically, the symptoms persist beyond three-week from the onset of first symptoms, extending up to beyond 12-weeks.

Post Covid Programme
■ Clinical assessment
■ Full history
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■ Mapping the symptoms and pathophysiology
■ Diagnostic tests
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Programme Duration: 21 Night
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Price: ₹ 3,51,000

TELLY TALE

JIJAJI IS BACK

Sony SAB is all set to bring back one of their most quirky and funny shows but this time with a hint of mystery. Bringing back everyone's beloved characters with its comic madness is *Jijaji Chhat Parr Koi Hai*, which is set to grace your television screens soon.

With a fresh storyline and unique characters, the show will take the viewers to Delhi's Punjabi Bagh into the world of Jindals and Jaldirams. Based on an ageold property dispute between the Jindal and Jaldiram families, the show brings a twist with an element of mystery that dwells in this ancestral property. Another point of conflict are the two families' respective businesses, that of Jaldiram's sweet shop and Jindal's garage which have an outlet next to each other in the front yard of the house.

Taking the viewers through the laughter riot and adding to the show's quirk and madness is stunning Hiba Nawab, to be seen as Jaldiram's daughter CP (short for Connaught Place) and the new Jijaji *aka* Jitendra Jamwant Jindal played by dashing Shubhashish Jha. The traditional favourites too make their comeback with this *Jijaji* franchise with Anup Upadhyay, to be seen as Jaldiram, the proud owner of Jaldiram Sweets, the bubbly yet cheeky Soma Rathod, to be seen as Jaldiram's wife Sofia, contesting for Jaldiram as their lawyer and Sofia's brother, Chakral will be Firoz Khan and immensely charming Raashi Bawa as Sunita, a waitress in Jaldiram sweets.

The star cast will be graced by some new faces such as Jitu Shivhare as Nanhe, Jijaji's father, Sucheta Khanna as Bijlidevi *aka* Jijaji's mother and Vipin as Gulzar, as Jindal's adopted son and Jijaji's best friend, fighting the case for the Jindals will be father-son duo Dhyanchand and Vigyanchand, to be played by Nagin Wadel and Sumit Arora respectively.

DAREDEVIL STUNT

Zee TV's popular fiction show, *Kumkum Bhagya* has been an audience favourite with its intriguing plot and the authentic portrayal of relatable characters like Abhi (Shabbir Ahluwalia), Pragya (Sriti Jha), Rhea (Pooja Banerjee), Ranbir (Krishna Kaul) and Prachi (Mugdha Chapekar).

In fact, Abhi and Pragya's love story has kept the audience hooked for six years now and their recent wedding sequence got everyone excited. However, it looks like all the fans and followers of the show are in for a shock as their beloved Abhi is going to be shot in the upcoming dramatic twist on the show and will be seen falling off a cliff. Fans of the TV superstar will be delighted to know that their favorite Shabir pulled off this daredevil stunt for his own death sequence with elan!

In the upcoming episodes, we will see a group of goons chasing Abhi and Pragya and while they seem to have escaped from them, the baddies will be shown dashing their car and the two newly-weds will lose consciousness. After they regain their senses, they will try to run away, but Abhi will be shot and will be seen falling off a cliff. For the daredevil stunt, Shabir did the stunt all by himself. Yes, he did have safety harnesses while jumping off from a height for the shot, but the way he pulled off the stunt is noteworthy. The seasoned actor was cool as a cucumber and gave the perfect shot in the first take.



Talking about the stunt, Shabir said: "When the makers told me about the sequence where Abhi is shot and falls off a cliff, I was genuinely intrigued as it is always fun to do such action-packed sequences. I had to jump off a height for the shot and the makers ensured that all the safety equipment was in place before I shot for it. After going over the whole stunt choreography, I gave the shot and I can't wait for all our fans to see the stunt on the show."

When quizzed about Abhi's on-screen death and if it's the end of his track on the show, Shabir said: "I have lived the character of Abhi for six years and shooting a sequence where he's shot and presumed dead is overwhelming. What happens to Abhi next is for

our viewers to wait and watch out for. The story has always kept its audience on its toes, so this time around as well, they are in for the most exciting twist."

NOT A BALD ISSUE



Sony Entertainment Television is coming up with an all-new sitcom, *Sargam Ki Sadhe Satii* which is definitely going to tickle the funny bones of its viewers. The show is going to be filled with fun and banter of a family with seven and a half men who are handled by one woman in the house; Sargam, played by Anjali Tatrari.

Each of the men in the Awasthi family holds up a distinctive personality, which levitates even the most ordinary family life into witty situations. Kunal Saluja will be seen playing the role of Aparshakti Awasthi, Sargam's husband who is the hero of the house, a small-time influencer who aspires to become an actor. Having an unsuccessful stint of acting, he ends up doing some bizarre commercials like *champak sabun*/Dargon shampoo and one of the hair-care products makes him go bald.

Kunal Saluja *aka* Aparshakti Awasthi, while talking about his nightmares said: "I love my hair because it's a reflection of me; it adds to my look and also makes me feel confident. It's my crown that I never want to take off. We had to shoot a sequence where I try some hair products and end up losing my hair. Since then, I get nightmares of turning bald, every night."

He further adds: "Both on-screen and off-screen the thing I love the most about me is my hair and in the show, one of the reasons that Sargam marries Aparshakti is because of his hair. I made a video of the change in my look and when I posted a picture looking bald, people gave weird reactions cause they actually thought that I went bald."

Adhvik turns Jogi in love

MUSBA HASHMI catches up with ADHVIK MAHAJAN to know about his excitement of playing Jogi in Zee TV's *Teri Meri Ikk Jindri*, the preparations that he did, the days when he was out of work and his journey from Soham to now Jogi

Forgetting Soham from *Bani* — *Ishq Da Kalma* is a nightmare for the fans of Adhvik Mahajan. Only if one would have saw that TV show, one would understand the craze of the character in the sweet but short serial. But as they say, all good things come to an end and so did that show.

However, that doesn't mean better things were not on their way. A case in point is Zee TV's latest *Teri Meri Ikk Jindri*. The show has given its fans a lot more than just entertainment — Soham but in a different *avatar* — Jogi.

Not only the fans, but Jogi *aka* Adhvik too is extremely excited to play the character and be seen in a challenging but fun *avatar*.

"I got an offer for a film but since I had already given my commitment to this show, I said no to it. I don't know about other actors, but for me satisfaction of work is more important than the medium. And this show, I knew, was what I wanted to do without any second thoughts," Mahajan says with a confident voice.

What attracted Mahajan towards the character on the first place was the challenges that it offered. "I don't share any similarities with Jogi despite the fact that we both are Punjabi. He is a lively person. He knows how to be happy in every situation which is, of course, not possible practically. He knows the way out of everything. To sum it up, he is full of life and everything nice. I knew it will be a task for me to play such a role and that's why I made up my mind that this role is mine," Mahajan tells you with a smile.

Such was his curiosity or excitement to play the role, that Mahajan decided to walk an extra mile and send an audition clip that is hard to be rejected. And for this, instead of recording in front of a white wall, he shot in the fields, to bring in the authenticity of the character. That was, of course, a do or die situation for Mahajan. "I knew no one can play that role but me. And I have to give an audition that speaks for itself and which gets selected at once. Hence, I gave it my all with full energy and enthusiasm. Fortunately, it got selected and the team told me that nobody was able to replicate my version. That did feel great to hear," he explains.

Not that the excitement faded once he started shooting instead it



is growing even more. "I look forward to going to the sets. The atmosphere is so and comfortable that it feels like my second home. I share a good rapport with Amandeep Sidhu (who plays Mahi) and it adds to our performance. When one enjoys the work he does, the output is definitely good. This can be one of the reason why people are showering the show and us with their love," he asserts.

The preparation part, he says, was tough too. He loves to spend time with himself, unlike his character, and during this me time his focus was to improvise his character. He took inspiration from his father, who is a Punjabi of course, to add minute details to Jogi. "I also lost a few inches. That wasn't so hard, but the only challenge was to get into the skin of the character so well that it becomes a part of me," he says.

The journey from Soham to Jogi, he says, is full of learnings. "After Soham, people told me that my life will change for the better and that work will pour in from all directions. However, the reality was far away from this. I had no work for about two years after that show. In these seven years of my career, I have shot for four years in totality and for the rest three years I was out of work. To make ends meet, I stepped into a lot of side businesses as well. Some of them worked, while others did not. But there was never a moment when I felt like quitting. That's not me. My father's faith in me gave me the motivation to fight. I used to wake up every day with a smile, dress up, go to auditions and get rejected. But never gave up. One always learn from their failures and so did I. Having said that, it's a no-brainer that God has been always kind to me," he recalls.

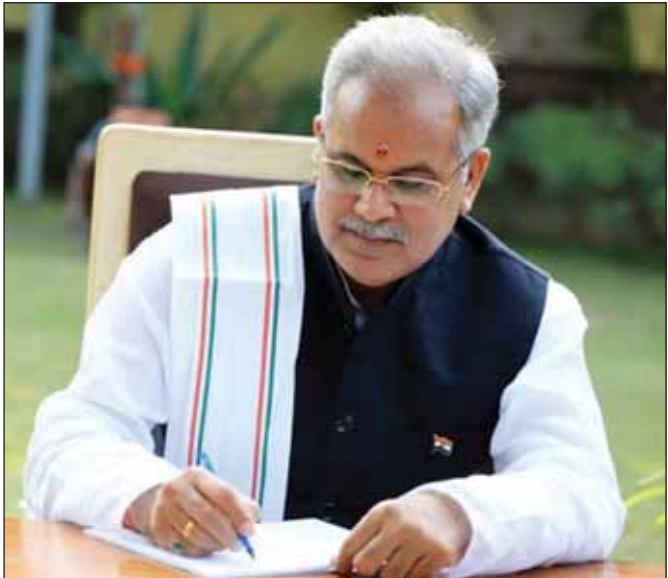
Another learning, that many of us have had in our life, Mahajan says, is that he learnt to unmask fake friendships. "There were people who took a step back from me when I was out of work. But that didn't bother me. I silently saw their actions. Some of them even turned back to me when I had work, but it is fine. I have my best people with me and they have always supported me. The rest of the people are like puppets to me, I just observe what they have in store," the actor who believes in staying grounded says.

CM wants early setting up of cantonment in Bilaspur

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has urged Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to set up the promised Army cantonment at Bilaspur at the earliest, pointing out that about 1,000 acres of land have been allotted to the Defence Ministry for this.

In a communication to the Minister, Baghel also said that the state government was ready to consider other requirements of both the Defence Ministry and the Army. "I look forward to your



cooperation."

Initially, the need for an airstrip was stated for setting up the cantonment. He said the state has developed an airstrip and the Bilasa Bai Kevatin Airport in Bilaspur is now recognized by the DGCA in 3C VFR category.

The Chief Minister said his government was keen on setting up an army hub at Chakrabhata in Bilaspur.

The establishment of the cantonment in the state will provide opportunities for Army service to the youths in Chhattisgarh. It will also help eradicate Maoist extremism, he added.

Centre's approval sought for forest produce based development

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has urged Union Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda to give immediate approval to proposals worth ₹234 crores for minor forest produce based development.

In a letter, Baghel said that 44 percent of the geographical area in Chhattisgarh is covered by forests and 31.80 percent of its population belongs to the tribal community.

In 2020-21, minor forest produce worth ₹115 crores have been so far procured at minimum support price.

Also in 2020-21, Chhattisgarh came on top in the country by collecting 72.5 percent of the total minor forest produce. Similarly,



under Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana, 139 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras have been set up and more than 120 herbal products are made and sold under the brand

'Chhattisgarh Herbs'. Chhattisgarh has sent proposals for minor forest produce based development to benefit the forest dwellers. These include ₹100 crores as

working capital to collect minor forest produce and reimbursement of business losses incurred under Minimum Support Price scheme.

Man arrested for smuggling diamonds



STAFF REPORTER ■
GARIABAND

A 24-year-old man has been arrested on charges of smuggling 86 pieces of rough diamonds valued at ₹11.31 lakhs in Chhattisgarh's Gariaband district.

Speaking to The Pioneer over telephone on Saturday, Gariaband Additional

Superintendent of Police Sukhandan Rathore identified the man as Navambar Nagesh of Kandekela village.

Acting on a tip, he was caught near a hotel at Jhariabaha village in the Mainpur police station area on Friday night. He was looking for customers for the rough diamonds.

The police recovered 86 rough diamonds of different sizes from an envelope. A motorcycle and a mobile phone were also seized from him, Rathore said.

The accused had illegally brought the diamonds, the officer said.

So far, police have seized 660 pieces of rough diamonds worth ₹85.91 lakhs in six cases in the district in the last one year.

'MMR audit must for every district'



RAIPUR: The audit of maternal mortality rate (MMR) is a must for every district in Chhattisgarh, National Health Mission Director Dr Priyanka Shukla said here on Saturday.

Chairing a review meeting on MMR, Shukla, also the Director of Health and Family Welfare Department, told officials to initiate steps for increasing institutional delivery.

She asked officers to sort out shortcomings found in the audit and asked district Chief Medical and Health Officers to submit suggestions to improve maternal health.

Shukla asked CMHOs to ensure good care of pregnant ladies with anaemia.

She said that primary health centres should have records of pregnant women and that they should be encouraged to go for institutional delivery.

Health Minister dedicates CT scan, MRI machine



STAFF REPORTER ■ BILASPUR

Health Minister T.S. Singh Deo on Saturday formally dedicated a CT scan and an MRI machine at the Chhattisgarh Institute of Medical Sciences (CIMS) in Bilaspur.

The machines were installed with funding provided by the South Eastern Coalfields Ltd, a press release said.

The CT scan started

functioning a few days back and about 300 persons have already benefited from it. Likewise, 118 patients have undergone MRI test.

Thanking SECL, Singh Deo said the people of Bilaspur will now have improved access to health services.

Present on the occasion were Bilaspur MLA Shailesh Pandey and SECL General Manager A.P. Panda.

Chhattisgarhi Khel Mahotsav opens

STAFF REPORTER ■
PATAN

A two-day 'Chhattisgarhi Khel Mahotsav', which seeks to promote the traditional sports in the state, opened on Saturday at Patan, the hometown of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

The Chhattisgarh Olympic Association (COA) and the Sports and Youth Welfare Department have jointly organized the event.

The events are being held at a ground behind the Public Works Department Rest House.

The Officer on Special Duty to the Chief Minister, Ashish Verma, lighted the lamp to mark the inauguration in the presence of Sports and Youth Welfare Department Director Shweta Sinha as well as office bearers of COA.

COA Secretary General Gurucharan Singh Hora said the Chief Minister will give away the prizes to the winners at the concluding ceremony on February 21.



mony on February 21.

He said eight competitions are being held. Around 500 players from Durg, Rajnandgaon, Dhamtari, Kanker, Gariaband, Mahasamund, Balodabazar,

Janjigir-Champa, Bilaspur, Bemetara, Balod, Surajpur, Raigarh and Raipur are participating.

On the inaugural day, in 'Gilli Danda' Raipur beat Bilaspur and Patan beat Durg

by 24 points, in 'Sur Pittul' Durg defeated Balod by 37 points while Raigarh beat Janjigir-Champa by 21 points. In 'Tuve Langarchi', Patan beat Durg by 8 points and 'Sankhali' Durg girls beat Patan.

CISF men fire at SECL Gevra mine, 1 injured

STAFF REPORTER ■ KORBA

A man was injured when Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel fired at him after coming under attack while trying to prevent theft at Korba's Gevra mines in Chhattisgarh, police said on Saturday. The incident occurred on Friday night but was reported on Saturday.

Additional Superintendent of Police (Korba) Kirtan Rathore said a CISF team saw two vehicles without registration plates venturing into the open cast mine.

The CISF personnel asked the truck driver to stop but he began to drive away, triggering a chase by the security forces. Suddenly, another truck came from behind and hit the CISF vehicle, the police said.

CISF Sub-Inspector Uday Kumar first fired in the air. But when the unidentified men attacked the CISF team with rods, Kumar and CISF Constable Ankit Raj fired at them, injuring one man later identified as Salik Ram Gond

(32). The others escaped.

Gond was admitted to Apollo Hospital in Bilaspur and his condition was said to be stable. When police questioned Gond, he accepted his involvement in the case.

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE FOR MISCELLANEOUS WORK
Sri. No. (1) E-Tender No. DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-167-20-21 Date: 16.02.2021
Work : Supply, delivery and stacking of 55,000 Cum. machine crushed track ballast as per Rly's specification at Bijuri Depot from outside Railway land and loading into Railway wagons under the jurisdiction of ADEN/Manendragarh of Bilaspur Division.
Tender Value (In Rs.): 7,55,70,000/- EMD (In Rs.): 00/-, Completion Period: 18 Months.
Start date of Submission of Tender: From 11.00 hrs. on 01.03.2021. Last date of Submission of Tender: Upto 11.00 hrs. on 15.03.2021.
The complete information of above e-Tender Notices is available over website <https://www.ireps.gov.in>. Bids other than e-bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders.
Divl. Railway Manager (Engg.) CPR/10/450 S.E.C. Railway/Bilaspur
S. South East Central Railway @seclrai

DIRECTORATE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING BLOCK NO.4, 1st FLOOR, INDRAVATI BHAVAN NAVA RAIPUR, ATAL NAGAR- CHHATTISGARH

Website www.cgiti.cgstate.gov.in

Phone No. 0771-2331399, E-mail : dettrgce@rediffmail.com & cgitisp@gmail.com

Tender No. - DET/STORE/STATEPURCHASE/TENDER/2020-21/ 751 Dated- 18/2/2021

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited for procurement of items of the (1) Multifunction photocopier machine for 27 ITI Exam Center and (2) Hostel Items (Printer, Scanner, Water Cooler & Water Purifier) for 20 ITI Hostel of Chhattisgarh. The tender form (complete set of bidding documents along with the details of Items with quantity for purchase) will be available on the website of "www.cgiti.cgstate.gov.in" from 17.02.2021. Eligible bidders (1. Manufacturer 2. Manufacturer's Authorized dealer or 3. Authorized Supplier), Whosoever interested, may download complete set of bidding documents (including terms & conditions) from website. Demand Draft of Rs. 5000/- in favor of Additional Director, Employment & Training, Atal Nagar (C.G.), payable at SBI Raipur, has to be submitted along with the bid at the time of bid submission. The sealed tender should reach on or before 18.03.2021 up to 03:00 PM and will be opened on the same day at 04:00 PM. Tender received after the prescribed date & time will not be accepted. The undersigned has all the rights pertaining to the tender.

Details of Group's			
GROUP	GROUP NAME	TENDER AMOUNT (INR)	EMD (INR)
GROUP - 1	Photocopier, Printer & Scanner	66,74,439.90	6,67,444.00
GROUP - 2	Hostel Items (Water cooler & Water Purifier	18,88,000.00	1,88,800.00

Director
Employment and Training,
G- 87219/3 Ryp/Dtd 19.2.21 Nava Raipur, Atal Nagar- Chhattisgarh

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER P.W.D. (B&R) AMBIKAPUR CIRCLE AMBIKAPUR

Invitation Date :- 09.02.2021

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

01. For tender detail please visit <http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>

02. Bid Due Date - 01.03.2021

03. Concern Division - Manendragarh Korea

S. No.	N.I.T. No./Online System Number	Name of work	P.A.C. in lacks
1	139 71523 1st Call D Class and Above	Construction of Approach Road for Salhi to Karmghongheswar Road (Length 600M) Distt. Korea (C.G.) Under MMSSY	49.00
2	140 71525 1st Call D Class and Above	Construction of Approach Road Kotadol Bazar to OHC Building (Length 650M) Block Bharatpur Distt. Korea (C.G.) Under MMSSY	49.00
3	141 71526 1st Call D Class and Above	Construction of Approach Road for NH43 to Siddhababa (Length 540M) Distt. Korea (C.G.) Under MMSSY	49.00

Superintending Engineer
G- 87231/3 Ryp/Dtd 19.2.21 P.W.D. Ambikapur Circle Ambikapur

Man who escaped from Andaman Police arrested



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Police on Saturday arrested a 48-year-old man who escaped from the custody of Andaman & Nicobar Police four days ago after locking up two policemen inside their room.

Raipur Senior Superintendent of Police Ajay Kumar Yadav told The

Pioneer that Ram Kumar Sahu (48), who escaped from a guest house here on Tuesday, was nabbed from the Chhattisgarh capital.

A police team from Andaman & Nicobar led by Sub-Inspector Mohammad Rafique and Head Constable Arvind Kumar Kerketta on Monday arrested him from Baloda Bazar town in the district. A transit remand was taken for him.

Before leaving for Andaman & Nicobar, the police subjected Sahu to a Covid-19 test at a private hospital in Raipur. The policemen stayed at one of the guest houses in Lalpur area of Raipur.

On Tuesday, the accused fled from the guest house after locking up the two policemen in their room.

Office of the Superintending Engineer, P.W.D.; National Highway Circle, Bilaspur (C.G.)			
Notice Inviting Tender No. 10/G/2020-21 Bilaspur, Dated 18.02.2021			
Tender Notice			
Online Tenders are invited for the following's Works upto 26.02.2021.			
Sno.	Name of Work	P.A.C (Rs. In Lacs)	Name of Division
1	2	3	4
01-	W.M.M. Patch Repair, B.T. Patch Repair, Concrete Patch Repair and Hire of JCB for Removing of Land Sliding Material and Fixing of K.M. Stone & 5th Km Point stone On Km (32 to 50 = 18 Km & 74 to 97.600 = 23.600 Km) Total = 41.600 Km On N.H.45 Extended.	Rs. 108.54	Excutive Engineer P.W.D.; N.H. Division, Bilaspur (C.G.)
The tender documents can be purchased online through PWD Website http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in before 26.02.2021. The other details can be viewed online on the above mentioned Website.			
Superintending Engineer P.W.D.; N.H. Circle Bilaspur (C.G.)			
G- 87234/3 Ryp/Dtd 19.2.21			

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, कोरबा (छत्तीसगढ़)
शाखा-संपदा साकेत भवन, आई.टी.आई.चौक, कोरबा (छ.ग.)
दूरभाष : 07759-221288, फैक्स : 07759-221929, पो.बाक्स नं. 12 पिन कोड - 495677
Website : www.korbamunicipal.in, Email : corporationkorba@gmail.com
फा.क./15/संपदा/भूखण्ड/2021/14530 कोरबा, दिनांक 19/2/21

आम सूचना

सर्व साधारण को इस विज्ञापित के माध्यम से सूचित किया जाता है कि श्री पवन कुमार अग्रवाल आ. श्री गोकुल चंद अग्रवाल को परिवहन नगर कोरबा में भूखण्ड क्रमांक 179, साईज 40' × 50' × 2000 वर्गफुट को प्रथम 30 वर्षीय लीज अवधि दिनांक 12.05.2015 को समाप्त हो जाने के फलस्वरूप आगामी 30 लीज (अवधि 13.05.2015 से 12.05.2045 तक) के पंजीयन आवंटन शर्तों के तहत नवीनीकरण किया गया है। उक्त भूखण्ड के नवीनीकरण लीज डीड पंजीयन (रजिस्ट्री) दिनांक 15.09.2016 को उप पंजीयक कार्यालय कोरबा में निमापन किया जा चुका है। आवंटित श्री पवन कुमार अग्रवाल आ. श्री गोकुल चंद अग्रवाल को मूल दिनांक 04.04.2019 को हो जाने के फलस्वरूप आवंटितों के नाम पर आवंटित उक्त भूखण्ड को उनके विधिक वारिसान क्रमशः- 1/श्रीमती प्रेमलता अग्रवाल पति स्व. पवन कुमार अग्रवाल (पति) एवं 2/श्री आकाश कुमार अग्रवाल आ. स्व. पवन कुमार अग्रवाल (पुत्र) के संयुक्त नाम पर उक्त भूखण्ड क्र. 179, साईज 40' × 50' = 2000 वर्गफुट, परिवहन नगर कोरबा को नामांतरण (फौती दर्ज) करने हेतु आवंटन पत्र, रापथ पत्र, मूल्य प्रमाण पत्र को छाया प्रति एवं अन्य प्रपत्र प्रस्तुत किया गया है।

अतः एतद द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि परिवहन नगर कोरबा में स्थित भूखण्ड क्र. -179, साईज 40' × 50' = 2000 वर्गफुट के आवंटित श्री पवन कुमार अग्रवाल आ. श्री गोकुल चंद अग्रवाल को मूल्य हो जाने के फलस्वरूप 1/श्रीमती प्रेमलता अग्रवाल पति स्व. पवन कुमार अग्रवाल (पति) एवं 2/श्री आकाश कुमार अग्रवाल आ. स्व. पवन कुमार अग्रवाल (पुत्र) द्वारा उक्त भूखण्ड को उनके विधिक वारिसान के संयुक्त नाम पर नामांतरण (फौतीदर्ज) कराये जाने के संबंध में किसी व्यक्ति/संस्था/निकाय को कोई आपत्ति हो तो अपनी आपत्ति मय प्रमाण सहित इस विज्ञापन प्रकाशन को तिथि से 30 दिवस के भीतर अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के कार्यालय में उपस्थित होकर अथवा अपने प्रतिनिधि के माध्यम से दे सकते हैं। अवधि समाप्त होने के पश्चात होने वाली आपत्ति पर कोई विचार नहीं किया जावेगा। उक्त भूखण्ड को उनके विधिक वारिसान क्रमशः 1/श्रीमती प्रेमलता अग्रवाल पति स्व. पवन कुमार अग्रवाल (पति) एवं 2/श्री आकाश कुमार अग्रवाल आ. स्व. पवन कुमार अग्रवाल (पुत्र) के संयुक्त नाम पर नामांतरण (फौतीदर्ज) करने को कार्यवाही की जावेगी।

आयुक्त
नगर पालिक निगम
कोरबा (छत्तीसगढ़)

Kerala adds 4,650 fresh Covid cases

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala on Saturday registered 4,650 new Covid-19 cases and 13 related deaths taking the total number of those affected in the state by the deadly virus to 10.30 lakh.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the state has tested 65,968 samples in the last 24 hours and the test positivity rate was 7.06 per cent. Till now, 1.09 crore samples have been tested by the state.

“Out of the total cases reported today, 76 reached the state from outside while 4,253 contracted the disease through their contacts.

The sources of infection of 295 are yet to be traced. Twenty six health workers are also among the infected,” Vijayan said in a press meet.

Meanwhile, 5,841 people recuperated from the disease on Saturday taking the total

recoveries in the state to 9,67,630. Currently, there are 58,606 people are under treatment in the state.

There are 2,47,780 people under observation in the state out of which 8,989 are in isolation wards of various hospitals.



Karnataka Min asks people to be on guard, cautions about possible second wave

Bengaluru: Urging people to take necessary precautions, while cautioning about the possible second wave of Covid-19, Karnataka Health Minister K Sudhakar on Saturday said according to experts till March end it is crucial.

Also ruling out any COVID curbs like lockdown or curfew measures in Karnataka for now,

he said the state has not come to that situation and all necessary precautions were being taken so that the state does not reach such a stage. The Minister also said the health department is seeking cooperation from Home and Revenue departments besides district administrations to control COVID spread in districts bordering Kerala and Maharashtra, states that have seen a spike in cases in recent days.

Karnataka has issued new guidelines mandating all those coming from Kerala and Maharashtra to the state to carry a negative RT-PCR test report not older than 72 hours.

“There are laws on one side, but civic sense is also required in protecting our own health, so people of the state have to understand and make necessary changes in their conduct by following necessary precautions... Till March end is an important stage according to the technical

advisory committee report,” Sudhakar said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said necessary precautions have to be taken at least till March end by compulsorily following things like wearing masks, maintaining distance, and all those who have the opportunity should get vaccinated. “The Union Health Ministry has said vaccinations are likely to be given to common citizens from March.... Now frontline warriors and health workers should take vaccines,” he said.

Further stating that there is no spike in the number of cases in Karnataka and the mortality rate is 1.3 per cent, the Minister said, “we will have to stop the possible second wave in the same way.”

“There is a sense about the second wave coming in Maharashtra and Kerala. It should not come in our state, we have to control it,” he said. **PTI**

Gujarat civic polls: Voting in 6 major cities today

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Voting in the civic polls in six major cities of Gujarat will be held between 7am and 5pm on Sunday amid tight security and adherence to COVID-19 norms, officials said.

The municipal corporation elections in Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot, Bhavnagar and Jamnagar are being seen as a test for Chief Minister Vijay Rupani as it may set the tone for the Assembly polls slated for next year. Votes will be cast for a total of 575 seats with each ward having four corporators, and 2,276 candidates, comprising 577 from the BJP, 566 from the Congress, 470 from AAP, 91 from NCP, 353 from other parties and 228 Independents, are in the fray, officials informed.

“The total number of voters in the six cities stands at

1.14 crore, comprising 60.60 lakh men and 54.06 lakh women. Of the 11,121 polling booths, 2,255 are sensitive and 1,188 have been designated as very sensitive,” a poll official said.

Votes will be counted on February 23, following which, on February 28, polls to 31 districts and 231 taluka panchayats, as well as 81 municipalities will be held, he added.

During the campaign, the BJP played the “development” card, while the Congress, which has been out of power in these local bodies for a long time now, cited “lack of amenities” and the recent fuel price hike to turn the tide.

The Aam Aadmi Party has claimed it would be an effective alternative to the BJP and Congress, while Asaduddin Owaisi’s AIMIM will make its local bodies poll debut having fielded 21 candidates in six wards in Ahmedabad.

UNNAO CASE Surviving minor girl’s condition improves, taken off ventilator

Kanpur: The minor girl, who was found along with her two cousins in an agriculture field in a village in Unnao district, was taken off ventilator support on Saturday after showing improvement, a senior police official said.

The girl has shown improvement and doctors decided to take her off the ventilator, Kanpur Deputy IG Preetinder Singh said.

The girl is still not in a condition to speak to the police and narrate the incident, the DIG said.

The doctors are constantly monitoring the girl’s condition and taking care of her, he said.

Heavy deployment of police force has been made at the hospital to ensure the safety and security of the girl.

On primary assessment, the girl was found in shock. As a suspected case of poisoning, she was shifted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at the paediatric ward, the medical bulletin issued by the private hospital, where she is undergoing treatment, said.

The victim was admitted to the hospital in intubated condition and was on bag and tube ventilation. Later, she was shifted to the ICU and treatment was given to her, the medical bulletin further stated.

On Saturday, the third day of treatment, the girl was put off the ventilator and has been going through spontaneous respiration, it added. **PTI**

Siddaramaiah for accountability on Ram Mandir donations

Bengaluru: Senior Congress leader Siddaramaiah on Saturday said he is having a Ram temple constructed in his village, as he urged those involved in collection of donations for the Ram Mandir at Ayodhya to be accountable to the people of the country, as it is public money.

Accusing the BJP of playing with the emotions of people in the name of god, the former Chief Minister said he too has faith in god, but for him beliefs are personal issues and should not be used as a political tool.

“... There is nothing that only those who have given the

money should ask for accounts. What I have said is, in the past too money and bricks were collected for Ram Mandir during Ayodhya agitation... did they account for it?” Siddaramaiah said.

Speaking to reporters in Mysuru, he said, it is said that Rs 1,500 crore has been collected so far, an account should be given, all 135 crore people might not have given, but it is public money.

“I’m not mentioning about any corruption, but an account has to be given... They are accountable... If they don’t give an account, doesn’t it give rise to suspicion about misuse?” he

Speaking to reporters in Mysuru, he said, it is said that ₹1,500 crore has been collected so far, an account should be given, all 135 crore people might not have given, but it is public money

asked, adding that those collecting donations are accountable to the people of the country.

He was responding to a BJP leaders’ statements questioning who Siddaramaiah was to seek an account, when he has

not given any donations. Siddaramaiah had earlier in the week said that he will not give a donation to build Ram Mandir in Ayodhya since it will be built in a disputed place.

The Leader of Opposition in the state assembly accused the BJP of trying to gain sympathy as part of its propaganda in the name of God.

People are giving money for Sri Rama and his temple, not for BJP, he said adding that “there are Ram Mandirs everywhere, also in villages, not only in Ayodhya.. I also have a Ram temple constructed in my village.. The public have contributed to it.”

India’s first Digital Varsity comes up in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala took a major step forward in its progress towards a knowledge society with the inauguration of the country’s first Digital University, based in Technocity at Mangalapuram near here on Saturday.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan presided over the function, where Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, who is also the Chancellor of the Kerala University of Digital Sciences, Innovation and Technology (KUDSIT), unveiled the varsity plaque.

Both the Governor and the Chief Minister addressed the

function through video conferencing.

In his inaugural address, Khan said the launch of the Digital University is part of the state’s resolve to embrace new technologies and desire to use them for bringing positive changes in the life of people and become a global hub for higher learning and technology.

Praising the state government for recent initiatives in higher education including the launch of Sree Narayana Guru Open University, the Governor said “In any aspect of life, knowledge brings courage,

understanding, acceptance, unity and also liberates us from the clutches of ignorance.”

“The society expects the Digital University to provide intellectual support to lap up the new world of opportunities arising through artificial intelligence (AI), Blockchain, Data Analytics and other digital transformation courses,” he said.

In his address, the CM said the launch of the first Digital University in the country would open tremendous opportunities for youngsters. **PTI**

U'khand: Man sentenced to 10 years in jail for raping girl

Gopeshwar (U'khand): A Chamoli court has sentenced a man to 10 years in jail for raping a minor girl.

Chamoli’s District and Sessions Judge R P Chauhan on Friday sentenced Girish Lal to 10 years rigorous imprisonment besides imposing upon him a fine of Rs 10,000 for abducting and raping a minor girl in 2018, special public prosecutor Mohan Pant said. An FIR had been lodged against Lal in the case in 2018 and a trial against him was conducted in a Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court, he said. **PTI**

Man chosen for Padma Shri for arranging last rites of unclaimed bodies lies bed-ridden, awaiting treatment

Ayodhya: An 83-year-old Faizabad resident, who is said to have arranged last rites over 25,000 unclaimed bodies in last 25 years and was chosen for a Padma Shri last year, is suffering from serious ailments but is unable to afford treatment due to poverty.

Mohammad Shareef, also known as a “messiah of lawarais lashaen”, was found bed-ridden when this PTI correspondent visited his home in Mohalla Khirki Ali Beg on Thursday.

With Shareef Chacha, as he is fondly called in his neighbourhood, lying virtually unconscious on his bed, his family members said they were

still hoping for some pension to him against his award so that they could afford his treatment.

Mohammad Shareef’s son Shageer said they had got a letter from the Union Home Ministry last year informing his father that he was chosen for the Padma Shri award.

The letter dated January 31, 2020 from Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla further said the date for conferring the award upon him would be shortly communicated, said Shageer.

He said his father was chosen for being conferred the award on the recommendation of BJP MP Lallu Singh from

Faizabad.

On being asked about the status of the award, Singh too expressed surprise and asked, “Has he still not received the award?”

“Ok, I will look into it,” he promised.

Shageer said he worked as a private driver and earned Rs 7,000 a month, while his father’s treatment alone costs over Rs 4,000 a month. “We are having very difficult times. We are unable to meet even household expenses. Due to the lack of money, we are not able to afford even proper treatment for my father,” he said. **PTI**

Muzaffarpur police on toes after 5 deaths due to spurious liquor

Patna: Bihar police have pulled up their socks in the aftermath of the death of five people due to the consumption of spurious liquor in Muzaffarpur.

The five deaths were reported in Dargah village under the Katra police station on Thursday. Amit Kumar, ADG, (law and order), said the victims are suspected to have consumed some poisonous country-made liquor which resulted in their deaths. However, the actual reason will be clear only after the autopsy and viscera reports are out. **IAN S**



Sculptures made of snow during the snow festival, at Khangsar village in Lahaul-Spiti on Saturday **PTI**

Kamal Haasan meets Rajinikanth ahead of polls

Chennai: Tamil superstar and Makkal Needhi Maiam supremo Kamal Haasan held talks with Rajinikanth on Saturday for over 30 minutes, amid speculation over extension of political support ahead of the Tamil Nadu assembly elections due in April this year.

Haasan’s three-year-old MNM party will organise an inaugural function on Sunday. Haasan has announced a full-fledged election campaign and earlier said that he would seek the Thalaiva’s support.

In a U-turn, superstar Rajinikanth had on December 29, 2020 announced he will not take the political plunge and launch a party as declared earlier. However, Rajinikanth’s associate and Gandhiya Makkal Iyakkam founder Tamilaruvi

Manian said that the actor didn’t say he would never enter politics, he said he would not jump into poll fray now and that he has also not disbanded the Rajini Makkal Mandram (RMM).

“If tomorrow Rajinikanth says he is entering politics, Gandhiya Makkal Iyakkam will associate itself with him on his journey. If Rajinikanth does not enter politics also, it will continue to function as a sister organization,” Manian had said.

Meanwhile, the actor-turned-politician, Haasan, recently announced that the MNM will begin accepting online applications from party members as it selects candidates for the elections.

In an official announce-

ment made on Monday, the party officials said that applications will open from Sunday, February 21, and potential candidates must pay Rs 25,000 to be considered. They also added that non-party members could also apply or be nominated.

The party’s permanent president Kamal Haasan is set to decide on electoral strategies for the forthcoming elections which include electoral alliance and selection of candidates.

Last month, Kamal Haasan said his party had been allotted the ‘battery torch’ symbol, the same symbol the party had used when it contested the 2019 Lok Sabha election, the actor’s electoral debut and picked up a vote share of 3.77 percent. **Agencies**

SKM holds Farmers’ meet at Wardha, cancels one at Yavatmal

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) had a shaky start in Maharashtra on Saturday, as it held its first Kisan Maha Panchayat at Wardha and Yavatmal,” Mangat said.

A team of farmer leaders, who reached Wardha by road from the national capital by road, addressed the farmers at the Kisan Maha Panchayat. The Panchayat passed peacefully.

Among those who addressed the Kisan Panchayat at Wardha were Tejveer Singh, Spokesperson of Bharatiya Kisan Union (Cheduni) and Amandeep Singh Ghuman and General Secretary of Pagdi Sambhal Jatta Lehr in Punjab.

After the event at Wardha, the SKM leaders left Wardha for Yavatmal where prohibitory orders have been in force since Friday. As a consequence, the police denied permission to the SKM at the last minute to

Nagpur by flight from Delhi on Friday night owing to certain issues. “However, we decided to go ahead with Maha Panchayats at Wardha and Yavatmal,” Mangat said.

hold its Kisan Maha Panchayat there.

At the Yavatmal border, the SKM leaders were welcomed by Vasantrao Naik Sheti Swavalamban Mission (VNSSM) President Kishore Tiwari, who has been accorded a Minister of State status by the Maharashtra government.

“I received them on behalf of our Chief Minister Uddhav Thackerayji. I conveyed the CM’s message that the Maha Panchayat cannot be allowed in view of the deteriorated Covid-19 situation in the state. However, Maharashtra would look forward to a fresh Maha Panchayat after the situation improves here,” Tiwari said.

Tiwari thanked Mangat, other SKM leaders and 7 other representatives from Nagpur, for honouring the CM’s request and postponing the Kisan Maha Panchayat for a later date.



A jockey guides his buffaloes on the slush track during Kambala competition, at Moodabidri in Dakshina Kannada district, on Saturday **PTI**

Mumbai cops books Vivek for not wearing mask, helmet while riding bike

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Hours after the Santa Cruz Police sent him an e-challan for riding a motorbike on Valentine’s Day without a helmet, Bollywood actor Vivek Oberoi suffered a double whammy on Saturday, as the neighbouring Juhu police registered an FIR against the actor, who featured in the protagonist’s role in the 2019 biopic “PM Narendra Modi” for flouting public health safety rules framed under the Maharashtra COVID -19 Precautionary Measures Act 2020, for not wearing the mask.

However, the actor sought to put up a brave face by seeking to turn his acute embarrassment into humour through a tweet where he regretted his faux pas and sang “Be safe, wear a helmet & a mask” tune. Vivek’s is a classic husband-wife romantic story turning sour. A video-post proudly shared by him on February 14 in which he is enjoying a ride with his wife Priyanka Alva Oberoi on his electric-blue Harley Davidson bike with a message: “What a start of this lovely Valentine’s Day, with Main, Meri Patni aur Woh! A refreshing joyride indeed!” landed him in trouble.

The actor would have gotten away with the crime but for the fact that social activist Binu Varghese took notice of the video and tweeted: “Actor Vivek Oberoi flouts traffic safety rules as well as health safety rules by riding a bike without helmet and not wearing a (face) mask. This sends a wrong message to the youth... hence he should be fished for the same”.

Varghese tagged along Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, Mumbai Police, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation and others which led to the e-challan being issued to him under the

Motor Vehicle Act by Assistant Police Inspector Nandkishor Jadhav of Mumbai Traffic Police Santacruz Division late on Friday evening. The actor was fined Rs 500 for not wearing a helmet while riding his Harley Davidson. That was not all. The Juhu police on Saturday registered an FIR against the actor, who featured in the protagonist’s role in the 2019 biopic “PM Narendra Modi” for flouting public health safety rules framed under the Maharashtra COVID -19 Precautionary Measures 2020 Act, which make it mandatory for the citizens to wear masks, as a precautionary measure to control the outbreak of COVID-19.

Vivek has been booked by the police under several sections of section 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of IPC. The section 3 of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, provides penalties for disobeying any regulation or order made under the Act which can be invoked through section 188 of IPC. The Juhu police have also invoked against Vivek the provisions of the Maharashtra COVID -19 Precautionary Measures 2020 Act, which make it mandatory for the citizens to wear masks, as a precautionary measure to control the outbreak of COVID-19. Hours after he landed in an embarrassing situation, the actor sought to reduce the impact of the twin crimes by putting out a humorous tweet which read: “Pyar humein kis mod pe le aaya! Nikle they nayi bike par hum aur hamari jaan, bina helmet ke kat gaya chalaan! Riding without a helmet? Mumbai police will do a checkmate! Thank u @mumbaipolice for making me realise that safety is always most important. Be safe, Wear a helmet & a mask.”

K’taka has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country: CM to PM

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka has been able to maintain “one of the lowest” unemployment rates in the country at 3.6 per cent, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa told Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday.

The Chief Minister also requested the Prime Minister to declare Upper Bhadra Project and Upper Krishna Project as national projects.

Speaking during the virtual meeting of the NITI Aayog chaired by Modi, he said despite the coronavirus pandemic all the fiscal indicators of the state have been contained within the limits of the Karnataka Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2002. “The Prime Minister was briefed about the initiatives taken by the State for Industrial development such as New Industrial Policy 2020-2024, Affidavit based clearance system, steps taken to promote exports, MoUs made with e-commerce players like Amazon and Flipkart to

boost marketing of local products etc,” the CMO said in a statement.

The Chief Minister also listed various farmer and farm sector related initiatives like setting up of a task force to promote integrated farming system, making Farmers Contact Centres as a single point of contact for region specific input supplies and advisories and also regarding conserving local breeds of cattle.

According to the statement, the government intends to set up a scientific marketing intelligence cell in order to shift focus on income based policy to increase farmers income.

It is also intended to create an online marketing platform for surplus fruits and vegetables supported by infrastructure facilities under the Atmanirbhar scheme.

The state government plans to follow NITI Aayog’s 49 aspirational indicators to monitor the progress of 114 backward taluks, Yediyurappa said.

₹350 cr bank cheating case

Chargesheet filed against Punjab-based company

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has filed a prosecution complaint (chargesheet) against Punjab-based Kudos Chemie Ltd. and its directors for forging documents to seek loan from a consortium of banks and diverting the funds to the tune of about ₹350 crore.

The agency said it has filed the Prosecution Complaint against Kudos Chemie Ltd., Kudos Holdings Pvt Ltd. and its directors, Jitendra Singh and Gurmeet Sodhi before the Special Court (PMLA), Chandigarh under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

The ED initiated the investigation on the basis of a CBI FIR dated April 7, 2017 under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) Sections relating to cheating, forgery and criminal conspiracy for bank fraud with the consortium of banks led by Punjab National Bank.

“The ED investigation revealed that

Jitendra Singh and Gurmeet Sodhi, directors of Kudos Chemie Ltd, prepared forged export bills and got them discounted with the banks fraudulently. They also diverted loan funds to the related concern Kudos Holdings Pvt. Ltd. being a shell company and through round-tripping showed the diverted funds as their own capital and took more loans from the banks. Directors of the company aloused company loan funds for buying properties in individual names. In



thiscase, the immovable properties amounting to ₹343 crore stand attached by ED,”it said.

Further investigation, in this case, is in progress, it added.

Meanwhile, in a separate case, the ED has filed a Supplementary Prosecution Complaint before the Special Court of Bharat Parashar, Special Judge (PC Act), New Delhi under PMLA in a case of illegal allocation of coal block in Jharkhand against Domco Pvt. Ltd. and its directors Binay Prakash, Rita Prakash and their two other firms.

The agency initiated investigation on the basis of a CBI FIR under IPC sections relating to criminal conspiracy and cheating against Domco Pvt. Ltd. and its promoters/directors and other unknown persons for submitting false information with dishonest intention to the authorities while applying for a captive coal block and securing allocation of “Lalgah (North)” coal block in West Bokaro Coalfield, Jharkhand. The irregular allocation led to a pecu-

niary benefit of ₹7 crores to the accused Binay Prakash who offered to sell the shares of the company on premium, after-allocation of the coal block to the Ranchi-based firm.

Further investigation revealed that the accused Binay Prakash placed the Proceeds of Crime in the banking system and subsequently the amount was siphoned off/ routed/invested through the entities of Binay Prakash group owned/controlled by him. Identified assets in form of immovable properties held in the name of Binay Prakash group amounting to ₹3.96 crores and movable properties amounting to ₹3.04 crores were provisionally attached. The Adjudicating Authority under PMLA has already

confirmed attached properties worth ₹6.88 crores and properties worth ₹12 lakhs are under the process of confirmation, it said.

Earlier, a Prosecution Complaint under PMLA was filed before the court here on December 13, 2018.

Robust vax programmes, strict physical distancing may halt Covid surge: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A combination of robust vaccination programmes and strict physical distancing rules could avoid recurring peaks of Covid-19 without the need to rely on stay-at-home restrictions. This is the suggestion by epidemiologists and demographers from WorldPop at the University of Southampton, in collaboration with The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The findings are published in the journal Nature Human Behaviour.

In their study, they used anonymised mobile phone geolocation data with epidemiological and coronavirus case data from China to model the potential impact of vaccination and physical distancing on virus transmission.

They predicted the effect of different combinations of interventions on low, medium and high density cities in the country.

The impact of physical distancing in containing future resurgences of Covid-19 depends greatly on the intensity of measures, population density, and the availability of vaccines across geographical areas and time. The researchers set out to gain a greater understanding of the relationship between these factors.

The team predicts that in most cities, vaccination programmes and physical distancing combined will be enough to contain virus resurgence without the need to greatly restrict population mobility. Containment in this study was defined as maintaining a low transmission rate, or ‘R’ below one.

The researchers report cities

with medium and high density populations will need both vaccination and distancing to prevent future intense waves of Covid-19, until herd immunity is reached. However, they suggest cities with low populations and effective vaccination could fully interrupt transmission without the need for physical distancing. In all cities, full ‘stay-at-home’ lockdowns would no longer be necessary.

The team’s results also suggest strong physical distancing interventions implemented for short periods of time may be more effective than mild, longer term ones.

The author and spatial epidemiologist, Dr Shengjie Lai, Senior Research Fellow in Geography and Environmental Sciences at the University of Southampton said, “Our research provides a framework and set of outputs that can be used by policy-makers and public health authorities to identify appropriate levels of intervention to keep Covid-19 outbreaks in check over time.

“Although our study was based on data from China, our methods and findings are applicable to cities worldwide with similar levels of population density and social contact patterns.”

Director of WorldPop, Professor Andy Tatem, added: “Previous studies have assumed that when people reduce mobility, they proportionately reduce their social contacts, but this isn’t necessarily the case and as more SARS-CoV-2 vaccines come online, there is an urgent need to understand the relationship between these factors, so we can adjust and tailor interventions and open up sections of society in a safer way.”

Govt working on ‘one nation, one standard’ for quality product: Goyal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Like ‘one nation, one ration card’, the Government is working to have ‘one nation, one standard’ in order to ensure quality products in the country. Reviewing the work of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday said, it’s time to embark on Mission one nation one standard and make India the leader in setting global benchmarks in

setting standards. Goyal said, no one should feel the need to go abroad to get quality certification. Saying lab testing in India should be of world standards, Goyal said, modern equipment and latest technologies should be used there.

The Minister stressed that strength and character of nation is often exemplified by the standards it sets for the quality of its products and services.

Currently, the Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) is the only national body that frames standards. It has come out with over 20,000 standards for various products and services so far. There are also about 50-odd agencies that have framed about 400 standards in the country.

Restore job to worker who met with accident, Gzb-based firm told

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a message to private sector companies ignoring the rights of their disabled employees, the Court of Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD), under the Union Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry, has asked a Ghaziabad-based private firm to restore the job of a worker who was terminated from the service after he met with a mishap, causing him 60 per cent locomotor disability.

The case pertains to one Tusarkanta Pattanayak, who worked with a private firm, BioMed Pvt Ltd, since 2006. On December 30, 2016, while in the office when he was not feeling well, his company manager advised him to get medicine from the nearby dispensary and take rest. But as his fate would have it, Pattanayak met with a serious accident on his way to the dispensary. It made him permanently disabled (locomotor disability at 60 per cent).

However, instead of empathising with Pattanayak’s condition, his company pressured him to quit the job. In 2019, the company handed him a termination letter, the complainant alleged in his

petition before the CCPD which he had moved for justice.

The Employee State Insurance (ESI) too rejected his application seeking pension as it contended that his case does not fall within the purview of the existing rules.

Commissioner for Persons with Disability Upma Srivastava after hearing both the sides on January 12, 2021 observed that the employer of Pattanayak violated employment rights of the latter as guaranteed under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

“Section 20(4) of the Act lays down that if any employee acquires disability during course of his employment, he shall not be dispensed with his services; further, such employee cannot be even reduced in rank or pay scale. Though, Section 20(4) lays down mandate for government establishments. Yet, this court, considering the objectives of RPwD Act 2016, concludes that effect of this provision must also be extended to non-government establishments.

In her order she further said that “Objective of this Act is to assimilate the Divyangjans into main stream

society so that they can spend their life with dignity and enjoy their basic fundamental rights equally with others. If private establishments shall be left out of scope of Section 20(4) it may amount to creating hinderance in path of achieving aims and objectives sought to be achieved by RPwD Act, 2016.”

Therefore, said Srivastava, this court by exercising its suo motu powers to investigate, vested in it by virtue of Section 75(b) of RPwD Act, 2016, decides to take cognisance of the complaint against the employer of the complainant, i.e. Bio-Med Private Limited and recommends it to cancel the termination letter and re-employ him on any such post which is suitable for a Divyangjan. Further this court recommends that the employer shall not reduce the pay scale of the complainant.

However, the Court was silent on the ESI contention that “after conducting detailed investigation it was found that at the time the complainant met with the accident, he was not commuting for employment purpose, rather he was commuting from one place to another for personal reasons therefore, he could not be granted pension. “

Arjuna awardee pistol shooter seeks action against 2 Air India staffers for ‘harassment’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Arjuna awardee and Tokyo Olympics medal prospect Manu Bhaker has demanded action against two Air India employees for allegedly “harassing” and “insulting” the pistol shooter while she tried to board a flight to Bhopal from Delhi. Air India, however, rebutted her claims.

After being stopped at the Indira Gandhi Airport, 19-year-old Manu tweeted her ‘problem’, tagging Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju and Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, among others.

After Rijiju’s intervention, Bhaker eventually boarded the AI 437 flight. She thanked the sports minister in her last tweet: “Thank you @KirenRijiju sir. Got boarded after strong support from all of you. Thank you India. jai

hind.” Rijiju responded by tweeting: “You are India’s pride.”

The 19-year-old Olympics shooter made a sensational charge against Air India, saying that employees of the national airline treated her “like a criminal” for carrying guns on board the aircraft. Taking to Twitter, Bhaker was headed to Bhopal Shooting Academy for training alleged that the national carrier did not allow her, in the first instance, to board her scheduled flight from Delhi to Bhopal, citing no permission to carry her guns and shooting equipment.

Bhaker further claimed that the airline employees even demanded a bride from her. Lashing out at Air India, the Commonwealth Games and Youth Olympics gold medalist stated that she had to go

through the “ordeal” despite carrying all valid documents and clearance from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for travelling with her weapons and ammunition.

“Not allowing me to board flight AI 437 at IGI Delhi and asking now 10200rs despite all valid documentation and DGCA permit . Top of that Manoj Gupta Air India incharge doesn’t recognise DGCA @narendramodi @HardeepSPuri @AmitShah @VasundharaBJP shall I pay this Bribes or!!!!” the ace shooter tweeted.

“Think this type of behaviour is not acceptable. Manoj Gupta is not even human. He is treating me like I am a criminal. Also his security in charge. Such people need basic training of behaviour hope-fully Aviation ministry will

find out and will send him to the right place,” she said in another tweet.

The 19-year-old pistol shooter also demanded action against two Air India employees for allegedly “harassing” and “insulting” her.

Denying Bhaker’s charges, Air India, in its reply to Bhaker, tweeted, “Our Delhi Airport team has confirmed that the official at our counter had only sought for valid documents as per rules for the carriage of your weapon on board. In absence of the same, legitimate specified charges for the arms were conveyed to you.”

The airline further added that no one sought a ‘bribe’ and that “you were issued boarding pass on your assurance of furnishing valid documents before boarding. Immediately after the official valid documents were shown by you at the boarding point, you were allowed to board”. Air India also tendered an apology and added that the airline has always encouraged and respected sportspersons.

PM in Assam, Bengal on Monday to launch several projects



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit the poll-bound States of Assam and West Bengal on Monday to launch and lay the foundation stones of several projects.

The PMO said he will dedicate to the nation important projects of the oil and gas sector in an event organised at Silapathar in Assam, and also inaugurate and lay the foundation stones of engineering colleges during the event.

Later in the day, he will inaugurate several railway projects at Hooghly in West Bengal.

Guj Govt brings 30L people under National Food Security Act

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Vijay Rupani Government in Gujarat has added 30 lakh beneficiaries under the food law in the recent past and it is in the process of identifying more people for coverage under this Act. The State Government informed this in a review meeting of the implementation of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), under which 5 kg of wheat and rice are being provided per person per month at a highly subsidised rate of ₹2-3 per kg. Over 80 crore people are covered under this Act.

Union Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey reviewed the NFSA implementation and other allied matters with the Gujarat Government at Gandhinagar, an official statement said. During the meeting, he said there is possibility of including more beneficiaries under the NFSA.

“State Government informed that 30 lakh beneficiaries have been added in the recent past and they are in process of identifying more beneficiaries through convergence with other central

programmes like National Social Assistance programme, etc,” the statement said.

As production of both wheat and paddy is higher than annual requirement of foodgrains of Gujarat State under the NFSA, it was observed that there is potential of augmenting procurement.

“It was emphasised that State Government should target procuring to the extent of annual requirement which would not only benefit local farmers but also save the transportation cost which is incurred in bringing food grains from other States,” the statement said, adding that the acceptance of locally cultivated food grains would also be higher among local population.

Pandey informed that automatic grain dispensing machines are being tested in five cities on pilot basis that enable beneficiaries to obtain subsidized food grains without having to visit FPS to provide freedom to the beneficiaries.

The Gujarat Government expressed its willingness to install such machines in Ahmedabad city on a trial basis.

Andhra Govt informs NHRC about ex-gratia paid to families of Vizag gas leak victims

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Andhra Pradesh Government has informed the NHRC that an ex gratia of ₹1 crore each has been paid to the families of the 12 people who died in the styrene gas leak tragedy in Visakhapatnam last May, officials said on Friday.

The National Human Rights Commission had taken suo motu cognisance of media reports about the death of several persons and over 5,000 others falling sick due to leakage of styrene gas in the district on May 7, they said.

“The NHRC has accepted the action taken by the concerned authorities and the ex gratia of ₹1 crore each paid to the families of the 12 people who died in the tragic incident,” the rights panel said in a statement.

“The government of Andhra Pradesh has informed the Commission that 485 people were paid ₹1 lakh each, who were hospitalised for two-three days. It has also informed that criminal proceedings were initiated against the 12 accused,” the statement said.

The leakage of the gas had reportedly affected people within a radius of about 3 km.

Many people were reported to be lying on roads while some had complained of difficulty in breathing and rashes on their bodies, it added

Scientists decode how Mars may have lost its atmosphere

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Solar winds may have led to Mars losing its atmosphere, according to a computer simulation study which confirms the long held belief that planets need a protective magnetic field to block such harmful radiations in order to sustain life.

While factors like the existence of a moderately warm, moist atmosphere and liquid water determine whether a planet can host life, the study, published in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society, noted that the ability of planets to generate magnetic fields around them is an overlooked aspect.

According to the scientists, Arnab Basak and Dibyendu Nandi from the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISER) Kolkata, these magnetic fields enveloping planets can act like a protective umbrella, shielding the atmosphere from the super fast plasma winds of the Sun.

On the Earth, they said a geo-dynamo mechanism generates the planet’s protective magnetosphere—an invisible shield that stops the solar wind from eroding away our



atmosphere.

In the current study, the scientists simulated two scenarios of the Red Planet -- one considering a young Mars with its magnetosphere intact, and the other with the planet without this force field.

The simulations revealed that in the young Mars, the magnetosphere may have acted as a shield stopping the solar wind from coming too close to the planet’s atmosphere thus protecting it.

Without an intrinsic magnetosphere, the researchers said the solar wind magnetic field may have first draped around, and slipped past Mars, carrying

bits of the planet’s atmosphere away, eventually eroding it completely.

They said the findings confirm the belief that the magnetospheres around planets play a crucial role in determining their ability to sustain life.

Alternatively, planets that lose their magnetic field eventually become inhospitable with loss of their atmosphere, the scientists added.

The researchers believe the study has important implications for the search for habitable exoplanets via initiatives like NASA’s James Webb Space Telescope and ISRO’s ExoWorlds mission.

Centre reconstitutes NITI Aayog governing council with PM as head

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has reconstituted the governing council of the NITI Aayog with Prime Minister Narendra Modi as its chairperson.

According to a notification of the Cabinet Secretariat, chief ministers of all states and those of the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi and Puducherry are full time

members of the council.

The Lieutenant Governors of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh, and the administrators of Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep will be special invitees of governing council.

The notification said the governing council was reconstituted as there was a need to do this.

Nadda chairs meetings ahead of Modi’s address to BJP office-bearers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday held some key organisational meetings on the eve of the first physical meeting of its new set of national office-bearers, which is likely to be addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

BJP president J P Nadda chaired meetings of the party’s national general secretaries and also general secretaries (Party leaders deliberated upon the agenda of the Sunday’s meeting, and organisational work undertaken by state units, including

poll campaign in election-bound states, were also reviewed, sources said.

Sunday’s meeting, which will also be attended by state unit presidents, assumes significance as it comes amid fierce protests by a section of farmers in Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh against the three new farm laws.

The farmer union leaders have been trying to spread their agitation in other parts of the country while stepping up their attack on the Modi Government.

Unleash ‘animal spirits’, raise investments: FM to pvt sector

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday exhorted the private sector to take advantage of corporate tax rate cut and other initiatives of the Government, and unleash ‘animal spirits’ by enhancing investments to make India one of the fastest growing economies of the world.

The government has been waiting for the expansion by the private sector, she said while reminding India Inc of various measures including corporate tax rate cut, policy consistency, ease of doing business, among others to facilitate investment.

“We need capacities to be ramped up, we need expansion, we need more production of many such items which are

required for the economy. I would invite business leaders...Post the corporate tax rate reduction I’ve been waiting to see expansion happening,” she said.

In the biggest reduction in 28 years, the government in September 2019 slashed corporate tax rates by up to 10 percentage points to attract private investment and reinvigorate the sagging economy. The tax break resulted in financial implication of Rs 1.45 lakh crore on the exchequer.

Base corporate tax rate for existing companies was reduced to 22 per cent from 30 per cent, and to 15 per cent from 25 per cent for manufacturing firms incorporated after October 1, 2019, and starting operations before March 31, 2023.

“So I would like to see now that the policy is clear, tax rates have been brought down, policy consistency has been underlined and ease of doing business is still going further. I would now like to see private investors and private industry...Coming forward with the so called ‘animal spirits’ to show that it is possible to pull India up and keep it high as one of the fastest growing economies. It is now on your shoulder entirely,” she said.

Addressing industry leaders at an All India Management Association (AIMA) virtual event, the Finance Minister said the recent Budget has addressed several issues which were so critical for India to have a clearer path for the next decade or more.

The Budget 2021-22

comes against the backdrop of the pandemic and contraction of the economy to give a sense of certainty to businesses that policies will remain predictable and therefore businesses can continue to concentrate on their core activities, she said.

With regard to disinvestment, the Finance Minister said the government has identified the core sector where it will have bare minimum presence and the rest will be allowed for public-private partnership.

The past strategy of disinvestment in trickles has not really been so successful in spreading the ownership pattern, she said, adding, it was not enthusiastically received.

“So, I want to have an efficient, more meaningful, purpose serving way in which our

taxpayers’ money should be spent...The disinvestment of units or privatisation of units is not because we want them to be closed down,” she said.

The government wants these units to be running, to be kept up and running professionally as the economy has very high demand for many of these items of production such as steel, coal or copper, or many such things in which PSUs are there for decades now. She urged the industry to make best of the disinvestment policy announced in the Budget.

Earlier this month, the Finance Minister presented a Rs 34.8 lakh crore-Budget for 2021-22.

The Budget has laid emphasis on increasing capital expenditure, raising allocation

for healthcare capacity building and development of agriculture infrastructure, among others, which are expected to have a multiplier effect on the economy. Sitharaman said spending is required this year as well as next year for sustaining growth.

Therefore, the government has committed to spend on infrastructure and capital expenditure over the next several years which will give the multiplier effect, she added.

About 7,000 projects have been identified under the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) with projected investment of a whopping Rs 111 lakh crore during 2020-25.

On the fiscal deficit management, she said, the government has given a glide path, fiscal deficit is something which we’ll watch, probably after the stim-

ulus has shown clear impact on the ground,” she said.

Speaking at the event Kotak Mahindra Bank Managing Director Uday Kotak said the government in coordination with the RBI has played a role to ensure that the interest rates remain stable.

He also expressed hope that rates would remain stable over the next 12-18 months.

“We need to ensure that as the size of the borrowing goes up, we are able to keep the long-term interest rates stable, on the basis of which business and industry take the investment decisions,” Kotak said.

Exuding confidence that the future of India is bright, Kotak said: “We now really need to get our animal spirits back... And the time has come for us to walk the talk”

of pandemic.

Hit hard by the pandemic, fiscal deficit — the excess of government expenditure over its revenues — is estimated to hit a record high of 9.5 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2020-21.

For 2021-22, the deficit has been pegged at 6.8 per cent of GDP, which will be further lowered to 4.5 per cent by the fiscal ending March 31, 2026.

“We are very clearly telling even the credit rating agencies that every country is going through this pandemic, and every country has to spend to keep the stimulus going.

So every country’s ratings will have to be in relative terms...However, because we’ve given the glide path, fiscal deficit is something which we’ll watch, probably after the stim-

Close to pre-Covid air passenger traffic numbers, says Aviation Minister

At present, airlines can operate up to 80 per cent of their pre-Covid capacity

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

Civil Aviation Minister Chhara Singh Puri on Saturday said that the country’s air passenger traffic is “within touching distance of pre-Covid numbers”.

In a tweet, the minister said: “2,90,518 passengers on 2,360 flights on 19 Feb is within touching distance of Pre-COVID numbers & marks revival of the domestic sector.”

“From transporting essential & medical supplies, to movement of vaccines, civil aviation sector plays a key role in efforts against COVID19.”

Since the resumption of operations on May 25, domestic air traffic continued to sequentially improve in January 2021.

The domestic passenger traffic rose 5.55 per cent sequentially in January to 77.34 lakh passengers from 73.27 lakh reported for December 2020.

However, on a year-on-year basis the January numbers stood 39.50 per cent lower than 127.83 lakh reported for the corresponding period of the previous year.

At present, airlines can operate up to 80 per cent of their pre-Covid capacity.

Centre released ₹1 lakh crore GST compensation to States since Oct 2020

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has released ₹1 lakh crore to states and UTs in four months since October 2020, to meet GST compensation shortfall, the Finance Ministry said on Saturday.

The ministry on Friday released the 17th weekly instalment of ₹5,000 crore to 23 states and 3 Union Territories (Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir & Puducherry), taking the total amount released so far under the special borrowing window set up in October last year to Rs 1 lakh crore.

The remaining 5 states, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim, do not have a gap in revenue on account of Goods and Services Tax (GST) implementation.

The Centre had set up a special borrowing window in October 2020 to meet the estimated shortfall of ₹1.10 lakh crore in revenue arising on account of implementation of GST.

The borrowings are being done through this window by the Centre on behalf of states and UTs.

Under the special window, the Centre has been borrowing in government stock with tenor of 3 years and 5 years. The borrowing made under each tenor is equally divided among all states as per their GST compensation shortfall.

With the current release, the proportionate pending GST shortfall with respect to borrowing under 5 years tenor has been completed for 16 states and 2 UTs.

Till now, 91 per cent of the total estimated GST compensation shortfall has been released to states & UTs with Legislative Assembly (Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir & Puducherry), the statement said.

“An amount of Rs 1,00,000 crore has been borrowed by the Central Government through the special borrowing window at an average interest rate of 4.83 per cent....Out of this, an amount of Rs 91,460.34 crore has been released to states and an amount of Rs. 8,539.66 crore has been released to the 3 UTs with Legislative Assembly,” it said.

Total 17 rounds of borrowings have been completed so far starting from October 23, 2020.

Union Minister Piyush Goyal calls for mission ‘One Nation One Standard’

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday stressed on the need for ‘One Nation One Standard’ to bring uniformity and said labs testing in India should be of global standards.

The minister said this while reviewing the work of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

“It’s time to embark on Mission ‘One Nation One Standard’ and make India the leader in setting global benchmarks in setting standards,” Goyal was quoted as saying in an official statement.

While all areas of production and services should be included in this national mission, bringing a national uniformity and standardization

in all kinds of public procurement and tendering can be an immediate deliverable, Goyal said.

The minister said that strength and character of nation is often exemplified by the standards it sets for the quality of its products and services. “Its time for India to settle for nothing less than the best,” the statement said.

Goyal asked the BIS to explore international partnerships and associations to achieve synergy in the field.

The minister said that lab testing in India should be of world standards and added that modern equipment and latest technologies should be used there.

He asked for gap analysis of BIS and government labs to be taken up on priority basis.

Referring to the issue of different institutions and PSUs having variety of non-uniform standards, he said effort should be made to merge different standards under one standard as much as possible.

The minister said that industry should be invited for more dialogue, participation and collaboration in this mission of “one nation one standard”.

Process of granting certification should be kept as simple as possible and duplication of work should be avoided, he said.

Goyal said, “We should aim to be the world leader in having maximum industrial products under Indian Standards and no one should feel the need to go abroad to get quality certification.”

- Goyal asked the BIS to explore international partnerships and associations to achieve synergy in the field
 - He asked for gap analysis of BIS and government labs to be taken up on priority basis
 - The meeting was attended by senior officials of Department of Consumer Affairs and BIS besides others
- The meeting was attended by senior officials of Department of Consumer Affairs and BIS besides others. Detailed presentation was made by BIS about various areas of the progress being made, the statement said.

Goa industry seeks public procurement policy in State Budget

PTI ■ PANAJI

Goa State Industries Association (GSIA), in their pre-budget memorandum, has urged the state government to introduce Public Procurement Policy for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) on lines with the central governments initiative.

GSIA led by its President Damodar Kochkar presented pre-Budget memorandum to the chief minister ahead of the Budget Assembly Session scheduled to begin in March.

“We request that a Public Procurement Policy for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) should be introduced in line with Central Government Policy making it mandatory for

all Government Departments/Understandings to purchase a minimum of 20 per cent of their annual purchase of products and services from MSEs, the memorandum reads.

The GSIA has said that this initiative will help the government increase their revenue by way of higher collection of SGST and will generate more economic activity and employment in the state.

All these years, mining was the major contributor to states revenue and other sectors were not given the desired attention by the state government.

After the closure of the mining industry and the tourism sector not picking up as expected due to coronavirus pandemic, manufacturing industry is the only sector

which can bring about overall development and create inclusive growth in the state, the Association has said.

Speaking about Ease of Doing Business, the Association has said that the initiatives taken to improve Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) are not felt on the ground. For better implementation, the initiatives should be properly monitored and executed.

The GSIA has said that state government should ensure that Single Window System is properly implemented.

At present, online services are not very effective, process is cumbersome and the government staff is not trained to provide assistance.

The server infrastructure

All these years, mining was the major contributor to states revenue and other sectors were not given the desired attention by the state government.

Rising exports to China surge domestic cotton yarn prices: Ind-Ra

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

China’s demand for India’s Cotton has pushed domestic yarn prices higher, said India Ratings and Research.

Accordingly, domestic yarn production increased in January 2021, led by a strong export and moderate domestic demand during December 2020.

“While yarn production was substantially lower on a YoY basis up to 8MFY21, exports increased by higher single digits YoY due to a healthy demand from neighbouring countries,”

“China’s demand for Indian yarn resumed to pre-Covid levels during November-December 2020, as against a volume drop from Bangladesh and Vietnam during same period.”

In January 2021, cotton yarn prices increased 15 per cent MoM and 30 per cent YoY, resulting in higher gross margins.

“The higher cotton yarn demand is attributed to the global supply curbs on Xinjiang region (China) cotton, which is benefiting Indian domestic spinners.”

“While exports are likely to moderate during January-February 2021 with likely shutdown of mills ahead of Chinese new year, demand resumption is likely by March 2021.”

Consequently, cotton prices surged by 7-10 per cent MoM during January 2021, led by a strong export demand for cotton yarn.

“The international prices rose by 13-17 per cent YoY, led by the buoyant China demand for US cotton, which is having

a rub-off effect on cheaper Indian cotton prices.”

However, apparel exports declined in December 2020, after recovering over September-November 2020 on a YoY basis due to the impact of a second wave of Covid-19 in the US and Europe.

“This would also impact the near-term order book position of ready-made garment exporters for the upcoming fashion season.”

“During November 2020, knitted apparels volumes remained stagnant with realisations gaining by high single digit yoy basis; on the contrary, woven apparels volumes increased by 8.2 per cent and realisations fell substantially yoy basis. During 2020, India exports to the US fell 20-25 per cent YoY in both volume and value terms.”

CSC launches Rural e-Mobility Programme to promote use of electric vehicles

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

To promote the use of electric vehicles across India, CSC e-Governance Service Common Services India Ltd has launched Rural e-Mobility Programme whereby urging people to switch to electric vehicles to preserve and conserve the environment by reducing their carbon footprint.

“We are focusing on rural areas for which we have

launched Rural e-Mobility Programme at our 100 CSC centres that will be providing e-scooters and e-rickshaws to people. The company has tied up with various e-vehicles manufacturers and also financial institutions for offering attractive loans to people in rural areas. We are also setting up charging infrastructure at our CSCs for convenience of our customers,” said Ytgi. One such mega roadshow was organized in New Delhi on Friday.

CSC is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) under the Ministry of Electronics and IT. “Our programme will not only add environmental benefits but also create new models of inclusive development in terms of connectivity in remote corners of our country. We will organize roadshows and bike rallies across India to promote our Rural e-Mobility Programme,” said Ytgi. One such mega roadshow was organized in New Delhi on Friday.

ED files charge sheet against Kudos chemie in bank fraud case

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday said that it has filed a charge sheet against Kudos Chemie Ltd., Kudos Holdings Pvt Ltd and its directors and Jitendra Singh and Gurmeet Sodhi in connection with a money laundering probe.

The ED filed the charge sheet at the Special PMLA Court in Chandigarh under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act on February 18.

Notice Inviting Re-e-Tender

No.SSA/Equity/Procurement/Adolescent Prog.forGirls/336/2020/4519 Date :19.02.2021

Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites re-tender through e-Tendering process for printing and supply Training Module from reputed printing offset printing presses having Coloured Sheet Offset Machine for printing.

To participate in the tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.

The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender processing fee of Rs. 1000/- (Rupees one thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/Scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

Sd/-Executive Director,
SSA, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

Janasanyog CF/5207/20

RAJASTHAN STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER (S/ P)
JHOTWARA ROAD, JAIPUR TEL No. 0141-2281912, 2281913

E-Tendering Notice

E-tender invited for the purchase of Tube Less Radial Tyre Size 295/80R-22.5", Radial tyre, tube and flaps & Nylon tyre, tube and flaps. For further details you can visit online website <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> or from e-procurement cell RISL, Yojana Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur-302005 and contact on Toll Free number No. 1800-3070-2232 (Help Desk be contacted directly in the following mobile nos. 91-7878007972 and 91-7878007973, 10.00 AM to 06.00 PM on all working days). and e-mail-eproc@rajasthan.gov.in
UBN No RTC2021GLOB00446, RTC2021GLOB00445 & RTC2021GLOB00444
General Manager (SP)
RSRTC Central Store, Jaipur

Raj. SamwadiC/2020-21/1957

Nabha Power Limited

Regd. Office: PO Box No. 28, Near Nalash Village, Teh. Rajpura, Distt. Patiala, Punjab-140401, India, CIN: U40102PB2007PLC031039

Notice Inviting “Expression of Interest for Ash Utilization”

Nabha Power Limited (NPL), a wholly owned subsidiary of L&T Power Development Limited, has been successfully operating the 2x700 MW super critical Rajpura Thermal Power Plant near Nalash Village, Teh. Rajpura, Distt. Patiala, Punjab India since 2014.

For promoting utilisation of ash and its consumption in an environment friendly manner, NPL invites “Expression of Interest” (EOI) for allocation of up to 20% of dry ESP dry fly ash (fly ash) on free of cost basis from units manufacturing fly ash or clay fly ash bricks, blocks or tiles.

The allocation of fly ash shall be subject to availability and for the remaining period of the financial year 2020-21. The fly ash allotted from the **Rajpura Thermal Power Plant** must be utilized and consumed in an environment friendly manner and only for the purpose for which it is obtained, failing which the allocation of fly ash shall be cancelled.

Interested parties are requested to submit their EOI within 7 days from publication of this notice along with details of fly ash requirement and supporting documents such as SSI registration, pollution control board approval, location plan of existing/proposed unit, existing and previous allocation letters of fly ash (if any), previous production details, income tax & sales tax registration details etc. in hard and soft copies to the Senior Deputy General Manager, Nabha Power Limited, Near Village Nalash, Rajpura-140401, Punjab. Tel. No.: +91-1762-277267 Fax. No.: +91-1762-277251 E-mail: npl@Larsentoubro.com

Parties to whom fly ash will be allocated based on their EOI shall be responsible for the transportation and utilization of the same in an environment friendly manner.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

See Section U/S 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Ajay Tyagi, S/o Hari Raj Tyagi, R/o H.No. 132, Khanpur Japti, Loni, Ghaziabad, UP** has Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **U/S 138 NI Act, P.S. Karawal Nagar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Ajay Tyagi** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Ajay Tyagi** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Ajay Tyagi of U/S 138 NI Act, P.S. Karawal Nagar, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **24.03.2021**.

By Order
Sh. Dinesh Kumar,
Chief Metropolitan Magistrate,
Karkardooma Courts,
Shahdara, Delhi

DP/588/NE/2021(Court Matter)

PUBLIC NOTICE

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

This is to inform the General Public that following share certificate of KILITCH DRUGS INDIA LTD. having its Registered office at 37 UJAGAR INDUSTRIAL ESTATE WAMAN TUKARAM PATEL MARG, DEONAR MUMBAI - 400088 registered in the name of the following shareholder/s have been lost by them.

Sl. No.	Name of the Shareholder/s	Folio No.	Certificate No.	Distinctive No.	No of Shares
1.	Rama Malhotra	000-7000	26663	2616201 to 2616300	100
2.	SIRI RAM MALHOTRA		26664	2616301 to 2616400	100

The Public are hereby cautioned against purchasing or dealing in any way with the above referred share certificates. Any person who has any claim in respect of the said share certificate/s should lodge such claim with the Company or its Registrar and Transfer Agents Link Intime India Private Limited 247 Park, C-101, 1st Floor, L.B.S. Marg, Vikroli (W) Mumbai - 400083 within 15 days of publication of this notice after which no claim will be entertained and the company shall proceed to issue Duplicate Share Certificate/s.

Place: _____ Name of Legal Claimant
Date: _____

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank

Notice is hereby given to the public at large, on behalf of our client, ICICI Bank Ltd., (‘Bank’), Bangalore branch that the original Sale Deed registered as No. 6011/14-15 dated Sep 06,2014 and Prior deed registered as No. 3507/2001-2002 dated Dec 04,2001 pertaining to the immovable property now constructed residential apartment (more particularly described in ‘Schedule ‘I’, ‘A’ and ‘B’ hereunder) of Mr. Anshul Goel, deposited with our client by way of security, has been misplaced from the custody of our client ICICI Bank Ltd. The original Sale Deed dated Sep 06, 2014 and Prior deed dated Dec 04,2001 are registered before the sub-registrar office, Bangalore city at Bangalore, bearing the registration number 6011/14-15 and Prior deed registered No. 3507/2001-2002 and were executed by in favour of Mr. Anshul Goel.

Any person/s who has/have any claim, right, title and interest in the said document(s) and/or any person/s coming into possession of the aforesaid document(s) is/are having knowledge of its whereabouts are hereby requested to intimate our client, forthwith about the same at the above address for examination and such further action as may be advised.

Any person receiving or dealing with the said document(s) would do so at their own risk and responsibility and our client, will not be responsible in any manner whatsoever for any for any loss incurred on account of any such dealing.

In the event no information is received by our client, ICICI Bank, within 7 days from date hereof, the original Sale Deed no 6011/14-15 dated Sep 06,2014 and Prior deed registered as No. 3507/2001-2002 dated Dec 04,2001 shall be treated as irretrievably lost and certified true copy of the document(s) lost, which will be treated as the original one for all the intent and purposes thereafter.

SCHEDULE ‘I’ A portion of schedule property measuring 5243. 04 sq. Mtrs, demarked by the letters B, C, D, E, F, L, K in sketch enclosed and bounded as follows: East by: Hesar Road West by: Portion of Sy.No.66/1 and 66/2 belonging to vendors and others developed by Kirtoskar finance limited. North by: Portion of Sy.No.66/1 and 66/2 belonging to vendors and others developed by Kirtoskar finance limited. South by: private property. The 1/20th undivided share in the land of the vendor is 262.15 sq. mtrs.

SCHEDULE ‘A’ Portion of schedule- 1 property on which the block named as Ansal krishna- 11 is constructed as per master plan for the development of the entire schedule property. The schedule property presently falls within the jurisdiction of the Bangalore Mahanagara Palike.

SCHEDULE ‘B’ 427 Sq. ft. undivided share of land right, title and interest of the property mentioned in the Schedule-I.

Date : February 21, 2021
Place: Delhi

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Biden declares ‘America is back’ in welcome words to allies

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden used his first address before a global audience Saturday to declare that “America is back, the transatlantic alliance is back,” after four years of a Trump administration that flaunted its foreign policy through an “America First” lens.

Speaking to the annual Munich Security Conference virtually, Biden ticked through a daunting to-do list — salvaging the Iran nuclear deal, meeting economic and security challenges posed by China and Russia and repairing the damage caused by the coronavirus pandemic — that he said would require close cooperation between the US and its Western allies.

Without mentioning Donald Trump’s name once in his speech, Biden mixed talk of a reinvigorated democratic alliance with a rebuke of his predecessor’s approach, a message warmly received by Western allies.

“I know the past few years have strained and tested the transatlantic relationship,”

Biden said. “The United States is determined to reengage with Europe, to consult with you, to earn back our position of trusted leadership.”

The president also participated Friday in a virtual meeting of the Group of Seven industrialized nations, where leaders managed to work Biden’s campaign theme into their closing joint statement, vowing to “work together to beat Covid-19 and build back better.”

“Welcome back, America,” said European Council President Charles Michel, effectively summing up the mood of the Munich conference.

But while such happy talk conveyed the palpable sense of relief among allies at Biden’s full-throated commitment to mending frayed US-Europe relations, plenty has changed over the past four years in ways creating new challenges.

China has cemented its place as a fierce economic competitor on the continent as the US has reconsidered long-held national security and economic priorities embedded in the transatlantic alliance.



President Joe Biden walks on the South Lawn of the White House after stepping off Marine One on Friday

AP

Populism has grown through much of Europe. And other Western countries have, at moments, sought to fill the vacuum left as America stepped back from the world stage.

German Chancellor

Angela Merkel noted that some differences between the U.S. And Europe remain “complicated.” Europe sees China’s economic ambitions as less of an existential threat than the US does and has its own strate-

gic and economic concerns that are not always in sync with Biden on Russia as well.

Still, Merkel, who had a strained relationship with Trump, didn’t hide her preference for an American foreign

policy informed by Biden’s world view.

“Things are looking a great deal better for multilateralism this year than two years ago, and that has a lot to do with Joe Biden having become the president of the United States of America,” Merkel said.

“His speech just now, but also his administration’s first announcements, have convinced us that this is not just talk but action.”

Biden made his address to a global audience as his administration this week took steps to reverse key Trump administration policies.

He said that the U.S. Stands ready to rejoin talks about reentering the 2015 multilateral Iran nuclear deal abandoned by the Trump administration. The Biden administration announced Thursday its desire to reengage Iran, and it took action at the United Nations aimed at restoring policy to what it was before Trump withdrew from the deal in 2018.

Biden also spoke out about the two-decade war in Afghanistan, where he faces a

May 1 deadline to remove the remaining 2,500 US troops under a Trump administration negotiated peace agreement with the Taliban. He also called for cooperation in addressing economic and national security challenges posed by Russia and China and identified cyberspace, artificial intelligence and biotechnology as areas of growing competition.

“We must prepare together for long-term strategic competition with China,” Biden declared.

His message was girded by an underlying argument that democracies — not autocracies — are models of governance that can best meet the challenges of the moment. The president urged fellow world leaders to show together that “democracies can still deliver.”

At the G-7, administration officials said, Biden focused on what lies ahead for the international community as it tries to extinguish the public health and economic crises created by the coronavirus pandemic. He announced the US will soon begin releasing \$4 billion for an

international effort to bolster the purchase and distribution of vaccine to poor nations, a program that Trump refused to support.

Biden’s turn on the world stage came as the US officially rejoined the Paris climate agreement, the largest international effort to curb global warming. Trump announced in June 2017 that he was pulling the US Out of the landmark accord, arguing that the pact would undermine the American economy.

Biden announced the U.S. Intention of rejoining on the first day of his presidency, but he had to wait 30 days for the move to go into effect. He has said that he will bake considerations about climate change into every major domestic and foreign policy decision his administration faces.

“This is a global existential crisis,” Biden said.

Biden also encouraged G-7 partners to make good on their pledges to COVAX, an initiative by the World Health Organization to improve access to vaccines, even as he reopens the US Spigot.

2 Myanmar protesters killed by police fire, reports say

AP ■ MANDALAY

Two anti-coup protesters were shot dead by riot police who fired live rounds Saturday in Mandalay, Myanmar’s second-largest city, local media reported.

One of the victims was shot in the head and died at the scene, according to Frontier Myanmar, a news and business magazine based in Yangon, the country’s largest city. Another was shot in the chest and died en route to the hospital.

Several other serious injuries were also reported. The shootings occurred near Mandalay’s Yadanabon dock, where tear gas and rubber bullets were used on protesters earlier in the day.

The Irrawaddy news website also confirmed the deaths on social media.

Security forces had been increasing their pressure against anti-coup protesters earlier Saturday, using water cannons, tear gas, slingshots and rubber bullets against demonstrators and striking dock workers in Mandalay.

At least five people were injured by rubber bullets and had to be carried away in ambulances, according to an Associated Press journalist who



Police charge forward to disperse protesters in Mandalay, Myanmar, on Saturday

US expresses concern over China’s recently enacted Coast Guard law

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US has voiced concern over China’s recently enacted Coast Guard law, which it said may escalate the ongoing territorial and maritime disputes in the region and can be invoked to assert unlawful claims.

China passed a law last month which for the first time explicitly allows its coast guard to fire on foreign vessels.

“The United States joins the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Japan and other countries in expressing concern with China’s recently enacted Coast Guard law, which may escalate the ongoing territorial and maritime disputes,” State Department Spokesperson Ned Price told reporters during a conference call.

China is engaged in hotly contested territorial disputes in both the South China Sea and the East China Sea. Beijing has built up and militarised many of the islands and reefs it controls in the region.

Both areas are stated to be rich in minerals, oil and other natural resources and are vital to global trade.

China claims almost all of the South China Sea. Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia,

Brunei and Taiwan have counterclaims over the area.

The new law could make the contested waters around China more choppy.

“We are specifically concerned by language in the law that expressly ties the potential use of force, including armed force by the China Coast Guard, to the enforcement of China’s claims in ongoing territorial and maritime disputes in the East and South China Seas,” he said.

Language in that law, including text allowing the coast guard to destroy other countries’ economic structures and to use force in defending China’s maritime claims in disputed areas, strongly implies this law could be used to intimidate the maritime neighbours of China, Price said.

“We are further concerned that China may invoke this new law to assert its unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea,” he said.

The United States reminds China of its obligations under the United Nations Charter to refrain from the threat or use of force and to conform its maritime claims to the International Law of the Sea, as reflected in the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention.

Moscow court rejects Opp leader Navalny’s appeal

AP ■ MOSCOW

A Moscow court on Saturday rejected Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny’s appeal against his prison sentence, even as the country faced a top European rights court’s order to free the Kremlin’s most prominent foe.

Speaking before the verdict, Navalny urged Russians to stand up to the Kremlin in a fiery speech mixing references to the Bible and “Harry Potter.”

A lower court sentenced Navalny earlier this month to two years and eight months in prison for violating terms of his probation while recuperating in Germany from a nerve agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin. Russian authorities have rejected the accusation.

Navalny, 44, an anti-corruption crusader and President Vladimir Putin’s most vocal critic, appealed the prison sentence and asked to be released. The Moscow City Court’s judge on Saturday only slightly reduced his sentence to just over 2 1/2 years in prison, ruling that a month-and-half Navalny spent under house arrest in early 2015 will be deducted from his sentence.

His arrest and imprisonment have fueled a huge wave of protests across Russia.

Authorities responded with



Russian Opposition leader Alexei Navalny stands in a cage in the Babuskiy District Court in Moscow on Saturday

AP

a sweeping crackdown, detaining about 11,000 people, many of whom were fined or given jail terms ranging from seven to 15 days.

Speaking before the verdict, Navalny referenced the Bible as well as “Harry Potter” and the animated sitcom “Rick and Morty” as he urged Russians to resist pressure from the authorities and challenge the Kremlin to build a fairer and more prosperous country.

“The government’s task is to scare you and then persuade you that you are alone,” he said. “Our Volodermort in his palace also wants me to feel cut off,” he added, in a reference to Putin.

“To live is to risk it all,” he continued. “Otherwise, you’re just an inert chunk of randomly assembled molecules drifting

wherever the universe blows you.”

Navalny also addressed the judge and the prosecutor, arguing that they could have a much better life in a new Russia.

“Just imagine how wonderful life would be without constant lying,” he said.

“Imagine how great it would be to work as a judge when no one would be able to call you and give you directions what verdicts to issue.”

He insisted that he was unable to report to the authorities in line with his probation requirements while he was convalescing in Germany after his poisoning, emphasizing that he returned to Russia immediately after his health allowed.

GLOBE TROTTER

5 KILLED IN SOMALIA’S POLL-RELATED VIOLENCE

Mogadishu: A health worker in Somalia’s capital says at least five soldiers were killed and more than a dozen people, mostly civilians, were wounded in violence related to protests over the country’s delayed election. Abdi Bafo, a doctor at the Medina hospital, spoke on Saturday, the day after Somali security forces fired on hundreds of people peacefully demonstrating in Mogadishu over the delayed vote. The capital was calm on Saturday, and streets were open again after being blocked on Friday.

AF POLICE: 3 SEPARATE KABUL BLASTS KILL 5

Kabul: Three separate explosions in the Afghan capital Kabul on Saturday killed at least five people and wounded two others, a police official said, amid a surge in violence in the war-torn country.

DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN PAK MAY WORSEN

Islamabad: Pakistan’s meteorological department has warned that drought-like conditions currently prevailing in parts of Sindh and Balochistan provinces may exacerbate and cause water stress in cultivated lands, according to a media report. The National Drought Monitoring Centre, part of the PMD, issued an advisory on Thursday which showed the situation has emerged due to overall below than average rainfall in the country from October 2020 to January 2021, Dawn newspaper reported. According to the advisory, most of the central and southern districts of Balochistan are experiencing mild to moderate drought.

Major emitters need to step up and lower emissions: Kerry

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

As the United States officially joined the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, US Special Envoy on Climate Crisis, John Kerry asserted that all 17 major emitting countries including India need to step up and begin lowering emissions.

“Everything has to be done with greater sense of urgency, with a determination that we have to win this fight... And we need the United States and every country to determine they will get on a path toward net zero emissions by 2050,” he said on Friday.

A major achievement of the Obama administration, the previous Trump Administration had withdrawn from the Paris Agreement. President Joe Biden, who served as the Vice President during the Obama administration, issued orders to join the Paris Agreement on day one of his presidency.

“... what steps will we take in the next 10 years? And the truth is that everybody has to do that. China, which is the largest emitter in the world needs to be part of the 2020 to 2030 effort.

“India needs to be part of it. Russia needs to be part of it.

So is Japan... the major emitters, 17 nations, need to really step up and begin to lower those emissions,” Kerry said.

This challenge, he asserted, means that all countries setting bold and achievable targets have to do so here at home and in the course of their declaration of their national determined contributions (NDCs).

“We have to drive investment toward climate solutions and innovations and resilience. We need to get the entire world on a path towards net zero emissions, and we need to absolutely make certain that happens no later than 2050 and sooner if possible,” he said.

UK urges UNSC to push for pause in wars

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

Britain has circulated a draft Resolution to the UN Security Council demanding that all warring parties immediately institute a “sustained humanitarian pause” to enable people in conflict areas to be vaccinated against Covid-19.

The proposed resolution reiterates the council’s demand last July 1 for “a general and immediate cessation of hostilities” in major conflicts from Syria and Yemen to Central African Republic, Mali and Sudan and Somalia, an appeal first made by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on March 23, 2020, to tackle the coronavirus pandemic.

Joe Biden’s Indian-American nominee to lead budget faces challenge to her confirmation

Washington: Indian-American Neera Tanden, US President Joe Biden’s nominee for the position of Director of White House Office of Management and Budget, is facing a challenge to her confirmation after Democratic Senator Joe Manchin announced that he would vote against her over “overtly partisan statements.”

Manchin’s announcement means that unless a Republican senator comes forward to support her nomination, it is unlikely that Tanden, 50, will be confirmed for the job.

Manchin, a moderate Democrat from West Virginia, said: “I believe her overtly partisan statements will have a toxic and detrimental impact

on the important working relationship between members of Congress and the next director of the Office of Management and Budget.”

“For this reason, I cannot support her nomination. As I have said before, we must take meaningful steps to end the political division and dysfunction that pervades our politics,” he said. The 100-member Senate is evenly split between the Republicans and the Democrats. The vote of Vice-President Kamala Harris will tilt the balance in favour of the Democrats. As such the vote of Manchin gains significance, given that a majority of the Republicans are likely to oppose the nomination of Tanden. **PTI**

Biden believes US will be approaching normalcy by end of this year

Washington: President Joe Biden has said that he believes the US will be approaching normalcy by the end of this year as the country races to deliver coronavirus vaccines to millions of Americans.

Biden on Friday toured a manufacturing facility of Pfizer in Kalamazoo, Michigan, seeking to highlight efforts to mass produce a coronavirus vaccine as his administration looks for ways to increase supply and streamline distribution.

“I believe we’ll be approaching normalcy by the end of this year. And God willing, this Christmas will be different than the last,” Biden said responding to a question at the site in Michigan.

At the same time, he refused to make any commitment.

“I can’t make that commitment to you. There are other strains of the virus. We don’t know what could happen in terms of production rates. Things can change. But we’re doing everything the science has indicated we should do, and people are stepping up to get everything done that has to be done,” he said.

Biden said that getting the vaccine and having it available is not the same as putting it in someone’s arms. This is going to be a continuous rolling effort.

“We will have ordered, much of which will have been distributed, over 600 million doses by the end of July. July 29th is the expected date. That could change. Look at what’s happening with the weather now, for example: It’s slowing up the distribution right now,” he said. **PTI**

Extreme weather testing Joe’s disaster management skills

Washington: Add Mother Nature to the pile of crises on President Joe Biden’s plate.

A month into the job and focused on the coronavirus, Biden is seeing his disaster management skills tested after winter storms plunged Texas, Oklahoma and neighbouring states into an unusual deep freeze that left millions shivering in homes that lost heat and power, and in many homes, water. At least 59 deaths across the US have been blamed on the blast of unseasonable weather. **AP**

WESTERN RAILWAY

REPLACEMENT OF CORRODED STEEL GIRDERS OF SPAN

Divisional Railway Manager (WA), Western Railway, 6th floor, Engg. Deptt., Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400 008, invites E-tender as per details given as follows. **Executive: Sr.DEN(N) BCT.** **Tender Notice No. & Date BCT/20-21/361 dtd. 19-02-2021.** **Work and location:** Virar-Joravasan Section :- Replacement of corroded steel girders of span upto 9.15m by Precast RCC/ PSC slabs on Br.No. 88, 90, 91, 161, 164 Total Span = 40 under Sr. DEN/North in connection of Virar-Surat Sec. :- Replacement of corroded steel girders of span upto 9.15m by Precast RCC/PSC slabs for Br.No. 88, 90, 91, 161, 164, 434, 373, 420, 455 Total Span = 54. **Approx. cost of work: ₹7,98,80,027.69/- EMD: ₹0/-.** **Date & Time of submission: On 16.03.2021 till 15:00 hrs. Date & Time of opening: On 16.03.2021 at 15:30 hrs.** For more details please visit our website www.ireps.gov.in. **677**

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Notice Inviting e-Tender

No. SSA/Pre-Primary/Miscellaneous/36/2021/4517 Date: 19.02.2021

Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed offset printing presses having coloured Sheet Offset Machine for printing and supply Work Book.

To participate in the tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.

The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender processing fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/Scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

Sd/-Executive Director,
SSA, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

Janasanyog /CF/5199/20

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General Public is hereby informed that one girl **Namely: Babli Kaur, D/o: Kulwant Kaur, R/o: Village, Jhangola, Delhi** has been missing/ kidnapped since **17.01.2021 at 6:30 pm.** from the area of P.S. Alipur, Delhi. In this regard a case vide **DD No. 54-A dated 21.01.2021** has been lodged at P.S. Alipur, Delhi.

The description of the missing girl are as under: **Age: 20 years, Height: 5'2", Face: Round, Complexion: Fair, Build: Thin, Wearing: Black colour suit-salwar and jutti in feet.** Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-mail Id - cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011-24368639
DP/783/ON/2021

SHO
P.S. Alipur, Delhi
Ph.: 011- 27202265, 7065036325

Osaka has done it again

Naomi beats Brady to win her 4th Grand Slam title

Osaka’s win travels to space station


AFP ■ TOKYO

Japan’s celebrations for Naomi Osaka’s fourth Grand Slam title went into orbit on Saturday, with an astronaut tweeting congratulations from the International Space Station.

Osaka’s triumph over Jennifer Brady in the Australian Open final was hailed in Japan, and beyond, as astronaut Soichi Noguchi wrote from space “Naomi Osaka, congratulations on the victory,” with a Gold-medal emoji.

Japan’s media said it brought prospects of a Gold medal at the coronavirus-delayed Tokyo Olympics “a big step closer.”

Major broadcasters flashed news of the 23-year-old’s latest Grand Slam win, which added to victories at the 2018 US Open, the 2019 Australian Open and the 2020 US Open.



Astronaut Soichi Noguchi tweets from space to congratulate Naomi Osaka after her win in Australia Open final

“Osaka got a big step closer to winning the Gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics,” the *Nikkan Sports* daily said of the player, who is a leading face of the Games in her home nation.

“The Australian victory is a barometer for the Gold medal” at the Tokyo Games, where tennis matches are played on the same type of court, the newspaper said — calling Osaka “the queen of hard courts.”

roared.

“We played in the semis of the US Open a couple of months ago and I told everyone that you’re going to be a problem,” Osaka told Brady at the trophy presentation. “And I was right.”

US OPEN REMATCH

The Japanese survived a seesaw start to gain control, reeling off six straight games en route to the title.

It was a rematch of last year’s epic, three-set US Open semi-final, described by some as the best match of 2020, but Osaka triumphed far more comfortably on this occasion.

Despite the defeat, Brady will rise to a career-high 13th in the WTA rankings.

Asked what makes Osaka special, she said: “She’s just brings out her best in the big moments.”

“But I don’t think, you know, she’s God,” added Brady. “I think maybe Serena is. Maybe she’ll get there, I don’t know.”

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Japan’s Naomi Osaka dismissed Jennifer Brady in straight sets to win her fourth Grand Slam title at the Australian Open on Saturday and underline her new status as the dominant force in women’s tennis.

Osaka, 23, swept past America’s Brady 6-4, 6-3 in 77 minutes to win her second straight major crown and extend a 21-match winning streak that stretches back more than a year.

The world number three, who will rise to second in the rankings, becomes only the third player after Monica Seles and Roger Federer to win her first four major finals.

By clinching back-to-back majors for the second time, the reigning US Open champion has won half of the Slams she has contested since her breakthrough 2018 US Open victory against Serena Williams.

After a tight first set, Osaka controlled the second to win 6-4, 6-3 in



‘One Slam at a time’

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Japan’s Naomi Osaka promised on Saturday not to be weighed down by “pressure and expectation” after her latest Grand Slam victory sparked



Naomi Osaka poses with her support team after defeating Jennifer Brady in the women’s singles final at the Australian Open on Saturday

talk she could end up winning 10 majors.

She becomes only the third player after Monica Seles and Roger Federer to win their first four major finals, and will now rise to second in the world rankings.

The 23-year-old won her fourth Slam from the last eight she’s contested and is now seen as the dominant force in women’s tennis, a view shared by seven-time Slam-winner Mats Wilander, who believes Osaka can win 10 Grand Slams.

“I’m taking it in sections. For right now, I’m trying to go for five,” Osaka said, when asked about Wilander’s comment.

“After five I would think about maybe dividing the 10, so maybe seven or eight.”

“I don’t like to take things big-picture,” Osaka added. “For me, I like to live in the moment.”

“It’s an honour that he said that. But I don’t want to weigh myself down with pressure and expectations.”

Osaka has proven to be irre-

I’M TAKING IT IN (SLAMS) SECTIONS. FOR RIGHT NOW, I’M TRYING TO GO FOR FIVE. AFTER FIVE I WOULD THINK ABOUT MAYBE DIVIDING THE 10, SO MAYBE SEVEN OR EIGHT. I DON’T LIKE TO TAKE THINGS BIG-PICTURE. FOR ME, I LIKE TO LIVE IN THE MOMENT

sistible on hard courts after now winning twice at Melbourne Park and Flushing Meadows.

But she’s struggled elsewhere, having never made it past the third round on the French Open’s clay or

Wimbledon’s grass courts.

“I feel like I have to get comfortable on those surfaces,” she said. “I didn’t grow up playing on grass at all.”

“I honestly think I’d have better luck on clay, because I think last year I didn’t play bad at all.”

However, when asked where she was most likely to win her first non-hardcourt Grand Slam, Osaka said: “Hopefully clay because it’s the one that’s sooner.”

As her achievements grow, Osaka said she simply hoped to inspire the next generation.

“Hopefully I play long enough to play a girl that said that I was once her favourite player,” she said.

“Unfortunately I didn’t get to play (her favourite player) Li Na. “I just think that’s how the sport moves forward.”

Anime, pizza, sleep: low-key celebration for Naomi

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Naomi Osaka said she’s living her “dreams” on Saturday after defeating Jennifer Brady to win the Australian Open, adding that she’ll celebrate with anime and pizza.

Having grown up watching the Australian Open at “crazy hours” in the United States, Osaka said it felt “surreal” to triumph for the second time at Melbourne Park.

“I’m really just living my dreams,” she told *Channel Nine*.

“I’m always shaking a little bit (at the end). Thank God I had three match points.”

Reinforcing her reputation herself as tennis’s leading light, having won four of her last eight Slams she’s played, Osaka warned she was not satisfied.

“I take every tournament seriously,” she said.

“I just want to be consistent and that is my main goal this year.”

Amid an uncertain upcoming schedule, Osaka said she hoped to play the Tokyo Olympics.

“Everyone knows I wanted to play in the Olympics since I was a kid and hopefully it goes through,” she said. But after her triumph, Osaka planned a low-key celebration.

“I’m probably going to watch some anime... maybe (eat) pizza... and go to sleep,” she said.

Slam win no longer an alien prospect for Brady



AFP ■ MELBOURNE

“I think I belong at this level. I think winning a Grand Slam is totally achievable. It’s within reach,” said Brady after her first Slam decider.

“Obviously I was nervous, didn’t go my way, but at the same time coming off court, I was like, OK, that feels a little bit normal.”

“If you were to ask me maybe a year ago, I wouldn’t think it’s possible or it would feel like it’s, like, going to Mars,” she added.

Brady has had the best run of her career since tennis returned from its coronavirus shutdown, winning her first WTA title and reaching the US Open semi-finals — where she also lost to Osaka.

She reached the Melbourne final despite undergoing 14 days’ hard quarantine in Australia, forced to stay in her room while other players were allowed out every day to train.

“I made my first Grand Slam final, so maybe if I wasn’t in quarantine I would have won,” she smiled, adding that she had “mixed feelings” about the match.

“I’m pretty proud of myself, my team, for what we achieved here. We came here and I reached my first Grand Slam final,” she said.

“But also I’m walking away with the runner-up trophy, not the winner’s trophy, so that’s a little bit sad.”

Krejciikova & Ram win mixed doubles title

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Barbora Krejciikova and Rajeev Ram won their second Australian Open mixed doubles title in three years on Saturday with a 6-1, 6-4 win over home pairing Sam Stosur and Matthew Ebden.

For Krejciikova it was her third Australian Open title in a row after combining with Nikola Mektic of Croatia to win the mixed doubles a year ago.

She had lost in the women’s doubles final with fellow Czech Katerina Siniakova on Friday to Elise Mertens



Rajeev Ram and Barbora Krejciikova pose with their trophy after defeating Samantha Stosur and Matthew Ebden in the mixed doubles final on Saturday

and Aryna Sabalenka, but put her disappointment behind her in just 59 minutes on Rod Laver Arena.

“We had a year off as a team, but she didn’t have a year off and won this thing last year,” Ram said of Krejciikova at the presentation ceremony.

“Three years running is an amazing job.”

Ram has a chance to pick up another Australian Open title on Sunday, when he and Britain’s Joe Salisbury defend their men’s doubles title against Ivan Dodig and Filip Polasek.

Champion takes on Challenger

In men’s final today, Djokovic chases 18th Slam, Medvedev 1st

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Novak Djokovic says going unbeaten in eight Australian Open finals will give him confidence in Sunday’s decider, but he’ll need more than that to overcome “the man to beat” — red-hot Russian Daniil Medvedev.

The Serbian world number one is into his ninth decider at Melbourne Park as he targets an 18th Slam title to close the gap on Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, who have 20 each.

It has been a rollercoaster ride to get there, with Djokovic uncharacteristically dropping five sets as he battled an abdominal injury that nearly forced him to pull out.

But after his semi-final, Djokovic said he was feeling better than at any time during the past fortnight as he prepares to defend his crown against a man on a 20-match unbeaten streak.

The Serb heads into the showpiece on Sunday evening with the phenomenal record of never losing a final on Melbourne’s famous blue courts in eight attempts spanning 13 years.

Djokovic will also be playing his 28th Grand Slam final, in contrast to the Russian’s second.

But the 33-year-old, who swept past qualifier Aslan Karatsev in the semi-finals, said while experience was



AP/File Picture

clearly an advantage, Medvedev was also in electric form.

“Of course it contributes to more confidence, prior to coming into the finals knowing that I never lost in the finals or semi-finals just makes me feel more comfortable being on the court,” he said.

“But each year is different, although it does have a mental effect on me. Maybe on my opponents, I don’t know, but on

Djokovic vs Medvedev
Live from 1:30pm IST
SONY TEN 2, TEN 3 & SIX

the momentum he was still the underdog.

“He’s the favourite because he didn’t lose. On eight occasions that he was here in the semis he won the tournament,” said the 25-year-old.

“Me, I’m... the challenger, the guy that challenges the guy who was eight times in the final and won eight times. And I’m happy about it.”

“I know that to beat him you need to just show your best tennis, be at your best physically maybe four or five hours, and be at your best mentally maybe for five hours,” he added.

Despite playing down his chances, Medvedev, who also reached the 2019 US Open final, losing to Nadal, has the weapons to trouble Djokovic, with a big serve, unrelenting returns and exceptional movement as he targets a maiden Grand Slam title.

Twelve of his 20 straight wins have been against top-10 players and he has won three of his last four against the 17-time Grand Slam-winning Serb.

“Playing Novak seven times already is just a huge experience,” he said.

“(But) I think when he’s in the zone he doesn’t miss. He goes down the line, cross, forehand, backhand, he doesn’t miss. That’s what is the toughest part of playing against him.”

‘HE’S THE FAVOURITE’

Medvedev, who has dropped just two sets so far, insisted that despite having all

All square at St Mary’s

AFP ■ SOUTHAMPTON



Southampton’s Takumi Minamino celebrates after scoring his side’s opening goal against Chelsea during Premier League match at St Mary’s stadium on Saturday

Mason Mount preserved Thomas Tuchel’s unbeaten record as the Chelsea midfielder equalised from the penalty spot to earn a 1-1 draw at Southampton on Saturday.

Tuchel’s side trailed to a first half goal from Japan star Takumi Minamino at St Mary’s.

Mount came to the rescue as he won and converted the second half spot-kick that extended Tuchel’s unbeaten run to seven matches in all competitions since he replaced the sacked Frank Lampard in January.

Chelsea remain fourth in the Premier League after their run of five successive wins came to an end.

They will fall out of the top four if West Ham beat Tottenham on Sunday.

In a performance reminiscent of the issues that plagued Lampard, Chelsea monopolised possession without delivering the knockout blow and paid for a defensive lapse.

Former Paris Saint Germain boss Tuchel will demand a much-improved display against Atletico Madrid in the Champions League last 16 first leg next week.

The Blues had conceded just one goal in the six games, but Southampton sliced them open with a rapier thrust in the 33rd minute.

Nathan Redmond cut infield and slipped a superb pass between Zouma and Cesar Azpilicueta.

With the centre-backs

caught out of position, on-loan Liverpool forward Minamino scampered clear and cleverly dummied Mendy and Azpilicueta before flicking a cool finish past the Chelsea keeper.

Hampered by an ankle injury, Tuchel replaces Abraham by Callum Hudson-Odoi at half-time.

Abraham’s exit put more onus on Werner, who had scored his first league goal in 14 games and 1,000 minutes when he netted against Newcastle.

Werner was lively enough, firing into the side-netting from a tight angle, but it was an incisive break from Mount that led to Chelsea’s equaliser.

Mount’s burst into the Southampton area prompted a rash lunge from Danny Ings and he picked himself up to convert the penalty for his fifth club goal of the season.

Jan Vestergaard was inches away from restoring Southampton’s lead when his header from Djenepo’s cross beat Mendy and cannoned back off the bar.

Hudson-Odoi’s brief substitute appearance ended in embarrassment when he was hauled off to make way for Hakim Ziyech.

James could have won it for Chelsea in the closing minutes but he side-footed over from Mount’s pass.




FROM THE INSIDE

Power of self-realisation

By associating with saintly beings, we can practice the four principles of religion — austerity, cleanliness, mercy & truthfulness

2



4

Stepping stone to *dhyana*

Dharana, dhyana and samadhi are the progressively growing three successive stages of *dhyana*



My theory is that if you look confident you can pull off anything — even if you have no clue what you're doing — Jessica Alba





SUSTAINABLE WORKPLACES

ENCOURAGING GREEN HR PRACTICES

Organisations that have made greening a priority for themselves expect environment-centric behaviour from their people and this has resulted in judicious utilisation of resources, say SONI AGRAWAL and ROMA PURI

Businesses need to go beyond the interests of their companies to the communities they serve. — Ratan Tata

Very recently Mahindra&Mahindra got caught on the wrong foot. A picture of M&M's Board meeting was shared on Twitter, where a user pointed out use of disposable plastic bottles in the Board meeting of the company. This promptly led Mr. Mahindra to take ownership and banish plastic bottles from meetings and replace them with environment friendly alternatives.

This simple narrative points out how the organisers of the meeting had not thought about the environmental implications of their actions (using plastic bottles in the meeting), when the company is actively promoting environment and sustainability, and this may be true for employees across organisations as well, who are neither aware nor committed to the environmental cause. Hence, employee involvement becomes important for organisations on its sustainability journey.

Smart organisations know how to ensure core values of their organisation. This can happen either by persuading their employees or by giving them a clear message. Organisations that have made greening a priority for themselves expect environment-centric behaviour from their people and this has resulted in judicious utilisation of resources. In addition, consistent assessment of environmental impact while taking business decisions, recycling and repurposing of resources and adoption of sustainable forms of different resources are some other important parameters.

ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE WORKPLACE

Sustainability, greening the corporation, environment management are gradually becoming a part of the corporate vocabulary. The way the natural resources are extracted and consumed from earth, it is going to be very difficult to replenish them timely. It is often discussed in various forums that for generating the resources we spend in one year; earth takes around 1.5 years for the re-generation. Hence, it can be assumed that there will a requirement of the capacity of almost two Earths by 2030 to keep pace with the present natural resource consumption, and the requirement will be of three planets by 2050.

Experts have always warned people about the impacts of climate change, global warming and the recent onset of a pandemic (Covid-19) can completely rewire people's brains. All these environmental changes will have far reaching impact on humanity and life force on the planet. They would be designed in such a way that they work on People-Planet-Profit (PPP)

methodologies, thereby providing benefits to all the stakeholders. The architecture, building, resources employed would all be designed to function on the principles that promote sustainability.

The current requirement is towards developing long-term, meaningful relationships, and self-discipline for attaining effective results. Thus, the design of the workplace is such that supports the basic and core idea in a more accommodating and comprehensive manner. When employees find the conviction among their leaders, they tend to behave in the manner that supports green and sustainable way of working in an interrelated and interlinked way.

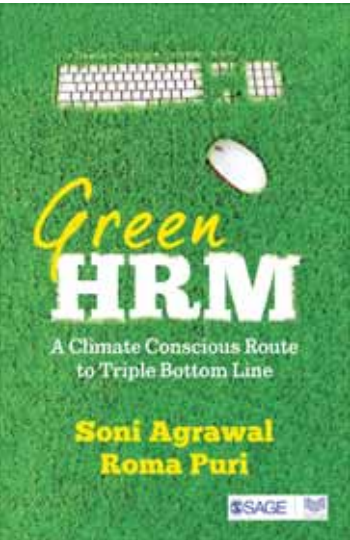
A Green workplace is an eco-friendly and focused organisation and leans towards the adoption of business practices that are justifiable in nature, energy efficient, and well suited to the complex as well as the ever-changing world of business. It advocates the model based on 3Rs — reduce, reuse, recycle. It is not only green building and green infrastructure, rather it has a much broader scope. It encompasses green competencies, green attitude, and green behaviour, which is combined synergistically to help the organisation become green or sustainable. Values are the essential characteristic that both employees and organisations uphold and operate at multiple levels (societal, organisational and personal), thus playing a fundamental role in shaping the organisation's culture with regard to a shift towards greater sustainability.

RECENT CHANGES POST COVID-19 IN HR DOMAIN

A lot of changes were witnessed post pandemic in the very year of 2020. Globally, work from office (if not completely zero) definitely went on the downward slide. At the same time, thanks to availability of internet and online working option availability, work was not completely shut. Although, work from office was very less, we could experiment with new working models in most of the industries and companies of all sizes. Though we were not meeting face-to-face, we were still connected. The pandemic accelerated the adoption of technology and digital way of working tremendously.

Now, with the vaccine discussions, new experiments are being made. These include mixing remote and office work with safety protocols, remote management, making tough decisions like giving furlough to some workers and growing the roles of others, engagement, learning, monitoring and evaluating so that the business of the organisation can happen as usual.

Global industry analyst Josh aptly mentioned at Perspectives 2020, "For us in HR, it is really time to be the heroic leaders of the response." Thus, the HR is experimenting and



THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IS PIVOTAL WHEN IT COMES TO ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABILITY IN ORGANISATIONS. CEOS ACROSS COMPANIES AND NATIONALITIES ARE UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMITTING TO SUSTAINABILITY AND HAVE PLACED SUSTAINABILITY ON TOP OF THEIR AGENDA

finding opportunity the year of the pandemic and following year with huge expectations and the big acceleration of the transformation HR. The enmeshment of all aspects has caused a sea change in how people are working at home, trying to strike a balance among all the domains. The clear segregation between home and work has today blurred, integration, of an 'enforced' kind is in place which is different from the voluntary work from home which companies used to give. Thus, in this process of transformation and management of unprecedented situation, HR is gaining smoothly greater importance.

WORK FROM HOME AND SUSTAINABLE ASPECTS

Although, work from home (WFH) was always advocated by HR fraternity (as it gives the opportunity for work life integration), the actual decision to allow the employees to work from home was a difficult one. The principal risk to firms when allowing employees to work from home is a potential inability to monitor those employees to the same degree as would be possible if he or she worked in a traditional office setting.

During Covid-19, the situations are different. Everyone is worried about health and well-being related aspects. Supply chains are disrupted. Daily and essential works are taking more time as no support is available at home. More than that, all the family members are available all the time at the same place with kids not going outside is an extra burden of managing and engaging them with lots of patience. Along with that the individual difference of managing stress and uncertainties also play an important role when we talk about working effectively in this uncertain times.

Working from home or working at home during the Covid-19 pandemic has given rise to realities which are reframing the very fabric of our social, occupational, and emotional lives. Not surprisingly, the nature of WFH has changed in recent years. The cost to employees of corresponding with employers and co-workers quickly and effectively from a distance has fallen dramatically.

In addition, the positive aspect can be seen that resource utilisation has gone down dramatically. Due to WFH and less commute required, there seem chances that less people need to travel daily to attend their office. The proposed hybrid model, where WFH and online learning will be a part, lesser vehicles will be needed on the road. That will definitely impact positively in terms of less polluted air and sound. Due to digital way of working, prevalence of electronic mail, video conferencing software, and mobile communication through ubiquitous cellular communications networks, the usage of electricity, paper will go down.

LEADERS' ROLE IN ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABILITY IN ORGANISATIONS

The role of leadership is pivotal when it comes to encouraging sustainability in organisations. CEOs across companies and nationalities are understanding the importance of committing to sustainability and have placed sustainability on top of their agenda. The seriousness of climate threat and the growing awareness around environmental issues is making organisations commit to reducing their contribution to pollution and depletion of natural resources.

Indian organisations have become a part of the Carbon Disclosure Project thereby committing to reduce emission of carbon but recent reports show that CDP has pulled up 20 Indian organisations for their weak sustainability disclosures. A recent CDP India Annual Report also discloses that Indian companies are not much concerned about deforestation and do not make a realistic assessment of the impact of their business on deforestation. This indicates the lack of seriousness to take environmental impact of business into consideration.

This is where the role of leadership becomes highly significant. Integrating sustainability and environmental issues into the strategy of business can only be accomplished at the highest level of the organisation. We need the business leaders to step up and work towards becoming more sustainable. There are examples of leaders who have taken sustainability to be the most important driver of their business. Yvon Chouinard of Patagonia is a shining example of sustainable leadership. He not only made sustainability a part of his business but also worked with his vendors to make their businesses sustainable. His contribution to the environment extended to producing documentaries meant to sensitise people on environmental issues.

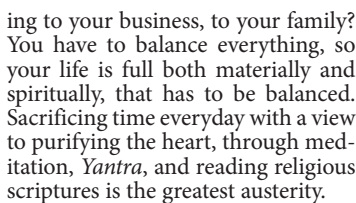
Late Y.C. Deveshwar, former Chairman of ITC Ltd. in an interview had stated that sustainability was a key to gain competitive advantage. The current CEO and MD of ITC, Sanjiv Puri has committed to stretch goals to improve its sustainability performance by 2030 by replacing 50% of the company's energy consumption with renewable sources.

These examples demonstrate the leader's vision and commitment to sustainability are imperative to promote sustainability in organisations. The leader's beliefs about environmental conservation and a vision centered around sustainability can motivate employees to take up the environmental cause. The leader can become a catalyst in enhancing awareness on sustainability by making it a part of the corporate vocabulary and integrating sustainability as a value in the organisation's culture.

HIDDEN SOULS
PRAMOD PATHAK

Essence of *Dharma*

Pathak is a professor of management, writer, and an acclaimed public speaker. He can be reached at ppathak.ism@gmail.com



CLEANLINESS

The second principle of religion is Cleanliness. It is said that Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Cleanliness means for the body and the mind. For cleanliness of the body, we should bathe at least once a day. Because when the body becomes dirty, the environment also becomes dirty and it is very difficult for the mind to remain clean.

MERCY

The next principle of religion is 'Mercy'. How to be merciful within this society? Again every religion of the world teaches us that we must be merciful and show mercy to all. It is sacrifice, it is Austerity. The non-violence must be based on 'faith in God'. Faith can move mountains, We must have faith.

TRUTHFULNESS

The fourth principle of religion is truthfulness. What is the truth? The answer lies in simply not telling lies in our daily affairs. We should be honest and straight forward in all our dealings in this world that is called Morality. Lord Krishna says in *Bhagavad Gita* that the definition of truth is to know that all living beings are part of me and they are in me and they are mine. The truth is that we are part of God. That everything is the property of God. Unless we know the truth, unless we understand the truth how can we be truthful.

By understanding and pursuing Truth, we can see how everything within our environment is perfect. How everything is the loving grace of God. Not simple to intellectual understanding, but we can experience from the core of our heart the God's expression of love in every condition of life. This is the real peace. This is not intangible, it is not something impossible. It is as close as your own soul. We are running in every other direction to find pleasure and peace. We simply have to redirect our priorities in life towards our soul and towards our service of the god. By associating with saintly persons, by hearing the truth, we will learn how to practice these four principles of religion, austerity, cleanliness, mercy, and truthfulness.

The writer is a spiritual guru at the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)

The world is full of uncertainties and the fact is that one can never change the condition of this universe. However, we can make arrangements to change ourselves in order to adjust with the environment and learn to live harmoniously. We must as far as possible create an environment which is conducive to peace, prosperity and happiness among the people. Therefore, great Saints the world over have propagated the need for self-realisation among the people.

The question that haunts our mind is how to bring about peace in this world? Some people argue that we can do so through religion. However, it is not so. In fact, most of the violence which occurs in this world, today, has surfaced in the form of 'terrorism' which has sprung up from the issues of religion. The terrorists wrongly surmise that by resorting to terrorism they can save their religion. However, this is far from the truth. No religion preaches violence but only propagates peace in the universe. Unfortunately, this has been misinterpreted by terrorists to suit their interests.

Take the case of the great

Mahabharata war which occurred more than 5,000 years ago between Kaurvas and Pandavas. The war was based on certain principles or rules which were agreed upon by both the sides. There was no terrorism involved in that Great War. Only men fought in the war. Women, children and old people did not participate in the battle. The armies fought with equal strength and with pride and honour with a firm conviction that whoever wins will get the kingdom of Hastinapur to rule and whoever dies shall go to heaven. As compared to this battle, terrorism, which has surfaced today, does not spare people even women, children and the old. This is the bitter truth that we are facing today.

Terrorism knows no religion. Terrorists, today, blow up airplanes, plant bombs in buses and public transport vehicles, in cinema houses or shopping Malls — all this in the name of religion although the violence has nothing to do with the religion.

Srimad Bhagavatam describes that religion is based on four principles. They are called the four pillars of religion. They are Austerity, Cleanliness, Mercy, and Truthfulness. Whether you call yourself a Hindu, a Muslim, a

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Buddhist, a Christian it is not so important. The question is how we are developing our love for God through the process of following these four principles of religion? By following these four principles we can realise our eternal relationship with the Supreme creator and then we can look harmoniously in any condition that the environment has placed before us and remain peaceful and contribute to the wellbeing of the society.

AUSTERITY

Let us consider the first principle of 'Austerity' which means to be willing to accept inconvenience for the purification of one's heart and in the service of God and in the service of humanity.

Austerity means to be willing to accept inconvenience, sacrifice and even pain, for the purpose of purifying our consciousness and to reject things which are unfavorable for the purification of our heart, whether we like it or not. Human life is meant for sacrifice.

Austerity means making priority in your time. How much time are you dedicating to purify your heart for God? How much time you are allocat-

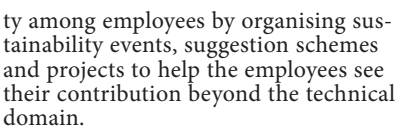
FROM PAGE 1

Dedicating funds and other resources for environmental projects, instituting rewards and recognition for contributions towards sustainability can also be initiated by the leader. The leader can walk the talk by demonstrating environment friendly behaviour by reducing wastage of electricity, paper and other resources. These savings may not amount to much but as actions speak louder than words they go on to show that the leader believes in sustainability and acts on it at a personal level.

EMPLOYEES' ROLE IN ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABILITY

Employees can play an important role in promoting sustainability at the workplace. It is seen that individuals may be very conscious of sustainability and waste management at home but this behaviour does not always translate into environment-friendly behaviour at the place of work. At homes we have electricity meters which help in monitoring consumption but in an office employees do not receive individualized bills for energy and paper consumption thereby diffusing responsibility towards resource usage.

The idea is to make all the employees understand the environmental implications of their work behaviour and improve ways to reduce/ reuse/ recycle resources. The collective impact of sustainable behaviour can reap rich dividends for organisations in the form of savings and reduction in environmental footprints. Organisations are now trying to collaborate with NGOs and other environment management organisations to sensitise employees on sustainability matters. There are instances in which employees have initiated waste management, car-pooling and recycling of resources on their own and this has inspired peers to follow in their footsteps. Organisations can encourage sustainability



As the general awareness on sustainability is increasing, we find that sustainability is becoming an important contributor to the employer brand and talent is naturally choosing organisations that value sustainability. Some employees may have a natural propensity towards environmental issues. Organisations can appoint them as sustainability champions in their organisations. They can act as role models and also provide momentum to the sustainability movement inside the organisation. The champions can help create sustainability converts that is employees who adopt sustainability by understanding its importance.

Sustainability is also being called a super strategy for promoting employee engagement. Organisations can get

employees to connect by making them see how their contribution is significant by establishing a connection between work behaviour and sustainability.

The year long struggle with Covid has already made us realise how important the harmony between the environment and humanity is for us to survive as a species in times to come. The total reliance on technology to work has led to considerable savings in commuting time and costs. Though this situation was forced upon us, it demonstrated that this sustainable form of work is definitely a viable alternative. Organisations should now change their mindset of – “if I don't see you, you are not working” and make work from home (WFH) a practice. It is not only going to cut on the costs of operations but would have a very positive effect on the environment in the long run.

Organisations such as Salesforce, BitPay and Square are looking at the permanent work from home as long term options. It may not be possible for all the organisations to do so, but practicing WFH to the extent possible in going to increase employee well-being as well as environmental wellbeing. Organisation can also have innovative ways of making employees commit to sustainability by having a personal/departmental sustainability action plans in which employees would plan their sustainability activities voluntarily. Institutionalising sustainability can help get employee ownership for sustainability. The idea is to make sustainability integral to daily work behaviour rather than making it into an event which is celebrated in the form of environmental day or week and forgotten as soon as it is over.

Soni Agrawal and Roma Puri recently published Green HRM: A Climate Conscious Route to Triple Bottom with SAGE Publications India

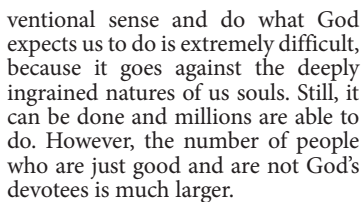
God empowers His devotees to do extraordinary feats, which benefit the creation/mankind, writes AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

In the verse 18.65 of *Bhagavad Gita*, Lord gently states, “Develop My consciousness; become My devotee; make sacrifices for Me; and offer obedience to Me.” In the verse 12.8, He is cajoles, “Fix your mind in Me only; engage your intelligence in Me.” In the verse 11.34, God instructs Arjuna to do His bidding when He states, “You fight; kill; do not get disturbed; you will conquer.” Then, in the verse 18.62, He goes direct when He states, “In all respects take shelter of Him, meaning Himself.” And in the verse 18.66, He leaves us no choice when He states, “Take My shelter only.” He couldn't be more direct, leaving no ambiguity.

Complete surrender is required for the proper functioning of the system. Can any company survive for long if its employees do not obey the employer? What does the employer do when they don't obey? He fires them for the sake of the health of the company. Similarly, God or His system would not tolerate indiscipline for long; the divine authorities will punish by demoting the offenders to lower species.

There are innumerable examples of taking shelter of higher authorities in our daily lives. Then, why not do the same in case of the Almighty, who is everything vis-à-vis this creation?

Fortunately for us, many do. The whole system, that is, this creation cannot function unless there are good people and, more specifically, devotees of God. They are the bedrocks of the system. And such persons benefit immensely by doing what the Lord or the system expects them to do. The Lord realises that the small soul is very limited. To be both good in the con-



Obviously, benefits accruing to devotees will be much greater. These benefits are duly delivered, otherwise who will choose this difficult path. Of course there are various degrees of being good and the extent one is linked with God, and their rewards are also likewise graded.

Briefly, good people are mostly rewarded in these ways. Their good *karmas*¹ entitle them to many material benefits like sufficient resources, welcome attention and the most important support of the system. As far as benefits to God's devotees, these are very wide in scope. God guides because this is crucial to stay on the right

course, and God, being omniscient, always knows perfectly. God protects; gets devotees out of trouble. God supports; maintains and provides all the needed resources for a satisfactory existence. God helps in many other ways as well like He warns His devotees; gives them mental strength; gives them intelligence — the ability to make the right decisions; the strength to tolerate; the ability to transcend the difficult to deal with '*mayā*' — the illusory energy of the Lord; and helps them overcome '*tomoguna*' — the dark mode. God empowers His devotees to do extraordinary feats, which benefit the creation/mankind. God forgives; He gives peace — the only source who can. He forgives, i.e. releases from sins and, ultimately, liberates when a particular soul has attained a certain degree of enlightenment. Is God wrong in insisting that we take shelter in Him?

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Migrant protection: Biden takes challenge

Although Donald Trump left the White House on January 20, some of his policies like the crucial Migrant Protection Protocol (MPP) remain a “choke point” for thousands of migrants awaiting entry into the US.

The Trump Administration is formally gone, but the shadow of Trumpism has perpetuated. Both critics and fans of Trump agree on the fact that Joe Biden has inherited a largely “Divided America”. Although the Biden Administration has tried to reposition America at the heart of globality, the wounds of the Trump days would take longer than what Biden and the liberals are expecting.

The MPP is a US Government action whereby citizens and nationals of countries other than Mexico arriving in the US by land from Mexico, whether or not at a port of entry, may be returned to Mexico, pursuant to Section 235 (b) (2) (C) of the Immigration National Act (INA), while their US removal proceedings are pending under Section 240 of the INA. But the Government of Mexico has committed to providing aliens place into MPP with appropriate humanitarian protections, including immigration documentation and access to education, healthcare and employment.

In fact, the Section 235 of the INA addresses the inspection of the aliens seeking admission into the US and provides specific procedures regarding the treatment of those not clearly entitled to admission. Further Section 235 (b) (C) (2) provides that “in the case of an alien... who is arriving on land, (whether or not at a designated port of arrival) from a foreign territory contiguous to the US, the Secretary of Homeland Security may return the alien to that territory pending a removal proceeding under Section 240 of the INA. But individuals in such removal proceedings have the ability to seek relief or protection from removal, including asylum.

It has been regarded as one of the most controversial pieces of legislation of the Trump era. But now the question is that how does it work? The aliens subject to the MPP are placed into removal proceedings under Section 240 of the INA



Migrants waiting to cross into the United States wait for news at the border crossing on February 17, 2021, in Tijuana, Mexico

AP

before an immigration judge, just like any other alien in removal proceedings pursuant to Section 240 of the INA. The aliens generally remain in Mexico throughout the duration of their removal proceedings. Only issue is that while waiting for the final decision of the immigration trial, the immigrants, particularly women, children and aged people suffer a lot in the hands of the authority. Once their removal proceedings are completed, the aliens who receive final orders of removal are turned over to the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement authorities.

Further, the aliens who are granted relief from removal including asylum will be allowed to remain in the US, consistent with the existing laws and policies.

The origin of the MPP goes back to December 2018. On that very month, the Trump Administration announced the creation of a new programme known as ‘Migrant Protection Protocols’ (MPP). It’s often referred to as the “Remain in Mexico”. Under

the jurisdiction of the MPP, individuals who arrive at the southern border of the US i.e. US-Mexico Border and ask for asylum, (either at a port of entry or after crossing the borders between the port of entry) are given notices to appear in immigration court or sent back to Mexico. Meanwhile they are instructed to return to a specific port of entry on a specific date and time for their next court hearing.

However, the MPP is different from another process regarded as “Metering”. Under Metering, it takes months for migrants before they are even allowed to approach US border officials to just start the process of asylum. The waitlist of these migrants are managed by themselves and by local shelters or Mexican authorities. Finally the US Government only decides how many people are allowed to request asylum each day. But the disheartening fact is that on some particular days, the US officials do not call anyone for processing their applications in certain locations. This uncertain wait today is prolonging and the migrants

have to experience the worst of the tragedies at times.

It is worth noting why America has introduced the MPP. During the Fiscal Year 2019, America encountered a security and humanitarian crisis in its South West border when nearly one million migrants who entered the country illegally or without proper documentation were apprehended or encountered by the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Therefore, to address this imminent crisis, the Trump Administration used all appropriate resources, and authorities to secure the borders, enforce immigration and customs laws, facilitate legal trade and travel, counter traffickers, smugglers and transnational criminal organisations and finally to interdict drugs and contraband. Thus to restore the normal process of safe and orderly immigration, and to reduce incentives for aliens to try illegal entry methods and to make meritless case for entry or removal from protection, the legislation called the MPP was brought into practice.

Migration, to be precise, is an unending process. Since time immemorial, people have moved from one part to the other parts of the globe, either looking for a better life or to escape adversities in life. With globalisation, the process of migration has become easier, better and transparent.

The first World Migration Report was released by the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), a UN agency, in the year 2017. A lot has happened since then across the world. In the last two years, the world has witnessed historic changes at the international level: the member states of the UN have come together to finalise two global compacts on the international manifestations of migration and displacement, which are: a) Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and b) Global Compact on Refugees.

The finalisation of these two historic compacts is the result of sustained efforts brought by states, international agencies, human rights bodies, civil society organisations, and even private actors to

improve how the process of migration is governed at the global level. All these actors demand a safe, humane and affordable process of migration.

Today, what is happening to the thousands of migrants at the US-Mexico border is drawing the attention of the entire world. Most of these migrants are coming from the Central American countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, etc. The steady flow of immigrants leaving these North Central American countries simply reflect the grim realities of life for millions of children and their families. The root causes of this pervasive migration are manifold: crushing poverty, endemic crime, environmental crises, gang-related violence, extortion, high rates of domestic violence, sexual abuse of girls and forced recruitment in various street gangs. Besides, many of the horrific tales of migration are accompanied with the realities of scarce social services and very limited opportunities to learn or to earn a decent living. Hence millions of migrants from these countries keep

migrating to the US each year and they face insurmountable risks to their lives on this long road.

There is demand from some sections of liberals that the Biden Administration should immediately dismantle this harsh piece of legislation introduced by his predecessor. But, will he be able to do it? At the moment, Biden is trying to undo some of the critical decisions taken by the Trump regime in the last four years.

However the MPP is a very sensitive legislation. January 29 marked the second anniversary of the MPP. The asylum seekers and advocates of migration across America are using this occasion to call for an end to this controversial law. To them, this MPP has prevented thousands of people from accessing a meaningful and safe opportunity to seek asylum in America. They are blaming Trump’s poor vision and blaming him for destroying the very image of a liberal and democratic America of the yesteryears built by the founding fathers of the American Constitution. And these anti-MPP activists say that the legislation is a clear violation of the due process and violation of universal human rights. Since March 2020, the US Administration has suspended all MPP hearings because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the Trump era, his administration continued subjecting people to the programme without knowing when their cases could be heard in the court.

On Biden’s first day in office, the Department of Homeland Security immediately announced that it would stop placing new asylum seekers into the MPP. This may be a critical first step in that direction, but it simply fulfils his election promise to end the programme. However, the latest report say that even Biden’s White House is indicating that it is not the time to rush. An orderly immigration protocol would certainly take time. To dismantle Trump legislations may be easy, but the truth behind many of these laws and regulations reveal many fault lines of 21st century America. And Biden needs to tread carefully.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)



MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE

Giving wing to Indian aviation industry

Tax exemptions on aircraft leasing and rentals for foreign companies are likely to provide relief to bleeding Indian airlines



BRAJESH KUMAR TIWARI

The current Union Budget has given a new lease of life to some vital sectors, including aviation. Any policy which aims at liberalising regulation is a good sign in upscaling skill and boosting job opportunities, helping India become a super-power by 2030.

In a bid to attract foreign aircraft lessors in the country, the Government has rolled out tax incentives for companies that are willing to set up shop at International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). Gujarat International Finance Tec-City Company Ltd (GIFT City) — which is being developed as the country’s first IFSC — is poised to be the next hub of prosperity for businesses as soon as most companies set up shop.

The current policy also proves beneficial for sale-lease-back (SLB) transactions where-in airlines sell aircraft to buy them back via lease, thus lowering the aggregate enterprise debt. This especially works in case of facilitating repayment of long-term loans, bonds or working capital requirement.

Indian companies rank at the top of the global listing of aircraft lease.

In addition to the tax incentives for foreign aircraft lessors willing to set up business in India, the Government has offered additional incentives, including:

- a) tax holiday for capi-



tal gains incomes from aircraft leasing

- b) tax exemptions for aircraft lease rentals or royalty paid to foreign lessor

- c) tax incentive for re-location of foreign funds in IFSC, and

- d) tax exemptions to investment division of the foreign banks located in IFSC

These tax exemptions are a

major boon for lessors operating from IFSC. Evidently, the Government is providing an avenue of business development by establishing a conducive aircraft leasing and financing environment in India. Additionally, it is also offering better terms to Indian and foreign carriers.

The best part of this Budget is the abolishment of custom

duty i.e., reducing the tax rate from 2.5 per cent to zero across the entire MRO (maintenance repair and overhaul) industry, a \$1.5 billion industry in India. Setting up an MRO requires a high capital and constitutes a long break-even time. India constitutes less than one per cent of the entire global industry which caters to commercial travel, goods sup-

ply and defence. Reducing duties is a strategic move towards ensuring that India captures a higher share of the global market.

This Budget also paves the way for flavoursome proposition of PPP (public private partnership) players by encouraging private players to offer support to the aviation industry on areas such as infra-

structure building, airport operations and construction. The Airport Authority of India is working on the next round of privatisation of 10 airports in the next three years.

Six airports have already been awarded to the successful bidders and the concession agreements have been signed. This step will help the Ministry of Civil Aviation to complete the goal of building 100 new airports by 2024 which shows the airline industry has excellent growth prospects. The biggest transfer of power happening in the airline sector is the privatisation of Air India and Pawan Hans, which will generate economic surplus and also help reduce the ₹60,000 crore compounding loan book of Air India.

A new centrally sponsored scheme, PM Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana will be launched with an outlay of ₹64,160 crore over six years. Health is the primary concern in everyone’s minds in the Covid-19 pandemic era. Now 32 airports are in development stage to create special entry points for the healthcare sector, including pharma logistics, organ dispatch, patient transport.

The agriculture industry will also be receiving 50 per cent open freight subsidy for agri-perishable products of north-eastern States and four

Himalayan States/UTs. Krishi Udan will be launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation on international and national routes. This is intended to help improve value realisation (on agricultural products), especially in the north-east and tribal districts.

The Union Budget has greatly prioritised aviation. It has set the stage for an ambitious plan to monetise airports across tier 2 and tier 3 cities in the country. What’s remarkable is that these cities have seen a significant growth in demand for air travel by first-time flyers, especially after the relaxation in the Covid-19 lockdown rules.

The Budget is a boon to the aviation sector as the allocations and plans are made not only to put the aviation industry on priority, but the ripple effect will help boost all sectors of business where airlines stand as a factor in increasing their efficiency.

Monetisation of airports will prospectively accelerate infrastructure development, particularly in the not-so-developed areas. This will also strengthen regional air connectivity.

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