

HOME THEATRE

Plenty of twists and intrigue



TANDAV
Amazon Prime Video
*ing: Saif Ali Khan, Dimple Kapadia, Mohd Zeeshan Ayub, Sunil Grover, Gaahar Khan, Kritika Kamra
Rated: 5.5/10

This 38-minute each episode created by Ali Abbas Zafar may not have been able to scratch the surface as far as intrigue and twists are concerned but that doesn't mean that they are missing. The Season 1 that has nine episodes takes you on a behind closed doors journey of politics where playing person against the other, murder and using the common man as a stepping stone to further one's career is fair game — all that matters is the position and the power that comes with it.

While the story appears to have been told many times, *Tandav* manages to keep one engaged. Who doesn't want to know how the game is played and however fictional the characters may be, a reference to a lady politician can't help one try and draw parallel

even if the said people are no more and the mere mention of the names can be construed in bad taste. But then, this is reel life not reality.

The makers have ensured that no one point is dragged for long and the story moves at a pace that is interesting and offers plenty of turns that may leave one stumped only to be thrown a curve ball with another twist — all within a span of minutes.

The performance too keeps one glued to this series. Sunil Grover as Guralp is a welcome change. It is good to see him move totally away from Dr Gulati's role in *The Kapil Sharma show*. Saif Ali Khan plays his role just as brilliantly.

As a wannabe king to a kingmaker, his character keeps the interest alive. Dimple Kapadia may look a tad old but one can't take away the elegance with which she portrays herself here. The others actors, and there are so many, do their bit.

It makes for a good watch since it gas plenty of twists and turns.

— Shalini Saksena

Starts on a good note



OUTSIDE THE WIRE
Netflix
Presenter: Anthony Mackie, Damson Idris, Emily Beecham, Michael Kelly, Pilou Asbæk
Rated: 6/10

There is a thrill that comes with watching an action-thriller and when that is embellished with sci-fi the experience of watching the same is at another level. It goes without saying that one must enjoy this genre otherwise it can be a drag as one tries to grapple with what is unfolding.

The storyline is simple enough to begin with — bring down a madman all set to wage a war against the US by going after the nukes that are in hiding. The curve ball? The setting is 2036 with a Civil War in Europe.

Then there is the whole thing about using machines to fight this unrest and caught in between are the locals who only want peace and go on with their lives. Machines fighting? Sound familiar? Remember the Terminator series? *Outside The Wire* takes that on to a whole new dimension — a humanoid — a prototype — capable of doing things out-the-box; a lean mean fighting machine but capable of emotions. Definitely dangerous because it means it can think independently of its maker.

Outside The Wire directed by Mikael Hafstrom is definitely an ambitious project that starts off on a rather intriguing idea and keeps one engaged for the majority of the film. Anthony Mackie who is also one of the producers here pairs up with Damon Idris, plays the role of an android officer rather well. The downer is that the movie somewhat loses its steam as it progresses to become a film that is all about killing the enemy — the US — in order for to stop its android soldiers' project since the prototype has gone rogue.

The repetitive shoot-out are a drag but those who love bullets flying at the drop of a hat would love this one. After all to watch machines go all out is what action thrillers are all about even if the climax is a bit of a let down given a good start.

— Shalini Saksena

TELLY TALE

ADITYA IS BACK WITH BAWRA DIL

Bringing forth an uncommon tale of Siddhi and Shiva filled with love and hatred will be Colors' upcoming love story *Bawara Dil*. Back on TV after a brief hiatus will be actor Aditya Redij who will essay the character of Shiva Lashkare. Like a force of nature, Shiva holds a powerful personality and usually comes across as an angry young man. Pure at heart but often misunderstood because of his brash nature, he is someone who doesn't follow the rules & conventions laid by society but instead makes his own.

His counterpart Siddhi Gokarna is an educated and intellectual young woman with a strong sense of morals and justice. But in a twist of fate, Shiva and Siddhi start off on a wrong note and their bond is fuelled by hatred

Shiva and Siddhi have strikingly different personalities and their colliding life principles ensure they are never on the same page about anything. But as fate has it they get married and unlike any happily ever after, the two vow to come together only to destroy each other.

Speaking about essaying the role of Shiva, Aditya said: "I am super excited for my new show, specially because I've been waiting to play a character like Shiva who is a 26-year-old rebellious self-made man. One who looks tough from the outside but has a child inside him. My last affiliation with Colors was a great success and I am sure that this one will do wonders too. I hope that my audience will like my performance as they watch me portray Shiva's character in *Bawara Dil*."

Talking about playing Siddhi, Kinjal Dhamecha said: "This is my debut show with Colors, a dream I always hoped would come true. Siddhi's role is very special to me, because of the strong and unique character that she is. She is someone who will always side with what is right no matter the price. She is fierce, determined and honest at the same time. The intensity of the character has impressed me alot. I can't wait for the day my fans will finally get to watch the show on TV."

DHARMESH ONBOARD FOR DD

Life is always better when you dance! With the lockdown behind us and

with everyone stepping into the new year with new vigour, it's time to put on your dancing shoes again and reignite your passion for dance as the biggest dance reality show is back. The stage of Dance Deewane, which is known to fulfil dreams and celebrate the spirit of the dance of all generations is set to return with its new season — *Wagt Ko Nachane, Dance Machane*. This time, the ace choreographer, Dharmesh Yelande, will be joining the charismatic diva Madhuri Dixit and the very talented Tushar Kalia on the judges' panel and mentor the contestants to put their best foot forward.

The upcoming season of *Dance Deewane* will resurrect the power of dreams once again as dancers across different age groups will come together and make the stage a springboard for their talent. The contestants will dance their way into the judges' hearts in duos, trios and groups.

WHO'S YOUR ROOMMATE?

Ever imagined what would you do if you had a ghost for a roommate? This is what four bachelor friends (Nikhil, Kavi, Subbu and Sanki) are about to find out in MX Player's upcoming horror comedy — MX Original Series *Aapkey Kanrey Mein Koi Rehta Hai*.

In dire circumstances, the foursome — Nikhil (Sumeet Vyas), Subbu (Naveen Kasturia), Kavi (Amol Parashar) and Sanki (Ashish Verma) are ecstatic when they find a 4 B.H.K for a measly rent, in a city like Mumbai. But little did they know that they would be sharing their amazing new flat with a newly acquired roommate who is a ghost! Life gets further complicated when the beautiful Mausam (Swara Bhasker) comes for their housewarming party, and then begins the comedy of horrors. The five-episodic series, directed by Gaurav Sinha will stream for free, starting January 22 exclusively on MX Player.

Speaking about the same, Swara Bhasker says: "Picking roles that span across genres and varied character graphs has always been important to me. Whether it was as the sultry Shanoo, the amiable Beanie or now the free spirited Mausam, I've enjoyed portraying all, and I think this horror comedy will hit the right notes of laughter and unexpected drama."

Of history and hope

RAJESH SHRINGARPURE, who plays Malhar Rao Holkar in SET'S Punyashlok Ahilya Bai, tells MUSBA HASHMI what is the character about, the responsibility that comes with such roles and the reason behind the never-ending craze for historical shows

Retelling the tales of history and mythology on TV is a pure delight both for the makers and the audience. No matter how many times one sees such stories, they still look as fresh and entertaining. Take for example Ramanand Sagar's *Ramayan*, which even after so many years became one of the most watched series on TV during the lockdown or for that matter BR Chopra's *Mahabharat* which was also topping the list.

One wonders what is it with such shows that they can never go out of trend. "Our soul lies there. We are able to connect with these stories and that's the reason they are always on our watch lists. The other reason is that people get life lessons from them in an entertaining way. If we'll preach them something, the audience immediately lose interest, but instead if we teach them in a fun way they will learn from it," Rajesh Shringarpure, who plays Malhar Rao Holkar in SET'S *Punyashlok Ahilya Bai*, says.

The story, he says, is the 17th century period drama and is not about the chronicles or glory of Malhar Rao, but the rapport that he shared with his daughter-in-law, Ahilya Bai Holkar. "Malhar Rao is compassionate, endearing and he understands even the smallest of emotions of every one. He has been given the title of *subedar* by the Peshwas. He came from a humble and subdued family. He supports his daughter-in-law in all walks of her journey. The relationship that is shown here between the father-in-law and daughter-in-law is very unique," he explains.

On what attracted Shringarpure to the show, he says, is of course the story itself. "It is a matter of pride for anyone to be a part of such inspiring stories. Also, the character itself is so strong. Not to mention, the progressive thoughts that the story has to offer, I was instantly attracted towards this role and the show," he says.

There is always a learning lesson when is a part of historical shows, he adds. "People always tell you to forget the past and move on. But when we become a part of such stories, it is then we realise that we shouldn't forget our past, roots, forefathers and what they did for us. It is because of them we are able to live a happy and independent life," he says.

With such roles, he says, comes a lot



of responsibility to do justice to the character. "When one plays a character who is praised like God by a society, there is a lot of things that one has to take care of. This is a huge character and there is a lot of responsibility on my shoulders. As an actor I need to execute it right. Since it is winters, the costume is not an issue. Come April, and then it will be a bit of hassle. Also, the body language and the mannerisms has to be spot-on. If he is with Ahilya, his tone will be different. He will talk to her like a man does to a girl. But, if he is with the other people, he will speak with authority. Fortunately, I have been blessed with a voice that can do justice to it, hence things get simpler," he tells you.

Shringarpure adds that if one has understood the characteristics of the character that he plays, then there is not much to research about. "If you know the characteristics, visualise what you play and then just layer it up," Shringarpure, who debuted with *Param Vir Chakra*, says. However, acting was never on his cards.

"In school and college, I was into dramatics but never thought that I will be in this line. I wanted to join the Defence forces and I was selected as a pilot in the Air Force, but during the medical I got rejected due to some reasons. I was worried what do to next and then I got to know that RK banner was presenting a film *Param Vir Chakra*. Initially, I was apprehensive and I didn't feel like going to their studio. My friend insisted that I should give it a try. I went there and spoke formally with the director. The first thing about me that struck them was my voice. I didn't tell them the reason of my visit and they told me that I should visit them more often. I took it very positively and made it a point to go there twice a week. But I couldn't open my mouth in front of them, I thought that they should realise what I was there for. It went on for sometime.

One day, I got to know that they need an instructor to train the shortlisted candidates. A *jawan* came to teach them from Colaba and the director urged me that I should also join him and give commands to people. Then after a few days, a spot boy asked me why am I not playing the role in the film since I was trained enough. Then, the voting happened and everyone on the sets was in the favour of me getting the role. Fortunately, I got that project," he tells you.

'I had never done fantasy thriller'

MUSBA HASHMI speaks with ARJIT TANEJA, who has recently entered Colors' Naagin 5 as Farishta, about the attraction of doing a fantasy thriller, challenges and how did acting happened with him

■ What made you say yes to play Farishta in Naagin 5?

I have never done a supernatural fantasy show earlier and also I was getting a chance to work with Balaji after three-and-a-half years, so that's what attracted me to the role. Not to mention, that it is an interesting character and different from what I have done till date.

■ What all can the audience expect from this new entry?

There is a lot of craze for *Naagin* among the audience. I can't reveal the track but I am sure it will be as interesting as it has been all these years with me joining the show as a cameo.

■ Did the role offer any challenges?

The role is challenging because the technique to shoot a fantasy thriller is different from a daily soap. I have never joined a show midway and believe it will be fun and also a learning experience.

■ In all these years, what has been your biggest takeaway from the industry?

I am growing and evolving with every project that I do, not only as an actor but also as a human being. That's my biggest takeaway. I am fortunate enough to have been able to work with such good people all through. I am grateful for whatever I have achieved and my journey is nothing short of amazing.

■ You have been a part of a few music videos as well. How did that happen?

I got an offer, I had time and so I did it. I didn't give it much thought. And the last music video that I did — *Ek Dafa To Mil*, was shot and directed very well.

■ How did acting happen to you?

It happened after school. I always wanted to act. I told my parents that I want to go to Mumbai. They were supportive and encouraged my decision. They were happy of what I wanted to do. I came to Mumbai and started



I am growing and evolving with every project that I do, not only as an actor but also as a human being. That's my biggest takeaway from the industry

auditioning. Thankfully, within two months of coming to Mumbai, I got work. There was no struggle that I had to go through because of my parents or any other thing. It all went smooth for me.

■ Did you have any apprehensions?

Not at all. I knew what I wanted to do and I just went with my intuitions. A lot of people are worried about the future and they do want to

have a back-up plan if things didn't go their way. But I was dedicated enough to this craft and that is all I cared about. I was sure things will work out on their own and there was nothing that I was worried about.

■ What next?

There are a few things in the pipeline and I will talk about it and share more details soon as things will get confirmed.

GRAFT IN LATRINE SCHEME

Two OAS officers, JE suspended

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR/ NABARANGPUR

The State Government on Saturday suspended two Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) officers and a Junior Engineer (JE) from their services for their alleged involvement in corruption.

The suspended officials are BDO Lariman Kharsel of Chitrakonda block in Malkangiri district, BDO Debendra Bahadur Singh Dharua of Jharia block in Nabarangpur and JE Sunil Samal of Jharia block in Nabarangpur.

"Lariman Kharsel has been placed under suspension for

involvement in gross irregularities in execution of Individual Household Latrines (IHHL) programme. Besides, Debendra Bahadur and Sunil Samal have been suspended for their alleged involvement in misappropriation of the entitled money of the same programme," said an official order issued by the Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department.

The IHHL scheme is executed under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) programme.

In Nabarangpur district, several beneficiaries had lodged complaints at the Jharia police station alleging that the

BDO Dharua took around Rs 5 crore for sanctioning funds under the scheme. The block was sanctioned funds for 26,355 bogs, sources said.

Following the complaints, Nabarangpur DRDA officials, at the instruction of district Collector Dr Ajit Kumar Mishra, visited the villages to inquire into the allegations.

Recently, beneficiaries led by Congress leader and former Nabarangpur MP Pradip Majhi had also lodged complaints at the Jharia police station.

All the officers have been asked not to leave their headquarters without prior permission from the concerned authorities

Save oil awareness drive kicks off

SAKSHAM TO CONTINUE FOR A MONTH

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A month-long awareness drive, SAKSHAM, by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas started on Saturday, which would continue till February 15. This year's theme is "Green & Clean Energy".

Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal delivered his message through audio visual mode on the occasion. Emphasising upon oil conservation, he thrust upon two things, "Ek Bharat Sresth Bharat" and "Atmanirvar Bharat".

He urged all to develop habit of optimal use of energy which subsequently will help in protecting the national econo-

my, provide a healthy environment to human life, reduce import bill and sustain the ecosystem.

The inaugural function was conducted at the Indian Oil Bhavan, here, by chief guest Rajya Sabha member Padma Vibhushan Raghunath Mohapatra.

He stressed upon the need to conserve petroleum products at all costs.

State Level Coordinator (SLC), Chief General Manager, Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Subhajit Ghosh in his welcome address elaborated on the activities planned to create awareness about oil and gas conservation in the State.

During the one month programme, the oil industries,



jointly with the Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), will conduct training programmes for drivers on better driving habits to save fuel.

Workshops will be conducted for housewives at every LPG panchayat on better cooking habits to save LPG. Across the State, quiz, debate and painting competitions will be organised in schools and colleges to emphasise upon the importance of conservation.

UTP dies at Jharpada jail

WAS HELD FOR N'GARH ARMOURY LOOT

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

An under-trial prisoner (UTP) lodged at the Jharpada Special Jail here died due to health complications on Saturday.

The deceased, identified as Rabi Dulla, had been arrested in connection with a looting incident at an armoury in Nayagarh district. He was also accused in crimes like looting weapons after torching the Nayagarh police station, murder and explosion. He was also arrested for his alleged links with Maoists. However, the jail authorities could not be contacted to comment on the UTP's death.

Young couple ends life in J'suguda

PNS ■ JHARSUGUDA

A young couple consumed poison for unknown reason at Marakuta village under the Sadar police limits in Jharsuguda. While the man died, the woman was admitted to a hospital in a critical condition.

The deceased was identified as Gobardhan Oram (30), a resident of Ubuda village under Lakhampur block in Jharsuguda district. His body was found in bushes near Marakuta village. Later, family members of the deceased reached the spot. Police and a magistrate recorded the statement of the woman, who is currently undergoing treatment at the District Headquarters Hospital. Police said a probe has been initiated into the incident to ascertain the reason for which the couple committed suicide.

JSpur Book Fair held on virtual mode

JAGATSINGHPUR: Even as 22nd Jagatsinghpur Book Fair was put on hold this year due to the Covid 19 pandemic but to mark the occasion a celebration was organised through virtual mode on Friday.

District Collector-cum-chairman Jagatsinghpur Sanskritika Parishad Sangram Keshari Mohapatra inaugurated the event in presence of Parishad office bearers and others.

Joint secretary Sudhir Kumar Mohanty delivered the inaugural speech and spoke on the book fair's history since 2000 without break.

Parishad working president Bipal Choudhury chaired the meeting. A souvenir was released by Collector Mohapatra, besides a few books. Those felicitated included district NIC head Jyoti



Prakash Behera, Sahoo Cable proprietor Bharat Chandra Sahoo and those connected on the occasion through virtual manner were District Information and Public Relations Officer Kaminiranjan Patnaik and Parishad office bearers Sarada Prasad Das, Ganeswar Mania, Naresh Das, Prasanta Kumar Mohapatra, Mahendra Acharya, Dr Ajaya Kumar Mishra, scribes Pinaki Mohanty, Pradipta Kishor Choudhury, Manoj Dash, Radhakanta Mishra, Duryodhan Moharana, Sasanka Sekhar Panda and Udaya Swain.

JUBILATION IN ROURKELA

SOS Village kid selected for Doon School

PNS ■ ROURKELA

Rahul Oram of the SOS Children's Village, Rourkela, has been offered admission at the prestigious Doon School in Class-VII.

Rahul is a sincere, well-disciplined and hardworking boy presently studying in Class-VI at the Delhi Public School, Rourkela. Among so many children across India from different NGOs, Rahul could outshine both in the written and the online interviews conducted by subject experts from The Doon School.

"Congratulations to entire Rourkela team consisting of mothers, coworkers and Village Director for making it happen and also to the child Rahul



Oram who cleared all the rounds so brilliantly. Indeed, Rahul has brought pride and honour to Rourkela and all SOS Children's Villages of India by qualifying the entrance," said Tapan Kumar Suna, Village Director, SOS Children's Village, Rourkela

IRC police branch felicitates Dashsharma

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In the Indian Red Cross (IRC) Commissionerate police branch annual general meet on Friday, branch Chairman and Commissioner of Police Sudhansu Sarangi and Vice-Chairman and Additional Commissioner of Police Rekha Lohani felicitated executive committee member Dillip Dashsharma.

During the Phailin cyclone

Dashsharma distributed relief to the needy and during the Covid-19 pandemic he organised many blood donation camps and cooperated with the Commissionerate police branch.

Among others, DCP Headquarters Pramod Kumar Patel, Bhubaneswar DCP Uma Shankar Dash and Cuttack DCP Pratik Singh were present. ACP Lalitendu Mohanty coordinated the function.



‘Kalahandi irrigation project to dry Indravati’

PNS ■ NABARANGPUR

Former Nabarangpur BJP MP Parsuram Majhi has alleged that the diversion of Indravati water to Kalahandi district would create water crisis in Nabarangpur district.

Addressing the media a day after Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik unveiled a mega lift irrigation project in Kalahandi, Majhi said the State Government is neglecting the interest of the farmers of the Nabarangpur district who are entitled to get water from river

Indravati. The Government has been using Indravati water from Nabarangpur for irrigation project in neighbouring district. On the other hand, local farmers are deprived of the river water for irrigation, he claimed.

EX-BJP MP SAYS N'RANGPUR PEOPLE TO FACE WATER CRISIS

He further said the State Government had planned to implement five irrigation projects here but not a single project has been started yet. If the Government failed to start an irrigation project here soon, the BJP would take to the streets, Majhi warned.

Among others, district BJP president Jagadish Bisoi and senior party leader Jhadeswar Khadanga were present.

Utkal Hospital a site for Covid vaccination



PNS ■ RAYAGADA

As part of the nationwide rollout of the Covid vaccine from Saturday, the Utkal Hospital at Ossapada in Tikiri is chosen as a vaccination site for the Tikiri area by the Rayagada district administration. The hospital is a healthcare initiative of UAIL, a unit of Hindalco Industries Limited of the Aditya Birla Group.

The Utkal Hospital fulfils all the criteria like adequate space, trained HR, AEFI kit, bed in observation room, referral mechanism and internet availability for communication

with the block and district headquarters.

Dr Arindham Roychoudary, chief medical officer, Utkal Hospital, was first to take the vaccine. UAIL unit head Beig expressed his gratitude for the frontline workers, the hospital management and staffs who relentlessly battled the Covid crisis.

The UAIL is deeply engaged in executing its CSR activities in peripheral villages in the areas of education, healthcare, sustainable livelihood and rural infrastructure. It is engaged in 57 villages serving over 30,000 populations.

Cine scribe Jena no more



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Senior cine journalist and Sedor of film magazine 'Banichitra' Parikshit Jena passed away on Saturday. He was 79. The Odisha Cine Critics' Association and the Sanskruti O Sanskruti held a condolence meeting for Jena at the Buddha Mandir here. The speakers referred to Jena's immense contribution to Odia cine journalism and his effort to make the 'Banichitra' a major publication for encouragement of the Odia film industry.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Pradosh Patnaik, Dilip Hali, Lutu Mohanty and Shridhar Martha.

Temp plummets: 4 places below 10 degrees

BHUBANESWAR: Cold wave again gripped several parts of the State on Saturday with the mercury dipping below 10 degree Celsius at four places in the last 24 hours. Phulbani was the coldest place at 5.8 degree followed by Jharsuguda 7.6 degree, Darngbadi 8 degree, Sundargarh 8.5 degree and Keonjhar 9.9 degree. Stations that recorded below 11 degree Celsius are Balangir 10 degree, Sonepur 10.2 degree, Bhawanipatna 10.5 degree and Sambalpur 10.8 degree. Bhubaneswar and Cuttack recorded minimum temperature of 16 and 15 degree, respectively, the Regional Office of IMD here said. Besides, a thick blanket of fog enveloped various parts of the State with poor visibility recorded at many places on Saturday morning. At several places, including Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, the foggy condition prevailed till 10.30 am on the day. **PNS**

Multifaceted rehab unit MEDICLUB opens



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

For orthopaedic, bones, joint, nerves and ligament problems which affect work efficiency of the people, a multifaceted rehabilitation centre, the MEDICLUB, was inaugurated at Niladrivihar with all modern machineries and amenities.

The centre is initiated by Dr Abhishek Kumar Behera and Dr Dinesh Kumar Behera. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Assistant Regional Manager of SBI RC Patnaik, Niladrivihar Youth and Cultural Association pres-

ident Dr Prakash Chandra Panigrahi, medicine specialist of Sparsh Hospital Dr Sagar Hembrum, former general secretary of Food Corporation of India Arun Kumar Behera and former general secretary of State Bank of India Employees Union Siba Prasad Behera.

Among other facilities the Occupational Therapy, Physio Therapy, Prosthetics and Orthotics (artificial limb) treatments will be made available along with rarely available treatments like Laser Therapy, G-10, Combo Healer and others.

Pangolin smuggling rampant in Odisha, save toothless mammals from extinction

SASMITA LENKA

Pangolins are unique toothless mammals. They are the only mammal which has hard keratinous scales on their body. They are myrmecophagous (feeds on ants and termites). Being insectivorous mammals, they feed on eggs, larvae and adults of ants and termites acting as biological pest controlling agents. Their long sticky tongue is used for feeding on insects and devoid of any teeth. They are solitary and remain inactive and hide in their burrows and tree holes during daytime. They roll their body to form a ball-like structure in case they sense the presence of predators in their vicinity. They secrete strong odour through their anal glands that is used in defence.

Pangolins are listed in Schedule I of India's Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, implying the highest degree of protection, and grouped as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of

Nature (IUCN) Red List. The species is also listed under the Appendix I of the International Convention of Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) which prohibits international commercial trade.

Among eight pangolin species globally, four each are found in Asia and Africa. India is home to two species, Chinese pangolin (Manis pentadactyla) and Indian pangolin (Manis crassicaudata). Chinese pangolin is known to occur in northern and northeastern India. Indian pangolin is widely distributed throughout the country except the Himalayan region.

In February 2020, a study by the South China Agricultural University identified pangolins as the potential intermediate host of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19). The study announced the discovery of a 99% genetic match between the new 2019-nCoV virus and a strain of the virus found in pangolins. We thought that after Covid-19, the

trade would reduce but unfortunately in all probability it appears to be the same.

The cases of pangolin poaching are regularly being reported from different places of Odisha. To address this, we need inputs from local people (primary data) to understand the trade and its channels. We need to understand whether it is happening at the local level or if there is an organized network (secondary data).

Pangolin scales and parts are ingredients in prescriptions of traditional Chinese medicine. The scales' uses vary widely, from helping with anorexia, sores, and skin infections to treating infertility in women and promoting lactation. Pangolin scales are composed primarily of keratin, the same substance that makes up hair and fingernails, and no credible scientific evidence exists supporting their efficacy. The pangolin trade is also linked to the narcotics industry. Pangolin scales are purported to contain a substance



used to make psychotropic drugs, such as methamphetamine.

Forest officials of Athagarh in Odisha busted a huge gang of pangolin smugglers during 2019 to 2020 and arrested more than 30 members of the organised network from different parts of the State. Investigations revealed that the accused were trading live pangolins and scales online by forming Whatsapp groups in which videos and photos were shared with customers of outside country and details communicated in codes to conceal the transactions.

Trafficking (smuggling) of

live pangolins and its scales is a highly lucrative business for organised mafias, who exploit poor and vulnerable forest dwelling communities for their criminal interests. This is pushing endangered species into extinction and simultaneously placing these communities at high risk. Pangolins are illegally hunted and traded within Odisha and India while a subset of these is smuggled abroad by trafficking networks.

While personal contacts and networks of grassroots markets run by middlemen enabled wildlife trade, the cyber revolution has enabled widespread access to digital

platforms since the 2000s, and consequently a sizable chunk of wildlife trade happens via social media, and other online communication media. It is fairly easy to find videos and pictures of threatened and protected species of fauna and flora animals online. Middlemen share these videos and pictures of collected pangolins to their colleagues and contacts online, attracting buyers and therefore enabling the trade. Traffickers and criminal networks are explaining e-commerce websites and social media platforms to trade in illicit wildlife products globally.

Based on investigations and interrogations to the arrested poachers/ smugglers and discussion with community, it is found that the most frequently-used methods for hunting pangolins were 1) identifying and digging the burrow; 2) tracking the foot and tail prints; 3) waiting at the burrow for the animal to emerge and then hitting them with sticks on the head; 4) use

of dogs in tracking them; 5) setting fire to the burrow entrance to smoke the pangolins out; and 6) tracking them at night (since pangolins are nocturnal). The pangolins are extremely easy to catch once they are sighted. Once the animal is caught, only picking it up, putting it into a sack and carrying it away remains, because pangolins are defenseless and can't attack or defend themselves in any way.

Earlier, locals used to kill the animal straight away, eat its meat and burn or discard the scales. However, people now realise the commercial value of pangolins in the wildlife trade market, and are trying to keep it alive till they find a buyer and sell it. Pangolins fetch steep prices locally as well as in the international market, and this is the greatest incentive for its hunting. Technology, social media and communication tools play an important role here in facilitating wildlife trade through bringing together the nexus of middlemen and

buyers based in cities and towns with the hunters who are mostly from villages virtually.

The most important players in combating wildlife trade though remain the grassroots communities particularly forest dwelling people who coexist with these species. Unless they are made the main partners in conserving pangolins through community initiatives, the situation may continue to worsen rapidly for pangolins and other endangered species.

It is necessary to gain support from indigenous people to help control the impact of hunting, thereby reducing the supply. The convergence of various stakeholders, most importantly forest dwelling communities, researchers, government departments and NGOs in devising strategies to break the web of poaching and trade is, therefore, essential to save pangolins from extinction.

(The author is a Deputy Conservator of Forests, Odisha)

Vaccination programme begins in Ganjam



PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

The Covid-19 vaccination drive began in Brahmapur and 11 centres in Ganjam district on Saturday. The drive kicked off in all other centres as soon as Prime Minister Modi launched the programme through videoconferencing. The first vaccine was administered to Dr Sunil Kota at the City Hospital. Dr Kota said, "As my name was chosen

for the first vaccination in Ganjam district, I feel proud." He said the vaccine is fully safe and does not have any side effects. The people should not be apprehensive to take the shot. Later, Dr Sunil Agarwal took the shot at the MKCG Medical College Hospital and spoke about his experience to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik through video-conference. Notably, more than 25,105 Covid warriors had enlisted

their names for getting the vaccine. Presently, there are 16,800 vaccines in the district. On the day, arrangements were made for 1100 people to take the vaccine at the 11 centres. While district Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange, CDMO Uma Shankar Mishra and BeMC Commssioner Siddheswar Baliarsingh Bender were present at the City Hospital, RDC T Aao inspected the programme at the MKCG Hospital.

Mukteswar fest ends with spellbinding Odishi

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The three-day Odishi fest at the magnificent Mukteswar Temple ended on Saturday with spellbinding performances of Odishi by renowned dancers of national and international repute showcasing the varied items of Odishi repertoire. The evening's programme was started after lighting the lamp by Minister, Odia Language, Literature, Culture and Tourism Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi; Chairperson, OTDC Ltd Shreemaye Mishra, Secretary, Orissa Dance Akademy Guru Aruna Mohanty, Director, Tourism Sachin Ramachandra Jadhav and Chief Executive, GKCM Odissi Research Centre Dr Sangita Gosain. The first programme of the evening was a chorus in honour of Lord Shiva eulogizing the glory of Lord Shiva presented by eminent music director Guru Srinibas Satapathy and his group.



Renowned Odishi hearing impaired danseuse Sonali Mohapatra started her programme with Mangalacharan - Shiva followed by Abhinaya Sajani Go Najani Pirati Jaha Kali choreography by Durga Charan Ranbir and music composition by Sukanta Kumar Kundu. Her last item was Pallavi - Raga Saranga choreography by herself and music composition by Guru Nirmal Kumar Mohapatra.

In duet Sripunya Mohanty and Pratap Barik presented Pallavi - Raga Nagaballi choreography by Guru Aruna Mohanty, which was followed by Abhinaya Su Mukha Gunakeshi choreography by Guru Aruna Mohanty and music composition by Guru Dhaneswar Swain. The concluding item of concluding evening was a Group Odishi presentation by Jyotsnarani Sahoo and group of Soor Mandir, Cuttack.

289 administered Covid jab in JSpur

PNS ■ JAGATSinghpur

The anti Covid-19 jab drive for health workers was launched in Jagatsinghpur district on Saturday. Collector SK Mohapatra inaugurated the initiative at the District Headquarters Hospital as Prime Minister Narendra Modi rolled out the massive country wide Covid 19 immunization exercise on Saturday. Four sites of the district such as the DHH and the Balikuda, Raghunathpur and Biridi Community Health Centres [CHCs] were selected for the vaccination and 100 persons were fixed to be immunized in each site. According to hospital sources, 289 persons were administered Covid-jab out of 400 on the first day, while Raghunathpur CHC achieved hundred percent immunisation target. It was 72 percent in the DHH, 74 percent at Balikuda and 43 at the Biridi CHC. In the DHH, Dr Dharanidhar Senapati was first given Covid 19 vaccine.

'Athagarh Prahari' 20th anniv held



ATHAGARH: The "Athagarh Prahari", a weekly newspaper published from here, observed its 20th foundation day on January 14, the day of Makar Sankranti. With the welcome speech by its Chief Editor Naliniprava Pattnaik, the meeting was coordinated by senior scribe Dinesh Das. Editor Babita Das read out the editorial which was written for the occasion. Well-wishers like Bhaskar Mishra, Prafulla Kumar Pattnaik, Jadunath Pattnaik, Srinath Rath, Ashok Dash, Prasant Pattnaik, Bimbadhar Rout, Ranjan Mohapatra, Pradyumna Dash, Trilochan Behera and Sanatan Ray spoke. General Manager Shailendra Pattnaik proposed the vote of thanks. A one-minute silent prayer was also conducted in fond memory of its founder Narayan Das.

Nabarangpur farmers block road

PROTEST PROCUREMENT MESS IN MANDI

MONOHAR MOHANTY ■ NABARANGPUR

The Chandahandi-Umarkote main road was blocked on Saturday due to unrest in four paddy procurement mandis in Chandahandi block of Nabarangpur district. Hundreds of farmers, led by RMC director and Congress leader Khemaraj Bagh, blocked the road with bags of paddy on the road. It is to be noted that, even though farmers have been keeping paddy in the mandi for about a month, it is alleged that



the paddy of selective farmers is procured due to a nexus. It is also alleged that the paddy of hundreds of farmers is rejected for various reasons or underrated below MSP. Despite repeated complaints, no action has been taken so far and finding no way out the

farmers blocked the State highway, said Bagh. Even after testing the standards and handing them over to the mandi, the millers are still picking up the paddy at their sweet will. The road-blocks will not be lifted until the situation in the mandi is

resolved, the protesters said. Hundreds of farmers, including Humeshwar Hans, Rasik Nag, Pitambar Nayak, Jaydev Nial, Sadananda Kand, Bhuvan Suna, Pitambar Jhankar, Dhansingh Jhankar, Amaru Nayak, and others participated in the road blockade.

5-year-old raped in UP village, rushed to hosp in serious condition

Banda (UP): The condition of a 5-year-old girl, who was allegedly raped in a village in Uttar Pradesh's Banda district, deteriorated after which she was rushed to a hospital in Kanpur for better treatment, police said on Saturday. Chief Medical Officer Uday Bhan Singh said the girl was sent to Kanpur for better treatment and undergoing plastic surgery as she was profusely bleeding. The incident took place on Friday night in the village under Girwa police station area, they said. A 23-year-old man has been arrested in this connection, Circle Officer (CO) Nareni Siyaram said.



Ministers and other BJD leaders and people of Bhubaneswar greet Naveen Patnaik at his residence Naveen Niwas in Bhubaneswar on Saturday for being chosen in a survey as the number one Chief Minister of the country

Covid vaccination drive.

From Page 1
In Bhubaneswar, the vaccination was conducted at six sites, Capital Hospital, Unit IV Hospital, BMC Hospital, AIMS Bhubaneswar, KIIMS and SUM Hospital. Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Vice-Chancellor and former All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar Director Dr Ashok Kumar Mahapatra and Capital Hospital Director Dr Lakhmidhar Sahoo were among those who took shots of the vaccine on the first day. In Cuttack, Barsha Dei, a sanitation worker of the SCB Medical College Hospital, was

first to be administered the vaccine. Additional DMET Dr UK Satapathy and Dr Jayant Panda of the SCB Medical College Hospital were also vaccinated. The first dose of vaccine was administered to Biswanath Mallick, an attendant of the DHH in Puri. In Sundargarh district, sanitation worker Dilip Nag and senior doctor Dilip Mishra received the vaccine first. Notably, the State has received 4.08 lakh doses of Covishield vaccine and 20,000 doses of Covaxin vaccine in the first lot. While 3.38 lakh healthcare workers have been registered for the vaccination, the Government has a target to give first doses of the vaccination to 1.92 lakh healthcare workers within a week using the available vials.

World has begun to look up to India as a power to reckon with: Singh on vaccination drive

New Delhi: As the country rolled out the world's largest inoculation drive against the coronavirus on Saturday, Union Minister Jitendra Singh hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership and said the world has begun to look up to India as a power to reckon with. He said Prime Minister Modi has always demonstrated the ability to make a virtue out of adversity. "In the wake of COVID pandemic, the prime minister has placed India on the path of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and the world has begun to look up to India as a power to reckon with," said Singh, the Minister of State for Personnel. He said with the announce-

ment of early lockdown by Prime Minister Modi way back in March, India was possibly the first to declare a decisive war against the pandemic. "Today with the launch of vaccination drive, India is possibly the first to herald the beginning of the end of the pandemic. Something which was considered unbelievable to be achieved for a country as populous, as heterogeneous and as

CM takes vaccine beneficiaries feedback

From Page 1
Health Minister Naba Kishore Das said it was a memorable day of health service. In the first phase, more than 4 lakh Covaxin and over 20,000 Covishield vaccines have been sent to different centres for vaccination of nearly two lakh health workers in the State.

PM to perform ground-breaking ceremony for Ahmedabad, Surat metro projects tomorrow

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will perform the ground-breaking ceremony for the Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase-II and the Surat Metro Rail Project via video-conferencing on Monday. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Saturday said the metro projects will provide an environment-friendly mass rapid transit system to the two cities in Gujarat. The Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase-II is 28.25 km long with two corridors. The 22.8-km-long corridor-I is from Motera Stadium to Mahatma Mandir, while the 5.4-km-long corridor-II is from GNLU to GIFT City. The total completion cost of the Phase-II project is Rs 5,384 crore, a state-

PMO on Saturday said the metro projects will provide an environment-friendly mass rapid transit system to the two cities in Gujarat
ment issued by the PMO said. The Surat Metro Rail Project is 40.35 km long and comprises two corridors. The 21.61-km-long corridor-I is from Sarthana to Dream City, while the 18.74-km-long corridor-II is from Bhesan to Saroli. The total completion cost of the project is Rs 12,020 crore, the PMO said. **PTI**

Bharat Biotech to pay compensation if Covaxin causes side effects

Hyderabad: Bharat Biotech, which has received a government purchase order for supply of 55 lakh doses of Covaxin, a COVID-19 vaccine, will pay compensation to recipients in case of any 'serious adverse' effects experienced after receiving the antidote. A consent form to be signed by the vaccine recipients said, "In case of any adverse events or serious adverse events, you will be provided medically recognised standard of care in the government designated and authorised centres and hospitals." "The compensation for serious adverse event will be paid by sponsor (BBIL) in case if the SAE is proven to be causally related to the vaccine," the form said. In phase 1 and 2 clinical trials, Covaxin has demonstrated the ability to produce antibodies against COVID-19. However the clinical efficacy of the vaccine is yet to be established and it is still being studied in phase 3 clinical trials. "Hence, it is important to appreciate that receiving the vaccine does not mean that other precautions related to COVID-19 need not be followed," it added.

Wait for your turn to get vaccinated, beware of rumours: Yogi to people

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday asked the people to remain alert for rumours regarding COVID-19 vaccines and wait for their turn to get themselves vaccinated. Healthcare workers at the frontline of India's COVID-19 battle got their first jabs on Saturday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi launching the world's largest vaccination drive against the pandemic. "Today is a day of immense happiness and excitement. India is the first country which has launched two vaccines," Chief Minister Adityanath said here. The chief minister visited the Balrampur Hospital in Lucknow in the morning and reviewed the vaccination drive where the first doses were administered to Dr Praveen Kumar and staff nurse Geeta Devi. Adityanath also interacted with the staff of the hospital. "I have just met the health workers who have got vaccinated and they are all fine," he said told newsmen. "I congratulate Prime Minister Narendra Modi for this achievement and thank the scientists of the country. At this point of time, when the country is moving ahead in this battle against a pandemic, some peo-

Raghav Chadha conducts door-to-door survey at Sat Nagar

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
Continuing with the development work in his constituency, Rajinder Nagar MLA and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) senior leader Raghav Chadha conducted a door-to-door survey of Sat Nagar along with the representatives of BSES, Delhi Jal Board, Municipal Corporations and Public Works Department and examined issues related to water supply, drainage, electricity and road network. During his visit, Chadha questioned the MCD's lackadaisical approach in

resolving residents' issues despite repeated complaints. "Half the problems of Delhi can be resolved if the MCD begins to take ownership and do its duty properly vis-a-vis, timely action when people lodge complaints. It is unfortunate that the Corporation has failed in its duty towards the people. They have not acted on the upkeep of roads; they have not taken any steps towards proper and regular garbage disposal. Their inaction has become a major cause for concern," he said.

During the combined development survey of Sat Nagar, WEA and 100 quarter, the Rajinder Nagar MLA came across several lanes where garbage was not collected nor had the lanes been cleaned properly. Several residents apprised their elected representative of lack of cleanliness and improper garbage disposal, which eventually becomes a major problem. Despite their repeated complaints, the MCD had taken no action. Chadha said, "Garbage disposal comes under the purview of the MCD.

The corporation has failed to do any upkeep and maintenance of roads that also comes under its purview. Their abject failure has caused multiple problems to residents. Following this, the Rajinder Nagar MLA issued immediate directions for the affected areas to be cleaned thoroughly. During the course of the nearly two-hour development survey, where the Rajinder Nagar MLA went door-to-door and met with residents of Sat Nagar and was apprised of various issues and has now designed a roadmap.

Air quality in Delhi touches hazardous level

NEW DELHI: Air quality in Delhi spiked to dangerous levels due to low ventilation and calm surface winds as Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR) predicted on Saturday. According to the National Ambient Air Quality Index (NAAQI), the overall Air Quality Index (AQI) was recorded at 492 micrograms per cubic. According to SAFAR, the values of Suspended Particulate Matters (SPMs) were recorded 436 and 278 microgram per cubic for Particulate Matters (PM) 10 and 2.5. SAFAR.



A milkman rides a horse cart amid dense fog on a winter morning in Jammu on Saturday

Roshni scam: CBI books 13 in Pulwama

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has re-registered J&K ACB FIR in connection with the alleged irregularities committed in transfer of land under the Roshni Scheme against 13 persons of Pulwama, including seven then officials posted in the district like the Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama and his subordinates.

The then Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama, Mehraj Ahmad Kakroo, the then Additional Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama Iftikhar-ul Hasnain, the then Assistant Commissioner, Revenue, Mohammad Rajab Bhatt, the then Tehsildar Mohammad Hussain, the then Naib Tehsildar, Kakpora, Mohammad Maqbool Ahanger, the then Girdawar, Kakpora, Ghulam Ahmad Sheikh and the then Patwari Halqa, Kakpora, Abdul Razak Wagey have been named in the FIR.

In addition, private persons named in the FIR are Ahmad Pandith, Nabi Naikoo, Mohammad Amin Pandith, Dr Farhat Pandith, Abdul



Majid Sheikh and Ghulam Rasool Wani.

The accused have been booked under Section 120-B (criminal conspiracy) of the Ranbir Penal Code and relevant provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act. "In pursuance of the J&K High Court, FIR No 29/2015 OF Police Station-VOK, now ACB, J&K is re-registered," reads the FIR.

An audit report of the Principal Accountant General (Audit) alleged irregularities committed in the transfer of land under the Roshni scheme. The report revealed that the officers and officials of Revenue department of Pulwama have by abuse and

misuse of their official position as public servants conferred undue pecuniary benefit upon the illegal occupants of state land by arbitrarily fixing the price of land which was lower than the prevailing market rate of the area, incorrect application of rates and unauthorised change of classification of land from residential to agricultural.

Verification revealed that the ownership rights of the state land measuring six Kanals, 10 Marlas and four Sirsai was transferred in the name of the six accused persons under Jammu and Kashmir State Land (vesting of ownership) Act, 2001, it added.

PC slams Centre for stalemate over farm laws

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Union Minister P Chidambaram on Saturday hit out at the Centre over the impasse on the farm laws, alleging that "no one" was consulted for the legislations, and asserted that the only way out for the Government was to agree to start on a "clean slate". His remarks came a day after the Centre asked protesting farmers to form an informal group to prepare a concrete proposal about their objections and suggestions on the farm laws for further discussion at their next meeting on January 19 to end the long-running protest at various Delhi borders.

The protesting farmer unions, however, stuck to their main demand of a complete repeal of the three legislations. In a series of tweets, Chidambaram said that as expected, another round of talks between the farmers and government has failed.

The fault lies with the Government because it will not agree to get rid of the disputed laws, the former Union minister said. "RTI responses have exposed as a lie the government's

claim that there were extensive consultations before the Farm Laws Ordinances were promulgated. The truth is that no one was consulted. In particular, state governments were not consulted," he alleged.

The only way out of the impasse is for the government to admit its mistake and agree to start on a clean slate, Chidambaram said. Thousands of farmers, mostly from Haryana and Punjab, have been protesting at several border points of Delhi since November 28 last year, demanding a repeal of the three laws and a legal guarantee to the minimum support price (MSP) system for their crops.

Enacted in September last year, the three laws have been projected by the Centre as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove middlemen and allow farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country.

However, the protesting farmers have expressed their apprehension that the new laws would pave the way for eliminating the safety cushion of the MSP and do away with the "mandi" (wholesale market) system, leaving them at the mercy of big corporates.

To promote desi toy makers, CSC joins hands with AICTE for 'Toycathon-2021'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To promote toy manufacturing among domestic players, particularly among rural entrepreneurs, the Common Service Centre (CSC), an SPV under the Ministry of Electronics and IT Ministry, has joined hands with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) to organise "Toycathon-2021".

"Toycathon-2021 is aimed at understanding the creativity among start-ups in rural areas, students and professionals for developing and manufacturing toys. It is a unique opportunity for students, teachers, start-ups and toy experts/professionals in India to submit their innovative toys/games concepts and win prizes worth Rs.50 lakhs," said CSC Managing Director Dr Dinesh Tyagi.

Toycathon-2021 is an inter-ministerial initiative involving six ministries. Organised by the Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell with support from AICTE, the initiative is being supported by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of MSME, Ministry of Textiles and Ministry of Information and



TOYCATHON-2021 IS AN INTER-MINISTERIAL INITIATIVE INVOLVING SIX MINISTRIES

Broadcasting.

Toycathon-2021 will be conducted through CSC Academy, an arm of CSC, at 6,000 block and taluka level where CSC Academies are present. "CSC Academy, a not-for-profit society which delivers specialized courses/training programmes, and promotes entrepreneurship among the rural masses, is best suited for



this unique initiative due to its reach and expertise.

CSC Academies are being utilised to create awareness, promote and conduct Toycathon-2021 in rural areas. The new concepts of toys generated from Tyocathon-2021 might also be useful in solving our societal problems," said Tyagi, who is also Secretary of the CSC Academy.

Plea in SC for directing WhatsApp to withdraw its new privacy policy



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Traders' body CAIT on Saturday filed a petition in the Supreme Court, making a plea to direct WhatsApp to withdraw its new privacy policy

The body issued a statement claiming that the new WhatsApp privacy policy encroaches upon various fundamental rights of the citizens.

About the petition, the traders' body said it "has also prayed that Union of India must frame guidelines to govern big technology companies like WhatsApp and frame policies which would protect the privacy of citizens and businesses".

"The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has today filed a petition in the Supreme Court with the prayer to direct WhatsApp to withdraw its new privacy policy, which is encroaching upon various fundamental rights of the citizens granted by Constitution of India," the statement said.

Meanwhile, WhatsApp has announced delaying by three months the implementation of the new privacy policy that has faced a massive backlash



with tens of millions of its users moving from the platform to rivals like Signal and Telegram.

The policy change was originally scheduled to come into effect on February 8, the Facebook-owned company said.

It has clarified that the update does not affect data sharing with Facebook with regard to personal conversations or other profile information and only addresses business chats in the event a user converses with a company's customer service platform through WhatsApp.

"The petition especially highlights the difference of approach in EU and India countries with respect to the privacy policy of WhatsApp and how the data of Indian users can be misused by such big tech companies," CAIT said.

SC slaps ₹25K fine on Guj for wasting judicial time

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has imposed a fine of ₹25,000 on Gujarat for wasting judicial time, irked over the "lethargy and incompetence" of the state government in filing a petition before it after a delay of over a year.

A bench, headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, pulled up the state for approaching the apex court in a "casual manner" and dismissed the plea on the ground of delay.

It observed that such kind of "certificate cases" are filed with the only objective to obtain a quietus from the top court on the ground that nothing could be done because the highest court had dismissed the appeal.

The petition was filed in the top court by the state government after a delay of 427 days against an order of the Gujarat High Court passed in March 2019 in a case.

"The objective is to complete a mere formality and save the skin of the officers who may be in default in following the due process or may have done it deliberately. We have deprecated such practice and process and we do so again.

"We refuse to grant such certificates and if the government suffers losses, it is time when concerned officers responsible for the same bear the consequences," said the bench, also comprising Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and Hrishikesh Roy.

"The irony, emphasised by us repeatedly, is that no action is ever taken against the officers and if the court pushes it, some mild warning is all that happens," the bench said in its order passed earlier this week.

North, north-western parts of country to reel under severe cold for next 3 days

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

There will be no letup in the intense cold and dense to very dense fog conditions in the north and north western parts of the country at least the next three to four days. Dense to very dense fog over north and central India has delayed several trains and rescheduled flights in Delhi, Amritsar and Lucknow on Saturday due to poor to zero visibility.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), zero visibility was reported over Delhi, Lucknow and Amritsar due to variable and calm lower-level winds on Saturday. "Zero visibility shown over Delhi, Lucknow and Amritsar..." the IMD said in a tweet. This is the third time during this winter season that the visibility has dropped to zero in several cities. Dense fog-induced low visibility conditions led to delay of over 40 flights from the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) here on Saturday. According to airport sources, poor visibility conditions and non-compliant CAT III B trained pilots led to the delays.

According to IMD, Ludhiana, Patiala, Karnal and Aligarh reported visibility-50 meters each at 5:30 pm on Saturday and Bahraich, Gangtok, Cooch Behar-200 each. As regards Delhi and Safdarjung have reported visibility 500 meters while visibility in Palam was reported 1000 meters.

The dense fog is likely to persist on Sunday and Monday as well. "Dense to very dense fog at some/many pockets very likely over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, north Rajasthan; at isolated pockets over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal & Sikkim, Bihar during the next



two-three days," the IMD said. "This will also lead to dense fog conditions with visibility at below 200 metres in the morning hours, which can impact the transport and power sectors," it said.

Due to the prevalence of dry north and north-westerly winds, minimum temperatures are likely to fall by 2-4 degrees over most parts of northwest India during the next two days. The cold and chilly winter this year is due to the prevailing La Nina condition which is a weather phenomenon caused due to the cooling of the Pacific Ocean. This has led to the drop in temperature and long spells of cold. Also, the western disturbances brought rains and snowfall in the first week of January which has also impacted the weather.

Kuldeep Srivastava, head of regional forecasting at the Regional Meteorological Department in Delhi, said that temperatures will begin to rise from January 19. "The La Nina conditions will persist till the first week of February 2021. We expect day temperatures to gradually increase from January-end which will give some respite to people," he said.

Dense fog also added to extreme cold in Jammu & Kashmir on Saturday, and the weather office forecast no major change during the next

five days in the prevailing weather conditions. Srinagar city — the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir -- recorded a low of minus 8.2 degrees Celsius, down from minus 7.6 degrees Celsius the previous night.

Cold wave conditions prevailed in Punjab and Haryana on Saturday, with Bathinda registering a minimum temperature of 4 degrees Celsius. Among other places in Punjab, Amritsar, Ludhiana and Patiala braved the chill at 6.5, 7.8 and 6.7 degrees Celsius, respectively, up to three degrees above normal.

In Uttar Pradesh, the lowest temperature in Uttar Pradesh was 2.6 degrees Celsius, recorded at Churk observatory, while Jhansi registered a high of 24.2 degree Celsius -- the highest in the state.

Cold wave conditions continued in Himachal Pradesh with Keylong shivering at minus 6.8 degrees Celsius. IMD has predicted dry but cold weather in the state till January 22. Tribal Lahaul and Spiti's administrative centre Keylong continued to be the coldest place in the state at minus 6.8 degrees Celsius, Shimla MeT centre director Manmohan Singh said. Kalpa in Kinnaur district recorded a low of zero degrees Celsius, he added.

CBI suspends its 2 officials for taking bribe

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Days after booking its four personnel for allegedly receiving bribe to compromise on investigation against companies accused of bank fraud, the CBI has suspended two of them —Inspector Kapil Dhankad and Stenographer Samir Kumar Singh — and recommended administrative action against the other two.

Officials said on Saturday that the agency has recommended to the Department of Personnel and Training to initiate administrative action against deputy superintendents of police R K Rishi and R K Sangwan.

The Department of Personnel and Training is the nodal ministry for the CBI, they said.

According to the charges levelled in the eight-page FIR, made public on Friday after the completion of a search operation by the agency, Inspector Dhankad received bribe money from Sangwan and Rishi, who were soliciting favours for Shree Shyam Pulp and Board Mills, accused in a Rs 700-crore bank fraud case, and Frost International, accused in a Rs 3,600-crore bank fraud case.

The CBI has booked its four personnel, besides two advocates, Additional Director of Shree Shyam Pulp and Board Mills Mandeep Kaur Dhillon and Directors of Frost International Sujay Desai and Uday Desai.

"The CBI has a zero tolerance policy towards corruption, be it other departments or within the organisation. The case is a result of strict vigil and action on any input which indicates involvement of our officials in corrupt practice," an official said.

EX-SCBA president urges Bench to end election impasse of lawyers' body

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

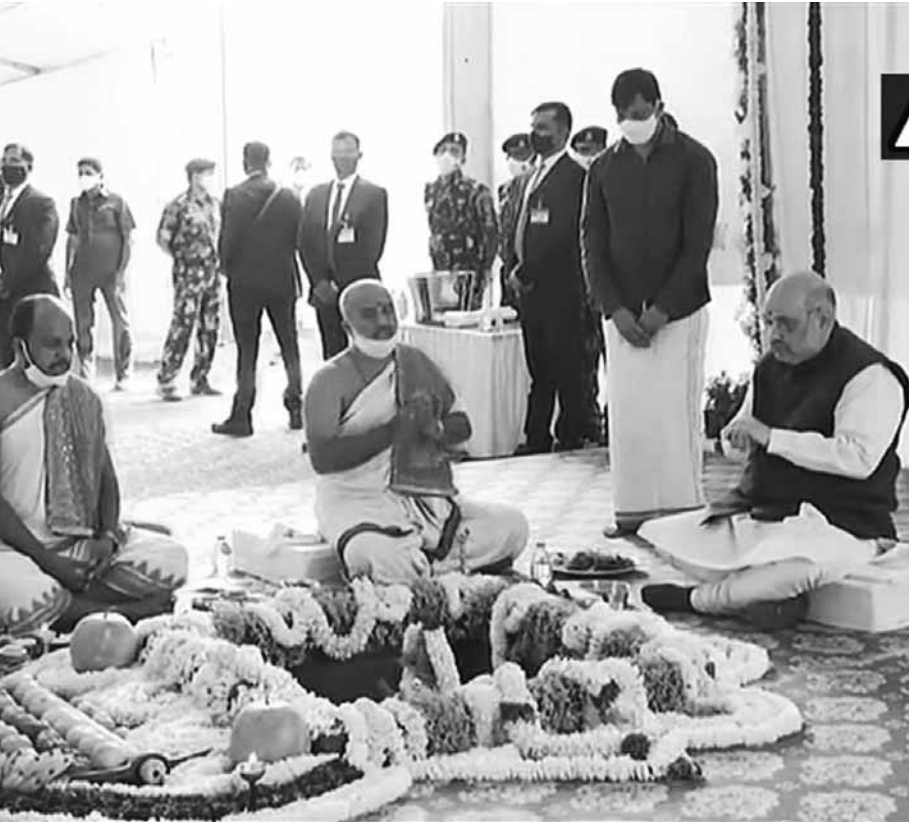
Former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and senior advocate Vikas Singh on Saturday requested Chief Justice S A Bobde to constitute a bench to resolve the election stalemate of the professional body of lawyers.

He said Dushyant Dave, who resigned from the post of SCBA president on Thursday, was to constitute the election committee in the first week of November last year as the term of the executive committee was ending on December 13.

"He delayed the decision by a month. Even after deciding on December 4, he delayed communicating to the election committee by another week. When the EC had already decided to conduct the election virtually, there was no occasion for him to call an EC to ratify the election committee decision of appointing NSDL," Singh said in a letter to the Registrar General of the Supreme Court.

"If a hybrid mode (of election) was what they wanted, they should have decided on December 4. Now asking the election committee to defer the election to third week of February is again an attempt by Dave to prolong his tenure till then creating a drama of resignation and then making the EC to reject his decision to resign," the letter stated.

The senior lawyer said all the three members of the election committee resigned on Friday night as the SCBA refused to accept its decision to hold elections through NSDL, a digital firm.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah lays foundation stone of Bhadravathi Rapid Action Force Centre in Shivamogga, Karnataka Agency

Bird flu in poultry confirmed in 9 districts of Maha: Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Saturday said bird flu in poultry has been confirmed in nine districts of Maharashtra, while culling operation in poultry is underway in one district each in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Apart from poultry, the viral disease has been confirmed in crow in Uttarakhand, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, while in pigeon, brown fish owl and Heron in Delhi.

The Ministry of Animal Husbandry on Saturday said that Avian Influenza has been confirmed in Chhatrapur district of Madhya Pradesh (crow); Surat, Navsari and Narmada districts of Gujarat (crow); Dehradun district of Uttarakhand (crow); Kanpur district of Uttar Pradesh (crow). Additionally, in Delhi, Pigeon and brown fish owl in Najafgarh and Heron in Rohini have tested positive for avian influenza. "Till 16 January,

2021 cases of Avian Influenza have been confirmed in poultry in Latur, Parbhani, Nanded, Pune, Solapur, Yavatmal, Ahmednagar, Beed and Raigad districts of Maharashtra," it said.

However, the ministry again requested state governments to "rethink" their decisions to impose ban sale of poultry products and allow sale of poultry items sourced from the non-infected areas/states.

As per the report, received from Central Poultry Development Organisation Mumbai, unusual mortality of poultry have been found in the farm. The samples have been sent to the designated laboratory for testing.

The ministry has again asked the states to rethink their decisions to impose ban on sale of poultry and poultry products and allow selling of poultry and poultry products sourced from the non-infected areas/States.

Nepal never accepts interference in domestic politics: Nepalese Foreign Minister Gyawali

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nepal does not accept interference in its domestic politics as it is capable of handling its internal problems, Nepalese Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali said on Saturday, in comments that came against the backdrop of China wading into the political turmoil in the Himalayan nation following the dissolution of its parliament.

Gyawali's assertion came at a media interaction when asked about China's attempt to play a role in the aftermath of fast-paced political developments in Nepal last month.

"We never accept interference in our domestic politics. We are able to settle our own problems. As a close neighbour, there may be some concerns or questions but we never accept

interference," the Nepalese foreign minister said.

Nepal plunged into a political turmoil following Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli's sudden decision to dissolve parliament and call for fresh elections in view of internal feud in the ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP).

As the crisis deepened, China rushed a high-level team headed by Vice Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Guo Yezhou to Kathmandu to hold talks with the rival factions within the NCP after the Chinese ambassador in the country failed to sort out differences.

The team held talks with almost all top Nepalese leaders but had to return empty handed. The Chinese meddling in Nepalese political developments triggered strong

criticism within Nepal.

Gyawali said Nepal's relations with both India and China are excellent and that it never compares ties with each other.

Asked about the political crisis and role of NCP leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal who is popularly known as Prachanda, Gyawali refused to make any direct comment and said as foreign minister of the country, he represents everyone in Nepal.

At the same time, the Nepalese foreign minister justified Oli's decision to dissolve parliament saying he followed the democratic principle of seeking fresh mandate from the people whose decisions are supreme in a democracy.

"In democracy, people are the final authority to decide about who will govern. I think dissolution of the parliament is a reflection of the internal issue. It is not wise to blame anybody," Gyawali said.

Biden plans to give jobs to 30% nationals in 100 days

Washington: US President-elect Joe Biden has announced an ambitious goal of inoculating 100 million of total 331 million Americans with Covid-19 vaccines in the first 100 days of his administration, noting the vaccine rollout in the country, the worst hit by the pandemic, has been a “dismal failure.”

Ahead of his inauguration on January 20, Biden on Friday held a briefing with his team on addressing the major health crisis that has engulfed the country for nearly a year now.

The US is the worst-affected country in the world with more than 23,523,000 COVID-19 infections and 391,955 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus tracker.

During his election campaign, Biden, a Democrat, made tackling COVID-19 and the economic hardships it had put on Americans a core pitch to voters.

“The vaccine rollout in the United States has been a dismal failure thus far and in today’s briefing we discussed five things, five things we will do in an attempt to turn things



around, five things to turn frustration into motivation, five things to help us meet our goal of 100 million shots by the end of our first 100 days in office. Some wonder if we are reaching too far for that goal. Is it achievable? It’s a legitimate question to ask,” Biden told reporters in Wilmington, Delaware.

“Let me be clear; I am convinced we can get it done, and this is the time to set big goals to pursue them with courage and conviction because the health of the nation is literally at stake. First, we will im-

mmediately work with states to open up vaccinations to more priority groups,” he said.

Biden said that the process of establishing priority groups is driven by science, but the problem is the implementation has been too rigid and confusing.

“If you were to ask most people today, they couldn’t tell you who exactly is getting vaccinated. What they do know is there are tens of millions of doses of vaccine sitting unused in freezers around the country while people who want and need the vaccine can’t get it,” he said. **PTI**

Pence congratulates Harris, offers peaceful transition of powers

Washington: Outgoing US Vice President Mike Pence has called his soon-to-be successor Kamala Harris to congratulate her and offer his full co-operation in the transition of power, according to multiple media reports said.

However, there has been no communication between outgoing President Donald Trump and president-elect Joe Biden, which is unprecedented in recent memory.

“Vice President Mike Pence telephoned Vice President-elect Kamala Harris Thursday to congratulate her and offer his belated assistance — filling a leadership role all but abdicated by President Trump, who is planning to fly out of the capital shortly before Joseph R Biden Jr is sworn in next week,” The New York Times reported.

Friday’s call was the first time Pence, 61, and Harris, 56, had an one-to-one conversation since their vice presidential debate in October last year. It was also the first direct contact between the two leaders since the November 3 presidential

election.

The traditional in-person meeting between the outgoing president and the president-elect has not happened. Same is the case with the outgoing vice president and his successor.

In a rare departure from the tradition, Trump has announced that he will not attend Biden’s inauguration on January 6. Trump would depart the White House for his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida just before the inauguration.

Though Trump has still refused to actually concede his 2020 election loss to Biden, he promised that a “peaceful transition” of power would take place.

He was impeached on Wednesday for inciting the Capitol Hill riot that stemmed from his unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud. The deadly insurrection at the Capitol on January 6 by Trump’s supporters, who unsuccessfully tried to stop Congress from certifying Biden’s win, resulted in the deaths of five people, including a police officer. **PTI**

Trump admin carries out 13th and final execution

Terre Haute (US): The Trump administration has carried out its 13th federal execution since July, an unprecedented run that concluded just five days before the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden — an opponent of the federal death penalty.

Dustin Higgs, convicted in the killings of three women in a Maryland wildlife refuge in 1996, was the third to receive a lethal injection this week at the federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana.

President Donald Trump’s Justice Department resumed federal executions last year following a 17-year hiatus. No president in more than 120 years had overseen as many federal executions.

Higgs, 48, was pronounced dead at 1:23 am on Friday.

The number of federal death sentences carried out under Trump since 2020 is more than in the previous 56 years combined, reducing the number of prisoners on federal death row by nearly a quarter. **AP**

Woman arrested in Capitol attack: ‘I listen to my Prez’

AP ■ DALLAS

A Dallas-area real estate agent who is facing charges for allegedly being part of the pro-President Donald Trump mob that stormed the U.S. Capitol last week said she’s a “normal person” who listened to her president.

Jenna Ryan, 50, is accused of “knowingly” entering or remaining in the restricted building or grounds without lawful authority and disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds on Jan. 6, according to a criminal complaint filed by the FBI in a Washington federal court.

Matt DeSarno, special agent in charge of the FBI Dallas office, confirmed that Ryan had turned herself in and that her Carrollton apartment was searched Friday. No personal telephone for Ryan was available, and court records didn’t list a lawyer for her as of Friday.

Ryan shared photos and videos on social media, includ-

ing a video in which she says, “We’re gonna go down and storm the Capitol,” in front of a bathroom mirror, according to the FBI criminal complaint.

The agent who signed the complaint also noted that Ryan live-streamed a 21-minute Facebook video of her and a group walking toward the Capitol.

“We are going to (expensive) go in here,” Ryan said in the video as she approached the top of the stairs on the west side of the Capitol building. “Life or death, it doesn’t matter. Here we go.” She then turned the camera to expose her face, the complaint noted, and said, “Y’all know who to hire for your Realtor, Jenna Ryan for your Realtor.”

Nearly halfway through, Ryan appears to have made it to the front door, chanting, “USA, USA” and “Here we are, in the name of Jesus.” In an interview with KTVT-TV in Fort Worth, Ryan said she hoped that Trump would pardon her.

European powers press Iran to back off latest nuke move

Berlin: Germany, France and Britain pressed Iran on Saturday to back off the latest planned violation of its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, saying that Tehran has “no credible civilian use” for uranium metal.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said Thursday Iran had informed it that it had begun installing equipment for the production of uranium metal. It said Tehran maintains its plans to conduct research and development on uranium metal production are part of its “declared aim to design an improved type of fuel.”

Uranium metal can also be used for a nuclear bomb, however, and research on its production is specifically prohibited under the nuclear deal — the so-called Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

— that Tehran signed with Germany, France, Britain, China, Russia and the United States in 2015.

Since the unilateral American withdrawal from the deal in 2018, the other members have been working to preserve the accord. Iran has been using violations of the deal to put pressure on the other signatories to provide more incentives to Iran to offset crippling American sanctions re-imposed after the US pullout.

A joint statement from the German, French and British foreign ministries said they are “deeply concerned” by the latest Iranian announcement.

“Iran has no credible civilian use for uranium metal,” it said. “The production of uranium metal has potentially grave military implications.” **AP**

Iranian Guard holds anti-warship ballistic missile drill

Tehran: Iran’s paramilitary Revolutionary Guard conducted a drill Saturday launching anti-warship ballistic missiles at a simulated target in the Indian Ocean, state television reported, amid heightened tensions over Tehran’s nuclear programme and a US pressure campaign against the Islamic Republic.

Footage showed two missiles smash into a target that Iranian state television described as “hypothetical hostile enemy ships” at a distance of 1,800 kilometers (1,120 miles). The report did not specify the type of missiles used.

In the first phase of the drill Friday, the Guard’s aerospace division launched surface-to-surface ballistic missiles and drones against “hypothetical enemy bases.” Iranian state television described the drill as

taking place in the country’s vast central desert, the latest in a series of snap exercises called amid the escalating tensions over its nuclear programme. Footage also showed four unmanned, triangle-shaped drones flying in a tight formation, smashing into targets and exploding. Tensions between Washington and Tehran have increased amid a series of incidents stemming from President Donald Trump’s unilateral withdrawal from Iran’s nuclear deal with world powers.

Amid Trump’s final days as president, Tehran has recently seized a South Korean oil tanker and begun enriching uranium closer to weapons-grade levels, while the US has sent B-52 bombers, the USS Nimitz aircraft carrier and a nuclear submarine into the region. **AP**

Uganda says Prez wins 6th term

Bobi Wine alleges vote rigging

Kampala: Uganda’s electoral commission says longtime President Yoweri Museveni has won a sixth term while top Opposition challenger Bobi Wine alleges rigging and officials struggle to explain how polling results were compiled amid an internet blackout.

In a generational clash widely watched across the African continent, with a booming young population and a host of aging leaders, the 38-year-old singer-turned-lawmaker Wine posed arguably the greatest challenge yet to Museveni. He had strong support in urban centers where frustration with unemployment and corruption is high.

The electoral commission said Museveni received 58% of ballots and Wine 34%, and voter turnout was 52%.

The top United States



Supporters of Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni celebrate in Kampala, Uganda on Saturday **AP**

diplomat to Africa has called the electoral process “fundamentally flawed.”

Thursday’s vote followed the East African country’s worst pre-election violence since the 76-year-old Museveni took office in 1986. Wine and other opposition candidates were often harassed, and more than 50 people were killed

when security forces put down riots in November over Wines arrest. Wine petitioned the International Criminal Court this month over alleged torture and other abuses by security forces.

While the president holds on to power, at least 15 of his Cabinet ministers, including the vice president, were voted

out, with many losing to candidates from Wines party, local media reported.

Wine claimed victory Friday, asserting that he had video evidence of vote-rigging and saying “every legal option is on the table” to challenge the official election results, including peaceful protests. Candidates can challenge election results at the Supreme Court.

Hours later, he tweeted that the military had entered his home compound and “we are in serious trouble,” which a military spokeswoman denied. Wine, whose real name is Kyagulanyi Ssentamu, was roughed up and arrested several times while campaigning but was never convicted, and eventually he campaigned wearing a flak jacket and said he feared for his life.

A heavy presence of security forces remained around his home, where he has said he was alone with his wife and a single security guard. **AP**

Pragmatic Governor Laschet elected to lead Merkel’s party

Berlin: Chancellor Angela Merkel’s center-right party on Saturday chose Armin Laschet, the pragmatic Governor of Germany’s most populous state, as its new leader — sending a signal of continuity months before an election in which voters will decide who becomes the new chancellor.

Laschet defeated Friedrich Merz, a conservative and one-time Merkel rival, at an online convention of the Christian Democratic Union. Laschet won 521 votes to Merz’s 466; a third candidate, prominent lawmaker Norbert Roettgen, was eliminated in a first round of voting.

Saturday’s vote isn’t the final word on who will run as

the center-right candidate for chancellor in Germany’s Sept. 26 election, but Laschet will either run for chancellor or will have a big say in who does.

Merkel, who has been chancellor since 2005, announced in late 2018 that she wouldn’t seek a fifth term. She also stepped down from the CDU leadership.

The decision ends an 11-month leadership limbo in Germany’s strongest party after outgoing leader Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, who had failed to impose her authority on the party, announced her resignation. A vote on her successor was delayed twice because of the coronavirus pandemic.

There had been no clear

favorite going into Saturday’s convention, but the election of Merz would have marked at least a symbolic break with the Merkel era. Laschet will now have to work to strengthen party unity — something Kramp-Karrenbauer struggled with.

Laschet, 59, was elected in 2017 as governor of North Rhine-Westphalia state, a traditionally center-left stronghold. He governs the region in a coalition with the pro-business Free Democrats, the CDU’s traditional ally on the right, but would likely be able to work smoothly with a more liberal partner, too.

Laschet pointed Saturday to the value of continuity and moderation. **AP**

Another UN peacekeeper killed in Mali, 5th in a week

Dakar: A United Nations peacekeeper from Egypt was killed in Mali’s northern Kidal region on Friday, and another was seriously injured, after their vehicle hit an explosive device during a logistics convoy, the UN said.

It brought the toll to five UN peacekeepers killed in

northern Mali in just a week.

Another explosive device was found at the scene in Tessalit and disabled, the UN mission in Mali said late Friday.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Saturday strongly condemned the attack and said attacks against peacekeepers may constitute war

crimes, spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

Four peacekeepers from Ivory Coast died from an improvised explosive device and an attack Wednesday by unidentified gunmen in the Timbuktu region.

The UN said six were wounded. **AP**

Sudan imposes curfew in West Darfur amid deadly clashes

Cairo: Sudanese authorities on Saturday imposed a round-the-clock curfew in the entire West Darfur province after tribal clashes between Arabs and non-Arabs killed at least six people and wounded at least 28 others.

Gov. Mohammed Abdalla al-Douma said the curfew began Saturday and would last until further notice, and includes the closure of all markets and a ban on gatherings across the province. Al-Douma also granted security forces and soldiers a mandate to use force to control the situation, according to decrees obtained by The Associated Press.

The violence comes two weeks after the U.N. Security Council ended the joint U.N.-African Union peacekeeping force’s mandate in the Darfur region, following pressure from Sudan’s transitional government, Russia and other African nations. The Darfur region remains scarred by war after a rebellion in the early 2000s was brutally suppressed.

The clashes erupted Friday in Genena, West Darfur’s provincial capital, when a man was killed at a market in the Krinding camp for internally displaced people. **AP**

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL



General public is here by informed that one girl
Namely: Dropdi, D/o Maha Nand Mandal, R/o Jhuggi E 406, Kishan Kunj, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi. **Age:** 13 years, **Height:** 152 C.M., **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Oval, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Black Kurta & Pink Pajama has been missing since 11.09.2019

from the area of PS. Laxmi Nagar, Delhi. In this regard a FIR No. 292/19, dated 11.09.2019 has been lodged at P.S. Laxmi Nagar, New Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this 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.

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in **SHO**
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> **P.S. Laxmi Nagar, Delhi**
Fax: 011-24368639 **Ph. 011-22542441, 8750870622**
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641 **DP/331/ED/2021**

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is publicly notified that the residential house No B-53B, Sector-19, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. allottee G.L. Wadhwa S/o Sh. Karam Chand Wadhwa R/o Quarter No. 66, Type-II, ESIC Colony, Basaidarpur, New Delhi had sold on the basis of General Power of Attorney to the following persons. The General Power of attorney was registered on dated 03.05.1988 in the name of Mr. Mahender Pal Singh S/o Sh. Kishan Singh Adhikari R/o House No. B-53B, Sector-19, Noida and agreement to sell is not executed.

Because agreement to sell is not executed so it is publicly notified that the transfer of the property bearing residential house No. B-53B, Sector-19, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar U.P. is going to transfer through G.P.A. in the name of Mrs. Basanti Adhikari W/o Mahender Pal Singh R/o House no. B-53B, Sector-19, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. If someone has any objection he/she file his/her objection along with the sufficient proof in the housing Department of Noida Authority within 15 days from the date of publication of this Notice.

SPORTKING INDIA LTD.

CIN: L17122DL1989PLC035050
Regd. Off.: 5/69, First Floor, Guru Mansion, Padam Singh Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005
Phone: 011-26754885
Website: www.sportking.co.in,
Email: cs@sportking.co.in

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015 that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the company is scheduled to be held on Saturday, 23rd January 2021, to consider and to take on record, inter alia, the Un-Audited Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended 31st December 2020.

The above information is also available on the company’s website www.sportking.co.in and on the website of Stock Exchange i.e. BSE - www.bseindia.com

For Sportking India Limited
Sd/-
Munish Avasthi
Place: Ludhiana Managing Director
Date : 16.01.2021 DIN : 004242425

AXIS BANK

Axis Bank Limited, Axis House, Tower-2, 2nd Floor, I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Jaypee Greens Wishtown, Noida (U.P.)-201301. **Controlling office:** Axis House, Bombay Dyeing Compound, Pandurang Budhkar Marg, Worli, Mumbai-400025.

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Secured Creditor will be sold on “As is where is”, “As is what is” and “Whatever there is” basis on **04-02-2021, 11:30 A.M.** at Axis House, Tower-2, 2nd Floor, I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Jaypee Greens Wishtown, Noida (U.P.)-201301 for recovery of Rs. 48,75,844/- due as on 13-01-2021 along with further interest as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred up to the date of actual payment and/or realization due to the secured creditor from Mr. Monish Paul. The reserve price will be Rs. 25,49,532/- and the earnest money deposit will be Rs. 2,54,953.2/-.

Account Number	Location / Details of the Immovable Property/Secured Assets possessed and put for sale	Encumbrances, if any known to the Bank.
PHR07920 1317106	Flat No. T15-201 on Second Floor of Tower 15, having a super area of 1225 Sq. Fts. (113.805 Sq. Mtrs.) situated in Group Housing Project known as Park Floors, Sector-76, Faridabad Haryana, alongwith the proportionate, undivided, impartible share only in the land underneath the said building in which the said unit is located, together with the right to use and access all common areas, patios, passages, benefits, and advantages, appurtenant whatsoever to the said unit or any part thereof and to hold the same unto and to the use of the Vendee Situated within the revenue estate of Village Fajipur Majra, Nimka, Sub Tehsil Tagaon, Distt. Faridabad, Haryana	

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in the secured creditor's website i.e. <https://www.axisbank.com/auction-notices/> **Sd/-, Authorized Officer,**
Date : 17-01-2021, Place: Faridabad **Axis Bank Ltd.**

WESTERN RAILWAY

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No.

S/02/2021 Date 13.01.2021

S.N.	Short Description of Item	Quantity	T.O.D.
21	Ball Joint Traction Lever	192 Nos.	25.01.2021
22	Rubber Spring	96 Nos.	25.01.2021
23	Set of High Tensile Hex Head Bolt	703 Nos.	29.01.2021
24	Locking Bracket	3559 Nos.	29.01.2021
25	Non Contract Tonometer	1 No.	29.01.2021
26	Intermediate Overhauling Kit	34 Set	30.01.2021
27	Mobilux EP2 Grease	150 Kg.	30.01.2021
28	64 Teeth Gear Wheel	9 Nos.	01.02.2021
29	Insulin Analogue Aspart/Lispro 100iu/ml -3ml cartridge	11291 Nos.	01.02.2021
30	Power Supply Gate Unit (GUSP)	2Nos.	02.02.2021
31	Air Brake Equipment	39 Set	02.02.2021
32	Heart Lung Machine	1 No.	02.02.2021
33	CVTS Instruments	29 items	02.02.2021
34	BEUC Speed Sensor Type	14 Nos.	03.02.2021
35	Lubricating Coating	1350 Kg.	03.02.2021
36	Paper Duplicating White Semi	1000 Ream	04.02.2021
37	Slip Free Finish Strainless Steel Chequered Sheet	16500 Kg	05.02.2021
38	Set of Axle Box Assly. Complete	56 Set	06.02.2021
39	Tapered Roller Bearing	20 Nos.	08.02.2021
40	Ophthalmic Operating Table	2 Nos.	08.02.2021
41	Hex Head Bolt M12x70 High Tensile	25460 Nos.	10.02.2021
42	Ball Joint Roll	180 Nos.	11.02.2021
43	Key for Brake Shoe	25780 Nos.	12.02.2021

CORRIGENDUM: Please visit www.ireps.gov.in for corrigendum issued to following tender Sr.No.811 of Tender Notice No. S/31/2020 Dt. 22.12.2020 (Constant Voltage Regulated cum Emergency Battery Charger).

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

For Principal Chief Materials Manager
0582
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PM announces ₹1,000-cr ‘Startup India Seed Fund’

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday announced the launch of Rs 1,000-crore ‘Startup India Seed Fund’ to support startups and help budding entrepreneurs pursue innovative ideas.

Addressing the ‘Prambh: Startup India International Summit’, Modi exuded confidence that the growth of startups will help in generating jobs and improving lives of people in the region.

“In order to provide initial capital for startups, the nation is launching a Rs 1,000 crore Startup India Seed Fund. This will help in setting up new startups and promote their growth,” the Prime Minister said.

The summit marked the fifth anniversary of the Startup India initiative launched by Modi on this day in 2016.



The government, Modi added, has been implementing the Fund of Fund Scheme to help startups raise equity capital. Going forward, the government will also help startups in raising debt capital, he added. India, the Prime Minister said, is home to the world's third largest startup ecosystem which has helped several budding entrepreneurs to come up with innovative technologies and become big corporations.

He further said that startups in India are not limited to big cities and about 40 per cent of such budding entrepreneurs are coming from tier-II and -III cities. Modi said in 2014 there were only four startups in the unicorn club, but today there are more than 30.

He informed that 11 startups entered the unicorn club in 2020 itself. India is the world's third largest startup ecosystem. There are over 41,000 startups in the country.

RBI remains steadfast to take any further measures to support growth: Das

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das on Saturday said the central bank remains steadfast to take any further measures as may be required to support growth without compromising on financial stability.

Delivering the 39th Palkhivala Memorial Lecture, the governor said the principal objective during the pandemic period was to support economic activity; and looking back, it is evident that policies of the RBI have helped in easing the severity of the economic impact of the pandemic.

“I would like to unambiguously reiterate that the Reserve Bank remains steadfast to take any further measures, as may be necessary, while at the same time remaining fully committed to maintaining financial stability,” he said.

In a bid to maintain financial stability, Das emphasised the need for banks to raise resources in advance as a buffer.

Going ahead, he said,

financial institutions in India have to walk a tightrope in nurturing the economic recovery within the overarching objective of preserving long-term stability of the financial system.

The current COVID-19 pandemic related shock will place greater pressure on the balance sheets of banks in terms of non-performing assets, leading to erosion of capital, he said, adding building buffers and raising capital by banks – both in the public and private sector – will be crucial not only to ensure credit flow but also to build resilience in the financial system.

“We have advised all banks, large non-deposit taking NBFCs and all deposit-taking NBFCs to assess the impact of COVID-19 on their balance sheet, asset quality, liquidity, capital adequacy, and work out possible mitigation measures, including capital planning, capital raising, and contingency liquidity planning, among others,” he said.

Prudently, a few large public sector banks (PSBs) and major private sector banks

(PVBs) have already raised capital, and some have plans to raise further resources taking advantage of benign financial conditions. “This process needs to be put on the fast track,” he added. The governor said recent experience across countries during the pandemic suggest that banks, non-banks, financial markets and payment systems remain at the core of financial stability issues, there was a need to work much closer at the system in its entirety.

“In this sense, the overall objective of financial stability policies should be closely intertwined with the health of the real economy,” he noted.

The financial stability needs to be seen in a broader perspective and must include not just the stability of the financial system and price stability but also ‘fiscal sustainability and external sector viability’, Das said.

Noting that good governance will have to be supported by effective risk management functions and assurance mechanisms, he said banks and non-banking finance insti-



tutions need to identify risks early, monitor them closely and manage them effectively.

The risk management function in banks and NBFCs should evolve with changing times as technology becomes all-pervasive and should be in sync with international best practices. In this context, instilling an appropriate risk culture in the organisation is important,” he said.

A robust assurance mechanism by way of internal audit function was another important component of sound corporate governance and risk management, Das said, adding it provides independent evalu-

ation and assurance to the Board that the “operations were performed in accordance with set policies and procedures”.

He said the central bank has already taken a number of measures and would continue to do so. “Recent efforts in this direction were geared towards enhancing the role and stature of compliance and internal audit functions in banks by clarifying supervisor expectations and aligning the guidelines with best practices.

“Some more measures on improving governance in banks and NBFCs are in the pipeline,” he said.

CAIT moves SC over WhatsApp’s new privacy policy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Traders’ body CAIT on Saturday filed a petition in the Supreme Court, making a plea to direct WhatsApp to withdraw its new privacy policy. The body issued a statement claiming that the new WhatsApp privacy policy encroaches upon various fundamental rights of the citizens.

About the petition, the traders’ body said it “has also prayed that Union of India must frame guidelines to govern big technology companies like WhatsApp and frame policies which would protect the privacy of citizens and busi-

nesses”.

“The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has today filed a petition in the Supreme Court with the prayer to direct WhatsApp to withdraw its new privacy policy, which is encroaching upon various fundamental rights of the citizens granted by Constitution of India,” the statement said. Meanwhile, WhatsApp has announced delaying by three months the implementation of the new privacy policy that has faced a massive backlash with tens of millions of its users moving from the platform to rivals like Signal and Telegram.

Finmin looks at BIC model after RBI raises concern over zero coupon bonds for PSBs recap

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With the RBI raising concern over the issuance of zero coupon bonds for recapitalisation of public sector banks (PSBs), the Finance Ministry is examining other avenues for affordable capital infusion including setting up of a Bank Investment

Company (BIC), sources said. Setting up a BIC as a holding company or a core investment company was suggested by the P J Nayak Committee in its report on ‘Governance of Boards of Banks in India’.

The report recommended transferring shares of the government in the banks to the BIC which would become the parent holding company of all these banks, as a result of this,

all the PSBs would become ‘limited’ banks. BIC will be autonomous and it will have the power to appoint the board of directors and make other policy decisions about subsidiaries.

The idea of BIC, which will serve as a super holding company, was also discussed at the first Gyan Sangam bankers’ retreat organised in 2014, sources said, adding it was proposed that the holding company would look into the capital needs of banks and arrange funds for them without government support.

It would also look at alternative ways of raising capital such as the sale of non-voting shares in a bid to garner affordable capital.

With this in place, the

dependence of PSBs on government support would also come down and ease fiscal pressure.

To save interest burden and ease the fiscal pressure, the government decided to issue zero-coupon bonds for meeting the capital needs of the banks.

The first test case of the new mechanism was a capital infusion of Rs 5,500 crore into Punjab & Sind Bank by issuing zero-coupon bonds of six different maturities last year. These special securities with tenure of 10-15 years are non-interest bearing and valued at par.

However, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) expressed concerns over zero-coupon bonds for the recapitalisation of PSBs.

HDFC Bank Q3 profit rises 14.36 pc to ₹8,760 cr; asset quality stable

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The country's largest private sector lender HDFC Bank on Saturday reported a 14.36 per cent jump in consolidated net profit to ₹8,760 crore for the December quarter, driven by a surge in core income.

At the standalone level, net profit for the three-month period grew 18.09 per cent to ₹8,758.29 crore, on the back of a 15.1 per cent growth in the core net interest income at ₹16,317 crore. Its deposits grew 19.1 per cent and the share of low-cost current and savings account deposits was 43 per cent. HDFC Bank is the first major lender to declare its results for the December quarter. This is also the maiden earnings declaration under

new chief executive and managing director Sashidhar Jagdishan, who succeeded Aditya Puri as the head of the bank. The bank's credit growth came at 15.6 per cent, while the net interest margin was 4.2 per cent. The non-interest income grew 11 per cent to ₹7,443 crore, largely on the back of a gain or revaluation in an investment at ₹1,109 crore, which stood at ₹676 crore in the year-ago period.

The results showed an improvement in the asset quality with the gross non-performing assets ratio stood at 0.81 per cent of the total assets as against 1.42 per cent in the year-ago period and 1.08 per cent at the end of the preceding September quarter, the bank said. If one were to

exclude the benefit of the Supreme Court order asking banks not to classify stress during the moratorium period in NPA computation, the GNPA ratio would have been at 1.38 per cent, it added. Its overall provisions and contingencies for the reporting quarter, which saw the economy trying to recover from the reverses of the pandemic, grew to ₹3,414 crore as against ₹3,043 crore in the year-ago period.

It held contingent provisions of ₹8,656 crore and floating provisions of ₹1,451 crore as of Dec 31. It said 0.5 per cent of its ₹10.82 lakh crore in advances have been restructured under the special scheme announced by the RBI to handle the COVID-related stress.

Stockbrokers seek rationalisation of tax structure for capital market

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

As the Union Budget for FY21-22 nears, stockbrokers have sought rationalisation and streamlining of the structure for the capital market.

The industry body stockbrokers Association of National Exchanges Member of India (ANMI) has written to Central Bank Direct Taxation (CBDT) on doing away with the multi-

ple classification system for calculating tax on capital market income.

In a statement, ANMI noted that financial markets worldwide play an important role in garnering growth capital for the economy. In the years following the coronavirus pandemic, catalysing equity market participation will hold the key to reviving India's GDP growth, it added.

Newsprint cost up 20% in last 3 months, publishers seek waiver in customs duty

New Delhi: Newsprint cost has jumped 20 per cent in the last three months due to demand-supply imbalance post pandemic, prompting news publishers to petition the government for waiver of 5 per cent import duty to help cut cost.

The industry has been hit hard due to COVID-19 led disruptions and the most news-

papers have stopped sending newspapers to rural areas where there is less than 50 copies to reduce the distribution cost, said the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) President L Adimoolam.

In a representation to the Finance Minister

Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday ahead of the forthcoming union budget, INS has suggested to take steps as to reduce the customs duty on import of newsprints, a stimulus package for the industry or at least to help the publications by releasing advertisement with an increased tariff of 50 per cent “If working out a stimulus package for print media is difficult at this juncture, DAVP (Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity) may please consider releasing advertisement for all its departments to all publications with an increased tariff of 50 per cent, which would be highly helpful for the industry as a whole,” the INS representation said. It has also asked to extend the validity of RNI (Registrar of Newspapers for India) Circulation Certificates up to March 31, 2022 which will enable DAVP rates to remain the same till next year.

Raj CM interacts with health workers

Jaipur: Chief Minister Shri Ashok Gehlot said that due to efficient management of corona by the state government, limiting the number of Covid patients in the state and introduction of vaccine today is a happy coincidence.

Just as we have fought the corona in the best way with the cooperation of all, similarly we will set an example by making this vaccination campaign a success. To ensure that the corona is completely eradicated despite the vaccine, everyone should ensure continued adherence to other health protocols, including masking, social distancing, and more.

Shri Gehlot was addressing the state-level inauguration ceremony of corona vaccination through video conference at the Chief Minister's residence on Saturday. On this occasion



simultaneous vaccination was started at 167 sites in the state. Along with Dr. Sudhir Bhandari, Principal of SMS Medical College, doctors of major medical institutes got vaccinated on these sites on the first day. The CM congratulated all the scientists, experts and other personnel associated with preparing the vaccine in a short time and said that everyone is proud of them. He said that this vaccine, which came after many trials and investigations, would help us in conquering the corona.

Petrol, diesel prices unchanged across metros

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol and diesel prices remained unchanged for the second consecutive day on Saturday.

In the national capital, petrol was sold at the record high level of Rs 84.70 per litre. Prices in Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata were Rs 91.32, Rs 87.40 and Rs 86.15 per litre, respectively.

Across the country, pump price of petrol and diesel remained static on Saturday.

In Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, diesel was sold for Rs 74.88, Rs 81.60, Rs 80.19 and Rs 78.47 per litre, respectively.

Auto fuel price rise was on hold for the last five days after petrol and diesel prices had increased on two successive days last week on Wednesday

and Thursday taking gasoline to record high levels in Delhi while keeping prices very close to record high levels in other metro cities.

WESTERN RAILWAY

CANCELLATION NOTICE

Tender No: BCT/20-21/290, dtd. 21.12.2020, DOP: 27.01.2021. Above Tender may be treated as cancelled due to technical reason. Please visit www.irops.gov.in in respective tender for further details & information corrigendum. **0579**

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WESTERN RAILWAY

CANCELLATION NOTICE

Tender No: BCT/20-21/290, dtd. 05.01.2021, DOP: 09.02.2021. Above Tender may be treated as cancelled due to technical reason. Please visit www.irops.gov.in in respective tender for further details & information corrigendum. **0580**

Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR

Tel-0194-2474234 Fax - 2482032 – email :- kasflori@rediffmail.com

Sub: Extension No. 02.

In view of no response, the last date for submission of bids invited vide this office e-Tender Notice **No.12 of 2020 dated.01.12.2020 for Outsourcing of Entry Ticketing System of Tulip Garden Cheshmashahi, Srinagar** is hereby extended as per the details given below:-

1. Period of downloading of bidding document	16/01/2021 from 11:00 AM to 04/02/2021 up to 02:00 PM.
2. Bid submission Start Date	18/01/2021 from 10:00 AM.
3. Bid submission End Date	04/02/2021 up to 02:00 PM.
4. Date and time of Opening of Tenders	09/02/2021 at 02:00 PM.

Other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid Tender Notice.

By order
Sd/- Accounts Officer
(Member secretary)

No. DIPK-11831/20
Dated:- 16-01-2021

BIHAR STATE KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES BOARD

Department of Industries, Government of Bihar

Corrigendum -1

Due to the unavoidable circumstances, the date for the submission and opening of tender is extended as follows:

Previous Tender Notice 3463 dated 06.12.2020 and PR No.- 009113 dated 06/12/2020 for Leasing of restaurant with kitchen and open space in Khadi Mall, East Gandhi Maidan, PATNA -800001

Wherever appear in the bid Document or NIT	Will Appear As
Last date of Receiving Bid Document: 04th January 2021, 2 PM	Last date of Receiving Bid Document: 27th January 2021, 2 PM
Last date of Opening Bid Document: 04th January 2021, 4 PM	Last date of Opening Bid Document: 27th January 2021, 4 PM

Further information can be obtained from the address mentioned below during office hours (10.30 AM to 5.00 PM):

Chief Executive officer
KVIB, PATNA

Chief Executive Officer, Bihar State Khadi and Village Industries Board, East Gandhi Maidan, Patna- 800001, Contact: 7320923213, 7004503382
Mail id: kvibpatna@gmail.com Website: www.kvibbihar.com

PR. No. 011304 (Industry) 2020-21

सावधानी- संबंधी किसी तरह की जानकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

जल संसाधन विभाग

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

पत्रांक- 45, कटिहार

अल्पकालीन पुर्ननिविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या -10 SBD/2020-21 (राष्ट्रीय/राजकीय स्पर्धा)

(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

क्र.सं.	कार्य का नाम	प्रारंभिक राशि (लाख रु० में)	अंशदान की राशि (लाख रु० में) (ऑन लाइन अथवा ऑफलाइन/ बैंगलोर सेड में मुद्रित)	परिमाणु - विपत्र का मूल्य (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (किंवा ऑन लाइन मोड में मुद्रित)	बैडरों को देय हिस्से (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (किंवा ऑन लाइन मोड में मुद्रित)	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
01.	लामा चौकिया पहलपुर महानंद दायी तटबंध के किमी० 20.25 (सेन रा० 675) से किमी० 23.00 (सेन रा० 67) के बीच कटाव नियंत्रण कार्य। एंजेंडा रा०- 168/322/2021	681.19	13.63	10000.00	5,900.00	15.05.2021

- निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक - 13.01.2021
- निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने : दिनांक-21.01.2021 से दिनांक-24.01.2021 के 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
- ग्री-बिड नीतिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक-27.01.2021 3.00 बजे अपराह्न में, मुख्य अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण एवं जल निस्सर्जन, जल संसाधन विभाग, कटिहार।
- तकनीकी बिड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक-27.01.2021 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
- बिड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक-27.01.2021 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
- निविदा खोलने का स्थान : 120 दिन
- निविदा की वैधता अवधि : कार्यपालक अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार
- निविदा प्रस्ताव करने हेतु वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर दिनांक-21.01.2021 से दिनांक-24.01.2021 के 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

कार्यपालक अभियंता
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार
मो० :-7463889238

PR- 011283 (WRD) 2020-21

किसी भी तरह आपदा की जानकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु आपदा प्रबंधन के हेल्पलाइन नं. 1070 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

ICICI Bank

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd. Regional Office Jsel Building, Malviya Nagar JLN Marg-Jaipur 302017

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

[See proviso to rule 8(6)]

Notice for sale of immovable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is", as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s) /Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Mr. Joginder Kumar (Borrower) Sunita Devi (Co-Borrower) Loan no: LBBWD00003939712	Flat No.- 3803, Second Floor The Park, Block C Kharsa No 200, 201, 202, 191, 181, 192, 519/189, 518/1, Village Shahpur, Tehsil Tijara Bhiwadi-301411 Super built-up area- 1125 Sq Ft	Rs. 24,47,941/- (as on January 08, 2021)	Rs. 18,00,000/- to 1,80,000/-	February 01, 2021 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM	February 18, 2021 from 11:30 AM onwards.

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link-<https://disposalhub.com>) of our auction agency **M/S NexXen Solution Private Limited**. The Mortgagees/noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **February 17, 2021 before 05:00 P.M** else these secured assets will be sold as per above schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at **ICICI Bank Ltd. Regional Office Jsel Building, Malviya Nagar JLN Marg-Jaipur 302017**, and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **February 17, 2021 before 05:00 P.M** along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, incase prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at **ICICI Bank Ltd. Regional Office Jsel Building, Malviya Nagar JLN Marg-Jaipur 302017** on or before **February 17, 2021 before 05:00 P.M**. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "**ICICI Bank Limited**" payable at **Bhiwadi**

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited on 8584874809, 7230004964 or M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited on 9710029933/9810029926/01244233933**

Please note that Marketing agencies agencies 1. **NexXen Solution Private limited** 2. **Augeo Asset Management Pvt Ltd** have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

Date: January 16, 2021
Place: Delhi/NCR

Authorised Officer
ICICI Bank Limited.

Rohit’s dismissal puts India on backfoot

PTI ■ BRISBANE

Rohit Sharma’s indiscreet shot selection pegged India back after rookie bowling attack restricted Australia to 369 on a rain-curtailed second day of the fourth Test on Saturday.

With heavy thundershowers preventing any play in the post tea session, India ended the day at 62 for two.

Rohit was elegant as ever in his 44 off 74 balls before Nathan Lyon in his 100th Test enticed him to come down the track but the half-chip-half-loft was safely pouched by Mitchell Starc in the deep.

India also lost Shubman Gill (7) who edged one off Pat Cummins to Steve Smith.

Cheteshwar Pujara (8) and Ajinkya Rahane (2) added only two runs in the 6.1 overs before the break.

There were six boundaries from Rohit but he did not fiddle at deliveries in and around the off-stump channel even as Cummins and Josh Hazlewood bowled a testing spell under overcast conditions.

The shot of the session was an on-drive off Cummins which came after a streaky boundary through the slips in the same over. Another delightful stroke was an off-drive off Cameron Green as 49 runs were added for the second wicket.

There wasn’t much swing on offer but the pace off the track has increased compared to the first day and it only helped that the Australian pace attack is a more well built one with average speed being at least 6-7 kmph more than their Indian counterparts.

Pujara, at the other end was playing his usual ‘grinding out’ game but it didn’t look too arduous



Rohit Sharma reacts on his way to pavilion after getting out on Day 2 of 4th Test BCCI/Twitter

till Rohit kept the scoreboard ticking at the other end.

It wouldn’t be an over statement to say that among all top order batsman across both sides, Rohit looked the most comfortable and till his dismissal never looked like being troubled by the four-pronged attack.

However as has been his wont in SENA countries, Rohit just before

the tea break went after Lyon when the situation demanded that he could have played for session-end.

It was very similar to his dismissal off Moeen Ali at the stroke of tea during the 2014 series and that was also after being set in the middle-order.

India, who have been forced to field a depleted side won’t mind an

4th Test. Day 3
Live from 5:00am IST
SONY TEN 1, 3 & SIX

inclement weather which effectively makes the home team more jittery as a draw would be enough for Ajinkya Rahane to lift the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

In the first session, India’s rookie bowling line-up did put up a lion-hearted effort, getting the last five wickets for 95 runs.

Shardul Thakur (3/94) along with debutants Washington Sundar (3/89) and Thangarasu Natarajan (3/78) got the breakthroughs while Mohammed Siraj (28-10-77-1) got one on the opening day.

For an attack as thin on experience as India, the effort in adverse times can only be commended. India lost five main bowlers through the three Test matches and were forced to hand Test debuts to Natarajan and Washington.

Nathan Lyon (24 off 22 balls) and Mitchell Starc (20 off 35 balls) counter-attacked the inexperienced Indian attack with a brisk 39-run partnership to take Australia past 350-run mark.

Going by statistics, Australia have never lost a Test match at the Gabba after scoring 350 in the first innings.

Resuming at 274 for five, Tim Paine (50) and Cameron Green (47) extended their stand to 98 before the home team encountered a mini-collapse.

Thakur bowled a fuller delivery that shaped away and Paine’s lazy drive without going to the pitch of the delivery saw Rohit Sharma take a regulation catch at the second slip.

Paine was just getting into the groove with some good drives

Rohit has no regret of playing that shot

PTI ■ BRISBANE

Rohit Sharma understands the criticism that his untimely dismissal has invited but the India vice-captain has “no regrets” about going after Nathan Lyon, saying that’s his way of putting bowlers under pressure.

Rohit looked in good touch during his 44 off 74 balls but was dismissed trying to loft Lyon over mid-wicket, the kind of shots that has often brought about his dismissal even during earlier Test matches.

“You always have a plan and I actually have no regret of playing that shot. It is something that I always like to do — put pressure on bowlers. Nathan Lyon is a smart bowler and he bowled into me which made it difficult for me to get some elevation,” Rohit said at the post-match virtual conference.

His shot selection invited criticism from the commentary box. India were 62 for two at stumps when Rohit could have gone for a big score after a good start.

Rohit understands the disappointment but in his defence would explain why he went for that kind of a high-risk stroke.

“It’s not that it is (that shot) coming out of nowhere. It’s a shot that I have played well in the past.



That’s something that I back myself to play and that’s the kind of role I play in this team. When it looks like that, it looks bad, but I don’t think too much as my focus is to make it count once I am in,” he said.

“Having said that, there is a process I like to follow. Sometimes you get out and sometimes it goes over the ropes. Unfortunate and sad dismissal in the end to be honest. Like I said, those are my shots and I will keep playing them,” the senior player was forthright about his mind-set.

As he has always maintained, he doesn’t have much time for his critics and would rather focus on the role his team wants him to perform.

“The team has shown lot of confidence in me. It’s just that I have to do what the team expects me to do and not worry about what happens anywhere else or what people talk about.”

On the match situation, Rohit said that although 369 at the Gabba was a very good first innings score and there is no reason why India with two of their most seasoned campaigners at the crease can’t match the home team’s total on a good batting track.

“We have got solid batters to come in now. Two of the most experienced players are still out there in the middle. The pitch is good and I don’t see any reason why we can’t get to that total of first innings.”

His advice for the batsmen is to play session by session rather than looking at the final total.

“We should focus on what’s there in front of us rather than thinking too far ahead. It’s a big score and we have to focus on sessions, take it as it comes. The pitch is playing good and we have to back ourselves. We have the guys to do it and I don’t see why we can bat well on day three,” he said.

Disciplined Sundar fill Ashwin’s shoes well: McDonald

PTI ■ BRISBANE

Australia’s assistant coach Andrew McDonald on Saturday praised the highly inexperienced Indian bowling attack for the final Test and singled out Washington Sundar, saying the young off-spinner filled the shoes of Ravichandran Ashwin “quite well”.

Hit by a barrage of injuries through the series, India picked debutants Washington (3/89) and medium pacer T Natarajan (3/78) in the playing eleven on Friday.

The duo was travelling with the squad as net bowlers.

“I thought they (the Indian bowlers) were very consistent. I thought Washington Sundar in particular was disciplined and fill that role of Ravi Ashwin quite well and kept it tight and was able to take some key wickets on the way,” McDonald said at post-day conference.

“So, for me I suppose, he is a bowler who controlled well the tempo of the game and I think it stood out for me.”

McDonald, who also coaches in the IPL, was also impressed by Natarajan.

“...Natarajan shaped the ball early, there is lot (to like) about him, left-arm swing bowler, no doubt he is inexperienced but has enough played first-class games to be play his first Test on this tour, (that) is a great achievement, so I think they held



their own,” the 39-year-old said.

The left-arm pacer had impressed in the limited overs leg of the tour after making the Indian team at the back of a stellar IPL.

Australia were bowled out for 369 in the first session of the rain-curtailed second day. Like Washington and Natarajan, Shardul Thakur also took three wickets..

“They (Indian bowlers) applied pressure throughout the innings and they made (it) difficult for ourselves. Times when we felt we would get on the top, they were able to bounce back and get key wickets at crucial times. It was great arm-wrestle, so full credit to their attack,” the Australian assistant coach said.

PTI ■ BRISBANE

India’s vice-captain Rohit Sharma is extremely impressed with Thangarasu Natarajan’s “solid character” and believes that the Tamil Nadu left-arm seamer is here to stay with his insatiable hunger to succeed at the top level.

Natarajan, who came in as a net bowler, joined fellow rookies Mohammed Siraj, Washington Sundar and Shardul Thakur to restrict Australia to 369, which according to Rohit is no

mean feat.

“Natarajan bowled pretty well, to be honest. Playing outside the country (internationals) for the first time and bowling to such batsmen, it wasn’t going to be easy and he was not under any pressure,” Rohit said about the debutant, who was the pick of the bowlers with 3/78 in 24.2 overs.

“From ball one, he was right up there. He showed a lot of composure, is a strong character who doesn’t speak much but we all know he has a solid personality. He wants to do well for the team and also for himself. He is here to stay,” he said.

For Rohit, considering that cumulative experience of the bowling attack was four Test matches, they need to be lauded for keeping Australia under check on a good batting check on a good batting check.

“Most of these guys are playing first time in Australia. Siraj has played a couple of games and Saini played in Sydney. Obviously, there’s not a lot of experience there.

“They showed a lot of discipline and overall if I had to analyse the performance of these bowlers, I would say they bowled pretty well. It’s a good pitch still. This is a great experience for them bowling against the

best batters, and test themselves,” he said.

Rohit believes that each and every youngster in this set-up knows that with so much competition for places, there aren’t too many chances that will be up for grabs.

“Basically it boils down to where they are coming from. There is a lot of hunger to perform. You don’t get a lot of opportunities at this level and we all know that. So when you get an opportunity, you have to make that count.”

It’s not every team that can restrict Australia to less than 400 hundred in six completed innings and that’s a big credit to bowling unit.

“The A tours must have helped. Shardul, Navdeep and Siraj have played a lot of A team cricket. They know how difficult it can be in Australia. Their understanding of conditions helped them.

“To not let Australia score 400 is an achievement in itself. These tours they have done has helped them stay in control,” he said.

Punjab, Baroda, TN close to Mushtaq Ali knock-outs



PTI ■ ALUR

Punjab inched closer to a knockout berth with a 10-wicket rout of Jammu and Kashmir in a Group A game of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy here on Saturday, their fourth win in a row.

Shubham Pundir top-scored with 42 to take J&K to 139 for eight in 20 overs.

Punjab made short of the target, cantering to victory in 14.3 overs with openers Simran Singh (59 not out off 42) and Abhishek Sharma (73 not out off 46) sharing an unbeaten 140-run stand.

Sharma smashed half a dozen sixes and his opening partner hit four of them.

Senior pacer Siddharth Kaul was the pick of the Punjab bowlers with four wicket for 33 runs in four overs.

In other Group A games, Karnataka defeated Railways for their third win in four games.

A struggling Uttar Pradesh recorded their first win of the tournament with nine-wicket victory over Tripura. Opener Karan Sharma top scored for UP with an unbeaten 68 off 36 balls. Suresh Raina too remained unbeaten with 36 off 23 balls.

In Vadodara, Baroda too continued their winning run by claiming a 60-run victory over Maharashtra in an Elite ‘C’ Group game.

This is Baroda’s fourth win on the trot in the league stage after having defeated Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in their first three outings.

Put in to bat, Baroda rode on stand-in skipper Kedar Devdhar’s stroke-filled unbeaten 99 off 71 balls to post a compet-

itive 158 for four.

Right-arm medium pacer Atit Sheth (4/17) then wreaked havoc to scuttle out Maharashtra for a meagre 98 and give his team four full points.

Devdhar was handed the captaincy after regular skipper Krunal Pandya left the bubble following his father’s demise.

In Group B match at Eden Gardens in Kolkata, Assam pulled off an upset 13-run win over Bengal while Tamil Nadu won its fourth straight match to go top of the points table.

Bengal opted to field and saw the talented Rryan Parag (77, 54 balls, 5 fours, 5 sixes) help Assam put up a fighting 157 for 5 in 20 overs. The visiting team restricted Bengal to 144 for 8.

In another match, skipper Dinesh Karthik (40 not out, 30 balls, 2X4, 2X6) and N Jagadeesan (78 not out, 51 balls, 4X4, 5X6) saw Tamil Nadu home against Hyderabad after a brief stutter in the middle of the innings.

Earlier, Hyderabad made 152 for 7 in 20 overs thanks to contributions from B Sandeep (41) and Pragmay Reddy (30) and late hitting by C V Milind (30, 11 balls, 3 sixes).

TN leads the group with 16 points after four consecutive wins followed by Bengal (12). The two teams face off on January 18 with the top spot on the line.

As per the format of the tournament, the top ranked teams from each group (Five in Elite and 1 Plate) will qualify for the knockout stage along with the next two teams in Elite Groups A to E with the most points.

Proteas not easy to beat but Pakistan banking on home advantage: Misbah

PTI ■ KARACHI

South Africa have always been a difficult opposition but Pakistan will have the home advantage this time as they host the visitors for the first time in nearly 14 years, said head coach Misbah-ul-Haq.

Back from New Zealand after a disappointing tour which ended with a 0-2 loss in the two-Test series, Pakistan will now play two Tests against South Africa at Karachi (January 26-30) and Rawalpindi (February 4-8), followed by a three-match T20I series at Lahore, beginning from February 11.

“South Africa has never been an easy side to beat, but them playing after 13 years in Pakistan will be an advantage for us, and we have a great chance to improve our record against them,” Misbah said.

He said the two Test matches are part of the ICC World Championship and are very important for the home side which will try to get maximum points out of it to improve their position on the table.

“Playing at home ground is always encouraging for the players, and it reflected in our performances in the series against Sri Lanka and Bangladesh last year,” Misbah said.

Pakistan won Tests against Sri Lanka and Bangladesh in late 2019



Officials and players of South Africa's cricket team come out from airport terminal upon arrival their arrival in Karachi AP

and early 2020 at home but have lost successive away Test tours to Australia, England and New Zealand leading to a criticism of the team’s performances and selection policies with Misbah under-fire.

Following their dismal tour of New Zealand, Pakistan’s new chief selector Muhammad Wasim named nine uncapped players in a revamped 20-member squad for the test series against South Africa.

“The series against South Africa

is an important one, and I am sure the players selected in the squad have the potential and hunger to give best results in the series,” Misbah said.

The South African cricket team, which last toured Pakistan in late 2007, arrived in Karachi on Saturday.

The visiting team’s head coach Mark Boucher cautioned his team, saying his batsmen will face a tough task against a “dangerous” side like Pakistan.

“Pakistan is a dangerous side at home; we will have to come up with a proper strategy to beat them at their own backyard,” the former wicket-keeper said.

“The wickets here in Pakistan are batting friendly, and we are relying on our batsmen to score runs. Their confidence will be high after scoring runs against Sri Lanka. Our fast bowlers will have to work very hard to get wickets.”

“Pakistan bowlers will have home advantage, so this series will be a test for our batsmen, but once they are successful in occupying the crease, they will be able to score freely,” Boucher said. “We are excited to play in Pakistan again, and expect a great series ahead with all focus on the game.”

South Africa had won the two-Test series 1-0 during their last tour of Pakistan in 2007.

Indian fan complains of racism at SCG during 3rd Test

Sydney: Sydney Cricket Ground officials have launched an investigation after an Indian supporter alleged that he was subjected to racial profiling and abuse by a security officer during the final day of the third Test against Australia.

The incident took place after Indian fast bowler Mohammed Siraj was allegedly racially abused by spectators on the third and fourth day of the drawn Test at SCG.

Sydney resident Krishna Kumar met *Venues* NSW legal personnel on Thursday to lodge an official complaint, accusing the security at the venue of racial profiling and unjustified frisking.

He informed the authorities that he felt “stripped and naked” by his treatment on the final day of the third Test (January 11), according to a report in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

Kumar, who attended three days’ play of the third Test, told *Venues* NSW that he was targeted after trying to carry four banners reading: “Rivalry is good, racism is not”, “No racism mate”, “Brown inclusion matters” and “Cricket Australia more diversity please”.

A security officer stopped Kumar, informing him that that one of the banners exceeded the permitted dimensions.

When he requested to speak to a security supervisor, Kumar was asked to leave.

“He told me, ‘If you need to address this matter, go back to where you belong,’” Kumar said.

Kumar said the official then told the junior guards to “make sure we give him a complete frisking when he gets back”.

“To me this a pure case of profiling. They changed their entire formation so the guy next to the boundary is standing right in front of me and facing me,” Kumar said.

“I want justice. I want accountability. I was feeling stripped, feeling watched and I went there to fight racism.

“Why should I be stopped from addressing racism, especially at a ground where it was debatable whether it was happening or not?,” he added.

PTI

Thirimanne, Perera lead SL resistance after Root’s 228

AFP ■ GALLE

Joe Root completed his fourth double century for England on Saturday but insisted it will mean nothing if his side cannot overcome a defiant Sri Lanka in the first Test.

The England captain made 228 of his teams 421 all out — 26 runs short of his brilliant 254 career best against Pakistan at Old Trafford in 2016.

But Lahiru Thirimanne led Sri Lanka’s stubborn resistance, hitting an unbeaten 75 while Kusal Perera made 62 as the home team reached 156/2 in their second innings. After their disappointing 135 in the first innings, they need another 130 to reach England’s total.

Root’s 321 ball innings with a six and 18 fours dominated the day. It took less than an hour in the open-



ing session to add the 32 runs to his overnight total. He reached 200 with a four off Lasith Emuldeniya.

While the empty Covid-19-stricken stadium meant that only his

teammates in the pavilion and a lone England fan watching from a near-by fort could applaud, the performance confirmed Root’s return as a batsman after a barren 2020 saw him fall to number 11 in the ICC rankings.

He had not reached three figures in a Test since his 226 in New Zealand in November 2019.

But he indicated his disappointment after seeing six wickets fall to Sri Lanka’s bowlers in the morning session and then the struggle by his own attack.

Running out of partners, Root was the last man out, caught by Emuldeniya on the boundary as he went for a six off Dilruwan Perera.

He saw fast bowler Asitha Fernando take Jos Buttler (30) and Sam Curran (0) with successive balls.

In the next over Root hit his landmark four then Dom Bess was run out as the tourists suffered a bout of nerves.

Perera also took Jack Leach and Mark Wood in successive overs to finish on four for 109 runs.

After their first innings collapse, Sri Lanka looked a different side in the second.

Perera and Thirimanne made 101 for the first wicket.

Perera took a fiery Mark Wood bouncer on his hand and needed a tight bandage to continue. He eventually gave a catch to Jack Leach on the boundary off a wayward Sam Curran delivery.

After four straight Test zeros Kusal Mendis broke the spell and scored 15 pent runs before he gave a catch to wicketkeeper Jos Buttler off Leach’s bowling.

the pioneer agenda

FROM THE INSIDE

Death is an interesting affair

Preparing For Death by Arun Shourie & Death: An Inside Story by Sadhguru speak of death in a matter-of-fact manner

2



4

Meditate for a better future

The process helps you to disengage from waking state consciousness and instead turns your attention inwards

You cannot live your life looking at yourself from someone else's point of view
— Penelope Cruz



A region, that was considered to be shrouded in mystery and inaccessible, is turning into a hot destination for business and leisure, writes SAIMI SATTAR, as she explores the reasons behind it

NORTH EAST ON THE RADAR

In 2013-14 racial attacks on North Easterners were common. We were more often than not referred to as *Chinki* or Chinese. In 2014, a boy, Nido Taniam, was killed for his hairstyle in Delhi. This shook the conscience of the entire community, recalls Shyam Kanu Mahanta

It was this incident that made Mahanta sit up and take notice, egged on by other youngsters from the North Eastern states to do something to bring about a positive change. After careful thought, Mahanta, who after having worked across the country had turned entrepreneur, decided to start a festival that would represent the distinct culture, food and more of the place. Over the years his brainchild, the North East Festival, has become a must-visit event on the capital's social calendar and in many ways representative of the changes that are gradually enveloping the perception about a region which for the longest of time was considered distant, different and inaccessible.

Powering this perception are several reasons which lie within the region as well as in the larger ecosystem of the country and the world.

FOCUS OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Mahanta believes that while the new government has undertaken several measures, it was former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee who kick-started the effort of connecting North East to the rest of the country. "He travelled to the region and then Manmohan Singh carried this integration forward when he became a Member of Parliament from Assam. Though he was not very vocal, this choice registered in the mind space of people," says Mahanta who runs MMS Advisory Pvt Ltd, a consultancy for road construction, besides the festival which he is better known for.

Ranjit Das, President of the Tour Operators Association of Assam (TOAA), while talking about his industry pins the beginning of the rise in tourist numbers to one particular decision. He says, "In 2009-10 the DoNER Minister Mani Shanker Aiyer promoted tourism by persuading government officials to use their Leave Travel Concession to visit the region which led to a huge surge of tourists in the North East."

The changed political thought process, where there was focus on the region, meant that connectivity improved and development accelerated. Mahanta believes that the present government and especially the Prime Minister and the DoNER Minister Jitendra Singh's attention has been important in creating a positive impression among people and has put the region on the highway to development.

Riniki Bhuyan Sharma, Chairman and Managing Director, Pride East Entertainments Pvt Ltd, a regional media house, agrees when she says, "With Modi's emphasis on development, investment has poured in and new avenues have opened up." This naturally meant a positive impression all around.

FALLING INSURGENCY

Earlier the perception within the region of being neglected, and often times exploited, by the Centre gave rise to insur-

gency. "People felt that in order to get even something as simple as a bridge or a refinery meant that they had to struggle for it. The distance from Indian mainland and mindset didn't help resulting in insurgency movements in 80s or 90s against the perceived discrimination of the region by the Centre," says Mahanta who believes that the increased attention was instrumental in bringing peace to the area.

Dr Parveen Ubed, CEO & Founder, ERC Eye Care (P) Limited which works towards democratising digital health (eye) care for the people in India & South-East Asia points out that insurgency affected business in different ways. "It meant that the offices were not operational every day which naturally led to erratic work conditions," he says.

Mahanta says that with more peace having prevailed, the conditions in Guwahati are almost similar to Delhi. "In fact, it is much safer for women. It has good restaurants, discotheques, all the major brands and a lot of people are coming to work here. It's very cosmopolitan. During insurgency people were scared of flaunting their wealth. Now they are buying expensive cars and splurging money which naturally helps the economy," says Mahanta.

STATE GOVERNMENT CHIPPING IN

Smitakshi B Goswami, Director, Pratidin Group which owns Asomiya Pratidin (the largest circulated Assamese daily) and Pratidin Time (a 24-hour Assamese news channel) says that the efforts of the state governments shored up the remaining gap. "When Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal conducted Khelo India in January last year, sports tourism got a fillip and people who came here saw the development as well as the future potential of the place. The international level stadiums were important in changing the thought process of the people who came from outside," she says.

ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

So, rather than the news of a flood or insurgency activities, there was positivity emanating from the region which grabbed eyeballs. While the ones who had visited the area saw the change for themselves, there were still others who were prompted to plan a trip because of the positive impression in the media. Das says, "During the TOAA's annual convention, we discussed the changing perception and dynamics due to the print and electronic media coverage. The international audience became more aware of the different kinds of experiences that the region held out thanks to programmes on channels like National Geographic." Road shows and participation in travel fairs by tour operators created awareness among domestic and international tourists about the scenic beauty of the region.

Moreover, the growth of social media meant that potential travellers often got the



of income and employment." Dr Ubed, who faced an uphill task while setting up his company in 2013, recalls, "People were surprised as they felt I was giving up a great career as a doctor. Start-ups were not a badge of honour. It was very difficult to get mentors to structure the business properly. I had to reach out to some friends in the US on Facebook who helped me. When I started in Jorhat, the local chartered accountants were not sure about how to register a local company as they hadn't done it before. Investors liked me, my idea and the opportunity it held out but did not want to come down to Assam to meet me."

He feels that the transformation in the eco system where there is a change in attitude as well as money and mentorship being easily available are the reasons why start-ups are thriving.

Gadi believes that a lot of youngsters have decided to head back home after getting an education in the metros as they no longer want a government job. "Home delivery for medicines, grocery and more are run by start-ups by youngsters. These developments are at par with what is happening in the country. Earlier, they did not think that this kind of thing can happen here as well."

However, Smitakshi says that it is the companies which are working with unique products like Eri Silk, organic farming and ingredients like Bhut Jolokia, the hottest chilli in the world, have created a unique footprint.

The change in the attitude towards start-ups, says Dr Ubed, is evident in the way he can now have the pick of people he employs. "Earlier they asked a lot of questions and would want to work for two-three days to see if the environment was good and whether I could pay or not. There is an attitudinal shift and the start-ups are now considered cool," he says.

COMMUNICATION, CONNECTIVITY AND AWARENESS

The connectivity has improved dramatically. According to the Ministry for Road Transport & Highways, 4484.9 km of National Highways were built in between 2014-2018 in the region. Guwahati, which was the first airport in the North East, is now the eighth busiest in the country. The Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport, which till three decades ago was handling only two or three flights a day, has over 120 commercial flights — both arrival and departure — in addition to chartered flights and aircrafts of the Indian Air Force. It registered over six million footfalls during 2018-19, which is a whopping 27.46 per cent increase from 2017-18. According to Airports Authority of India the airport handled 55,066 aircraft movements during 2018-19 which is a 20.99 per cent increase of aircraft movement over the previous 12 months.

Gadi's home state does not have an airport but Arunachal Pradesh would be getting one in another three-four years which, he says, would naturally make it more accessible. Sharma says that there is a flurry of activity, "Airports are coming up, there are investment summits taking place as the CMs take initiatives to improve connectivity."

This naturally has had a positive impact. Das says, "The perception has changed because of the development of communications network and also connectivity. Guwahati, for instance, has direct flights to all the metros."

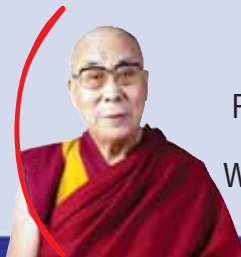
Gadi feels that a lot of festivals like the Ziro in Arunachal Pradesh, Hornbill in Nagaland have also become must-visit events for travellers. "People who have gone to these festivals return with beautiful memories. That has naturally helped create a positive impression about the people and the place," he says.

Mahanta offers a different take when he says, "The North East festival has united the states of the region. It is a meeting point where disagreements have been sorted out and barriers been broken. There is a common agenda for infrastructure, tourism, industry and more. The festival in Guwahati this year had just 100 visitors but saw three lakh digital footfalls worldwide."

As Sharma puts it, "Earlier, the odds seemed to be insurmountable but now the dots are being joined and everything is coming together." This is certainly not the last we have heard of the North East success story. ■

THE GROWTH OF SOCIAL MEDIA MEANT THAT POTENTIAL TRAVELLERS OFTEN GOT THE INFORMATION FROM PEOPLE IN THEIR OWN CIRCLE WHO HAD BEEN TO THE REGION. LIVE STREAMING OF A DESTINATION CREATES AN IMPACT LIKE NO OTHER. THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY TOO TAPPED INTO THE POTENTIAL OF THE NEW MEDIA





WE CAN LIVE WITHOUT
RELIGION AND MEDITATION,
BUT WE CANNOT SURVIVE
WITHOUT HUMAN AFFECTION
—DALAI LAMA



YOUR YEAR AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

As the week proceeds, you will overcome all your struggles. Your determination will help you achieve your goals and it will be acknowledged and celebrated. On the work front, you have done a good job on a project and now deserve all the credit. A fulfilled ambition and greater success than you expected will make you happy. Domestic travel is also indicated. Be cautious as this success may make you heady and you may go wild. Uncertainty in some matters may prove harmful. On the relationship front, you are likely to make a choice in family matters. The week does not predict stability on emotional front. You might face disappointment in love affairs. Open discussion with your loved ones will help improve the situation.

Lucky number 9
Lucky colour Orange
Lucky day Saturday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

Do not become the prey to external forces like fears, addictions, and other harmful impulses. You are likely to fall victim of deception and illusion. Follow meditation or *pranayama* to stay focused. On the career front, this is not the right time to look for another job or enter any venture. A rash decision could result in loss. An honest and genuine methodology will pay rich dividend later in life. You live life king size. More projects or business opportunities are coming your way, that will keep you busy. Your skill and expertise will be in demand. On the relationship front, your connection with the partner is getting stronger. By the end of the week, you will experience a celebration or an auspicious moment of your life.

Lucky number 6
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Friday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week you would be energetic. Take time out to pamper yourself. You will have the drive and determination to move towards your goals. Do not try to force things, as it might backfire on you. On the career front, do not engage in arguments that might make the environment tense. Secret motives and information will keep you in a troublesome situation. You need to go deep into the topic and look for your anxieties, fears, and psychic blocks. You need to keep an eye on your subordinates. On the relationship front, avoid heated arguments. While taking decisions, be grounded and firm. In love relationships, your partner may be very challenging. You are likely to be very emotional and critical and this may affect your relationship.

Lucky number 3
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Wednesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week your home and family life will keep you happy. There will be discussions concerning future events. You will experience family traditions and learn wisdom of the elders. On the work front, you would like a career that gives you a sense of completion, financial security and connection with others. This week you need to use your intelligence to get your way. Your generous, insightful and analytical approach can bring transformation in your life. You will experience financial security and will attain a comfortable life. You have the time to breathe and enjoy the material pleasures. On the personal front, relationships will be satisfactory. Ensure that your partner and you discuss issues to avoid complex situations. Avoid arguments with family members.

Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Friday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

You will complete all essential work with confidence, self-discipline and patience. You will realise the importance of self-awareness and comfort. As the days pass, you will evaluate what matters in life. There will be peace and happiness at home. You may enjoy solitary leisure. On the work front, a salary increase is indicated in the cards. You shall draw support and protection from your past ties. Avoid conflicts with conflicts. Finance inflow looks good but do not consider any kind of investment at this point. On the personal front, shopping, eating, earning and spending money shall be the theme of the week. There is fortune and security in your life. Relationship with family members will give warmth and confidence. A marriage ceremony is likely to take place.

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

You will feel healing and rejuvenating energy around you. Purity of energy will enhance your creativity. Positive thought will come to you. Ensure you continue with your health regime. Physical workout will add extra charm to your personality. Those who are having health issues are likely to recover, but it is still advisable to consult a doctor. On the career front, you are creative, original, and free from restrictions imposed by ideas and criticisms. How you speak your mind is as important as what you say. For some, promotion, salary hike or desirable transfer is on the cards. This is a very eventful week in all aspects. In a relationship, you are making a lot of efforts. Be very clear about your boundaries and preferences. Whatever is the final decision, you need to stick to it.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Indigo
Lucky day Tuesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week you would be enthusiastic, innovative and all set to get things rolling. Some of you may be impatient too. You want your self-worth acknowledged; self-realisation is the theme of the week. To test your limits, you may go to an extent to accomplish any difficult task. Some of you will experience a creative restlessness, that will unlock a new phase of life. This will be an opportunity to change your destiny. Your curiosity urges you to express yourself and your personality. Domestic travel for business purpose is likely. The card foretells a new beginning of a business or a new careers field. On the personal front, those who are dreaming of a house may move into a new house. Bonding with your near and dear ones are satisfactory.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Golden
Lucky day Sunday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week try to stay cool and avoid getting into any arguments. Else, you might get into a fight. You need to experience what competition means. Respect your opponent but stand up to your point of view. Since the past is over and the future is uncertain, there is no need for you to be faithless or fearful. Be at peace with yourself, independent. Devote your full attention to your situation. Professionally, you may experience heated arguments and violence in the work area. Focus on the work and be friendly with your juniors or peers. This will get you some support in terms of harsh times. On the personal front, you are likely to be a victim of the seriousness of a mature personality which is lacking emotion. Conflict with a family member is likely.

Lucky number 19
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Friday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week you will be filled with immense energy and vitality. You are likely to enjoy sports and adventurous activities. You must follow a strict health regime like diet, exercise, and vitamins/minerals. A brief vacation to enjoy the energy is indicated. On the career front, there could be frequent journeys which may open great avenues for your professional growth. Those who are appearing for an interview or competitive exam, stars are favourable. Patience and persistence will help resolve business-related issues. You are likely to face some challenges in terms of a relationship. Accusation and misunderstandings between the married couples is indicated. As for singles, this is not the right time for a relationship.

Lucky number 22
Lucky colour Red
Lucky day Wednesday



CANCER June 21-July 22

Your persistence, determination and efforts will allow you to make your dreams true. Enhancing your skill will help increase the chance of success. Ensure continuation of craft, educational pursuits. On the career front, promotions or increase in salary is likely. Respond to friends and opponents equally. Your achievements will make you the subject of envy. Doing your work with commitment will lead to self-development. By the end of the week, you may spend time alone to re-evaluate your life. On the personal front, you may need some privacy to recharge our battery and rejuvenate the spirit. This will help you experience greater inner strength and confidence. Relationships will give you the strength.

Lucky number 21
Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Wednesday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week evaluate where you stand now and where you feel you should be to increase your effectiveness and make the move accordingly. You will be full of enthusiasm and energy. You are likely to get a helping hand from a male friend or a relative. You are in rush with everything in life. This rashness, an impulsive nature may turn a good situation into a bad one. On the work front, you may be concerned about the lack of business or money and may feel that you have made a mistake with decisions made in the past. But you will try to take a positive point of view and wait for the final verdict. On the personal front, you need to experience childlike happiness. Spend time with younger members of the family.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Blue
Lucky day Thursday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

Your sentiments and emotions will rule your heart and mind this week. You will have the opportunity to resolve a conflict over an important issue or a discord with important people in your life. You are likely to help or make amends with your family. Irrespective of negotiation, one must stay try to maintain balance. There will be times when you need to spend time alone to re-evaluate your life and situation. A fourfold process is experienced at the levels of consciousness, mental, emotional, spiritual and physical. Surrender yourself to the higher wisdom, conquer material temptation and giving up something to gain something better is beneficial. Your patience and endurance will be put to test.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Monday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 9873283331



ASTROTURF BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Meditate for a better future



his breath cycle during the process — inbreath and outbreath both included.

The next time the person visited me, informed that he no longer gets into sleep mode. “In fact, I am able to see a pattern in my thought flow, which makes me understand and acknowledge my mental traits. I have realised that I carry a sense of fear and insecurity. I also suffer from a sense of ‘identity crisis’ which tempts me prove my point whatever way I can. Where does it come from? Also, I wish to realise my dream perceptions fast, which is not happening on expected lines. You have to now guide me how to resolve them and also realise my potential fast.” the person asked.

The sense of fear and identity crisis has actually become a part of your psyche, coming as they may as reflection of your unpleasant memory imprints picked up during early childhood. The Sun, which is marked with your identity and confidence level is in debility, and is placed opposite its dire enemy Saturn, which too is in debility. It implies that during early childhood, your parents would have tried to forcefully discipline you. You would have been subject to beating and chastised on every occasion

you committed some mistake or when your performance level was not on expected lines. Your parent’s intent can’t be questioned. But instead of handling you with a sense of love, they forcefully tried to impose their whip on you. The irony of the whole situation is that born with Aries lagna ruled by fiery Mars, and prominently placed, it was difficult for you to digest commandeering. In the process, your confidence level got down and developed a sense of fear, which with time became a part of your psyche. Now that you are on your own, there is no relevance of those past happenings. Once, this thought gets registered in your mind, you will get over this hang. He began working on suggested lines, and soon he overcame this problem.

This way, with time, he went on identifying and acknowledging his mental limitations one by one, and then got over them. As he got over his negatives, his performance level too began to improve.

The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Write to him at G-102, Bharat Nagar, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110 025
Tel: 91-11-49848475/9818037273
Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com