

MONEY 6
 PETROL, DIESEL PRICES
 UNCHANGED ACROSS METROS

WORLD 7
 ANOTHER UN PEACEKEEPER
 KILLED IN MALI, 5TH IN A WEEK

SPORT 8
 PUNJAB, TN CLOSE
 TO MUSHTAQ ALI K/O

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USUAL SUSPECTS

SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Need for a measure of juridical predictability

The Supreme Court decision to stay the implementation of the legislation on agricultural marketing until it assesses the report of an expert committee on the subject has drawn considerable flak. Although the Government side has chosen to be reticent, many of the organisations representing farmer interests in Punjab and Haryana have been critical of the court's order, despite the fact that it ostensibly favours them, at least momentarily. The reasons for the dissatisfaction may vary but there seems an unlikely convergence of viewpoints which should be considered.

Despite the Government's unwillingness to take a public stand on the court's stay, there is a sense of outrage among the supporters of the reforms. This stems from a belief that the court has clearly exceeded its constitutional mandate governing judicial review. In normal circumstances, a court assesses the legality of legislation, properly enacted by elected representatives, on two counts. First, it assesses whether or not the legislation is in accordance with the letter and, occasionally, spirit of the Constitution. Secondly, it may extend its view to take into account the adherence to natural justice. In recent times, the principle of "judicial conscience" has made an entry in the thinking of some judges. However, since this is a nebulous and totally subjective principle, it is best to disregard it as an aberration.

On the question of the Constitution, the court would have been entirely in order to examine if the Centre had the necessary constitutional mandate to undertake legislation to abolish the APMC and the existing anti-hoarding rules. It is beyond the jurisdiction of the judiciary to question the wisdom and appropriateness of the legislation. That power vests entirely with the legislature, in this case both Houses of Parliament. The debate on the merits and demerits of the new laws belongs in the realms of politics. Although there is a school of thought that believes political decision-making is too crucial to be left to elected politicians and should be

vetted by a smaller group of wise people, this belief has no place in a democracy. The principle of judicial review has to be selective. If it becomes all-pervasive, the governance of the country passes to the hands of unelected representatives.

What the Indian Constitution stipulates is that governments have the absolute right to take bad decisions as long as they don't violate the "basic structure" of the Constitution. What constitutes the "basic structure" is a matter that the courts have arrogated to themselves. It is not an idea that finds any mention in the Constitution.

There have been a series of protests against the farm bills in northern India. However, I don't see there anyone in their

right mind has presumed to suggest that the right of farmers to sell their produce across state boundaries is unconstitutional. Nor is there any suggestion that it is constitutionally obligatory to inject the Minimum Support Price into the rules governing the relevant Act. The debate on the subject is partly grounded in economics and partly in politics. That is where the battle must be conducted, not in the courtrooms.

The highest court in the land has made some adverse observations on the paucity of public consultations prior to the passage of the Bills. Politically, this is a worthwhile objection, although it could be said that the waging pandemic didn't allow too much scope for village councils all over India to debate its merits and demerits. At an electoral level too, the new laws don't seem to have been a factor in influencing voting intentions in Bihar and in the series of by-elections all over the country, but notably in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. Nor for that matter has the apparent haste in which the bills were enacted in Parliament triggered farmer unrest in any part of the country, apart from Punjab and Haryana. The observation by economists that the big farmers who are spearheading the agitation — with a great deal of logistical support from professional, rent-a-cause agitators who have a track record of dismal failure in electoral politics — are among the top eight per cent in terms of income has also not been challenged.

India is not a plebiscitary democracy. Democracy vests the responsibility of assessing public opinion on elected representatives whose mandate is periodically renewed. It is their duty to uphold the "public interest" — often by championing change. The courts are meant to see that the rule of law is upheld. Safeguarding the public interest is a lofty concept but that is outside the purview of the judges. It is sometimes mistakenly believed that anything pronounced by the courts is law. It is also presumed that law is absolute and written in stone. Both these ideas are often responsible for facile conclusions, particularly in the media. The reality is that the interpretation of what is law often depends on the subjective orientation and personal philosophies of the judges. A decision by one Bench can often vary dramatically from the same case heard by another Bench. This is why there is such a tussle in the United States over the appointment of "liberal" or "conservative" judges. The composition of the Bench will shape the verdict — although this is not to say that the judges are wilfully political.

The reactions to the Supreme Court order have initiated a debate which is instructive. It is time that this debate finds reflection in the deliberations of Parliament in the forthcoming Budget session. India needs a measure of juridical predictability to confront turbulent politics.

2L get 1st dose of anti-Covid protection

World's largest vaccination drive launched, Modi congratulates citizens and scientists, urges people to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour and don't forget to take 2nd dose of vaccine on time



A medic administers Covishield vaccine to sanitation worker Manish Kumar, the first recipient in Delhi, in the presence of Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan at AIIMS in New Delhi on Saturday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India launched its mammoth vaccination drive on Saturday to bring the pandemic under control with two locally-produced vaccines — Covishield and Covaxin — with nearly two lakh out of targeted three lakh taking shot against the pathogen on the first day on Saturday.

Launching the "world's largest vaccination drive" against Covid-19, Modi congratulated citizens and scientists for the feat but cautioned people against being careless and not taking precautions after taking the first dose of the vaccination.

The Prime Minister also alerted people against the rumours spread about the vaccines. He said Indian vaccines are the "cheapest and the best in the world".

Modi, in a televised address before the vaccine rollout, said there are several nations whose entire population is less than 3 crore, but India will be vaccinating as many

people in just the first phase. He saluted scientists for developing the vaccines in such a short span of time.

The PM cautioned people to ensure that they take both the doses at one month's gap and show patience as the country begins to give the antidote to its huge population.

"Don't make the mistake of taking one dose and then forgetting about dose two and don't forget coronavirus appropriate behaviour after getting the dose. The patience with which you fought coronavirus, show the same patience during vaccination now," Modi said.

As the PM kicked off the vaccine rollout with a click of a button, a video message played the Sanskrit chant — *sarve bhavantu sukhinah, sarve santu niramaya* (All be happy, all be free of illness).

The Covid-19 vaccination drive was successfully conducted on the first day, Additional Secretary in the Union health Ministry Manohar Agnani said during a press briefing

here organised late evening after the drive was wrapped up for the day. Of three lakh planned to be inoculated, around 1,91,181 beneficiaries were given the shot of Covid-19 vaccines on first day involving 16,755 personnel at 3,351 vaccination sessions.

Agnani said that Covid-19 vaccines Covaxin and Covishield (developed by Bharat Biotech and Serum Institute of India (SII) respectively) were given at 3,351 session across the country.

He refused to take any questions from the reporters.

SII CEO RECEIVES 1ST DOSE OF COVISHIELD

Serum Institute CEO Adar Poonawalla was administered the first dose of the Covishield coronavirus vaccine on Saturday afternoon, hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched India's nationwide vaccination drive.

Local body polls in Punjab on Feb 14

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Ahead of next year's Assembly polls in Punjab, there would be another election for local bodies on February 14 which could reflect the public mood and set the tone for the Assembly elections.

Punjab State Election Office on Saturday said that Elections to eight municipal corporations and 109 municipal councils and nagar panchayats in Punjab will be held on February 14. The counting of votes would take place on February 17, state elections commissioner, Punjab, Jagpal Singh Sandhu said.

With the announcement of the poll schedule, the model code of conduct has come into force with immediate effect within the municipal areas of the municipalities where elections will be held, Sandhu said. The code of conduct would be in force till the completion of the elec-

toral process, he added. The process for filing nominations would commence on January 30 and the last date for the same would be February 3.

The nominations would be scrutinised on February 4 while the date of withdrawal of nominations is February 5, which would also be the date of allotting the election symbols to the candidates, Sandhu said. Election campaigning will end at 5 pm on February 12.

The voting would be held on February 14 from 8 am to 4 pm. The counting of votes would take place on February 17.

A total of 145 returning officers and 145 assistant returning officers would be appointed for conducting the elections. A total of 30 Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and Provincial Civil Service (PCS) officers would be appointed election observers and six Indian Police

Service (IPS) officers will be appointed police observers to ensure peaceful, free and fair conduct of polls, he said.

Sandhu said 400 members would be elected for eight municipal corporations and 1,902 members would be elected for 109 municipal councils/nagar panchayats in the state. Fifty per cent reservation has been given for women in municipal elections as per the Punjab government instructions.

There are 20,49,777 male, 18,65,354 female and 149 transgender voters, totalling 39,15,280 registered voters in Punjab for these elections. Sandhu said 4,102 polling booths would be established and 18,000 personnel will be put on election duty.

Around 7,000 Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) have been arranged for the polling.

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No way to go, no age to go

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

It was neither the age, nor the way to go. Usha Srivastava, 59, who headed the Hindi Pioneer since its birth in 2011, passed away at 11.30 at the Max hospital, Saket, in New Delhi on Saturday.

She left behind a grieving family, shell-shocked colleagues, a large number of friends, well-wishers, and acquaintance who would find it difficult to accept that the cheerful, friendly, demure face of Hindi journalism is no more.

Usha was suffering from a liver ailment and had undergone a liver transplant. She could never recover from the post-operation complications.

A host of political leaders and journalists have mourned her death.

An emotional Chandan Mitra, the Editor-in-Chief of *The Pioneer*, nearly broke down on hearing the news of Usha's demise. "She nurtured the *Hindi Pioneer* like her own baby.



USHA SRIVASTAVA
FEB 12, 1961 — JAN 16, 2021

She was a spirited, committed, and lively colleague, whose absence cannot be filled easily. I'm speechless with grief," he said.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath mourned Usha's death and conveyed his condolences to her family. Union Minister Nitin Gadara and Haryana Chief Minister

Manohar Lal Khattar were among those who mourned Usha's death.

The *Pioneer* CEO Shobori Ganguly described Usha as a "valuable" colleague who also cared for everyone around her. "I find it so difficult to come to terms with her passing away. She was such a noble soul," she said.

When her wait for a liver donor ended on December 25 after nearly a fortnight of a wait during which she was bedridden in the hospital, in and out of the ICUs, at *The Pioneer* we took a sigh of relief.

Many of us met her before she was wheeled into the operation theatre the next day. Little did we know that it would be the last time we would see her.

Her valiant fight for survival, our prayers, and doctors' efforts could not change what destiny had in store for her. She left us without a word, without even opening her eyes for nearly three weeks.

Turn to Page 4

52 adverse events in Delhi, 14 in Maha, 13 in Haryana

Some doctors at RML refuse to take vaccine, doubt Covaxin efficacy

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

On day one of the launch of India's historic nationwide vaccination drive against Covid-19, Delhi, Maharashtra and Haryana recorded cases of adverse events — though none of them fatal — even as the Centre asserted that the inoculation drive was successfully conducted and no case of post-vaccination hospitalisation reported so far.

In Delhi, 52 healthcare workers developed minor adverse event following immunisation (AEFI), while 1 severe case was reported as per data available from the Government.

Haryana recorded 13 adverse event cases following the immunisation.

Officials from Maharashtra said they are further investigating the 14 cases of adverse events.

At some sites like RML hospital in the national Capital, a section of doctors were apprehensive of an adverse event as they doubted the efficacy of the Covaxin developed by the Bharat Biotech, which is yet to complete the phase three trials.

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) had earlier this month approved Oxford Covid-19 vaccine Covishield, manufactured by the Serum Institute, and indigenously developed



A medic administers the first dose of Covishield vaccine to 87-year-old Dr. Asha Singhal at South Mumbai Nair Hospital in Mumbai on Saturday PTI

Covaxin of Bharat Biotech for restricted emergency use in the country.

The Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) of the Central Government hospital, RML refused to take the shot and requested the Medical Superintendent to vaccinate them with Oxford Covid-19 vaccine Covishield.

In a letter to the MS, the association said the resident doctors were "a bit apprehensive" about Covaxin and might not participate in the immunisation drive in large numbers.

Dr Reddy's gets nod to hold ph-3 trials of Sputnik-V in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has given approval to Dr Reddy's Laboratories to conduct phase 3 clinical trials of Russia's Covid-19 vaccine candidate, Sputnik V, in the country.

The phase 3 trial will be conducted on 1,500 subjects as part of the randomised, double-blind, parallel group, placebo controlled study in India, Dr Reddy said in a statement here on Friday.

Earlier, the Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) reviewed the safety data from the phase 2 clinical trials of the vaccine and recommended phase 3 recruitment. In its report, the DSMB concluded that no safety concerns were identified and the study met the primary endpoints of safety.

Dr Reddy's Laboratories co-chairman and MD GV Prasad said, "This is an important milestone in the progress of this pivotal clinical trial of the vaccine. We expect to commence phase 3 study within this month and will continue to fast-track our efforts to bring in a safe and efficacious vaccine for the Indian population".

In September 2020, Dr Reddy's partnered with the Russian Direct Investment Fund to conduct the clinical trials of the Sputnik V vaccine and for its distribution rights in India.

● Bharat Biotech will pay compensation to recipients in case of any 'serious adverse' effects experienced after receiving the antidote

● Prime Minister Narendra Modi kicked off the vaccine rollout with a click of a button, a video message played the Sanskrit chant — *sarve bhavantu sukhinah, sarve santu niramaya*

● Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan: These vaccines are 'sanjivani' in our fight against this pandemic. We have won the battles against polio and small pox. Now, we have reached the decisive phase of winning the war against coronavirus

● Manish Kumar from Delhi: Many of them (staff) were scared. So, I went to my seniors and said I should be given the vaccine first. I wanted to prove to my colleagues that there is no need to be scared

● Abdul Qayoom, security guard at Era Medical College in UP: There was always fear in mind because of close proximity to coronavirus patients. But now I am feeling much safer after the shot

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TANDAV
Amazon Prime Video
***ing: Saif Ali Khan, Dimple Kapadia, Mohd Zeeshan Ayub, Sunil Grover, Gauahar 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

films & tv 02

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 Kamrey 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. *Ajawan* 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.

COVID-19 VACCINATION IN REGION

Will get vaccinated in next phase, says Capt Amarinder

PNS ■ MOHALI

Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Saturday said he would get himself vaccinated for Covid-19 vaccine in the next phase as he rolled out the inoculation drive here.

Four healthcare workers, including three doctors, were administered the first dose of Covishield vaccine in the presence of the chief minister at civil hospital. Capt Amarinder also gifted saplings to these five healthcare workers as a token of appreciation.

The Chief Minister said it was his desire to get vaccinated first but in accordance with the directives of the Government of India only healthcare workers could be covered in the first phase. "I would definitely get myself

vaccinated in the next phase," he said.

The CM said the vaccine would be administered to the health workers first, followed by the Army and police personnel, in line with the guidelines of the Government of India. In the first phase, 1.74 lakh health workers would be inoculated.

He said he had written to the Prime Minister for permission for free distribution among the people belonging to the lower income groups. In response to a query on vaccine safety, the Chief Minister said the vaccine will not have been approved unless the scientists were sure of its safety.

He noted that Covid vaccines around the world had been taken by many eminent personalities, including Queen Elizabeth of the UK who is 93



and her husband who is 99, without any side effects.

Earlier, in his address, the chief minister said he was

delighted to announce the state-wide launch of the Covid vaccine, while appealing to the people to continue to wear

masks and observe all social distancing and other safety norms.

He noted that all the

restrictions imposed during lockdown, curfew and thereafter had been aimed at delaying the peak of the pandemic so that the vaccine could be available.

The CM thanked the people for their patience and cooperation during this difficult phase. Hoping that the vaccination would pave the way for the complete eradication of the Covid pandemic from Punjab and the rest of India, the CM said it was undoubtedly a memorable day when the long awaited vaccine had arrived after getting all the mandatory approvals from health experts in the Government of India.

He prayed to the almighty for the success of the vaccination drive to ensure the safety and protection of every citizen.

Amarinder lauded the

healthcare workers and others responsible for keeping the spread of the pandemic in check in the State, where the number of daily cases had come down from the peak of 3,700 to 242.

The target was to bring them down to zero, he said, asserting that his Government would continue its endeavour to safeguard the interests of all Punjabis.

Capt Amarinder said the first Covid case in the country was reported from Kerala on January 20, 2020, while the first instance of Covid -19 came to notice in Punjab on March 5, 2020 with a travel history of Italy.

Since then, in Punjab about 1.20 crore persons have been screened for symptoms and over 41 lakh persons have been tested so far, he said, adding

that nearly 1.7 lakh people have been diagnosed with Covid-19.

The CM pointed out that Punjab was the first state to impose lockdown and curfew, besides ensuring home delivery of food items and medicines during curfew.

Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu said all arrangements had been put in place for smooth vaccination, including online portal for registration, operationalisation of sites for administering the dose, etc. in the State.

In the initial stage, as many as 408 vaccination teams had been constituted and 59 teams were working to inoculate the healthcare workers, he added. Sidhu said 729 cold chain points had been established in the state for adequate storage of vials at the desired temperature.

Vaccination programme will prove to overcome pandemic: Haryana CM

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Stating that the vaccination programme would prove to be an effective step in overcoming global Covid-19 pandemic, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday said the State Government has made all necessary arrangements for the successful implementation of Covid-19 vaccination programme commencing today at 77 sites in the State.

He said two vaccines namely Covishield of Serum Institute of India and Covaxin of India Biotech are authorised for emergency use in Haryana. He said that on January 13, the State had received more than 2.4 lakh doses of Covishield vaccine and the first supply of 20,000 doses of Covaxin.

Khattar was interacting with the Covid vaccination beneficiaries and service providers of Medanta-The Medicity, Gurugram and other government and private health institutions in the State through video conferencing here in Chandigarh.

The address of Chief Minister was telecast live at all 77 sites in the State including two-way connectivity at Civil Dispensary, Sector-4, Panchkula and Government Primary School, Wazirabad, Gurugram.

He said the population has been prioritised in view of the high demand of vaccines initially. Several groups have been

included in the vaccination of Covid-19 and the vaccine would be administered sequentially starting from Health Care Workers.

Khattar said those who have been included in Group 1 include health workers (doctors, nurse, ANM, pharmacists, sweeper, lab technician, helper, ASHA, Anganwadi workers, etc).

Similarly, those who have been included in Group-2 include frontline workers such as municipal and sanitation workers, state and central police forces, civil security, prison staff and armed forces like armed line workers. Now the revenue staff has been added to it. He said that the population above 50 years of age and Population below 50 years with co-morbidities have been included in Group-3.

The Chief Minister said that to ensure smooth, effective and target based implementation of vaccination programme, beneficiaries have been enrolled in the digital platform (CoWIN software).

He said for the successful implementation of the vaccination programme, health care workers and health facilities have been registered on the CoWIN platform.

This includes about two lakh health workers, 5,044 vaccinators, 765 Public Health facilities, 3,634 Private health facilities, 18,921 session sites and 1,005 observers.

He said that Haryana has

adequate cold chain space to store the Covid-19 vaccine. A State Level Vaccine Store has been set up in Kurukshetra. Apart from this, four regional level stores have been set up in Hisar, Rohtak, Kurukshetra and Gurugram.

Also, 22 vaccine stores (one in each district) have also been set up. Apart from this, arrangement of 22 insulated vaccine vans has been made for the transportation of vaccine to 659 cold chain points across Haryana.

Khattar said that Haryana had enough Covid hospitals to treat Corona patients and all the hospitals are equipped with oxygen beds, ICU beds and ventilators. He said that the Health Department has also set up a 1075 helpline for the assistance of citizens of the State. Today the recovery rate in Haryana is more than 98 percent and the mortality rate is about 1 percent which is much lower than most states, he asserted.

He said however, cases of Coronavirus are decreasing and the Covid-19 vaccine has also come up, the people still need to be vigilant to prevent the further spread of CoronaVirus by following precautionary measures like wearing a mask, maintaining hand hygiene and a physical distance of two yards. He also urged the people not to panic from Corona as it is completely curable. Citing his own example, the Chief Minister said that he



remained admitted in Medanta, Gurugram for 17 days due to Corona. As a result of strong will power and dedication of doctors, he successfully recovered from Covid.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Rajeev Arora said that Saroj Bala was the first Healthcare worker to have been successfully vaccinated at Government Dispensary, Sector-4, Panchkula.

He said that Director General Health Services Suraj Bhan Kamboj, Additional Director General Health Services, Dr Veena Singh, Director, National Health Mission, Haryana Dr VK Bansal, Civil Surgeon, Panchkula Dr Jasjeet Kaur, State Immunization Officer Dr. Virender Ahlawat, were among the few who came forward and got themselves vaccinated so as to infuse confidence among other people of the State towards the vaccination.

Dr Naresh Trehan of Medanta-The Medicity Gurugram who was also among the doctors of Medanta that got vaccinated on Saturday told the Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar that Covid vaccination is necessary for the safety of people, their family and the society. He said that mild fever and body pain after the vaccination is normal and people should not worry about these symptoms.

state were 2129 while as many as 2,61,019 people have so far been discharged after recovering from infection. The recovery rate was 98.08 percent.

39 NEW CASES IN CHANDIGARH
Chandigarh on Saturday reported 39 new coronavirus cases, taking the infection count to 20,503, according to a medical bulletin. No Covid-19 death was reported on Saturday. The total toll in UT Chandigarh is 330, the bulletin said.

Sanitation worker gets first shot in Chandigarh

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

A 20-year-old sanitation worker received the first shot of the coronavirus vaccine as the inoculation drive commenced in Chandigarh on Saturday.

Arun, who works as a sweeper at the Government Multi-Specialty Hospital at Sector 16, said he was feeling good and had no worry before being administered the jab. After administering the vaccine, the youth was kept for observations for 30 minutes to check any side effects.

"There's no anxiety, rather I am feeling good," said Arun, who was also given a bouquet of flowers. Arun, whose mother



came to meet him when he was vaccinated, said he was told that he was the first one to get the vaccine in the Union territory.

The vaccination drive was conducted at five sites in

Chandigarh. One was at the Government Multi-Specialty Hospital at Sector 16, civil hospital at Sector 45, two sites at Government Medical College and Hospital at Sector

32 and one at advanced paediatric centre at the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER).

Around 500 healthcare workers will be vaccinated on the first day of the drive. Chandigarh Health Services Director Amandeep Kang was among those who got the jab. A doctor working at the PGIMER who also received the shot said he was happy that the vaccine had finally come and would be administered to all healthcare and frontline workers.

The Union territory has received 12,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine and health authorities provided 1,000 doses to the PGIMER.

Himachal CM starts vaccination campaign from IGMC, Shimla

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur started the Covid-19 vaccination campaign in the State from IGMC Shimla and said in the first phase of Covid-19 vaccination, 93,000 doses would be administered to the front line warriors including health care workers of the State.

He said that 2,529 health care workers were administered dose through 27 identified sites in the State on Saturday, adding that about 74,500 health workers would be vaccinated and each beneficiary would be provided two doses and a second dose would be administered after an interval of 28 days.

Thakur said the State Government had constituted a State Level Steering Committee, State Task Force, District Task Force and Block Task Force to monitor effective administration of vaccination of Covid-19.

He said the State Vaccination Store had been set up at Shimla while the Regional vaccine store had

been established at Mandi and Dharamshala. He said that District Vaccine Stores had been set up in all the 12 districts of the State besides 386 cold chain points in the State.

The CM said AD syringes in sufficient quantity as per beneficiary has also been received by the State and has been distributed to the districts and additional stock of 0.5 ml AD syringes had been stored at State Vaccine Store, Parimahal, Shimla, Regional Vaccine Store, Mandi and Regional Vaccine Store Dharamshala to meet out any situation.

He added Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) management training had been given to the session site vaccinators for establishing referral mechanisms and reports on COWIN app.

Thakur said AEFI Committees at State and District level had also been notified with additional members of Pulmonologist and Medicine Specialists for casualty assessment of AEFI cases.

The CM added to ensure the success of the vaccination



campaign dry run had also been organised at various identified sites. He also urged the people of the State to ensure that all precautions are maintained despite having administered Covid-19 vaccine.

Urban Development Minister Suresh Bhardwaj, Secretary Health Amitabh Awasthi, Mission Director NHM Dr. Nipun Jindal, Director Medical Education Dr. Ravi Sharma, Principal IGMC Rajneesh Pathania, Deputy Commissioner Shimla Aditya Negi and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

Later on, Thakur visited the identified site under Regional Hospital at Mandi and also reviewed the work plan for Covid-19 vaccination and bird flu situation in

the district. He expressed satisfaction over the decline of Covid-19 cases in the State and said that the Covishield vaccine would give safe and expected results in eradicating covid cases in the State.

On the first day of vaccination, he took stock of the established Covid vaccine centers at Vijay Senior Secondary School, Lal Bahadur Shastri Medical College and Hospital, Civil Hospital Sundernagar and Karsog, where 360 health workers were administered the vaccine.

He directed the officers concerned regarding micro plan of vaccination campaign which would be completed in 161 phases in 111 centres of the district covering 11,877 beneficiaries upto February 1, 2021.

14 more fatalities, 176 fresh cases in Punjab

Chandigarh: The death toll due to Covid-19 rose to 5, 499 in Punjab with 14 more fatalities while 176 new cases took the infection count to 1,70,366 on Saturday. There are 2578 active Covid-19 cases in the State as of now, according to a medical bulletin. Mohali reported 29 new cases, Ludhiana 26 and Patiala 23, among the fresh cases witnessed in the State. A total of 322 coronavirus patients were discharged after recovering from

the infection, taking the number of those recovered to 1,70,366, as per the bulletin.

Thirteen critical patients are on ventilator support while 82 are on oxygen support, the bulletin said. A total of 42,18,130 samples have been collected for testing so far in the state, it said.

4 DEATHS, 167 CASES IN HARYANA
Haryana on Saturday

reported four more coronavirus deaths, taking the toll to 2983 even as 167 fresh cases pushed the State's infection tally to 2,66,131, a health bulletin showed. According to the State health department's daily bulletin, the fatalities were one each from Jind, Bhiwani, Sirsa and Mahendergarh districts. Among other districts to report new cases included Gurugram (35) and Faridabad (21). The number of active cases in the

GHAR GHAR ROZGAR TE KAROBAAR MISSION Punjab CM kicks off allotment of 7,219 fair price shops

PNS ■ MOHALI

To promote livelihood, Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Saturday virtually kicked off a state-wide pro-poor scheme for Allotment of 7,219 Fair Price Shops (FPS) under his Government's flagship "Ghar Ghar Rozgar te Karobaar Mission".

As a token gesture, the Chief Minister handed over allotment letters to five beneficiaries. The event was marked by simultaneous distribution of 370 allotment letters to the beneficiaries in 64 Municipal Committees by various Ministers, MLAs and other dignitaries across the State, in the first phase of the scheme.

The CM said the initiative will be instrumental in improving the economic condition of people, besides further strengthening public distribution system to ensure seamless, fair and timely distribution.

He asked the allottees to ensure that the ration meant for

the poor reaches the genuine beneficiaries without illegal diversion of food grains. He added nearly 30,000 beneficiaries (average family of four) would be benefitted through the scheme.

Amarinder asked the Food Department to look into ways and means to supplement the income of FPS owners by facilitating these outlets as points of sale for additional consumer items. He complemented the Ration Depot Holders for their contribution to the State Government's relentless battle against Covid-19 by operating their shops during lockdown thus ensuring hassle-free supply of free food grains to the people in the State. During the lockdown period, 17 lakh free food kits were distributed to the poor.

He also lauded the endeavour of the Food and Civil Supplies Department to plug leakages in Public Distribution System with the introduction of ePOS machines using biometrics, to ensure that ration only goes to the rightful beneficiaries.

Haryana CM approves 218 new schemes of Public Health Engineering Dept

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Government on Saturday approved 218 new schemes costing Rs 245 crore and six schemes costing Rs 49.27 crore of Public Health Engineering Department in the 52nd meeting of Haryana State Drought Relief and Flood Control Board held under the Chairmanship of Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar here in Chandigarh.

Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala and Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister JP Dalal were also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister directed the Deputy Commissioners in the State and Superintending Engineers (SEs) of line departments to ensure speedy implementations of these schemes with a target to complete all short term schemes by June 30, 2021.

The Chief Minister also directed the officers of Public Health Engineering Department to coordinate with the Deputy Commissioners and District Municipal



Commissioners to draft separate dewatering plans for those areas which have not been included in the schemes approved in today's meeting so as to deal with the problem of water logging in such areas.

During the meeting, Additional Chief Secretary, Irrigation and Water Resources Department, Devender Singh said that the Irrigation Department by taking further the State Government's vision of water conservation has laid more thrust on water conservation and land reclamation in addition to its mandate to save the state from fury of floods. He informed that the 218

schemes approved in today's meeting include water conservation, reclamation, protection of Abadi/Agriculture Land, Procurement of Flood Machinery and Repair/Reconstruction of Bridges/Structures etc.

He informed that last year no flood situation along River Yamuna though some districts like Hisar, Sonapat, Ambala, Hajaraj Jind, Julana experienced water logging due to localized heavy rains. He said that all the flood protection schemes proposed were reviewed and recommended by the Haryana State Advisory Committee in the meeting held on January 6,

2021 under the Chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary and Financial Commissioner, Revenue and Disaster Management Sanjeev Kaushal.

He further intimated the success of last year's executed land/soil reclamation pilot schemes and said that the same have been proposed to be replicated on a wider scale to other districts to reclaim the submerged areas whereby saving crops and increasing agricultural produce.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister also launched a web portal for "Micro Irrigation Initiative" on the web site <https://cada-haryana.nic.in> for inviting applications from the farmers/WUA.

The launch is with the motto "Suksham Sinchai Se Har Khet Mein Pani" which is a step towards automation. A project, inclusive of water-course for installation of Community Based Solar/Grid Powered Integrated Micro Irrigation with subsidy at the rate of 95 percent on Micro Irrigation (MI) system will be taken up through the portal.

Farmers or groups of farmers have to come forward with the chak of minimum 25 acres to adopt MI in their fields. Further 100 percent consent of stakeholders (Farmers) for adaptation of MI system with 5 percent MI cost contribution and free land for tank at the rate of 2 kanal for 25 acres chak will be main requirement from farmers end. Therefore construction of storage tanks, solar pumps and on farm micro irrigation components like drip and sprinkler shall be provided by Government on subsidised rates in a transparent manner through this web portal.

Prison Radio launched in Panipat District Jail

Chandigarh: Prison Radio was launched in District Jail, Panipat on Saturday by Jail Minister Ranjit Singh, bringing joy to the inmates.

Earlier in December, 2020, six inmates of Central Jail, Ambala, five inmates of District Jail Panipat and 10 inmates including five female inmates of District Jail Faridabad were provided Radio Jockey training by Dr. Vartika Nanda, Founder of Tinka Tinka Foundation.

Speaking on the occasion, Ranjit Singh said that this initiative will help in converting Prisons into Correctional Homes. Additional Chief Secretary, Home and Jails Department, Rajeev Arora, said that jail radio is a unique initiative for positive engagement which will facilitate better communication among prison inmates and help in bringing out their positivity and creativity. Director General of Police/ Prisons, K. Selvaraj said that new radio stations at Faridabad and Ambala jails will be launched shortly. **PNS**

Shah, Nadda to attend Golden Jubilee function of HP statehood

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP President Jagat Prakash Nadda would attend the Golden Jubilee function of the statehood of Himachal Pradesh, Chief Secretary Anil Khachi said on Saturday.

Presiding over the review meeting for preparations of the Golden Jubilee function of Statehood here, Khachi said that to ensure success of the event all departments must work in coordination with each other.

He said that proper seating arrangements should be made for dignitaries, keeping in view the weather forecast.

He directed the officers to ensure a full day rehearsal of Golden Jubilee function one or two days prior to the event, adding that additional LED

He directed the officers to ensure a full day rehearsal of Golden Jubilee function one or two days prior to the event, adding that additional LED screens should be put up at the Ridge, so that people could watch the telecast of the programme and also directed to make proper arrangements for seating of media persons

screens should be put up at the Ridge, so that people could watch the telecast of the programme and also directed to make proper arrangements for seating of media persons. He said that live telecast of the function through LEDs in all 68 Assembly Constituencies

of the State besides all district headquarters.

He said that all those departments participating in the exhibition should use better mediums to showcase the developmental journey of the State, directing the officers to make proper arrangements for safety and sanitation during the event.

Additional Chief Secretaries Manoj Kumar, R.D. Dhiman, Secretary Health Amitabh Awasthi, Director IT Ashutosh Garg, Director Tourism and Civil Aviation Yunus, Deputy Commissioner Shimla Aditya Negi, Superintendent of Police Shimla Mohit Chawla, Director Information and Public Relations Harbans Singh Brascos, Director Language, Art and Culture Suneel Sharma and other senior officers were also present in the meeting.

Palghar lynching case: Thane court grants bail to 89 accused

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A Thane Special Court on Saturday granted bail to as many 89 accused in the much-discussed Palghar lynching incident, in which two Sadhus and their driver were killed by an irate mob near Kasa town in Maharashtra's Palghar district in April last year.

Having heard arguments by Special Public Prosecutor Satish Maneshinde and defense counsels Amrut Adhikari and Atul Patil on January 6, Special Judge S. B. Bahalkar granted bail to the 89 accused against a deposit of Rs 15,000 each.

The judge scheduled the next hearing of the case for February 15.

Earlier in their defence of the accused, counsels Amrut Adhikari and Atul Patil had told the court that the applicants had no role to play in the attack and the police had arrested them on mere suspicion.

They had also questioned the validity of the three FIRS filed against them.

As many as 251 adults and 16 juveniles are being tried on various charges of rioting, attempt to murder and murder in connection with the April 16, 2020 Palghar lynching incident which created public outrage across the country.

Till date, a total of 176 accused and 11 juveniles have been granted bail while the bail applications of 36 more have been rejected.

On July 16, this year, the state CID filed a comprehensive

charge-sheets against the accused before a Dahanu court in connection with the April 16, 2020 Palghar lynching incident. In its charge sheet -- running into 4955 pages -- filed before the court of Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) at Dahanu in Palghar district, the CID sleuths had named 126 accused in connection with the incident that took place on the night of April 16.

The investigation team, led by Deputy Superintendent of Police (CID) Vijay Pawar, filed the charge-sheet after examining 808 suspects and 118 witnesses to collect strong evidence against the accused.

It may be recalled that on the night of April 16 last year, three persons were lynched by a 200-strong mob of villagers near Kasa town in Maharashtra's Palghar district on suspicion that they were thieves.

The villagers first hurled stones at the van, prompting the driver to stop the vehicle. Later, they pulled three persons out of the vehicle and beat them to death in Gadchinchale village on Dabhadhi-Khanvel road, with sticks and rods.

The deceased -- identified as Chikne Maharaj Kalpavrukshagiri (70), Sushilgiri Maharaj (35) and driver Nilesh Telgade (30) were travelling to Surat. Of them one was the diver, while two are residents of Kandivli in north Mumbai. The place where the incident took place is approximately 120 km from Mumbai.

INBRIEF

APP FOR EXCISE AND TAXATION DEPT LAUNCHED

Chandigarh: Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala on Saturday launched a prototype of 'GST-PV' app for Excise and Taxation Department. Through this app, all the Tax Inspectors of the Excise and Taxation Department will conduct physical verification of the premises of taxpayers with their smartphones. On this occasion, Additional Chief Secretary, Excise and Taxation Department, Anurag Rastogi, Commissioner, Excise and Taxation Department, Shekhar Vidyarthi and other senior officers of the department were present. After launching the app, the Deputy Chief Minister who also holds the portfolio of the Excise and Taxation Department said that this app will help in quick detection of fake firms that are involved in passing inaccurate input tax-credits. Apart from this, this app will be helpful in registration of tax, which will save the time and resources of the department. He said that at present, tax-inspectors have to visit the firms and manually record the entries after taking the documents, which often leads to complaints of incorrect and inconsistent data filling, while the whole process will be automated through this app and the tax-inspector can feed their data directly.

PETROLEUM CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN KICKS OFF

Chandigarh: To sensitise the citizens about the acute need for petroleum conservation, a month-long campaign, Saksham 2021 (Sanrakshan Kshanta Mahotsav) took off at Mahatma Gandhi State Institute of Public Administration, Sector 26 here on Saturday. K. Siva Prasad, Principal Secretary, Transport, Punjab inaugurated Saksham 2021 through a web meeting. Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas through PCRA (Petroleum Conservation Research Association) and Oil PSUs have been conducting fuel conservation drives all over India. Sujoy Choudhury, State Level Coordinator (Oil Industry), Punjab and Executive Director, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd, Chandigarh while speaking on the occasion said, "In 1991 a campaign started to conserve the natural resources and since then a lot of campaigns and activities have been taken up. 'Saksham 2021' campaign will sensitize citizens through conferences, skits, painting competitions and a number of activities aimed to educate the public how important it was to preserve natural resources for a better environment." Shalabh Raj Gupta, State Level Coordinator (Oil Industry), U.T. Chandigarh & Chief Regional Manager (Retail), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd, Chandigarh Regional Office welcomed the Chief Guest and other senior dignitaries.

COLD WAVE CONDITIONS PERSIST IN PUNJAB, HARYANA

Chandigarh: 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. Pathankot, Adampur, Halwara Faridkot and Gurdaspur recorded minimum temperatures of 5, 6.8, 6.1, 6.6 and 9.2 degrees Celsius, respectively. In Haryana, Ambala, Hisar and Karnal experienced cold weather conditions at 5, 4.2 and 4.9 degrees Celsius, respectively, up to two degrees below normal. Narnaul, Rohtak, Bhiwani and Sirsa registered their minimum temperatures at 5, 6.2, 6.6 and 5.4 degrees Celsius, respectively. Chandigarh, the joint capital of both states, recorded its low at 5.8 degrees Celsius. A thick blanket of fog enveloped many places in Punjab and Haryana in the morning, causing inconvenience to commuters.

No way to go, no age to go

From Page 1

When she first fell ill in end of October last year, none of us ever thought in two-month time we would lose her forever. After all, we were so used to her presence, her friendly banter and intense political debates, that we thought nothing could ever defeat her. Alas! We were so wrong. Usha completed her study from Kashi Hindu Vishwavidyalaya and then started her journalist career from Hindi daily Aaj as a correspondent from Varanasi. Later, she moved to Delhi and worked with Amar Ujala, Rajasthan Patrika and Dainik Bhaskar before she joined as the Resident Editor of the Hindi Pioneer in 2011.

She would be always the last to leave the office. But when it came to leave us for one last time, she seemed to be in such a tearing hurry. Goodbye, Usha...

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Yuvraj Dutt R/o Vill. Mandouli, Tehsil Jagadhri, Distt Yamuna Nagar declares that my Transfer Deed No. 9824 Dt. 08.01.2020 has been lost in Yamuna Nagar on Dt. 27.12.2020. The above said deed has not been mortgaged with any bank / Financial Institution / Private Person.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Before Sh. Manish Kumar Lohan, HCS, Assistant Estate Officer, Exercising the Powers of the Estate Officer, U.T., Chandigarh.

Subject: Transfer of ownership rights to the extent of 100% share in respect of residential site no. 2522, Sector 37-C, Chandigarh on the basis of Regd. Will dated 02.06.2020 (within family)

It is notified for the information of the general public and all concerned with the property known as House No. 2522 Sector 37C, Chandigarh, which as per record of this office stands in the name of Smt. Gurnam Kaur W/o Sh. Devinder Singh Kamboj (100% share).

Now, Sh. Sohaninder Singh S/o Sh. Devinder Singh Kamboj has applied for the transfer of ownership rights in respect of House No. 2522, Sector 37-C, Chandigarh to the extent of 100% share on the basis of registered Will dated 02.06.2020 executed by Smt. Gurnam Kaur W/o Sh. Devinder Singh Kamboj.

If anybody has any objection upon the mutation of the Property to the extent of 100% share in favour of the above applicant, then she/they may furnish the same within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice in shape of affidavit duly attested by the Executive magistrate/Notary Public undertaking the genuineness of their objection being so raised, to the Estate Office, Sector 17, Chandigarh failing which the 100% share said property shall be mutated accordingly, no further claim what so ever shall be entertained later on

Manish Kumar Lohan, HCS Assistant Estate Officer Exercising the powers of Estate Officer

PUBLIC NOTICE

Before Sh. Manish Kumar Lohan, HCS, Assistant Estate Officer, Exercising the powers of the Estate Officer, U.T., Chandigarh.

Subject: Transfer of ownership rights in respect of Converted Industrial Plot No. 4, Phase-I, Industrial Area, Chandigarh (IND-5), to the extent of 50% share from the name of Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma, S/o. Lt. Girdhari Lal Verma to the extent of 50% share in the names of, (i) Sh. Aman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma (ii) Sh. Raman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma and (iii) Smt. Saahiba Khanna, D/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma on the basis of Regd. Will, dated 18.05.2016. It is notified for the information of general public and all concerned that as per record of this office property known as of Converted Industrial Plot No. 4, Phase-I, Industrial Area, Chandigarh (IND-5), to the extent of 50% share stands in the name of Sh. Prem Kumar Verma, S/o. Lt. Girdhari Lal Verma to the extent of 50% share in the names of, (i) Sh. Aman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma (ii) Sh. Raman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma and (iii) Smt. Saahiba Khanna, D/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma that Sh. Prem Kumar Verma was the owner of the said property to the extent of 50% share and expired on 20.04.2020. They have intimated the following legal heirs of the deceased owner: (i) Smt. Santosh Verma : Wife (ii) Aman Verma : Son (iii) Raman Verma : Son (iv) Saahiba Verma : Daughter. Now, (i) Sh. Aman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma (ii) Sh. Raman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma and (iii) Smt. Saahiba Khanna, D/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma has applied for the transfer of property to the extent 50% share in their favour on the basis of Registered Will of Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma, S/o. Lt. Girdhari Lal Verma dated 18.05.2016. If any body has information about any other legal heir(s) of the deceased other than mentioned above, the same may be intimated to the Estate Officer, U.T., Chandigarh immediately. If anybody has any objection upon the mutation of the said property in favour of above named applicants, they may furnish in writing in the office of the undersigned within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the said share in the said property will be mutated accordingly and no further claim whatsoever shall be entertained at any later stage.

Munish Kumar Lohan, HCS, Assistant Estate Officer, Exercising the powers of the Estate Officer, U.T., Chandigarh

PUBLIC NOTICE

Before Sh. Manish Kumar Lohan, HCS, Assistant Estate Officer, Exercising the powers of the Estate Officer, U.T., Chandigarh.

Subject: Transfer of ownership rights in respect of Converted Industrial Plot No. 4, Phase-I, Industrial Area, Chandigarh (IND-5), to the extent of 50% share from the name of Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma, S/o. Lt. Girdhari Lal Verma to the extent of 50% share in the names of, (i) Sh. Aman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma (ii) Sh. Raman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma and (iii) Smt. Saahiba Khanna, D/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma that Sh. Prem Kumar Verma was the owner of the said property to the extent of 50% share and expired on 20.04.2020. They have intimated the following legal heirs of the deceased owner: (i) Smt. Santosh Verma : Wife (ii) Aman Verma : Son (iii) Raman Verma : Son (iv) Saahiba Verma : Daughter. Now, (i) Sh. Aman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma (ii) Sh. Raman Verma, S/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma and (iii) Smt. Saahiba Khanna, D/o. Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma has applied for the transfer of property to the extent 50% share in their favour on the basis of Registered Will of Late Sh. Prem Kumar Verma, S/o. Lt. Girdhari Lal Verma dated 18.05.2016. If any body has information about any other legal heir(s) of the deceased other than mentioned above, the same may be intimated to the Estate Officer, U.T., Chandigarh immediately. If anybody has any objection upon the mutation of the said property in favour of above named applicants, they may furnish in writing in the office of the undersigned within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the said share in the said property will be mutated accordingly and no further claim whatsoever shall be entertained at any later stage.

Munish Kumar Lohan, HCS, Assistant Estate Officer, Exercising the powers of the Estate Officer, U.T., Chandigarh

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Army No. 15127462X Hav (GD) Rakesh Kumar 94 Medium Regt C/o 56 APO S/o Suram Singh Village Chak Noor Ali PO Garhdiwala Teh Dasuya Distt. Hoshiarpur (Pb.) declare my daughter's name written wrongly Sakshi Devi in my army record. According matric certificate her correct name is Sakshi be amended in my army record.

I, Army No. 15127462X Hav (GD) Rakesh Kumar 94 Medium Regt C/o 56 APO S/o Suram Singh Village Chak Noor Ali PO Garhdiwala Teh Dasuya Distt. Hoshiarpur (Pb.) declare my son's name written wrongly Bhooshan Kumar in my army record. According matric certificate her correct name is Bhooshan Kumar be amended in my army record.

I, No. 870162309 ASI GD Joginder Singh S/o Narpal Singh R/o Village-Alawala, PO-Shekhupura Manchuri, Tehsil-Assandh, District-Karnal (Haryana). In my service record my wife Bala Rani's DOB is 10-11-1972. Which is incorrect. Correct DOB is 01-01-1973.

I, Sunny Keshwar S/o Sh. Balwant Singh R/o H.No.111, Gali No.-6, Ranwar Road Vikas Colony, Distt. Karnal have changed my name from Sunny to Sunny Keshwar. Please note for future.

I, Jaivee Garg W/o Sh. Pavai Garg R/o H. No. 168, Sector 9, Panchkula have changed my name from Jaivee Goyal to Jaivee Garg after my marriage. Jaivee Goyal to Jaivee Garg is one and the same person.

I, Rajia W/o Vikas Sethi R/o 2318/17, Indira Puram, Jagadhri, Distt. Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Prachi to Rajia.

I, Army no. 154991891 Rank ALD Name Pravesh Kumar S/o Shishu Pal of Unit 47 Armed Regt. C/o 56 APO declare that in my service record my mother is wrongly entered as Harbegee Devi instead of Harabheji vide Affidavite no. 442279 dated 11-01-2021 before Notary Pathankot Punjab.

I, K.Sasikala W/o No JC764432H Rank Sub Name R Krishna Moorthy R/o D No. 2/3 South Street Thappukundu Theni Distt Tamil nadu Pin 625534 Declare that in my husband service record my DOB is wrongly written as 23 -08-1983 instead of 25-06-1983 vide affidavit no. before Notary Pathankot Punjab.

I, Jarnail Singh S/o Ram Sarup R/o VPO Yara, Tehsil Shahabad Markanda (Kurukshetra) have changed my name Jarnail s/o Sarupa Ram to Jarnail Singh s/o Ram Sarup.

I, Anjee Devi spouse of No 1597534X Rank HAV Name Ashok Yadav R/O Vill Bishan Pur, Po Rampur, Teh Kahalgau, Distt Bhagalpur, State Bihar 813222 hereby declare that I have changed my name from Anjee Devi to Anjani Devi vide affidavit dated 16/01/2021 before Session court Hisar.

I, JC-405193H Sub Iqbal Singh R/O Village Allowal District Tarn Taran (Punjab) have changed my son's name from Amratpal Singh to Amritpal Singh concerned Please note

I, JC-405193H Sub Iqbal Singh R/O Village Allowal District Tarn Taran (Punjab) have changed my Daughter name from Jagrup Kaur to Jagroop Kaur. concerned Please note

I, JC-405193 H Sub Iqbal Singh R/O Village Allowal District Tarn Taran (Punjab) have changed my daughter's name Navrup Kaur to Navroop Kaur concerned Please note.

I, JC-405641K Sub Gurlal Singh R/O Village Assa butter District Sri Muktsar Sahib (Punjab) have changed My son's name from Hussun Deep Singh to Hushan Deep Singh concerned Please note.

I, Paramjeet Kaur W/o Balbir Singh R/o Village Rasulpur PO Udaipur tehsil & distt Ambala have changed my name from Paramjit Kaur to Paramjeet Kaur.

I, JC-405641K Sub Gurlal Singh R/O Village Assa butter District Sri Muktsar Sahib (Punjab) have changed my daughter's name from kumari Rableen Kaur to Rableen Kaur concerned Please note.

I, Archana Singh W/O Sanjay Kumar Chauhan resident of Village Karwandia PO Hattia PS Chaipur District Kaimur (Bihar) pin 821106 have changed my name from Archana Singh to Kumari Archana Singh vide affidavit no. AL 442461 dated 15 January 2021 before Harmanjeet Bedi Notary Pathankot.

I, Sangita Spouse of Mr Parmar Sanjay Kumar Kanaksinh resident of Village Hadmalia PO Vyasa Tehsil Kalol District Panchmahal State Gujarat Pin 389340 have changed my name from Sangita to Parmar Sanggitaben vide affidavit no. 442310 Dated 12 January 2021 before notary public Pathankot.

I, Kishana Ram resident of Vill. Jajiwai Gehlota PO Jajiwai Kalla Teh. & Distt. Jodhpur in my Son Bakshi Ram Service Record my name wrongly Recorded as Kishana Ram instead of Kishna Ram vide affidavit No. AL 442457 dated 15 January 2021 before Notary Public Pathankot.

I, Suwa Devi resident of Vill. Jajiwai Gehlota PO Jajiwai Kalla Teh. & Distt. Jodhpur (Rajasthan) in my Son Bakshi Ram Service Record my name wrongly Recorded Suwa Devi instead of Sua Devi vide affidavit No. AL 442456 dated 15 Jan 2021 before Notary Public Pathankot.

I, Rupinderjeet Kaur W/o Amarjeet Singh R/o Mirzapur Khandiala PO Lalowal Hussainpur Distt. Hoshiarpur (Pb.) declare that my husband Amarjeet Singh holding SL Young Star Champion Suvidha Policy No. 13600817 date of issue 31 March 2010 in which my name written wrongly Rupinder Kaur. According to my matric certificate aadhar card, pan card bank account my correct name is Rupinderjeet Kaur be treated & corrected in all policy documents & records.

I, Sulkshana Garg D/O Amrit Lal Garg, R/O #141, New Preet Nagar, Nangal, Rupnagar Declared My Correct Name Is Sulkshana Garg. I Am Known With These Three Names Sulkshana Garg, Sulakshana Garg & Sulkshna Garg.

I, No. 2706703W, NK, Paras Kumar, Unit 19 Grenadiers, Permanent Address at Village Bhuj Gandhinagiri, District Kutch, Gujarat declare that my Father Shyam Lal Akela Correct Date of birth 06-09-1955 & Incorrect 09-06-1955. Vide Affidavit Dated 16 January 2021 before at Notary Ferozepur.

I, No. 2693684P, Hav, Kripa Shankar, Unit 19 Grenadiers, Permanent Address at Village & PO Sinora, Tehsil Bikapur, District Faizabad, U.P have changed my wife name from KM. Kiran Devi to Kiran Singh & Correct Date of birth 25-08-1981, Incorrect 25-08-1984. Vide Affidavit Dated 16 January 2021 before at Notary Ferozepur.

I, Nitu Devi Spouse Of Service No.156167381, Rank Hav Anil Kumar R/O Village- Rupaspur, Post Office Salarpur, Tehsil- Jehanabad, District- Jehanabad, Pin-804429, State Bihar. Have Changed My Name Nitu Devi Is Wrong. But My Name Nitu Kumari Is Correct. Vide Affidavit No.12658 Dated 16-01-2021 Before Notary Public Gurdaspur, Punjab.

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Classified Advertisement Contact : 94174-19351

Stalin, Kamal Haasan make poll promises on Pongal

kumar chellappan ■ CHENNAI

They may be rationalists and atheists but the leaders of Dravidian ideology selected the auspicious Pongal day to declare their election promises to the people of Tamil Nadu. MK Stalin, president of the DMK who is also the Leader of the Opposition, made it known that the 'crisis ridden' farm sector in the State stands to gain a big fortune if they vote him and his party to power in the upcoming election to the legislative assembly. Even Kamal Haasan, the cine actor-turned founder of Makkal Neethi Maam chose the Pongal day to declare his plan of action for Tamil people. "We will write off all farm loans and jewel loans. You should remember that the last time we came to power in 2006, the first thing done by Kalaignar (late CM M Karunanidhi) after the swearing in of his government was to issue an order waiving of cooperative loans worth Rs 7,000 crore."

Local body polls..

From Page 1

The State Election Commission further said that the expenditure limit for a candidate of municipal corporation has been fixed as Rs 3 lakh, for candidate of Municipal Council Class-I, Rs 2.70 lakh, Class-II Rs 1.70 lakh, Class-III Rs 1.45 lakh and candidates for nagar panchayats Rs 1.05 lakh. For taking preventive measures for Covid-19, Rs 1.65 crore has been allocated to provide masks, sanitisers, and gloves to be used by the staff deployed for election duty, he said.

Army has boosted country's morale during standoff with China: Rajnath

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said the Indian Army has boosted the morale of the country and also enabled the people to hold their heads high during the border standoff with China.

He said this while addressing a gathering here during the 'bhoomipujan' and foundation stone laying ceremony of the new Command Hospital.

"The charismatic (karishmaayi) performance by the Army during the India-China standoff has boosted the morale of the country and also enabled the citizens to hold their heads high," he said, drawing a thunderous applause from the crowd. "The entire world is facing COVID-19. Pandemic No one had thought that with the onset of the pandemic, celebrating festivals such as Holi, Eid and Diwali will be without much fanfare (dhoomdhaam). No one had imagined that trains will come to a halt, and schools and markets will remain closed. However, the good thing was that under

the leadership Prime Minister Narendra Modi, efforts to deal with the crisis started with courage and understanding (of the issue)," he said.

He added that the biggest challenge at the time of the pandemic was testing.

"There were barely two laboratories, but today there are over 1,000 laboratories. There was a shortage of masks, ventilators and PPE kits. But the swiftness and understanding of the issue which India displayed, masks, PPE kits and ventilators are now being exported. This has been done in 4-6 months," Singh said.

Hailing the doctors and healthcare workers, he said, "Had our doctors, para-medical staff, whom we know as warriors, not take the risk, we could not have fought the challenge. It is for this reason that doctors are considered as second God on earth. The threat of COVID-19 was on doctors, para-medical staff, sanitation workers. They stayed away from their families, ate food outside their homes, and then left for the hospital. These warriors have rendered charismatic

performance.

The doctors, para-medical staff, sanitation workers have worked as frontline soldiers and I salute their commitment and dedication."

He also informed that besides the two indigenous anti-COVID vaccines used in the nationwide vaccination drive that began on Saturday, four more vaccines are coming soon.

"These vaccines will not only be administered to people in India, but will also be exported to other countries. Because, India does not think about itself alone, but is also concerned about the entire world. Seers here gave the message of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam -- the whole world is a family. Since the Vedic era, the medical treatment system here has not only thought about human beings, but also of other creatures. During the reign of Ashoka, there were provisions for treatment of cows, buffaloes, cats and bats."

Army chief General MM Naravane and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath were also present at the programme.

Missing for 2 days, girl found dead in agricultural field in UP

Lalitpur (UP): The body of a 14-year-old girl, who had been missing for the last two days, was recovered from an agricultural field here, police said on Saturday. The body was found in Jamalpur

village under Talbehata police station area, they said. The girl went missing from her home on Thursday but her family did not inform the police, Circle Officer (CO) Devendra Kumar Singh said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Saroj w/o Sh. Late Surender Kumar intends to create a charge Viz, Mortgage or otherwise, on basis of laminated original Title Deeds of the property Plot No 27 Mandi Township HUDA Bhiwani admeasuring 418.07 Sq Mt (500 sq yards) registered on 08.08.2017 (Reg No.4932) and I wish to create charge for availing a loan/credit facility from State Bank of India, SME Railway Road Bhiwani Branch, Branch Code 50108. In case any party has any claim towards the said relevant property, the same should be lodged with the intending party and also with the above stated branch of State Bank of India, within 15 days from publication of this notice.

MANAGEMENT QUOTA ADMISSION TO B.ED. 2020-21

SRI SAI COLLEGE OF EDUCATION PATHANKOT (VPO BADHANI) - 145 001

Approved By NCTE & Punjab Govt. Affiliated To GNDU, Amritsar & NAAC Accredited Direct Admission through Management Quota Seats in the B.Ed. course for the Session 2020-2021 in the following Pedgagogy Subjects:-

Computer, Mathematics, Social Studies, Economics, History, Commerce, Political Science, Home Science, Music, Science, Physical Science, Life Science, Fine Arts, Physical Education, Punjabi Hindi, English.

Candidates with at least 50% (5% relaxation to SC/ST/PwD) marks either in Bachelor's degree and or in Master's degree in Science/ Social Science/ Humanities/ Commerce/ Home Science/ BBA/ BCA/ Engineering/Technology or any other qualification equivalent thereto are eligible for the admission to B.Ed. Programme. All candidates required to apply in the college by January 19, 2021. Candidates must bring their original documents to attend the counseling on January 19, 2021.

Er. S.K. PUNJ, Ph. : 01870-250802, Mob. : 8968844556, 8427184271 www.srisaigroup.in, email: srisaieducation@srisaigroup.in

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 Ifikhar-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 Sarsai 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 Toycathon-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 quibus 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 Bagraich, 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

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 Dhankar 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 Dhankar 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

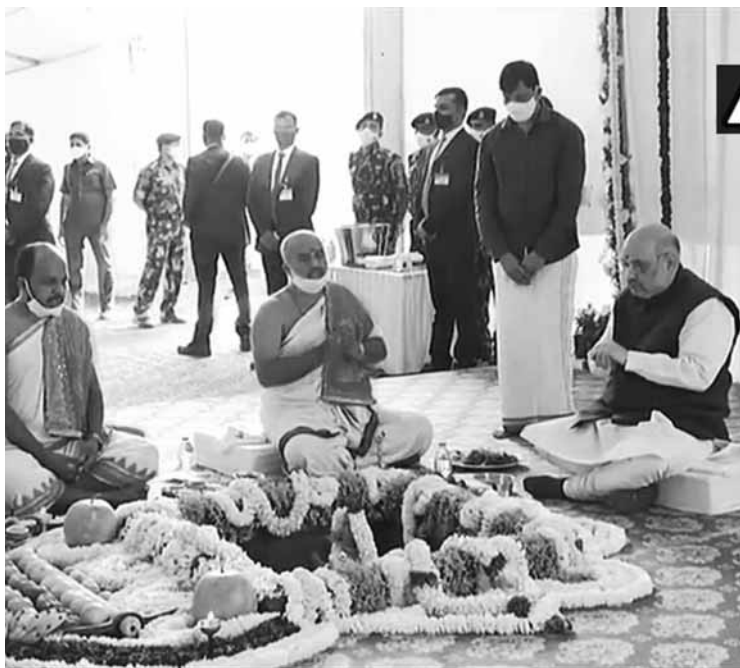
Former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and senior advocate Vikas Singh on Saturday requested Chief Justice S A Bobde to constitute a bench to resolve the election stalemate of the professional body of lawyers.

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 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.

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 'Parambha: 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, installing 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 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 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.

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: 04 th January 2021, 2 PM	27 th January 2021, 2 PM
Last date of Opening Bid Document: 04 th January 2021, 4 PM	27 th 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

आपका सम्पूर्ण - 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

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)

1. कार्य का विवरण -	प्रारंभिक राशि (लाख रुप में)	अंशदान की राशि (लाख रुप में) (ऑन लाईन अथवा ऑफलाइन/मैन्युअल मोड में)	पॉरिगन (विन का मुल्य (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में) (प्रत्यक्षीय) (केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में) (प्रत्यक्षीय) (केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में)	बैलेंस का देय विड प्रोसेसिंग फी (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में)	कार्य समाप्ति की तिथि
01. लामा चौकिया पहाड़पुर महानंदा दायें तटवर्ध के किनारे 20.25 (वेन रंग 675) से किनारे 23.00 (वेन रंग 67) के बीच कटाव निरोधक कार्य । एजेडा सं- 168/322/2021	681.19	13.63	10000.00	5,900.00	15.05.2021

2. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक 13.01.2021
3. निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की अवधि : दिनांक-21.01.2021 से दिनांक-24.01.2021 के 3:00 बजे अपरान्ह तक (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
4. प्री-बिड मीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक-22.01.2021 3:00 बजे अपरान्ह में, मुख्य अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण एवं जल निस्करण, जल संसाधन विभाग, कटिहार।
5. तकनीकी बिड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक-27.01.2021 समय 3:30 बजे अपरान्ह। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
6. वित्तीय बिड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : समय पर बिडिकारी द्वारा बाद में घोषितकी जायेगी (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
7. निविदा खोलने का स्थान : www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर
8. निविदा की वैधता अवधि : 120 दिन
9. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार
10. विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in एवं state.bihar.gov.in/prd/bihar पर देखा जा सकता है ।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार
मो 0-7463889238
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	Fiat 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/- (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 Mortgagors/notice are given a last chance to pay the total dues before further interest till **February 17, 2021** before **05:00 PM** 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 PM** 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 PM**. 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 97102993/9810029926/0124423393**

Please note that Marketing agencies **NexXen Solution Private limited 2. Augoo 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.

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 nation 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-

mediately 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 (explicitly) 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



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

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

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 spokesman 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 hereby informed that one girl
Namely: Droupi, 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: cbc@cbi.gov.in
Website: http://cbi.nic.in
Ph: 011-24368639
Fax: 011-24368638, 24368641

SHO
PS. Laxmi Nagar, Delhi
Ph. 011-22542441, 8750870622
DP/331/ED/2021

PUBLIC NOTICE
 This is to inform the general public that our client intends to enter into a agreement in respect of Plot No.2/20, land measuring 265 Sq.Yds., Lane No.1 & 2, Anupam Garden, New Delhi, (hereinafter referred to as "Schedule Property") with Mr. Nitin Kohli son of Shri S.L. Kohli. It is hereby informed to the general public that any person/bank/financial institutions etc. having any claim, charge, mortgage, right, title & interest etc. in respect thereof, are hereby requested to inform the undersigned in writing by Registered Post, A.D. at Kaushik & Associates, M-52-A, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi alongwith supported documents within a period of fifteen days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the claim of such persons will be deemed to have waived and / or abandoned & our client shall proceed to complete the proposed transaction.
(Advocate: Sachin Kumar) M-52A, Malviya Nagar, ND-17 # 991363700, 988150000

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - II, DELHI
 14TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001.
 O.A. No: 67819 DATE: 28.08.2020
CIC BANK LTD. - Applicant
MUKUL SHAH - Respondent
 To, DEFENDENT
 Mukul Shah S/o. Ripudaman Shah Prop. Goldline Corporation (Borrower) 105, Ground Floor, Sector-83, Noida, UP-201301
 Whereas the above named applicant (s) has / have instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 27,34,851 (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh Thirty Four Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty One Only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 27.01.2021 at 10.30A.M.
 Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.
By Order of this Tribunal For Registrar, DRT-II, Delhi

Nepali team first to top world's 2nd tallest peak in winter

Islamabad: A team of Nepalese climbers on Saturday made history by scaling the world's second highest peak — Pakistan's K2 — in the winter season, a local Alpine Club official said.

The secretary of Pakistan's Alpine Club, Karrar Haideri, said 10 Nepali Sherpas reached the summit around 5 pm.

At 8,611 metres (28,251 feet), K2 is the most prominent peak on the Pakistani side of the Himalayan range, and the world's second tallest after Mount Everest. Winter winds on K2 can blow at more than 200 kilometers per hour (125 miles per hour) and temperatures drop to minus 60 degrees Celsius (minus 76 Fahrenheit).

"This was never done by anyone before in winter," said Haideri. **AP**

He added that four international climbing teams had arrived about a month ago to try scaling K2 — the last peak above 8,000 metres in the world to not be climbed in the winter. Of these dozens of climbers, the group of 10 Nepalis have so far been the only successful team, said Haideri.

Since the maiden attempt back in 1988, just a handful of winter expeditions have been attempted on the storied 8,611-metre peak in the Karakoram range along the Chinese border that leads into the Himalayas.

Haideri said no mountaineers had reached higher than 7,750 metres, until Saturday when fair weather conditions allowed the climbers to push ahead. **AP**

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 6(i) 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. Ft. (13,805 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 Fajupur Majra, Nmrka, Sub Tensli Tiagaon, 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/>
Date: 17-01-2021, **Place:** Faridabad **Sd/-, Authorized Officer, 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	BECU 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 Stainless Steel Chequered Sheet	16500 Kg.	05.02.2021
38	Set of Axle Box Assy. 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 0562 Like us on facebook.com/WesternRly follows us on twitter.com/WesternRly			

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. Unfortunately 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

'Natarajan is here to stay'

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 wicket.

"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 Siddarth 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 Riyan 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.

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 is 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

South Africa not easy to beat: 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.

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Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) R/w Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, (on underlying pool assigned to ICICI Bank by Dewan Housing Finance Ltd.) in relation to the enforcement of security in respect of a housing loan facility granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between DHFL and the borrower, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Number (Loan Account Number (DHFL Old LAN & ICICI New LAN))	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Mahender Singh / Suman Devi S 25200000663 & QZHIS00005040100	Plot No- 54, Khewat No- 1963, Khatoni No- 2887, Kharsa No- 68/2/1/(1-11), 3(8-0), 4(8-0), 5 (7-8), 68/11 Indira Nagar Gangwa, Hisar Haryana January 15, 2021	August 20, 2020 Rs.17,05,620/-	Hisar
2.	Ram Prasad/ Santosh S 25200000343 & QZHIS00005025656	Khewat No- 492, Khatoni No- 622, Kita- 2 Vill Gurera, Dist Bhiwani, Near D A V School, Govt School, Siwani, Hisar Haryana / January 15, 2021	February 05, 2020 Rs. 9,28,919/-	Hisar

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : January 16, 2021
Place: Haryana

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

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 patient runs before he gave a catch to wicketkeeper Jos Buttler off Leach's bowling.

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



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

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

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," says Das.

YOUTH POWERING CHANGE

Designer Jenjum Gadi, who calls Delhi home, believes that the change has been brought about primarily by the youngsters. "We have faced a lot of racism in metros and the youngsters worked on countering it by engaging in discussions, both online and offline, about the people, food and culture. This created awareness and dispelled myths." He has noticed a marked shift in the number of people wanting to travel to the region and being more tolerant of the food habits than they were when he came from a remote village in Arunachal Pradesh to the capital to study 16 years back.

The fashion world was the one of the first industries to integrate people from the North East since they have an inherent sense of style. "There are stylists, designers, graphic designers and more in the industry which, to begin with, was always open," feels Gadi.

Sharma believes that the new crop of youngsters has done their bit in bridging the gap which existed on both sides. "Slowly we are trying to assimilate ourselves in the mainstream. Earlier, people found a million reasons not to return to Guwahati after having studied or worked outside. It could be low salaries, standard of living or opportunities," she says and adds that media, like her channel, bring together all the eight states which, in turn, fuels newer ideas for cooperation and development. "We often hear of stories of a boy from some remote area developing software or something equally amazing. There is no dearth of talent here. With the availability of internet, there is an exchange of ideas and more exposure for the younger generation. The basic education system has been strengthened. The economically independent young minds are applying their knowledge everywhere," she says.

STARTUPS REV UP

The entry of youngsters in tourism has transformed the way even this industry operates. Das says, "About 20 colleges and universities in Assam offering a course on tourism came up in the last four-five years. There are thousands of students pursuing these courses and, when they graduate, they are getting into different kinds of activities, exploring new destinations and looking at giving an authentic experience to tourist. People are now looking at tourism as an avenue

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





Preparing For Death by Arun Shourie & Death: An Inside Story by Sadhguru speak of death in a manner that is matter-of-fact and yet eye-opening at the same time, writes KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

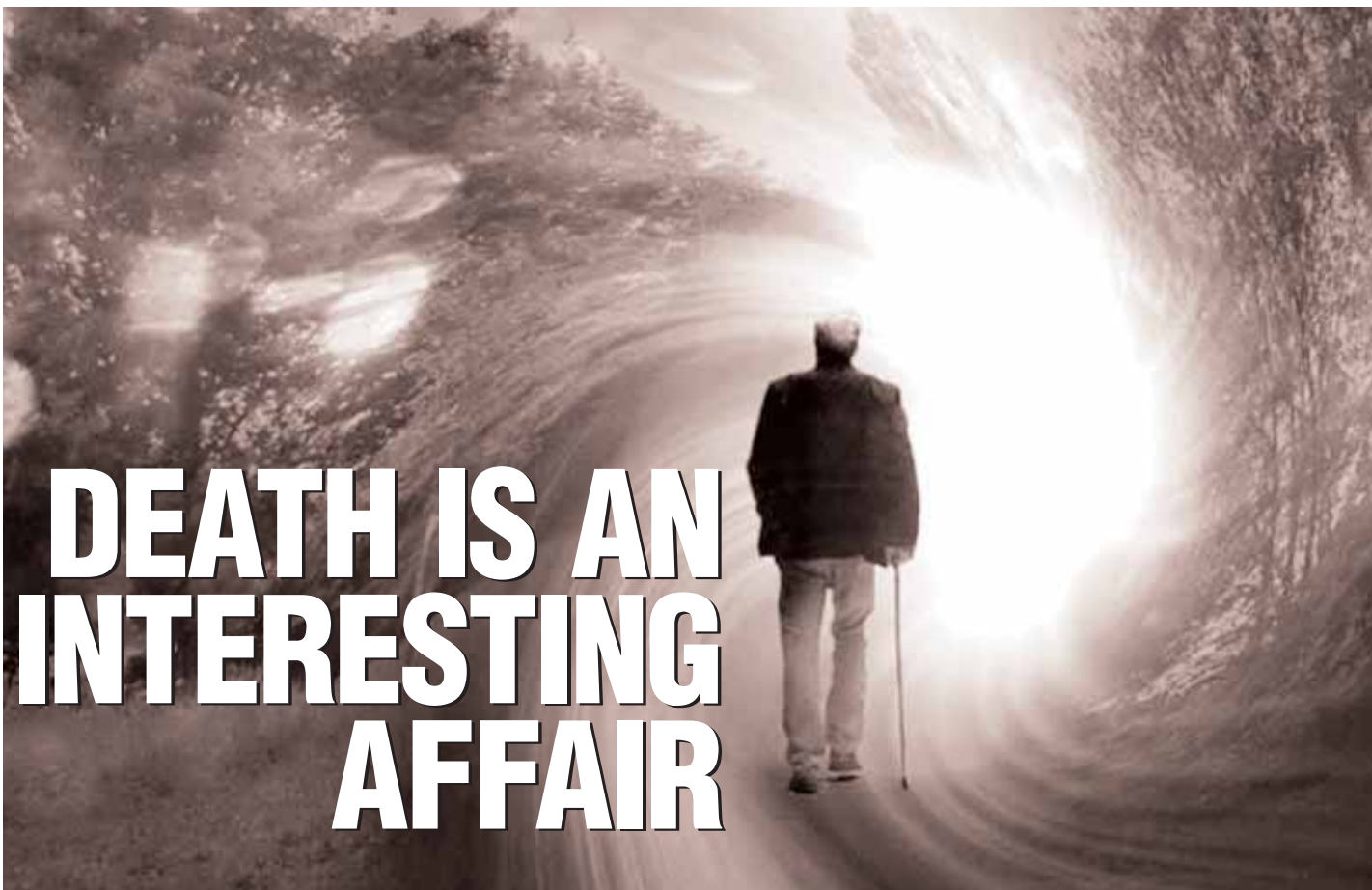
Karthiyayani Kunhamma, my mother, passed away peacefully on November 6, 2020. Her departure from this world was as uneventful as she lived for 90 years. There were no theatrics or high drama accompanying the event. She was there alive one moment and then the other she was gone. My long-time friend and physician Dr Rajiv rushed home upon hearing the news and certified that Amma was no more.

Death was not a painful event as far as my mother's departure was concerned. On the seventh day, we completed the last rites immersing the ashes in Poorna River flowing through Perumbavoor. Within the next two days, I was admitted to the ICU of Kochi Medical College having tested positive for Covid-19 and diagnosed with pneumonia. Two books that gave me company during this period were *Preparing For Death* by Dr Arun Shourie and *Death: An Inside Story* by Sadhguru.

The books were an eye opener for me, surrounded as I was by more than 25 Covid-19 patients who were in various phases of the pandemic. Some of them highly critical while others in an aggressive mood, testing the patience of doctors, nurses and other paramedical staff, working round the clock taking care of the patients.

It was the stay in ICU which made me think about my own death for the first time. I was worried only about whether my demise would be painful, suffocating or peaceful. The only time I have read about a person's last minutes in this world was about Sir C P Ramaswamy Aiyer, the former Diwan of the princely State of Travancore who was also a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the Constituent Assembly. Sir CP, as he was addressed had the "most sudden, painless and peaceful end," according to his biographer Saroja Sundararajan.

"A journalist who came to the National Liberal Club where he was staying in London at 11.30 am on 26 september 1966, enquired if he was not well, thinking Sir CP had a cold. CP laughed loudly at this and replied in a cheerful voice, "My dear lady, I have never been ill a day in my life." So saying he leaned back in his upholstered chair when his head drooped and he was no more."



writes Sundararajan. Prof TMP Mahadevan, eminent philosopher, has been quoted as saying in his tributes: "The world envies various aspects of the life of Sir CP, from his birth with a silver spoon in his mouth, through a multifaceted career. I envy him his death. What a wonderful way to die!"

With the oxygen mask connected to my face, I had nothing else to do other than 'scanning' the pages of *Preparing for Death*, Dr Shourie's account of the final hours of some of the great men and a woman in the sub continent. He recounts the last days and last moments of Lord Budha, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharshi, Kasturba, Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave. What makes the book unique is Dr Shourie's description about his own life and how fate

had been cruel to him throughout this life.

Even if one is born great or becomes great through his/her deeds, death follows us from the moment we come into this world as an uninvited friend. But the tragic truth is that none of us think or worry about this eternal and omnipresent character shadowing us all the from mother's womb.

The pain and sufferings undergone by Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana Maharshi in the prelude to their *samadhi* should be read to be believed. These great men never prayed to God Almighty to lessen their sufferings and tribulations. The reminiscences stand out because of the unique Arun Shourie style. Dr Shourie is brilliant in his description of the final hours of Ramakrishna, Ramana,

Kasturba and Gandhiji. The books he refers to, the quotes he uses and the way he projects the events on a wide canvas... only a master story teller could do the same.

Add to this his sense of humor even in the face of adversities.

"Just like those whom we don't know, our closest relatives, among them those whom we have loved the most and our friends die ever so often—some months it seems as if we have to set up a camp office at the Lodhi Road crematorium. Fed up, a relative has declared, "I am not going to any more cremations. If possible, I will skip my own too."

Thus begins Dr Shourie his latest work that also includes his recent brush with death in Pune. The collage like articles have everything that elevates the readers to new levels of thinking. While there are ever so many

books and articles about life post-death, the sad thing is that we are ignorant about the complex nature of death. This is a subject one should be thorough and knowledgeable to condition us about our own final hours.

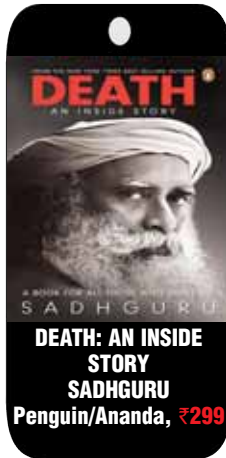
When it was time for me to be discharged from the ICU and transported to Ernakulam Medical Centre, I had graduated to reading *Death: An Inside Story* by Sadhguru. I don't have words to describe this pathbreaking book, full of humour and one which opens the windows to the world of death. "You must understand that what you refer to as death is a unique happening. It is the very last moment of your life. Almost everything in your life may happen many times over, but the final moment when you transcend the limitations of your physical body will happen only once in your life-

time. It is the last thing that you will do in your life. Moving from the physical to non-physical is the greatest moment in your life.

A lot has been discussed about life after death, rebirth, salvation and post-death phenomenon. But we are yet to discuss in detail the mysteries associated with the final moments of our life. Sadhguru, in his own inimitable style, asks hitherto unasked questions on death and explains in a scintillating style facts associated with death. I have seen Sadhguru demolishing and destroying the arguments of "self-styled intellectuals" who dared to challenge the Indian system of knowledge. But this is the first time I read a book authored by him and that too about death. What I feel after reading the book, especially the chapters, *Preparing For a Good Death* and *Assistance For The Dying*, is that I under-

stood that death is an interesting and entertaining phenomenon and it's not something bad as propagated by the Abrahamic religion. All one could feel after going through the book is, fine, here I am, waiting happily for me rendezvous with the person whom I was born with but yet to see face to face with him.

Vayalar Ramavarma, a leftist poet in Kerala, had written a poem way back in the 1970s spitting venom at death. "Oh death, get lost. I am not willing to join you in your solitude as I don't have death and I am immortal" he had written in the revolutionary song. Had Ramavarma read what Sadhguru has to speak about death, I am sure, he would have simply welcomed death for that enlightening encounter. Yes, Death is beautiful provided you learn the basics of its science.



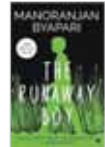
NEW ARRIVALS



OUT OF PRINT: TEN YEARS : AN ANTHOLOGY OF STORIES
Indira Chandrasekhar
Context/Westland, ₹499

A decade ago, in 2010, Indira Chandrasekhar set up *Out of Print* to address a need she felt as a writer: a focused platform for the short story; a space for robust editorial discussions as well as one that would serve as a platform for discoveries — of newer facets of the form itself and of new writing. This commemorative volume hopes to capture something of that adventure. It is, thus, not a 'best of' volume, but one that speaks to the spirit of the magazine: its diversity of literary voices, its openness to experimentation, its focus on Indian-language publishing and its stand against mediocrity. Most crucially, of course, this is an ode to the short-story form, its 'art of brevity and honesty'

THE RUNAWAY BOY (CHANDAL JIBON TRILOGY)
Manoranjan Byapari
(Author), V. Ramaswamy
(Translator)
Eka, ₹599



The first part of Byapari's extraordinary trilogy of novels begins in East Pakistan. It tells the story of little Jibon, who arrives at a refugee camp in West Bengal as an infant in the arms of his Dalit parents escaping from the Muslim-majority nation. He grows up perpetually hungry for hot rice in the camp where the treatment meted out to dispossessed families like his is deplorable. Jibon runs away when he's barely thirteen to Calcutta because he's heard that money flies in the air in the big city. And once he leaves home, through the travels of this starving, bewildered but gritty boy, we witness a newly independent India as it grapples with communalism and grave disparities of all kinds.

A guide to turning crisis into opportunity

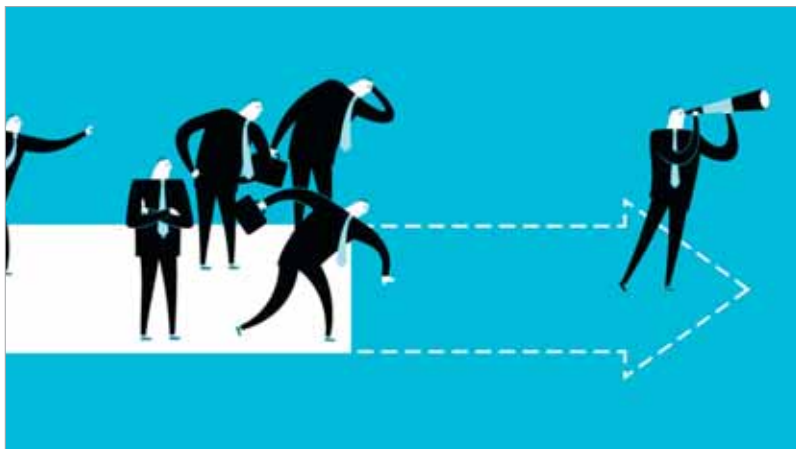
Ritesh Vig's book on leadership is a handy guide of possible solutions and has the potential to transform the outlook of the readers for better in difficult times, writes ARCHANA JYOTI

At a time when the entire world is struggling with Covid-19 pandemic, which has brought the economy almost to a standstill, it becomes impending on the leaders to go the extra mile, exhibit resilient behaviour and leadership qualities to help the common man sail through this trying time safely.

And, the passion to drive this resilience requires a clear understanding to help and guide the right behaviour. Author Ritesh Vig has tried to catalyse this human trait through his book *Leadership in Unprecedented Times* that offers help to business leaders, special business entrepreneurs, common man and youngsters to build confidence to fight back by deploying unprecedented measures.

There are no set rules to find solutions to times of uncertainty in the midst of whirlwind, rightly asserts Vig, a financial strategist in his debut book. He tries to address today's unprecedented challenges being faced by the leaders while laying the foundation that is needed to emerge stronger. When confidence level of many people is at its low, leaders need to retain their moral high, maintaining 'never say die' attitude, says the writer, who has over two decades of experience as a financial consultant.

Soft Bank, India Country Head Manoj Kohli who launched the book at an online event recently, lauded the writer's thoughtful initiative of penning the inspiration, saying that it provides a future context of constant disruption for entrepreneurs and



senior management. In this regard, he also drew the attention towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-reliant India) in the unprecedented times which, he said, has given us opportunity to be part of the changing face of the market where digital and start-ups are the focus of the business.

Agreeing with the book's pitch, Kohli said that leaders need to keep in mind that "It is about acceptance of the change. We can say there are courageous and bold decisions to be made, but it isn't like that. It is sometimes difficult to accept major change and this causes problems. According to me (and the book), look at the change; accept, embrace, and love it. Once you do that, it will be easier for you to

change the model, the culture, and the product range accordingly. All changes become easy then."

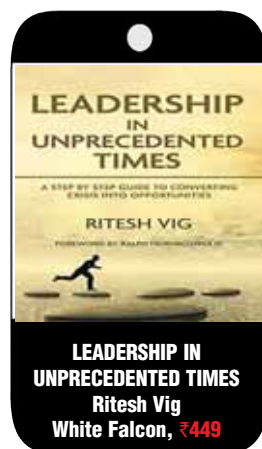
Kohli goes on to share that every company will go through multiple crisis situations. "There is competition crisis, there are regulation and government crisis, there are cost issues, and then performance and culture crisis. Strong, forward-looking leadership is the only way to success. If the leadership can do things in a systematic and orderly way, it can overcome every single crisis."

Published by 'White Falcon' the book, divided in seven sections or 'milestones', aims to offer a step by step guidance to convert crisis into opportunities and presents a strategy to define robust framework, evaluate new busi-

ness scenarios and redefine business shields for any crisis ahead.

Last but not the least, it defines the new normal for the growth of the business. To put it in other words, whether you feel like you've hit a wall, lost your fire, or are looking for innovative strategies to take your business to the next level, *Leadership in unprecedented times* has attempted to answers all.

According to the author, people from all walks of life and all kinds of readers will be enlightened by this book, which he says, has the potential to transform their outlook for better in difficult times. In one of the milestones, for instance, the writer tries to advice a clueless business leader to how to identify strategic live asset and minimise losses besides understanding internal



strength of his business.

Leadership quality is not just a domain of a certain group of people.

Vig writes that a common man too can display leadership at three levels: at home as parents, at job as an employee and for the nation, building true values in children.

Parents should use these unprecedented times as an opportunity to inculcate leadership qualities in their children and save them from anxiety and fears. The book is more relevant for youngsters, who the author says, can understand how leadership should be embedded within them to take on the future role of leaders.

Vig has also chronicled the integrity and strength of the leaders required to fight the pandem-

ic, sharing the thoughts that 'there are no set rules to find solutions to times of uncertainty'.

Real leadership, Vig stresses, requires clear communication, compassion for others, and a commitment to truth-telling — no matter how frightening the times may be. Going further, the writer has also touched upon the past pandemics and key learnings from them. For instance, Vig points out, how soon after The Great Depression that started in 1929 till 1941 left the economy reeling with unemployment, poverty, deflation and ill regulated loans among other financial crisis.

But that did not overshadow the spirit of leaders of those times who rose to the occasion to face challenges thrown by the turbulent environment. Ralph Hornblower III, a well known global investment manager in his foreword compliment the writer for reminding "us that we must stay positive if we want to succeed and vanquish the tsunami waves of humanitarian challenges that such calamities as the 2008 financial crisis and the present Covid 19 pandemic have brought to the doorstep of virtually every country on the planet."

Priced at ₹449, the book, overall is a good read, that no business leader, entrepreneur or a serious executive or for that matter a common man can afford to miss. For, it attempts to help driving people out of the myriad of crises created by the coronavirus pandemic.

China angle: Biden to cement India-USA relations

There has been understandable concern in India at the change of guard in the United States of America on January 20 after the election of Democratic candidate Joe Biden as the new President, particularly since the bilateral relations registered remarkable progress under President Donald Trump, given his determination to deal with China headlong and his hard-line views on Pakistan's complicity and direct involvement in international Islamic terrorism. Trump was outspoken and made his point without any prevarication which was liked in India. Warm personal chemistry between him and Prime Minister Narendra Modi also, no doubt, has been seen as a positive contributing factor.

However, it needs to be noted that Biden has been very supportive of strong ties with India. As Chairman of powerful Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate, he played a pivotal role in getting the India-US civil nuclear cooperation agreement cleared. Later, he served as Vice President in the Obama Administration when the US and India signed LEMOA paving the way for India's recognition by the USA as a "major Defence partner" and licence-free access to a wide range of dual use technologies.

Writing in an ethnic Indian community journal, Biden promised that his administration would "build on the great progress" made in the relationship with India during Obama years. He also asserted that India and the USA "can and should be natural allies". Significantly, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee had also described the India-USA relationship as being that between natural allies.

In geo-political terms, it is widely expected that the firm line against China initiated under the Trump presidency would broadly continue because of rather combative stance of China, which seems to be in a hurry to assert its primacy on the global stage. Its aggression against India and other neighbouring countries surrounding South China Sea has also not gone unnoticed by the Biden team. In fact, Secretary of State nominee Blinken has been on record as having said that "strengthening and deepening of relationship with India is going to be a high priority" for the US particularly in the context of its objectives of peace, stability and rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific

region.

Under these circumstances it can be expected that the USA under Biden would continue to regard India as a "key partner". Notably, India's External Affairs Minister Jaishankar, while commenting on this issue, expressed his confidence that Indo-US relations could only move up further in the coming months.

The presence of Kamala Harris as Vice President and likely induction of several persons of Indian origins (PIOs) in senior position in the new administration is also a factor which would favourably impact on the bilateral relationship. In fact, election of a PIO as the Vice President of the country itself is a landmark development. The credit for it obviously goes to Biden for having chosen Kamala Harris as his running mate, but it also signifies the coming of age of the vast and influential Indian community in the USA. It is well recognised that given their large numbers and relatively high income levels, PIOs in the USA have begun to play increasingly salient role in the country's politics and in providing a generally positive thrust to furthering India-US ties.

In the last two decades there has been a steady and continuing growth in Indo-US Defence and intelligence cooperation despite government changes in both countries indicating a broad bipartisan support on both sides for closer relations. Shared democratic and liberal values and generally positive perception that both countries have about each other have, no doubt, contributed to creation of a positive climate but there is no denying that common threat from China and consequent convergence of geo-political interests has mainly brought the two countries together.

Starting with the "General security of military information agreement" in 2002, India and the USA have now completed the full spectrum of foundational Defence agreements at the recently concluded 2+2 dialogue with the signing of BECA providing for sharing of geo-spatial intelligence. In the meanwhile, the USA has also eased export restrictions on India for high tech equipment, including sensitive Defence technologies by designating it as a "Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1)" country even though India is yet to gain entry into the



Then-Vice President Joe Biden escorts Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi off stage during a luncheon in his honor at the State Department in Washington DC, on Sept. 30, 2014

AP/File

NSG club. In fact, the USA has emerged as a major arms supplier to India over the last few years. This momentum is bound to continue because both countries face the joint challenge of countering China's growing military weight. India and the USA also actively cooperate in countering terrorism, another major threat to the world peace and stability. There are understandable concerns in India about the need to maintain country's strategic autonomy but that does not get compromised by a closer military coordination with the USA in order to deal with our existing security threat perception.

India has a massive economic and commercial relationship with the USA with trade in goods and services totaling \$150 billion. Unlike China with whom we have a huge deficit, India enjoys considerable trade sur-

plus with the USA. Energy partnership has also emerged as an important constituent of that relationship contributing greatly to India's quest to diversify its sources of energy supplies.

Biden has been quite emphatic about bringing the USA back into the Paris Climate Accord and in ensuring greater coordination and alignment with the allies on global political and economic issues. India's sterling record on promised reduction of emission levels jells quite well with his priorities.

It is widely expected that under Biden, the USA will seek to reclaim its centre stage role in global affairs which could, inter alia, see it playing a reinvigorated role in Indo-Pacific region involving closer coordination with India and traditional allies such as Japan and Australia, including military and maritime exercises

to enhance inter-operability both in bilateral and "quad" framework.

The onset of Covid-19 pandemic which has affected millions across the world resulting in heavy casualties would in all likelihood deepen the fissures between China and the western countries. China's dubious role in the spread of virus and suppression of information in the early stages has already come in for sharp criticism by western leaders and general population alike. Consequently, one could well see the western countries acting in concert to keep China's rise in check and India could play a pivotal role in that effort.

They would also move at least some of the manufacturing facilities out of China and India could offer itself as a credible alternative if we are to take further steps to improve the manufacturing climate in India and

bring our practices and regulations more in line with the international best practices.

To conclude, the evolution of geo-political dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region and indeed the world at large and emergent threat from China's aggressive posture would require both India and the USA to continue to work as close strategic partners. Based on current indications and affirmations on both sides, the cooperation between them at the Government level is likely to further solidify in Biden presidency.

(The writer retired from the Indian Foreign Service a few years ago after having served as Indian Ambassador in several countries and continues to take active interest in foreign policy issues. He is currently president of well-known NGO Antar Rashtriya Sahyog Parishad).

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VIRENDRA GUPTA

PERSPECTIVE

NEP can change dynamics of Defence services

Over the years sufficient literature has appeared on India's strategic planning. Many foreign scholars have made contributions towards the research on the modernisation of our Defence programme and the need for gearing up and updating.

One rarely comes across a balanced and dispassionate assessment of the issue since there hasn't been enough focus on a precise strategic planning.

However, the National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 is a sincere effort to fill the gap in the existing realms of knowledge about the contemporary importance of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary studies.

As India needs to diversify its strategies to counter the challenges it faces from Pakistan and China, the strategic knowledge and anticipating the move and motive would be helpful in nipping the problems in the bud.

Recently Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat lauded the NEP and found it quite useful for armed forces to identify the inner strength, resilience, intellect and accuracy of thinking and excellent coordination between mind and body among the youth, particularly from rural areas, for serving the nation with all the integrity and conviction. This is not only an attempt to bring them to the mainstream but a major step towards fulfilling the inner penchant of equity and social justice.

The procedure of accountability and disclosure were anxiously awaited and would make system foolproof. The NEP involving more practical-based approach at the tertiary level would help catching and identifying the inclination

among the new generation towards strengthening country's forces.

The new attention and scope for innovation would attract the talent and enlighten them to seek career opportunities in Defence services. The NEP 2020 has provided a new gateway to problem-solving mechanism and a huge platform for education sector in India. Undoubtedly tremendous efforts have been made towards creating an environment that generates smooth, easily understandable yet cognitive, constructive and analytical skills among the harbingers of future.

The provision of a single regulator and numerous entry and exit options with regard to formal degrees have been some of the salient features of the NEP which deserve all the appreciation as a new beginning to understand the core security problems which can be comprehended in brighter manner with an option of choosing Defence and security as one of the important subjects of the larger discipline either at the undergraduate or postgraduate levels.

The research on such issues would invite tremendous receptiveness on the part of higher education since the ongoing low intensity insurgency perpetuated by Pakistan and over expansionist mission of China have reaffirmed the obnoxious conspiracy to hit India where it matters the most by creating socio-religious and security quagmire.

Besides, it will send out a loud and clear message that India cannot reciprocate in the same manner as it has certain firm convictions and policies towards ensuring peace through defensive mechanism.



This has carried forward the question of reestablishing the credibility and confidence among people that India is not a soft state but it wants to avoid war and conflict as far as possible.

The new learning of socio-political aspects of the problem of insurgency, terrorism and Naxal violence would help security personnel get well versed with the psychology of terrorists and criminals.

John Milton once commented "hours have wings and they fly up to the author of fame dedicated to their cause". The attempt to sensitise about exploring our domestic underpinnings with renewed focus on the role of addressing the myriad shades such as gender

sensitisation and concern of marginalised communities by way of creation of Special Education Zones through inclusive social democratic ideas and values in the process deserve all the appreciation.

The provisions of Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) on par with IITs and IIMs, the National Research Foundation, the National Educational Technology Forum and Indian Institutes of Translation and Interpretation would create an environment for students to reach their potential best by encouraging academic excellence of global level, embracing new information on the one hand and opening new areas of job-ori-

ented courses on the other.

Besides, it would help in understanding social responsibility. In addition to this a new approach can also provide a clear way forward for students interested in Defence studies by getting them to learn new techniques.

The much talked about new provisions of new education formal orientation of "5+3+3+4" and learning in mother tongue or regional language till Class V would open up fresh outlook and generate an introspective discourse and seek multiple options and viewpoints to see one's right place according to one's interest.

There are numerous provisions under NEP which can ensure a collaborative creation

of ideas and providing tips to comprehend even the tedious and complex issues.

As far as education at the tertiary level is concerned, NEP's approach appears to set out a very clear way forward by getting the mentors fully involved in new techniques and developing challenging strategies to meet the need of all categories of students.

Hence, in order to enhance the standard of students it would be imperative to develop self-academic orientation and excellence to deliver and provide a problem-solving and inquiry-based learning activities with which students can further formulate and test their ideas, draw conclusions and inferences, and pool and con-

vey their knowledge in a collaborative learning environment.

An introduction of new syllabus would provide a vivid and deeper insight into the problem of terrorism and its causes and thereby may lead to a road map towards a foolproof encountering strategy. This combating strategy will have to look into the basis of the funding for terrorism, nexus among arms dealer, drug traffickers, smugglers and terrorists. A proper knowledge about the nexus between organised crime and terrorism can be of immense use.

The vision of the NEP is bound to make India the most competitive in the field of Defence education and would have many takers. The new facilities in security and Defence areas would enthral new generation and provide new perspective to all the aspiring academicians and students who are shortly going to step out into the world of competition much beyond a regulated framework.

Our Defence policies should be able to adapt to the challenging environment as well as efficiently implement recommendations.

A modern, vigilant and assertive military, intelligence, police and paramilitary network should replace the old one.

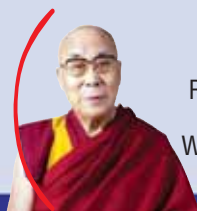
Since it has always been the academic class which provides policy orientation to the policy makers, the NEP has the potential to produce a new breed of intellectuals to ensure fullest realisation of the much needed strategic thinking in the Defence and security area.

(The author is a professor and expert on strategic affairs)

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SUDHIR HINDWAN



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

tarot 4

January 17, 2021



**YOUR
YEAR
AHEAD**

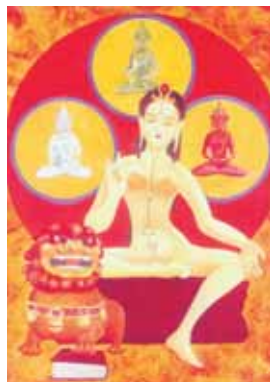
MADHU KOTIYA



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

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ASTROTURF

BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Meditate for a better future

No sooner I get into the process suggested to calm my overtaxed mind, I get into sleep mode. Obviously, when I get up, I feel temporarily relaxed. But soon after my monkey mind comes into active play. Tell me where I am going wrong. So asked a disciple, who is serious about getting over the limitations of his mind. "Getting into sleep mode during the process is not desirable," I answered. "Why then is it happening?" he asked. Well, as you close your eyes, you get cut off from all that you would be consciously watching in the outer world as well as the self-excited thoughts within, which includes lot of negative impressions. Nothing to process, mind gets into sleep mode. "How do I get over this syndrome?" he then asked.

While introducing you to the 8 fold course of *Patanjali Yoga Sutra*, I had explained that meditation proper begins by getting into state of *Pratyahara*. I had also explained the significance and application of *Pratyahara*. The process calls for getting disengaged from waking state consciousness and instead turning your attention inwards. Fact remains that you have ignored the most impor-

tant part of the process, which is why you get into sleep mode. Should you look within, your sub-conscious mind will come into full play. That will bring into focus random thoughts picked up in the immediate past, many of them unpleasant and inconsequential. Those thoughts keep alive your grieving mind. Also, persistent desires and feelings may keep knocking you. These thoughts engage your attention so much, that you are hardly have the space necessary to process any fresh thoughts objectively, and with obvious consequences.

Remember, mind-calming process is true to the calling of *Pratyahara*. Should you follow the process correctly, mind will have a task in hand. It has to witness the inflowing thoughts, but at the same time train it to remain disengaged from them. Following which, those thoughts will go out of reckoning over a period of time. Consequently, you will not only feel relaxed, but also fresh mind-space will be available to process any fresh thoughts objectively. And that makes the difference. I could make out that this fellow is not able to turn his attention inwards. To facilitate that, I suggested him to keep his attention on



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 them 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.

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