

OPINION 6
ANATOMY OF
UTTARAYANA

WORLD 8
AT LEAST 34 DEAD AS INDONESIA
QUAKE TOPPLES HOMES, BUILDINGS

SPORT 12
SIRAJ ABUSED BY
GABBA CROWD

Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

*Late City Vol. 15 Issue 15
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

DEHRADUN, SATURDAY JANUARY 16, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹2



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World's largest Covid vaccination drive begins

PM to launch campaign via video conferencing today at 10:30 am; Vardhan says it is beginning of the end of coronavirus pandemic

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will flag off the first phase of the pan-India rollout of world's largest Covid-19 vaccination drive on Saturday at 10:30 am via video conferencing.

The drive involves two vaccines — Covishield and Covaxin — developed by AstraZeneca-Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech respectively.

A day before the vaccination drive against coronavirus, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Friday said the step is "probably the beginning of the end" of Covid-19. 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 Covaxin of Bharat Biotech for restricted emergency use in the country, paving the way for a massive inoculation drive.

This vaccination programme will cover the entire length and breadth of the country, with a total of 3006 session

sites across all States and UTs which will be connected virtually throughout the exercise.

In the first phase, priority groups and healthcare workers, both in Government and private sectors, including ICDS workers, in all-around 100 beneficiaries will be vaccinated at each of the session sites. Adequate doses of both vaccines have been already delivered across the country. India, which reported first Covid case late January last year is currently the world's second worst-hit country with over 1.05 crore cases and over 1.51 lakh deaths. Over, 213,000 cases are currently active.

The phased rollouts will initially vaccinate one crore healthcare and two crore frontline workers, followed by around 27 crore senior citizens and people with co-morbidities like diabetes, hypertension, organ transplants, etc. In all, 30 crore people are going to be inoculated by July this year.

Speaking at the 146th India Meteorological Department foundation day, Vardhan cautioned that even if the vaccination drive is on, there should not be lowering of guard and



Workers prepare for the Covid-19 vaccination drive for frontline health workers at a Govt Hospital in Mumbai on Friday AP

people must follow Covid-19 appropriate behaviour.

"Tomorrow is an important day...It is the last phase of

the battle against coronavirus. I say, this is probably the beginning of the end of Covid now which is going to start tomorrow," Vardhan, who is also

Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Minister, said.

The Minister on Friday

also reviewed preparations for the vaccination drive as he visited the Dedicated Covid Control Room which has been set up on the Nirman Bhawan premises of the Ministry.

He scrutinised the working of CoWIN, an online digital platform, which will be used to drive the Covid-19 vaccination programme in the country. It will facilitate real-time information of vaccine stocks, storage temperature and individualised tracking of beneficiaries for Covid-19 vaccine. This digital platform will assist programme managers across

Covid-19 IN INDIA
TOTAL
CASES: 1,05,41,760
DEATHS: 1,52,086
RECOVERED: 1,01,75,895
ACTIVE: 2,09,399



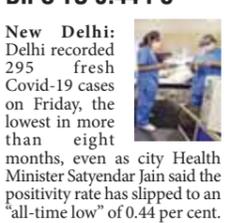
STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	19,84,768	50,336	18,81,088
Karnataka	9,30,668	12,158	9,09,701
Andhra Pradesh	8,85,616	7,138	8,76,140
Tamil Nadu	8,27,614	12,236	8,08,571
Kerala	8,36,884	3,416	7,65,757
Delhi	6,31,884	10,732	6,18,357
Uttar Pradesh	5,95,142	8,543	5,76,519
West Bengal	5,64,098	10,026	5,46,849
Odisha	3,32,949	1,951	3,29,088
Rajasthan	3,14,372	2,744	3,05,953
Chhattisgarh	2,92,612	3,544	2,82,145
Telangana	2,91,118	1,574	2,85,102
Haryana	2,65,964	2,979	2,60,801
Bihar	2,58,289	1,449	2,52,858
Gujarat	2,54,849	4,360	2,43,739
Madhya Pradesh	2,50,429	3,740	2,39,581

national, State, and district levels while conducting vaccination sessions. It will help them track beneficiary coverage, beneficiary dropouts, sessions planned v/s sessions held and vaccine utilisation, said an official from the Ministry.

The platform enables national and State administrators to view & sort data of beneficiaries as per their gender, age & co-morbidity. They can also view the metadata of vaccinations and Adverse Event Following Immunization reported from constituent districts across States and UTs.

295 CASES IN DELHI, LOWEST SINCE MAY 9; POSITIVITY RATE DIPS TO 0.44 PC

New Delhi: Delhi recorded 295 fresh Covid-19 cases on Friday, the lowest in more than eight months, even as city Health Minister Satyendar Jain said the positivity rate has slipped to an "all-time low" of 0.44 per cent.



Farmers-Govt talks inconclusive again

Govt asks unions to create an informal group to discuss finer points of the laws

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The ninth round talks between the farmers and the Government on Friday again failed to end the stalemate over the farm laws. While farmers insisted on the repeal of the laws and legal guarantee of the MSP, the Government asked them to be more flexible in their approach and expressed willingness for necessary amendments.

However, both sides have agreed to continue the dialogue despite the Supreme Court constituting a committee to mediate on the issue.

The next round of talks will be held on January 19, the day the court-appointed committee is likely to start consulting stakeholders to end the impasse. This was the first meeting after the Supreme Court stayed the enactment of farm laws until further orders and appointed a four-member committee to resolve the deadlock over farm laws.

In the meeting that lasted for nearly five hours, including a lunch break, the Government requested unions to create an informal group to discuss finer points of the laws so that a way forward can be found in the wake of the Supreme Court's



Representatives of farmer unions leave after the ninth round of talks with the Government over the new farm laws at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Friday PTI

direction.

Besides their major demands, unions alleged police repression on people associated as well as not associated with the ongoing protests, NIA raids on transporters and arthiyas in Punjab who are supporting farmers' protests and were providing logistic support for the agitation.

The farmer representatives have also raised questions on the cases that have been lodged

against the farmers and urged the Government to address this and prevent it. During the meeting, the Karnal incident where agitating farmers ransacked the venue of Manohar Lal Khattar's "kisan mahapanchayat" came up.

"Talks took place over three farm laws in a cordial atmosphere and detailed discussions took place on some issues, but couldn't reach a decisive stage. We suggested

they can form an informal group of people who can understand the laws better and prepare some concrete proposals, detailing what are farmers' expectations and what clauses are problematic for them, which the Government can consider with an open mind," Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said after the meeting with the farmer leaders.

Prez donates ₹5L for Ram temple

NEW DELHI: The fund collection drive for the construction of Ram temple

at Ayodhya kicked off on Friday with President Ram Nath Kovind donating ₹5

lakh.

The President made the contribution to the Ram Janmabhoomi Teerath Kshetra

Trust set up by the Government to look after the construction and management of the temple. PNS

J&K calm but can burst with rage any time: N Command

Lt Gen says J&K situation may flare up as Pak using terror as state policy

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Sounding a word of caution on the prevailing situation in Jammu & Kashmir, GOC-in-C, Northern Command Lt Gen YK Joshi on Friday said the internal situation in J&K, which is stable and under control, has the propensity to flare up at any time.

Interacting with the media persons after paying tributes to the "bravehearts" of the Indian Army on the occasion of Army Day in the Northern Command headquarters in Udhampur, Lt Gen Joshi also claimed that Pakistan has not relented from using terror as an instrument of state policy. Additionally, he went on to say, "We have seen the Chinese



belligerence on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). They have tried to alter the status quo which has been contested with resolve and courage by the Indian Army."

"Thirdly, the internal situation in J&K, which is stable and under control, has the propensity to flare up at any time," he said.

Elaborating, Lt Gen Joshi said, "There is also the collusive factor with threats ranging from supplying weapons to sharing of operational practices

and so on."

Referring to the prevailing security scenario, the Army commander said that the relentless operations on the Line of Control backed with a robust multi-agency grid in hinterland has forced the deep state in Pakistan to recalibrate its approach to handle this situation.

He said, "The terrorist networks across are trying hard to abet recruitment by extensive use of social media."

The recent District Development Council elections have conveyed the resolve and will of the common people to shun separatism and embrace democracy, he said.

Commenting on the situation in Jammu & Kashmir, Lt Gen Joshi said the abrogation of Article 370 and improvement in governance have been major game changers that helped in restoring the faith of the common people in the institutions of the Government.

Child among 3 killed in fire at scrap shop in Kirti Nagar

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Three people, including a child, were killed in a fire that broke out at a scrap shop in West Delhi's Kirti Nagar area late on Thursday night.

MARKETS

SENSEX 49,034.67 (-549.49)

NIFTY 14,433.70 (-161.90)

GOLD 48,945.00 (-276.00)

SILVER 64,777.00 (-1906.00)

WEATHER

MAX 21.0°C

MIN 8.0°C

Mainly Clear Sky

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मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तरप्रदेश

कोरोना के विरुद्ध युद्ध के लिये हम तैयार हैं

कोविड-19 का टीका पूरी तरह से सुरक्षित है!

कोविड-19 वैक्सीन टीकाकरण का शुभारम्भ

16 जनवरी, 2021

वैक्सिनेशन के लिए निर्धारित प्रक्रिया का पालन करें

सही फोटो आईडी का इस्तेमाल करके Co-WIN सिस्टम पर पंजीकरण करें

लाभार्थी को अपने पंजीकृत मोबाइल नंबर पर SMS प्राप्त होगा

वैक्सिनेशन स्थल पर वैक्सिनेशन अधिकारी-1 (पुलिस/एनसीसी आदि) द्वारा पंजीकरण की जांच और लाभार्थी के फोटो आईडी का सत्यापन किया जाएगा

वैक्सिनेशन अधिकारी -2 द्वारा Co-WIN दस्तावेजों को प्रमाणित/सत्यापित किया जाएगा

वैक्सिनेटर अधिकारी द्वारा लाभार्थी को वैक्सिन दी जाएगी

वैक्सिनेशन के बाद सभी लाभार्थियों को ऑक्जिडेशन एरिया में 30 मिनट इंतजार करना होगा

वैक्सिनेशन अधिकारी 3 और 4, लाभार्थी का 30 मिनट तक विश्राम, मॉनिटरिंग और गैर-पंजीकृत लाभार्थियों का मार्गदर्शन एवं भीड़ नियंत्रण का कार्य करेंगे

प्राप्त SMS के मुताबिक नियत तिथि को वैक्सिन की दूसरी खुराक के लिए आना होगा

अब हमें मिला एक और सुरक्षा कवच, आइये-कोविड-19 टीकाकरण अभियान के साथ जुड़े

स्वयं को सुरक्षित रखने के लिए टीकाकरण स्थल पर निम्न का पालन अवश्य करें

हमारी मां की चर्चा

मां की तस्वीरें मां की तस्वीरें मां की तस्वीरें

आज मैं 4 मिनट का समय दे रहा हूँ

आज मैं 4 मिनट का समय दे रहा हूँ

मैंने अपने मां का नाम याद कर लिया

मैंने अपने मां का नाम याद कर लिया

शिकायत/सुझाव के लिए हेल्पलाइन नं. 104/0135-2609500 पर संपर्क करें
अधिक जानकारी के लिये निकटतम स्वास्थ्य केन्द्र या एएनएम/आशा से संपर्क करें

राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन, चिकित्सा स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, उत्तरखण्ड द्वारा जनहित में जारी

हम सुरक्षित, तो देश सुरक्षित!

Help us to help you

Various decisions taken in State Cabinet meeting

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Various decisions were taken in the meeting of the state cabinet presided over by chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat on Friday. Briefing the media about the decisions taken, cabinet minister and State government spokesman Madan Kaushik informed that the cabinet granted its approval on 17 issues in the meeting. It was decided that the grants will be discontinued under the rules of central university to government aided private colleges not affiliated to Shri Dev Suman Uttarakhand University. The cabinet approved the proposal to bring about a 50 per cent hike in wage rates of those involved in weaving and stitching under the Uttarakhand Khadi and Gramudyog. The rates had not

been hiked since 2012. The service rules for the chairman and member secretary of the state pollution control board was also approved by the cabinet. Further, the cabinet also approved the merger of 366 personnel of the medical education department in the medical health and family welfare department.

The sponsorship of TV reality show-100 days in heaven produced by Jumping Tomato Marketing Private limited was also approved for branding of the state. Further, the cabinet approved amendment in Uttarakhand print media advertisement manual to enable other departments to publish tenders. The mandatory requirement for one year experience was also done away with for the nursing recruitment procedure.

Follow traffic rules honestly: Dr Gaurav Sanjay

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Sanjay Orthopedic Spine & SMaternity Centre and SHEWA Society is currently organising national road safety week beginning Jan 11.

Unlike the previous years, due to the corona pandemic, this year the centre had organised a webinar on 15 January 2021 to make a beginning. Dr. Gaurav Sanjay said that these fractures are causing lot of social and financial problem in the society. Road traffic accidents are not only breaking the bones physically but also family, relations and the society as well.

Dr. Sanjay appealed to the public to follow the traffic

rules honestly. Drinking and driving and lack of sleep are the two major causes of road traffic accidents particularly during the night time. These are the views expressed by Guinness and Limca Book of Records holders Dr. B.K.S. Sanjay. Dr. Sanjay said these public awareness lectures are giving fruitful results and we all can and should contribute our share for the nation building.

It is noteworthy that the SHEWA society is spreading the message towards improving road safety since the last 15 years. The centre and society have organised more than 200 free awareness lectures in the past.

Installation of LED street lights in all wards by April 30

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Municipal Corporation of Dehradun (MCD) will finish the installation of 65,000 LED street lights in all the wards by April. Informing this, the municipal commissioner Vinay Shankar Pandey stated that the corporation has already selected the wards where the installation will occur first by the lottery system. According to him, the installation of street lights will start from a batch of five wards as selected through the lottery system and initially, around 10,000 street lights will be issued to be installed and with the same procedure, the installation will be done in the other wards. Moreover, the officials informed that though most of the LED street lights

will be installed in the new wards, the corporation will also install over 2000 street lights in some of the old wards. Commissioner said that the installation of street lights will be finished by April 30 across the city and all the wards will be illuminated during the night. The installation of 1000 timers and electric meters on the electric poles is also under process to ensure efficient working of street lights after installation. Pandey said that in order to ensure the proper operation of street lights in every ward after the installation, MCD signed an agreement with EESL Company for seven years according to which, the company will maintain LED street lights in the new wards after installation.

District administration starts entrepreneurship training for rural women

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Taking another step towards making rural women of Dehradun district financially independent, the district administration has started to provide training of entrepreneurship and skill development in the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM). Last year, the administration provided the training of making LED light strings to about 100 women of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in LED Growth Centre which did the business of about Rs two lakhs within the first four days during Diwali festival. Besides this, the administration also inaugurated a bakery operated by an SHG in Vikas Bhawan which is also doing well as per the officials. According to the chief development officer

(CDO) Nitika Khandelwal, the administration focuses on such employment programmes that alleviate women and make them financially independent. She said that while several women learnt making LED light strings last year, they are also being trained now to repair them as very few people repair LED light strings in the district. Apart from training women in making products, the administration has also started to train about 50 rural women in entrepreneurship and skill development in Doiwala area so that they become competent enough to run small businesses on their own and become financially independent, stated Khandelwal. She said that the administration has various plans to empower rural women which will be executed in the upcoming months.

Table top exercise held for earthquake & cold wave scenario

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

A virtual tabletop exercise was carried out by the Uttarakhand disaster management department in coordination with the state disaster management authority here on Friday. The exercise was conducted to focus on better management considering the vulnerability of the state to earthquakes so that any damage during such a disaster scenario in the future can be mitigated. In addition to the seismic aspect, the state's preparation for a cold wave was also ascertained during the exercise.

National disaster management authority member, lieutenant general (retd) SA Hasnain presided over the table top exercise. State disaster management secretary SA Murugesan informed the NDMA about how the disaster management authority is coordinating with other departments and research institutions to mitigate the risk from disasters through efforts like training masons, undertaking school awareness programmes, training engineers, retrofitting vulnerable buildings and other activities. Officials from other departments were also informed about relevant aspects during the exercise.

Rahul, Priyanka protest outside LG's residence

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress led by senior Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi on Friday staged a protest outside Lieutenant Governor of Delhi Anil Bajjal's residence demanding to repeal the three anti-farmer agricultural laws "arbitrarily" passed by the Centre.

Addressing thousands of party workers, Rahul Gandhi said that the BJP and its core team are harming the interest of the farmers through these three anti-farmer agricultural laws.

Rahul said that these laws have not been made to help the farmers, but to destroy them, as



they are meant only to help and benefit big Corporates.

Gandhi said that the Congress party is standing by the farmers to protect their interest, and will continue to support them, till the anti-farmer laws are rolled back. The Narendra Modi government earlier tried to take away the land of farmers, when it brought the land acquisition Act and the Congress party stopped them at that

Sisodia unveils fellowship scheme for artists, theatre

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

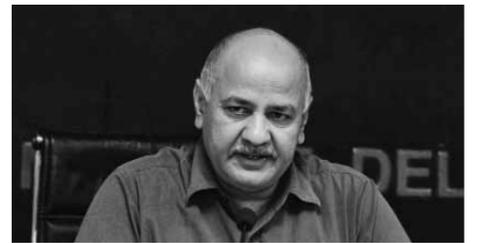
Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia inaugurated Delhi Government's Art, Culture and Languages Department's flagship cultural scheme to support artists, street theatre and performing arts fellowship at its launch programme on Friday.

"This is the first time that in our country such a unique scheme of cultural presentation of over 450 artists has been launched in Delhi. This will create a taste for art and culture amongst the people of Delhi. There will be live art performances on the streets as we have created this fellowship to give an opportunity to the artists to express their art," Sisodia said.

This fellowship has been started by Sahitya Kala Parishad under the Department of Arts, Culture and Languages and the launch happened at Delhi Secretariat.

Overall, 500 artists from diverse backgrounds such as theatre, music, dance and fine arts have been selected for this fellowship, with 500 more to be added to the roster in the future.

"Artists from Delhi, over the past few years, have been asking me to promote street art in Delhi. They pointed out that



though there are concentrated cultural hubs like Mandi House, we need to expand culture to all parts of the city. To give a platform to street artists to showcase their art," Sisodia said.

The deputy chief minister also said that while travelling abroad to Europe and to other progressive countries in Asia, there is a thriving street art culture wherein artists from all backgrounds take their art to public spaces.

"I saw guitarists, and mime artists abroad performing on the streets. When I spoke to them, I realised that they all have day jobs but do this in their spare time. It is their intrinsic relationship with art that fulfils them, and why they perform in public spaces over the weekends," Manish Sisodia said.

Sisodia said that India has a tradition of an extremely rich culture. "We created this to

give that opportunity to those who have talent in Delhi. Our government schools in Delhi remain vacant in the evening. We have decided to give these artists that space in the evenings to refine their talent, and where they are trained," he added.

Sisodia congratulated all the fellows and the team members. "We had envisioned this dream a year ago, which got side-lined because of the pandemic. I am happy that all formalities of the fellowship are out of the way, and now it will go out in the public — taking art to the streets," he said.

These artists will perform in a team of 10 every week at various public places in Delhi. Each team will be unique because each team includes artists of different art forms. Teams of these artists have been trained by eminent theatre experts.

पंजाब नेशनल बैंक Punjab National Bank		POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)	
Recovery Department- Circle Office, Sector IV, BHUL, Haridwar			
Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Punjab National Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notice/s on the dates mentioned against each account calling upon the respective Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors to repay the amount as mentioned against each account within 60 days from the date of notice(s) date of receipt of the said notice(s). The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/ies 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 Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on the dates mentioned against each account. The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealing with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Punjab National Bank for the amounts and interest thereon. The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.			
S. No.	Name of the Branch/ Borrower	Description of Mortgaged Immovable Property	Amount outstanding as on the date of demand notice
1.	Branch: Civil Lines, Roorkee Borrower : M/s Universal Industries, 429 Satti Street Roorkee, Tehsil Roorkee, Distt Haridwar Through Its Proprietor Shri Anshu All S/o Shri Rafeek Ahmad R/o 429, Satti Street Roorkee, Tehsil- Roorkee, Distt. Haridwar.	Property One Residential House Plot Area Measuring East- 47 Feet, 4 inch, West- 48 Feet, North- 23 Feet 1 inch, South- 23 Feet Total Plot Area Measuring 1100 Square Feet i.e. 102.25 Square Meter, Bearing Kharsa No. 145/1m, Situated At Mohalla Satti Roorkee Pargana & Tehsil- Roorkee Distt Haridwar Belonging To Smt. Shabana W/o Shri Anshu. Which is Bounded as Under: East: Plot of Smt. Shabana Begum & Plot of Smt. Naseema Begum, West: House of Bhura Nai, North: Gali 10 Feet Wide, South: House of Abdul Mazed.	Rs. 24,56,098.28 + other Charges & interest from 01.07.2020
Date: 15.01.2021		Place: Haridwar	Authorised Officer, Punjab National Bank

Website: www.ayush.gov.in

MINISTRY OF AYUSH
AYUSH BHAWAN

"बी" ब्लॉक, जी.पी.ओ. कॉम्प्लेक्स, 'B' Block, GPO Complex, आई.एन.ए. नई दिल्ली-110 023/INA, New Delhi-110 023

F. No. Y.18011/7/2020-EP(III) Dated: 16.01.2021

NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited for the post of **Chairperson and Part time Members of the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM), President and Members of the Autonomous Boards of the NCISM and the Secretary of the NCISM.**

2. Applicant must be less than 65 years of age as on 15.02.2021.

1. The last date of receipt of application shall be 15.02.2021 no later than 4:00 pm Indian Standard Time.

2. Detailed advertisement and the application format will be hosted on the Ministry of AYUSH website at www.ayush.gov.in and may be downloaded.

3. Duly filled application in the prescribed proforma along with attested copy of all relevant certificates should be sent to the following address: Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH, AYUSH Bhawan, B-Block, GPO Complex, INA, New Delhi, 110023, super-scribing on the envelope "Application for the Post of (respective post) in the National Commission for Homoeopathy".

4. Scanned copies of the applications along with all relevant documents must be sent on the email address: ncism.ayush@gov.in

5. Both the hard copy and online applications are mandatory for consideration of candidature. The scanned online copy will be considered as the final application and must be received by the due date and time at the designated email address.

davp 17201/11/0031/2021

Website: www.ayush.gov.in

MINISTRY OF AYUSH
AYUSH BHAWAN

"बी" ब्लॉक, जी.पी.ओ. कॉम्प्लेक्स, 'B' Block, GPO Complex, आई.एन.ए. नई दिल्ली-110 023/INA, New Delhi-110 023

F. No. R.21011/12/2020-EP(III) Dated: 16.01.2021

NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited for the post of **Chairperson and Part time Members of the National Commission for Homoeopathy (NCH), President and Members of the Autonomous Boards of the NCH and the Secretary of the NCH.**

2. Applicant must be less than 65 years of age as on 15.02.2021.

1. The last date of receipt of application shall be 15.02.2021 no later than 4:00 pm Indian Standard Time.

2. Detailed advertisement and the application format will be hosted on the Ministry of AYUSH website at www.ayush.gov.in and may be downloaded.

3. Duly filled application in the prescribed proforma along with attested copy of all relevant certificates should be sent to the following address: Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH, AYUSH Bhawan, B-Block, GPO Complex, INA, New Delhi, 110023, super-scribing on the envelope "Application for the Post of (respective post) in the National Commission for Homoeopathy".

4. Scanned copies of the applications along with all relevant documents must be sent on the email address: nch.ayush@gov.in

5. Both the hard copy and online applications are mandatory for consideration of candidature. The scanned online copy will be considered as the final application and must be received by the due date and time at the designated email address.

davp 17201/11/0028/2021

Man held for duping people of ₹3 crore

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Delhi Police has arrested a 43-year-old man for allegedly duping over 70 people of Rs 3 crore on the pretext of allotting them kiosks on lease in a mall.

The accused has been identified as Shashank Jain, a resident of Gurgaon. He was arrested on Wednesday. Two more accused -- Labsang Tenzing Bhutia and Gaurav Mittal -- had been arrested in the case earlier, police said.

According to Dr O P Mishra, the Joint Commissioner of Police, EOW, the complainants, all members of Rohini Monastery Market Association, alleged that Mittal and others told them that their firm Red Reality Infratech Pvt Ltd had taken an area of 9,607 square feet at City Centre in Rohini on lease for five years.

"Thereafter, the company allotted the complainants area on lease for five years for commercial purpose. The area was divided into 78 small shops. All the 78 complainants were invited to take over possession of the shops for five years from July 2015 to June 2020 for a consideration amount of Rs 3.5 lakh each with the offer to refund Rs 2.5 lakh after the expiry of the period," said the Joint CP.

"The accused also issued a circular asking the members to pay Rs 75,000 toward maintenance charge to get rid of the monthly charges of Rs 5,000 till June 30, 2020 and accordingly, they furnished new allotment letters to all 78 allottees," said the Joint CP.

DTC to induct 1,000 low floor CNG AC buses after 12 years

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) has placed an order to induct 1,000 low floor Air Conditioned CNG buses after a period of 12 years. Congratulating Air-Conditioned buses would be equipped with State-of-the-Art

Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that the Delhi Government is committed to building a world-class public transport system along with reducing the environmental pollution in Delhi. These BS-VI complaints Air-Conditioned buses would be equipped with State-of-the-Art

facilities like Real-Time Passenger Information systems, CCTVs, Panic Buttons, GPS and other facilities, along with being differently-abled friendly.

'BJP should resign from MCDs, allow AAP to rule it for 1yr'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and MLA Atishi on Friday said that the BJP should immediately resign from the Municipal Corporations and allow the AAP to rule it for just one year before the election so that the citizens of Delhi can compare five year tenure of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) one year tenure of AAP in MCD.

Atishi said "The Kejriwal government on Thursday released Rs.938 crores for the BJP ruled MCDs to pay the salaries of their employees. The COVID-19 pandemic also had an impact on the revenue of the Delhi government but despite all the limitations, the Delhi government came forward to support the employees of the BJP ruled Corporations as they did not get their salary for the last several months."

The AAP leader said, "The BJP councillors have increased their assets 10 times during

their tenures in MCD. If you look into any schemes of the BJP ruled MCD you will find some corruption. If you go to any area in Delhi you will see piles of garbage because the BJP ruled MCD does not perform any of the duties. They have done corruption with the medicines to combat malaria and dengue.

Replying to the charges, Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor has said AAP has crossed all limits of cheap politics on MCDs funds issue.

The BJP leader said that the truth is that the fund of Rs 938 crores given by the AAP government is less than even the actual dues of MCDs for current year 2020-21's third quarter.

The BJP Spokesperson said that AAP government should release due funds as per the 3rd, 4th and 5th Delhi Finance Commission's recommendations which amount to around Rs 13000 crores.

Covid-19

Mass vaccination drive starts today

3,400 health workers at 34 vaccination sites in U'khand to be inoculated on first day

first day and a total of 3400 health workers would receive the vaccine jab on the day. The nodal officer and Mission Director National Health Mission (NHM), Sonika said that on the first day five vaccination sessions would be organised in Dehradun while in Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar four such sessions each would be held. Three sessions would

health facilities (Himalayan hospital and SGRR Medical college). The Director General (DG) of state health services Dr Amita Upreti said that all preparations are complete for the vaccination and vaccine has safely reached all districts and they would be available at all vaccine centres with the help of the cold chain system on Saturday

Covid-19 tally increases to 94,465 in Uttarakhand

Six deaths, 141 new cases reported on Friday

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The tally of novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) cases in Uttarakhand climbed to 94465 on Friday with the state health department reporting 141 new cases of the disease. The department also reported the death of six patients of the disease on the day after which the death toll mounted to 1602 in the state. The health department dis-

charged 234 patients from different hospitals on Friday. A total of 89182 patients have recovered from the disease so far in the state. The recovery percentage from the disease is now at 94.41 and the sample positivity rate is 4.82 percent. Three patients of Covid-19 were reported dead at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Rishikesh on Friday. One patient each was reported dead at Sushila Tiwari government hospital, HNB base hospital and Synergy hospital Dehradun on the day. The health department reported 51 patients from Dehradun, 37 from Nainital, 13 from Haridwar, 12 from Pauri, ten from Udham Singh Nagar, four each from Tehri and

Champawat, three from Almora, two each from Chamoli, Pithoragarh and Uttarkashi and one from Bageshwar on Friday. Uttarakhand now has 2406 active cases of the disease. Dehradun is at continuing to remain at top of the table of active cases with 567 cases while with 442 active cases Nainital is at second spot. Haridwar is at third position with 315 cases, Almora has 169, Tehri 149, Udham Singh Nagar 144, Bageshwar 134, Pauri 121, Chamoli 103, Pithoragarh 95, Uttarkashi 98 and Rudrapur 43 active cases of the disease. With only 26 active cases of Covid-19, Champawat is at the bottom of the table of active cases of Covid-19.

No doubt about safety of vaccine, stresses Rawat

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said that all preparations are done for the first phase of anti-Covid-19 vaccination drive starting on January 16. Thanking the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Health Minister Dr Harshvardhan and scientists for preparation of the vaccine, Rawat reiterated that Uttarakhand is fully prepared for the stage-wise implementation of the vaccination drive. Rawat said that the vaccine is fully safe, stating that there should be no doubt about this. As part of the first batch, the



centre has provided 1.13 lakh vaccine doses to the state. In the first stage, the vaccine will be administered to 50,000 health workers. As the PM will inaugurate the vaccination drive at 10:30 AM on Saturday, the CM will participate in the event at government Doon medical college hospital virtually.

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The process of vaccinating the people of Uttarakhand for Covid-19 disease would commence on Saturday morning. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi would kick-start one of the biggest vaccination drives in the world at 10.30 am on the day. The drive in Uttarakhand would start on Saturday morning and the PM would himself monitor the vaccination at Government Doon Medical College (GDMC) hospital and Haldwani medical college via video conferencing session. He would also interact with the officers of the health department engaged in the drive.



be organised in Nainital while the remaining nine districts would have two vaccination sessions each. Sonika further informed that 32 vaccine sessions would be organised in government hospitals (including the All India Institute of Medical Sciences AIIMS Rishikesh and Rishikul Ayurvedic university) while two sessions would be organised at private

morning. She added that all the districts have been directed to follow the guidelines of the government of India for vaccine. The norms of Covid Appropriate Behavior would be followed everywhere. The DG has also asked the Chief Medical Officers (CMO) that the second dose of vaccine is kept safe for the beneficiaries inoculated with the first dose.

Prof Ajay Semalty figures in Sanford's elite list of scientists

The Garhwal University's professor listed among top 2% world's scientists

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In what can be termed as a big achievement, Ajay Semalty, a Professor in the department of Pharmaceutical Sciences of HNB Garhwal University has been included in the world's top two percent of scientists in the list published by a research group of Stanford University. Semalty is placed at 196612 overall rank in the prestigious list, has 1395 rank in the sub-field and is at 65th position in Pharmacy and Pharmacology in India. Terming Semalty's feat as a great achievement for

the university and inspiration for others, the Vice Chancellor Annapurna Nautiyal congratulated him.

On his achievement Semalty said, "Considering the scarce resources and adverse



conditions, it's soothing news that I could get this achievement."

Semalty has 75 research papers (with more than 1800 citations and h index 25), 10 research projects (including international post doctoral fellowship from Japan), six books, one Indian patent and other honours to his name

Congress gears up for Assembly polls of 2022

Appoints district and constituency in charges, constitutes chargesheet committee

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

With an eye on the assembly elections of 2022, the Uttarakhand Congress has appointed district and assembly constituencies in charge. To highlight the failures of the BJP government of the state the party has decided to bring a chargesheet on the fourth anniversary of the government. For this the party has constituted a 13 member chargesheet committee. The Vice President of state Congress Surya Kant Dhasmana said that the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Pritam Singh has made these appointments to gear up the preparations of

the party. He said that the chargesheet committee would have former minister Navprabhat, deputy leader of party in assembly Karan Mahra, former minister Surendra Singh Negi, former MLA Ambrish Kumar, former MLA Manoj Tiwari, SP Engineer, Vice President Jot Singh Bisht, Mohammad Akram, Professor Balwant Singh and state general secretary Anand Singh Rawat. Among the district incharges, Vice President Rajendra Singh Bhandari has been assigned Pauri, Ranjit Singh Rawat Udham Singh Rawat, Mahendra Singh Pal Haridwar, Mayukh Mahar Bageshwar, Vijay Pal Sajwan Tehri, Vikram Singh Negi Uttarkashi, Madan Singh Bisht Dehradun, Ganesh Godiyal Chamoli, Ramyash Singh SC



cell, Surya Kant Dhasmana Kotdwar and programme implementation committee. Similarly Aryendra Sharma would head the membership committee, youth Congress and NSUI, Hemant Bagadwal Almora, Jaya Bisht Pithoragarh, Sarojini Kaintura Rudrapur, Sarbaryar Khan Nainital, Narendra Jeet Singh Bindra Minorities cell, Narayan Pal Champawat and P P Singh Chauhan would be in charge of women Congress. Dhasmana said that the PCC President has made the party secretaries in charges of assembly constituencies.

Dev Dolis to be major attraction in Kumbh Mela

VINOD CHAMOLI ■ NEW TEHRI

The dev dolis (Goddess palanquins) from Himalayan region will be a major attraction in Kumbh Mela Haridwar, the grandest festival of Hindu faith this year. About hundred dev dolis will reach Haridwar amidst beating of traditional drums and other musical instruments for kumbh mela where they will take holy dip in Ganga on April 25th. A rally of all the files from Himalayan region will be organised on the occasion. The devotees from around

the world reach Haridwar to take a dip of faith in Ganga during Kumbh Mela celebrations. The main attraction of Kumbh mela is the presence of various seers and saints belonging to different akhara who come to take a holy dip in Ganga especially on the days of Shahi snan. This year the dev dolis from Uttarakhand will join in the celebrations and will get the opportunity of Holi dip in Ganga. The flags from Sem Maharaja and Shri Badrinath temple will head the procession. These dolis will reach triveni ghat and later proceed

towards Haridwar at night. On 25 april they will join in the procession and take a holi dip in Ganga. The culture enthusiast Bhawani Pratap Singh has welcomed the move and said with this the region will be able to get cultural identity. The president of Devbhoomi lok sanskriti virasatiya sobha yatra samiti president Mohan Singh Gaonwasi said in order to preserve the sanatan culture final preparations are being made for roping in the villages of Uttarakhand for participation in the dev doli snan.

New revised electoral roll: U'khand has now 7,81,5192 voters

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

An increase of 106785 voters has occurred in Uttarakhand in the last one year. The data released by the election commission on Friday revealed that there are a total of 7815192 voters in the state out of whom 4074436 are males, 3740523 females and 233 are voters of third gender. The state had 7708407 voters a year ago. Releasing the integrated draft electoral roll on Friday, the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Uttarakhand Sowjanya said that 77734 first time voters were added in the rolls after they completed 18 years of age. Dehradun district has 1395232 voters, Haridwar 1354821, Udham Singh Nagar 1217231, Uttarkashi 227214, Chamoli 294187, Rudrapur 188887, Tehri 507433, Pauri 563382, Pithoragarh 373296, Bageshwar

213811, Almora 533049, Champawat 197372 and Nainital 749277 voters. The CEO Uttarakhand said that there are 93911 service voters in the state out of which 91378 are male and 2533 female voters. Pauri district has maximum number of service voters (16221) followed by Pithoragarh (14518). Chamoli has 10425, Dehradun 9812, Almora 7219 and Tehri 5787 service voters. Sowjanya said that the process of addition and deletion of names in the electoral roll would continue. She said that one can add his or her name or get any error corrected by logging at the website of commission



www.nsvp.in or voterportal.eci.gov.in. This facility is also available at the Common Service Centres (CCS). There are 6188 CCS in the state. She said that there are 11024 polling booths in the state and BLOs are appointed at every booth.

Face identification technology to find duplicate voters

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The face matching technology is helping the election commission of India to identify the voters who are enrolled at more than one place. The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Sowjanya said that the image software is now uploaded in the algorithm of the commission which is helping in pointing out those enrolled at more than one place. The technology uses the facial features by matching the pictures available with it. Till now the commission was using the data such as name of voter, father's name, age and date of birth to identify duplicity in the rolls.

Farm laws

U'khand Cong holds massive protest in Doon

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In protest against the three farm laws, the Uttarakhand Congress organised a massive protest in Dehradun on Friday. The Congress president Sonia Gandhi had given a call to the party-men to organise marches to the governor houses in every state and Friday's protest in Dehradun was part of it. The Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Pritam Singh, the in charge of Uttarakhand Congress Devendra Yadav and leader of opposition (LoP) in state assembly Indra Hridayesh led the march. The agitated Congressmen started their march from Congress Bhawan located on Rajpur road. The march was stopped by the police at Hathibarkala where minor scuffle between the party workers and police occurred. Large number of

Congressmen courted arrest here and were taken to the police line from where they were later released. Addressing the party workers the PCC president Pritam Singh said that the Congress party is standing firmly behind the farmers who are agitating against the draconian farm laws. He said that the people of the country are fed up with the Narendra Modi led BJP government. He said that farmers, unemployed, poor, women and every section of society are suffering during the current regime. The state in charge Devendra Yadav said that Congress party is a very sensitive party and fights for the cause of every section of the society. He said that every worker of the Congress party is standing shoulder to shoulder with the farmers on the issue of



farm laws. Yadav said that so far 70 farmers have died in agitation but the government is unmoved by the plight of farmers. He said that the agitation would continue till these laws are taken back.

The march was attended by the vice president Surya Kant Dhasmana, MLAs Qazi Nizamuddin, Manoj Rawat, former Minister Hira Singh Bisht, general secretary organisation Vijay Saraswat, Ranjit

Rawat, Ajay Singh, Laxmi Rana, Sushil Rathi, Rajkumar, Lal Chand Sharma, Mahesh Joshi and large number of leaders and office bearers of frontal organisations of the party.

भारतीय स्टेट बैंक State Bank of India
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Ramnagar Branch, Kosi Road, Ramnagar, Distt. Nainital, Uttarakhand

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)
(Under Rule 8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the State Bank of India under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice dated 29.10.2020 calling upon the Borrower M/S Nidhi Seed Corporation, through proprietor Sh. Surjeet Singh S/o Sh. Joginder Singh Reg. Office Prop - Mr Surjeet Singh S/o Sh. Joginder Singh Village & Post - Bailpokhara, Tehsil - Kaladhungi, Dist - Nainital PIN-244715 (Mob No 9971932216) Guarantors-

- i) Sh Joginder Singh S/o Mr Makhhan Singh VIII & Post Bailpokhara, Ramnagar, Dist Nainital 244715 (Mob No 9411682584)
- ii) Sh Madan Mohan Tiwari S/o Bhola Dutt Tiwari VIII Ratanpur, PO Bailparao, Ramnagar, Dist Nainital 244715
- iii) Sh Dhara Balabh Tiwari S/o Indermani Tiwari VIII Ratanpur, PO Bailparao, Ramnagar, Dist Nainital 244715
- iv) Mr Jaspal Singh S/o Mr Surjeet Singh Village & Post- Bailpokhara, Tehsil- Kaladhungi, Dist - Nainital, PIN- 244715 (Mob No 9012666616)

to repay the amount mentioned in the notice u/s 13 (2) being Rs. 1,14,87,746.66 (Rs. One Crores Fourteen Lacs Eighty Seven Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty Six Rupees Sixty Six Paise only) as on 19.10.2020 + future interest from 20.10.2020 and further interest plus legal charges, cost, other expenses etc. from 20.10.2020 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties 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 this 12th day of January of year 2021.

The Borrower/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealing with the properties will be subject to the charge of the State Bank of India for an amount of Rs. 1,14,87,746.66 (Rs. One Crores Fourteen Lacs Eighty Seven Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty Six Rupees Sixty Six Paise only) as on 19.10.2020 + future interest from 20.10.2020 and further interest plus legal charges, cost, other expenses etc. from 20.10.2020 thereon. The borrowers attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the immovable property:

- (1) EM of Residential Land and Building in the name of Shri Surjeet Singh S/o Mr Joginder Singh Situated at Khata No.10, Khasra No.181min(Khet No 181) Village - Bailpura, Tehsil - Kaladhungi, Dist - Nainital, Admeasuring 0.190 hect (1900 sq. mt.) but as per conversion order (05/08/2011) the mortgageable area is 0.189 hect.
- Boundaries as per Sale deed are East-Land of Seller (Mr Tarantath), West- 12ft wide Kachha Rasta, North-Land of Seller (Mr Tarantath) and South- Office of Forest Department Property registered in name of Surjeet Singh S/o Jogender Singh which has Sno7118 in Bahi No 2, Jild No 1210, Page no 399-402 at SRO Haldwani on 18.12.2003.
- (2) EM of property Land in the name of Shri Surjeet Singh S/o Mr Joginder Singh Situated at Khata No 061 at various Khasra no which are tabulated below Village - Bailpokhara, Tehsil - Kaladhungi, Dist - Nainital, Admeasuring 0.410hectare.

Khasra No	Area
14197	0.005 hec
647 min	0.080 hec
648 min	0.020 hec
649 min	0.090 hec
660 min	0.050 hec
647	0.165 hec

Boundaries as per deed:- East :- House of Mahesh Lala ,West :- Land of Uttam Singh ;North side:- Public way and South of Land of Shivgiri.

Lease deed in favour of Sh. Jogender Singh S/o Sh Makhhan Singh which has Sno 467 in Bahi No 1, Jild No 982, Page no 269-280 at SRO Haldwani on 01.02.2002.

Supplementary Lease deed in favour of Nidhi Seed Corporation which has Sno 2684 in Bahi No 1, 2Jld No 8, Page No 55-72 at SRO Haldwani on 09.04.2007.

- (3) EM of Land in the name of Shri Jaspal Singh S/o Mr Surjeet Singh Situated at Village - Hirmatpur Bailparao, Tehsil - Kaladhungi, Dist - Nainital, Khata No.028, Khasra No 79/81, Admeasuring Area 0.142 hec.
- Boundaries as per Sale deed are East-Land of Ansaal Singh, West- Land of Ansaal Singh, North- Land of Purchaser (Jaspal Singh) and South- Land of Kabul Singh Property registered in name of Jaspal Singh S/o Surjeet Singh which has Sno 7573 in Book No 1, Khand No 1642, Page no 287-300 at SRO Haldwani on 03.12.2012.

Date : 12.01.2021
Place : Ramnagar

AUTHORISED OFFICER
STATE BANK OF INDIA

Honest State poll officials get EC shield ahead of polls

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the upcoming Assembly polls in five States, the Election Commission (EC) on Friday stepped in to protect officials assigned to the election duty to ensure free, fair and impartial elections. Taking note of victimisation of the officials on flimsy grounds after the election is over, the Election Commission (EC) on Friday said States and Union Territories will need its approval before initiating disciplinary action against the chief electoral officers and other officers up to the joint chief electoral officer during their tenure and also up to one year from its expiry.

In a letter addressed to the cabinet secretary, DoPT secretary, chief secretaries and chief electoral officers of all States and Union Territories on Thursday, the EC said it has noted some incidents of "victimisation" of CEOs and additional, joint, deputy and assistant CEOs in the post-election period.

The preparations for the Assembly polls in five States—Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Puducherry and Assam are on. The terms of the assemblies in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Puducherry and Assam will end on May 24, 2021, June 1, 2021, May 30, 2021, June 8, 2021 and May 31, 2021 respectively.

In its direction, the EC said not reduce facilities such as vehicle, security and other facilities/amenities provided to



the office of the Chief Electoral Officer for proper discharge of his/her duties.

The Commission has noted some incidents of victimisation of CEOs, Addl/Joint/Deputy/Assistant CEO in the post-election period. Many a times they are targeted for political vendetta by charging them with disciplinary cases on flimsy grounds for their earlier tenures in the State Government after the completion of their tenure. An environment of fear is created to convey that the upright, steadfast and sincere officers can be taken to task at any time, on the flimsiest of the grounds," the EC noted. It said in such a scenario, these officers are not only "demotivated but also their morale is greatly reduced, which severely affect their efforts to ensure free and fair elections." "Left to go on unfettered, it causes a situation where officials are reluctant to join as CEOs and those who are inclined face the uncertainty of fair treatment in post-election phase," it observed.

"Commission is sanguine in the expectation that all concerned shall strictly adhere to this regimen in letter as well as in spirit," EC said in a communication sent to Cabinet secretary, all state/UT chief secretaries, DoPT secretary

and state chief electoral officers.

The letter states that EC is of the considered view that positive protection to election officials from motivated harassment is essential to enable the electoral officials in carrying out the electoral functions in free, fair, impartial and fearless manner. The letter pointed out that the matter of taking action against any officer on election duty was subjected to the scrutiny of the Supreme Court. In 2000, the apex court had upheld that neither any action can be initiated against the officers on election duty by the state government nor can the government refuse to act on its advice to initiate action against errant officials.

The Commission designates a CEO for state and union territories in consultation with the respective governments. Chief electoral officers are essentially an extension of the Commission in the states and union territories to carry out multifarious election related functions of the Commission. Once appointed, the CEO comes under direct control, superintendence and discipline of the Election Commission and remains on deputation to Election Commission.

LAC crisis: No one should test patience of India, says Army chief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sounding a note of warning to China, Army Chief General MM Naravane on Friday said no one should test the patience of India. He, however, reiterated that the nation is committed to resolve the current impasse through dialogues.

He also said a "befitting" response was given to China when it tried to change the status quo at the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Addressing the Army Day parade, Naravane said a "befitting response" was given to the "conspiracy" to make unilateral changes on the border and that the sacrifice of the Galwan heroes in eastern Ladakh will not go waste.

"We are committed to resolve disputes through talks and political efforts but no one should make any mistake of testing our patience," he said.

"I want to assure the country that the sacrifice of the Galwan heroes will not go waste. Indian Army will not allow any harm to the country's sovereignty and security," the Chief said.

Twenty Indian Army personnel including the commanding officer were killed in a brawl with the Chinese troops on June 15 last year in the Galwan valley. It marked the most serious military conflicts between the two sides in decades.

Though it suffered casualties in the hand-to-hand combat that day, China is yet to disclose the number of its soldiers killed and injured. Reports indicate that more

than 35 Chinese soldiers were also killed in the clash.

Stressing the point that India favoured talks to resolve the dispute leading to disengagement and de-escalation at the LAC now on for the last nine months, Naravane said eight rounds of military talks were held between India and China to bring the situation under control.

"Our efforts will continue to find a solution to the current situation on the basis of mutual and equal security, basis of mutual and equal security," he said.

Referring to cross-border terrorism from Pakistan, the Chief said the neighbouring country continues to provide a safe haven to terrorists.

More than 300-400 terrorists are ready to infiltrate, he said.

"There was an increase of 40 per cent in the ceasefire violations last year which is the proof of Pakistan's sinister plans. There were also attempts to smuggle weapons using drones, he added. Naravane said more than 200 terrorists were killed by the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir in different operations last year.

On the issue of modernization, he said the army is taking concrete steps. Outlining some of the procurements undertaken in the last few months in the backdrop of the stand-off at the LAC, Naravane said under emergency and fast-track schemes, the Army procured equipment worth about ₹5,000 crores and signed contracts worth ₹13,000 crores in the last year under capital procurement.

Covid vaccines only for those above 18, says Health Ministry



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Contrary to the approval given by the country's top drug regulator which said that Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech's Covaxin could be administered to those above 12 years of age, the Union Health Ministry, in a recent communique, has said that both shots are recommended and approved for people above 18 years of age.

Sources said that the Ministry, in a letter issued on January 14, provided comparative details of the two vaccines - Bharat Biotech's Covaxin and University of Oxford-AstraZeneca's Covishield which is being manufactured by Serum Institute of India - approved by Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).

The factsheet has details of the vaccines, which will be distributed to cold chain points and vaccination centres for ready reference.

However, in the letter, the Ministry says that both vaccines are recommended and approved for people above 18 years of age. This contradicts the earlier DCGI approval which said that Bharat Biotech's Covaxin could be administered to those above 12 years of age.

The Health Ministry's letter - under the subhead 'Precautions and contraindications for COVID-19 vaccination' reads: "1. Authorised age group: Under the EUA, COVID-19 vaccination is indicated only for 18 years and above. 2. Co-administration of vaccines: If required, COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines should be separated by an interval of at least 14 days. 3. Interchangeability of COVID-19 vaccines is not permitted: Second dose should also be of the same Covid-19 vaccine which was administered as the first dose."

EC ready to share voters' list with Govt for job plan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) will extend "full assistance" to the Government in identifying targeted beneficiaries at the polling station level for the Covid-19 vaccination drive, but wants health authorities to delete the data once the inoculation exercise is over.

The EC after detailed deliberations, wrote back to the home secretary on January 4, saying it has decided to render "full assistance" in the vaccination drive. But asked the government to ensure that the data is strictly used for the limited purpose for which it has been sought, the sources said.

On December 31 last year, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla wrote to Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora requesting the commission's help in identifying people above 50 years of age at the polling station level. On the issue of data security, the home secretary wrote that the Government is complying with the current best practices for ensuring cyber security. He has assured the poll panel that the data will be used only for the purpose of vaccination, the sources said.

The commission also said that the data should be deleted by health authorities once

the vaccination exercise concludes, they said. Some senior EC officials will be in touch with nodal officers of the Union home ministry and the Union health ministry to settle day-to-day issues, the sources said.

Last month, officials of the Union health ministry and the Niti Aayog had met the EC top brass seeking their help in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccine given the poll panel's robust network at the booth level. The letter by the home secretary is a follow up to the meeting, the sources said.

According to guidelines for the COVID-19 vaccination drive, the latest electoral roll for Lok Sabha and assembly elections will be used to identify the priority population over the age of 50 years. Twelve identity documents, such as Voter ID, Aadhaar card, driving licence, passport and pension document, will be required for beneficiary identification.

According to the government, the shots will be offered first to an estimated one crore healthcare workers, and around two crore frontline workers, and then to persons above 50 years of age, followed by persons younger than 50 years of age with associated comorbidities.

Construction work of new Parl building starts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The construction work of the new Parliament building started on Friday, a day after 'Makar Sankranti', considered auspicious.

"Excavation work has started at the site where a sufficient number of labourers have been engaged to ensure that the project is completed on time", officials said. The site of the construction is adjacent to the existing Parliament, which was completed in 1927.

The new building is being constructed by Tata Projects Ltd. The project is estimated to cost Rs 971 crore. Tata Projects Ltd. said despite the 35-day delay in the commencement of the construction work, it is confident that it will be able to deliver the project on or before time.

The project was scheduled to start in December last, but construction and demolition at the site was put on hold while legal challenges to the project were pending with the apex court. On December 7, the Supreme Court allowed the ground-breaking ceremony to take place after the government



submitted an affidavit that it would not start construction, demolition and tree transplantation until the court gave its judgment. With the judgment clearing the project on January 5, the Central Public Works Department moved the HCC for approval, which was granted on Monday, according to HUA Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra.

The new Parliament building will have a triangular shape and is expected to be completed by the 75th anniversary of India's independence in 2022. The government plans to hold the monsoon session of Parliament in 2022 in the new building. PM Modi had laid the foundation stone for the new

Parliament building on December 10 last year.

Earlier this week, a 14-member heritage panel gave its approval to the new Parliament building while also giving the go-ahead to the Central Vista redevelopment project. The Supreme Court had asked the Centre to seek prior approval from the panel and other relevant authorities before starting the construction of the new building.

The construction work could not start earlier as the government had assured the Supreme Court that no construction or demolition work would commence till the apex court decided the pending pleas on the issue.

CBI conducts searches in ₹340-cr bank scam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Friday conducted searches in connection with investigation of two separate cases related to bank fraud involving an amount of about ₹340 crore.

The agency has registered a case on a complaint from State Bank of India (SBI) against a private company Naftogaz India Private Limited based at Delhi/Noida and others including its CMD and unknown public servants/persons for causing an alleged loss of about ₹219.81 crore to SBI.

"It was alleged in the complaint that the said accused firm has cheated the SBI by way of diversion of bank funds, fraudulent transactions, criminal misappropriation, submission of false stock / debt statements etc.," the CBI said in a statement.

In the complaint, the SBI alleged that the company was incorporated in 2005 starting as EPC contractor for exploration, drilling, extraction and production of mineral oils,

natural gas and petroleum products. The alleged fraud came to light when Forensic Auditors submitted a report on February 18, 2020 for the period April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2014.

Searches were conducted at three locations including Delhi / NCR at the office and residential premises of the borrower company and other accused persons, it said.

The other case was registered on a complaint from Punjab National Bank (PNB) against a private company Hari Har Overseas Private Ltd, Narsing, Karnal (Haryana) engaged in rice milling activities at Karnal and others including its directors/guarantor and unknown public servants/persons for causing an alleged loss of about ₹121.75 crore to the bank.

It was alleged that the said accused had fraudulently sold its stock as well as machinery, which was hypothecated to the bank. It was further alleged that the accused had not deposited the sale proceeds with the bank.

SC seeks reply from Centre, 61 firms on PIL duty evasion in iron ore exports to China

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has sought responses from the Centre and 61 iron exporting firms including Essar Steel and Jindal Steel & Power on a PIL seeking a direction to the CBI to register an FIR and probe the alleged duty evasion by them in exporting iron ore to China since 2015.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde took note of the submissions of lawyer and PIL petitioner M L Sharma that the companies be prosecuted for alleged evasion of export duty by declaring wrong tariff code to export the iron ore under the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992.

"Issue notice," said the bench which also comprised Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian. The bench, which permitted the petitioner lawyer to argue in person the PIL, was told that iron ore "smuggling to China"



has been taking place as these companies have been exporting them without paying 30 per cent export duty. The PIL said the ministries of commerce and finance control and regulate the export policies and decide as to under which Harmonized System (HS) Codes each good will be exported. It said the government had set up a firm with the name of KIOCL to use low grade iron ore and export them under the "duty free Tariff HS code 26011210 which is

exclusively prescribed for KIOCL".

The PIL said under Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992, "tariff HS CODE NO. 26011100 was prescribed to export "all other kind of iron ore" subject to payment of export duty at the rate of 30 per cent."

The firms were wrongly allowed to export iron ore using the tariff code being used by KIOCL and as a result crores of rupees have been cheated by them, it said.

Won't relent until farm laws are repealed: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi led the party's countrywide protests, billed Kisan Adhikar Divas in support of the agitating farmers and said the grand old party will not relent till the new farm laws are repealed which invited sharp reactions from Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar.

On the day when yet another round of talks between the Government and farmers unions remained inconclusive, Rahul alleged the Prime Minister Narendra Modi does not respect farmers and wants to tire out those protesting against the new agriculture laws.

Tomar hit back at Rahul for his remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said even the leaders of his

own party do not take the Gandhi scion seriously and laugh at his remarks. Addressing the media after the meeting with the farmers, Tomar said Gandhi's statements and actions are laughed at even within his own party.

"The Congress manifesto in 2019 itself had promised these reforms and therefore, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi should tell us whether they were lying then or are lying now," said the Agriculture Minister.

Sitting at Jantar Mantar protest site, Rahul alongwith his sibling and party general secretary Priyanka said farmers will not relent till the laws are repealed. The duo was joined by party MPs in their demonstration against the legislations. "The talks are being held only

to delay. PM Modi thinks he has the power and will tire the farmers out, but he is mistaken," Rahul Gandhi said talking to media.

Congress has been demanding a repeal of the farm laws, alleging that they are against the interests of farmers and farming and are aimed at helping only the "corporate friends" of the BJP. The three farm laws, enacted in September last year, have been projected by the government as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove middlemen and allow farmers to sell anywhere in the country.

The party on Friday demonstrated protest at State capitals across the country and at places like Lucknow protestors were also detained. Massive protests were also reported from Kolkata, Jaipur.

Climate change-induced temp behind low diet quality, malnutrition among children: Study

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

More than traditional causes such as poverty, inadequate sanitation and poor education, it is the climate change-induced higher temperatures which is majorly contributing to low diet quality and malnutrition among young children in many parts of the world, researchers have found after assessing diet diversity among one lakh kids under five in 19 countries.

"Certainly, future climate changes have been predicted to affect malnutrition, but it surprised us that higher temperatures are already showing an impact," said lead author Meredith Niles, an assistant professor of Nutrition and Food Sciences at the University of Vermont and a fellow at the university's Gund Institute for Environment.

The study published in journal Environmental Research Letters, found that the negative effects of climate — especially higher temperature — on diet diversity are greater in some regions than the positive effects of education, water

and sanitation and poverty alleviation — all common global development tactics.

Of the six regions examined — Asia; Central and South America; North, West, and Southeast Africa, five had significant reductions in diet diversity associated with higher temperatures.

Researchers focused on diet diversity, a metric developed by the United Nations to measure diet quality and micronutrient intake. Micronutrients, such as iron, folic acid, zinc, and vitamins A and D, are critical for child development. A lack of micronutrients is a cause of malnutrition, which affects one out of every three children under the age of five. Diet diversity is measured by counting the number of food groups eaten over a given time period, as per the study.

The researchers found that on an average, children had eaten food from 3.2 food groups (out of 10) — including meat and fish, legumes, dark leafy greens and cereal greens — in the previous 24 hours. By contrast, diet diversity in

emerging economies or more affluent countries such as China have been more than double this average (6.8 for children 6 and under).

"Higher rainfall in the future may provide important diet quality benefits in multiple ways, but it also depends on how that rain comes," said co-author Molly Brown of the University of Maryland. "If it's more erratic and intense, as is predicted with climate change, this may not hold true."

"Diet diversity was already low for this group," said UVM co-author Brendan Fisher. "These results suggest that, if we don't adapt, climate change could further erode a diet that already isn't meeting adequate child micronutrient levels."

The researchers had used 30 years of geo-coded temperature and precipitation data, and socioeconomic, ecological, and geographic data.

The disturbing findings does not bode well for the future generation with a UNICEF report already pointing out that some 144 million children worldwide are stunted by malnutrition.

SCBA ex-president urges SC to resume normal functioning

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Senior advocate and former SCBA president Vikas Singh has requested Chief Justice of India (CJI) S A Bobde that the Supreme Court, which has been hearing cases virtually in view of Covid-19 for past several months, resume "normal functioning" at the earliest.

"Recent turn of events have created a situation where by the interests of the Bar are being neglected and the Bench is taking unilateral decisions with regard to the functioning of the institution," he said.

Bar and Bench are the two main pillars on which the system of justice stood, the for-

mer Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) president said in a letter to the CJI on Thursday.

Singh said: "In my view when the entire country is opening up, of course with sufficient safeguards, I see no reason why the Supreme Court which is the foundation of our democratic polity should not resume full normal functioning by putting in place sufficient safeguards for the said opening."

"While the judges and the court staff are completely protected being away from the areas where the lawyers, litigants and media come, till date no effort has been made to even think of a method where-

by the number of people entering the Court is restricted and normal functioning of courts starts on that basis".

He added that the largest stakeholders in the functioning of the Supreme Court were the litigants for whose benefit this entire institution had been created and while the issue of the pandemic was looming large in this country, the litigants could not be ignored by the non-functioning of the SC in a proper manner.

While pointing out the band-width issues for allowing mentioning, he also said that any technological shortcoming could not be an impediment in this vital activity.

Sasikala faction, ADMK merger chances brighten

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Possibilities of VK Sasikala (the jailed former aide of late Jayalalitha) joining hands with the AIADMK led by Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswamy and his deputy O Panneerselvam got brightened on the auspicious occasion of Pongal which was observed with gaiety across Tamil Nadu on Thursday.

The initial signals of such a scenario came from S Gurumurthy, Tamil Nadu's leading political commentator and chief editor of Thuglak, the popular magazine launched by late Cho Ramaswamy. Sasikala who has been convicted for four years in a disproportionate wealth case will come out of the Bangalore jail anytime after January 27, according to S Pandian, her lawyer.

"If there is a realignment of forces and there is unity, it is always good. But the final word is with the party leadership," said Vaigaichelvan, former Minister and AIADMK's spokesman.

Terminating the Dravidian political parties and other fringe parties as the major threat faced by Tamil Nadu and India, Gurumurthy said it was the

responsibility of all patriotic people in the State to ensure the defeat of the DMK and its allies. "The DMK is an embodiment of corruption, favoritism, communalism and anti-nationalism. Through the AIADMK too is corrupt, it has got certain positive characteristics. The AIADMK is nationalistic as envisaged by party founder MGR and his chosen successor Jayalalitha. But the DMK is a family owned enterprises which has made corruption its hallmark," said Gurumurthy while addressing a public meeting held late Thursday evening to mark the 51st anniversary of the magazine Thuglak.

He said he was borrowing the words of Arun Shourie who asked all non-Congress political parties in 1989 to come together to defeat the Rajiv Gandhi Government. "Those were the days when the Government at the Centre was enmeshed in corruption charges. Military deals involving purchase of Bofors, HDW ships, Scorpene sub marines and the Fairfax controversy were plaguing the Rajiv Gandhi led Government. The opposition parties were divided and were confused over aligning with the rival parties. It was then that Arun Shourie who was the

editor of Indian Express told them that their house was in fire and not to waste time waiting for Ganga water to douse the flames. Shourie told them to make use of even drainage water to douse the fire," said Gurumurthy.

He explained that his friend Rajinikanth opted out of the political race only because of ill health. "You should remember that we don't have an alternate leader to take over from Rajinikanth if there is more deterioration in his health. We cannot afford to lose Rajini," said Gurumurthy.

What stood out in his speech was the comments he made about judiciary. "Most of the judges, from trial courts to the apex court, are having allegiance to the persons who appointed and promoted them. The case involving former IT minister and DMK leader Dayanidhi Maran is an ideal example.

A judge belittled the findings that the nation has lost hundreds of crores because of the private telephone exchange set up by Maran in his Chennai home misusing his official power. But the judge asked the former minister to pay up Rs 1.5 crore and disposed of the case," said Gurumurthy.

ED grills Eknath Khadse for 7 hours in land scam

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday grilled senior NCP leader and former Minister Eknath Khadse in connection with a questionable land deal in Pune, for seven-long hours.

Khadse—who was to have appeared before the ED on December 30, but had sought time to do so because of his indisposition—arrived at the investigation agency's office at 11 am. After a seven-hour-long grilling, he stepped out of the ED's office at around 6 pm.

Talking to media persons after the first round of questioning, Khadse said: "I coop-

erated fully with the ED today and will continue to do so even in future. I have replied to all their questions and provided all evidence required in the matter. I will continue to provide whatever information they require from me."

Sixty-eight-year-old Khadse, who had quit the BJP and joined the NCP on October 23, had said soon after joining the Sharad Pawar-led party that "if the BJP unleashes ED against me, then I will release CDs against the BJP leaders".

Responding to the ED's summons, Khadse had earlier said: "The land in the MIDC deal has been transferred in the

name of my wife. I have absolutely nothing to do with this land deal. Earlier, the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Pune, the Anti Corruption Bureau, Nashik, Income Tax department and a judicial committee headed by retired Bombay HC judge Dinkar Zoting, had looked into the allegations against me. Now the ED has summoned me for questioning. I will appear before it," Khadse had said.

It may be recalled that on June 4, 2016, Khadse had resigned from his post as the State Revenue Minister over irregularities in the purchase of a plot of land at Bhosari in Pune district.

65-year-old man booked for raping 2 minors in Pilibhit

Pilibhit (UP): A 65-year-old man has been booked for allegedly raping two sisters at a village here, police said on Friday.

An FIR was lodged against Satnaam Singh (65) on the charge of rape on Thursday after a probe into it by Circle Officer Pramod Kumar, Superintendent of Police Jai Prakash said. The two girls, aged 15 and 13, worked at Singh's place and were allegedly raped by him for a year, police said.

The victims' family alleged

that they were trying to lodge a complaint in this regard for the past one month but police did not listen to them.

They approached officials at Purnapur tehsil and informed them about it after which an FIR was registered on Thursday. The SP said a probe has also been ordered against the area SHO for not taking the case seriously. The SP said in their complaint, the girls' family did not give any date of the incident and alleged that they were being raped for the past year. **PTI**

New bailey bridge to restore traffic on Jammu-Srinagar highway

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Vehicular traffic and movement of security convoys, which remained suspended along the 300-Km long Jammu-Srinagar National Highway since January 3, is set to be restored from Sunday with the completion of 120-foot-long, 40-ton bailey bridge near Kela Morh in Ramban district in a record time of three days.

After the mandatory testing of the bailey bridge the road link would be thrown open to rush essential supplies to the Kashmir valley. Braving intense cold wave conditions, men and machinery of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) are working round the clock to complete the job at hand.

Chief Engineer of Project Beacon of the Border Roads Organisation, Brigadier IK Jaggi along with Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Nazim Zai Khan Friday supervised the bridge construction work on ground zero.

Briefing media persons Brigadier IK Jaggi said "More than 50 percent of the work on



Pic of an under construction bailey bridge at Kela Morh, Ramban

120 foot long, 40 ton bailey bridge has been completed and the left over work is expected to be completed on January 16. After mandatory testing the local authorities are hoping to throw open the road link for movement of traffic on January 17.

Brigadier IK Jaggi said, "we had launched the construction work of the 120 foot long bailey bridge at the loca-

tion on January 14 and by Saturday evening we will complete the task". He said, due to the collapse of the retaining wall of the existing bridge a 28 meter long gap was created. He said, "we have covered the gap using a 120 foot long span as it is considered safe to restore the link".

Chief Engineer BRO said,

"we have put all the resources available for completing the bridge". "Work is going on war footing as all men and machinery have been put to use. We are sure that by tomorrow evening the bailey bridge will be completed and ready for traffic" he added.

Deputy Commissioner Ramban Nazim Zai Khan said,

construction of Bailey bridge is nearing to completion at Kela Morh and a trial run would be conducted tomorrow before starting the movement of vehicles on the bridge.

He said that the construction of Bailey bridge is going on round the clock and Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has completed more than 50 percent of bridge launching work till early Friday morning.

Due to prolonged suspension of traffic movement on the strategic highway the common people are facing many hardships. Convoy movement of security forces was also affected due to suspension of traffic.

Initially, the traffic on the National Highway was suspended on January 3 following a fresh spell of snowfall. After remaining closed for six long days the traffic was partially restored on January 9 to clear the rush of stranded vehicles and essential supplies. A day later the traffic was suspended again after a retaining wall of a bridge collapsed near Kela Morh in Ramban district on January 10.

NCP MIN RAPE CHARGE ROW Pawar softens stand, says let the law take its course

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In what came to his party's Minister accused of rape Dhananjay Munde, NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Friday softened his stand over the accusation of rape made by a woman against Dhananjay Munde after two more political leaders alleged that the woman was trying to honey trap them, and said that the police be allowed to investigate the matter.

Ruling out indirectly any possible action against Munde at the party level, Pawar said: "Since allegations have been made against the woman who has complained against Munde, we have come to a conclusion that the police be allowed to do a comprehensive probe into the matter. We are confident that the police will do a good job. Hence we will not interfere in the probe. All we have suggested to the government that ACP-level be woman be asked to conduct the probe".

On Thursday, Pawar had termed the charges made by a woman were "serious" and said that he would take a call on the issue, after consulting his senior party's important colleagues. "The charges are serious...The matter is with the police...it is also in court...they will decide, however, we as a party would have to decide on it. I will speak to my colleagues and decide," Pawar had said.

Alluding to his yesterday's comment, Pawar said: "Yesterday when I had commented on Dhananjay Munde issue, I said that the issue was serious. But by then, certain facts were not in the public domain. I came to know that there was a similar complaints against the same lady by different political party leaders," Pawar said.

In effect, Pawar was referring to the statements made by BJP leader Krishna Hegde and MNS leader Manish Dhuri, who had come in indirect support of Munde by claiming that the woman who had made

allegations of rape against the NCP minister had tried to "honey-trap" them.

In a related development, Maharashtra's Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said: "Law will take its own course. Everyone is same before law...santri' or 'mantri'...the matter would be investigated as per law".

Munde has been accused of rape by a singer Renu Sharma, with whose sister Karuna Sharma the minister has admitted to have been in a relationship and sired children.

After Pawar distanced himself from the controversy by saying that the charges against Munde were "serious", Munde had on Thursday received support from an unexpected quarter, as Hegde and Dhuri trained their gun on the woman who had accused the minister of having raped her sister.

"Renu Sharma has been calling me, messaging me and coaxing me since 2010 to have a relationship with her. This harassment went on to the point of stalking. Through my sources I found out that she is a dubious person who is setting up a honey trap. I totally avoided meeting her," BJP leader Krishna Hegde had said in his complaint lodged with Senior Inspector of Amboli police station Kamte.

On his part, MNS leader Manish Dhuri had said separately: "The woman (Renu Sharma) who has now complained against Munde had obtained my telephone number. She used to follow me. She tried many times to get to close to me. Having realised that she had honey trap several influential people, I tried to distance myself from her.... If I had got involved with her, I would have become another Dhananjay Munde".

Meanwhile, having come under fire various quarters, Renu Sharma—who has accused Munde of rape—said that she would take a step back if all wanted her to do so.

Kerala to offer 2 million jobs in 5 yrs: Min

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The CPI(M)-led LDF Government in Kerala would create "at least" two million jobs for the unemployed people in the State in the next five years, according to Thomas Issac, Minister of Finance.

Presenting the fifth and last budget of the Government led by Pinarayi Vijayan in the State assembly on Friday (Kerala goes to the polls to elect a new legislative assembly by April 2021), Issac said despite the non-cooperation from the Centre, Kerala has done exceedingly well in the last five years.

"The changes that has happened in the global employment market and the superb expertise gained by Kerala in controlling the Covid-19 pandemic has helped us to address the problem of unemployment. We are opening a digital platform in February 2021 to launch the massive employment generation programme.

Six days after the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) seized 200 kilograms of ganja and imported drugs like "OG Kush" (a strain of cannabis indica) in raids conducted in Mumbai's north-western suburbs, the Mumbai police raided a small flat at Chandivali's Sangharshnagar locality in north-east Mumbai and seized huge quantity of drugs.

Acting on a tip-off, the Mumbai police raided a small flat in building no. 10 of the Slum Redevelopment Authority complex at Sangharsh Nagar area of Chandivali and seized 345 kilograms of Ganja (marijuana) worth around Rs.5.2 crore.

"After examining the CCTV footage in the area, we have arrested one - Ashok M. Metre (39). We have arrested him and booked him under the NDPS Act," Deputy

Mumbai cops seize 345 kg ganja worth ₹5.2 cr, arrest 1

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a second major drug haul in less than a week, the Mumbai Police on Friday seized 345 kilograms of Ganja (marijuana) worth around Rs 5.2 crore and arrested one person in connection with the seizure.

The drugs, seized from Khar and Bandra areas in north-west Mumbai, included ganja, imported contraband like "OG Kush" (a strain of cannabis indica), and curated marijuana. Some of the seized drugs had been sourced from the United States.

Subsequently on January 12 (Tuesday, the NCB arrested Ramkumar Tiwari, one of the brothers who own "Muchhad Paanwala" shop at Kemps corner in south Mumbai in connection of cannabis-related drugs seizure.

A day later, the NCB arrested Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik's

Commissioner of Police (Zone 10) Maheshwar Reddy said.

Following the seizure of drugs, the Saki Naka Police are keeping a close watch on the illegal activities in the area.

Friday's was the second major drug seizure in less than a week. On January 9, the NCB personnel had seized 200 kilograms and arrested three persons Karan Sajani, a British national, and two others Rahila Furniturewala and Shaista Furniturewala

The drugs, seized from Khar and Bandra areas in north-west Mumbai, included ganja, imported contraband like "OG Kush" (a strain of cannabis indica), and curated marijuana. Some of the seized drugs had been sourced from the United States.

Earlier on Tuesday, the NCB had arrested "Muchhad Paanwala" shop's co-owner Ramkumar Tiwari was arrested in connection with the same drugs case. The NCB said that it had seized "half a kg of cannabis-related drugs" at a warehouse in Mumbai. The allegation is that it was Sajani who provided drugs to Tiwari.

Started in 1977, Muchhad Paanwala is one of the most famous paan shops in Mumbai, which is frequented by celebrities and which takes orders on its web site.

son-in-law Sameer Khan in connection with a drugs case.

Sameer's arrest came at the end of a day-long questioning of him in connection with a drugs case in which three arrests, including that one of the owners of famous "Muchhad Paanwala" shop, have been made so far.

Sameer was placed under arrest by the NCB after it questioned him in connection with a google pay transaction of Rs 20,000 between him and one of the arrested accused Karan Sajani, a British national.

Earlier on Tuesday, the NCB had arrested "Muchhad Paanwala" shop's co-owner Ramkumar Tiwari was arrested in connection with the same drugs case. The NCB said that it had seized "half a kg of cannabis-related drugs" at a warehouse in Mumbai. The allegation is that it was Sajani who provided drugs to Tiwari.

Started in 1977, Muchhad Paanwala is one of the most famous paan shops in Mumbai, which is frequented by celebrities and which takes orders on its web site.

5,624 new corona cases in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: As many as 5,624 more persons tested positive for coronavirus in Kerala on Friday while 4,603 patients recovered from the disease, Health Minister KK Shailaja's office said in a statement here.

The state's test positivity rate is 8.94 per cent. A total of 67,496 COVID-19 patients are under treatment in various hospitals.

Ernakulam recorded the highest 799 new cases and Kasargod the least 97 cases on Friday. A total of 23 more fatalities took the state's death toll to 3,415, the statement added.

In all, 58 positive cases have come from outside Kerala, whereas 5,110 others tested positive through contact. The source of contact of 394 persons is unknown.

As many as 62 Kerala health workers also tested positive on Friday -- including 14 in Kozhikode, 10 in Pathanamthitta, 9 in Thiruvananthapuram, six in Thrissur, four each in Ernakulam, Palakkad, Wayanad, and Kannur, three each in Kollam and Idukki, and one in Malappuram.

In all, 2,02,080 persons are under observation, including 1,90,999 in home or institutional quarantine, and 11,081 in various hospitals in Kerala. Two new hotspots declared on Friday -- Puthuparyaram (Containment Zone ward 12) in Palakkad district and Manalur (Ward 18) in Thrissur district -- took the total to 419 in Kerala. **IAN5**

Haryana Medical Services Corporation Limited
(A Government of Haryana Undertaking)
Bays No. 59-62, Sector-2, Panchkula,
Phone: 0172-2590608
Notice Inviting Tenders (NIT)
HMCSL invites e-tenders for two years Rate Contract for 5 Part Differential Hematology Analyzer, Cryostate on the website www.etenders.hry.nic.in. Please see corrigendum if any regarding these tenders on the website www.etenders.hry.nic.in only.
Managing Director,
HMCSL, Panchkula
RO NO. 1422

Office Project Manager, Construction Unit
Uttarakhand Peyal Sansadhan Vikas Evam Nirman Nigam
Ghinsihari, Ranikhet, Distt. Almora
E-Mail: pmranikhet@rediffmail.com Fax & Ph. No. 05966-220690
Lno. 07 / Camp Haldwani/ Date: 13.01.2021
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
The Project Manager Construction Unit Uttarakhand Peyal Nigam Ranikhet (Almora) 263645, on behalf of Chairman Uttarakhand Peyal Nigam invites sealed item rate tender on e-Government Procurement System (e-GPS) portal i.e. <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>, for the following works.
Sl. No. Name of Work Cost of Work
1. Construction of A.N.M Center and appurtenant work at Matkhari, Distt Almora. 32.78 Lacs.
The tender form can be downloaded from e-Government Procurement System (e-GPS) portal i.e. <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> from 13.01.2021 at 17:00 hrs. to 18.01.2021 at 17:00 hrs. Other information can be seen in tender form or office notice board or obtained from office or phone no. 05966 220690 of office of tendering authority.
PROJECT MANAGER

WANTED
General public is hereby informed that one suspected person namely **Unknown, Age about 20-21 yrs., Height 5', Wheatish complexion, Thin built, Long face, black hair, wearing shirt and pant is involved in case e-FIR No. NDD-NAV 000061/19 dated 09.10.2019 U/s 380 IPC PS North Avenue, New Delhi.**
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the suspected person but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this suspected person may kindly inform to the following.
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-23011334
Ph.: 011-23014046
011-23015218
S.H.O., PS North Avenue, New Delhi.
Ph.: 011-23093040, 23093294
DP/186/NDD/2021

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E - TENDER NOTICE NO. ELKS/SRE/T-13 dtd. 08.01.2021
Open tender through E-tendering are invited by Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRS, Electric Loco Shed, Khanalpura Yard, Northern Railway, Saharanpur (Ambala Division)) for and on behalf of the President of India from the registered tenderer on web site www.ireps.gov.in for the following work upto 11:00 hrs on the date of closing shown against the work and will be opened thereafter:-
Open Tender No. ELKS/SRE/T-13
Name of work Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of 06 Nos. EOT cranes with standby spare for one years in Electric Loco shed, Saharanpur
Date of Closing/Opening 02.02.2021
Approx. Cost 17,25,988-00
Earnest Money 34800.00
Completion period 01 Year
Validity period 45 days
Cost of tender form Free of cost
1. The required Earnest Money will only be accepted through online payment modes available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. upto tender closing date and time i.e. 02.02.2021 at 11:00 hrs. Manual payments through demand draft, bankers Cheque, deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. Offers which are not complying above will be considered invalid. 2. Tenderer(s) should have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate to participate in E-Tendering of Works Tenders. 3. Tenderer are required to upload self-attested scanned copies of all related eligibility documents as per conditions. 4. Taxes & Charges will be applicable as per extant rule. 5. For details, please log on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in
118/21
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION
General public is hereby informed that an unidentified accused (depicted in the photo), **Namely : Unknown S/o : Unknown, R/o : Unknown**, is wanted in case FIR No. 31/20 u/s 420/34 IPC dated 06.08.2020 registered at PS North Avenue, New Delhi. His physical description is as under:-
Age : about 20-25 Years, Height : 5'2", Complexion : Wheatish, Face : Long, Built : Thin, Hair : Black Wearing : Shirt and Pant.
Any accused person is having any information/clue about this wanted person, may inform SHO, North Avenue, New Delhi at E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in or website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
SHO
Phone: 011-24368638, 24368641 P.S. North Avenue, New Delhi
Fax No. 011-24368639 New Delhi Distt., Delhi
DP/191/NDD/2021 Ph. No. 011-23093040, 23093294

Privacy matters

You wouldn't want anyone else seeing what you do online, would you? But they already do



WhatsApp's new privacy policy is in essence providing Facebook a way to monetise messages on the messaging app. At one level, it makes sense since users of the messaging app are getting a free service, and Facebook's algorithms go through your messages just like Google's algorithms go through every email you send and receive on Gmail. And most of us do use Google's service for email and the tech giant's search for everything and we post about our lives on Facebook and Twitter, so to suddenly cry 'wolf' about the new privacy policy does little but to expose our hypocrisy. Could Facebook and WhatsApp have handled it any better? Yes, they should have; many Indians will migrate

to other messaging platforms and apps over the coming weeks and some of them, at least for now, assure privacy. But with applications like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, there is something called the 'network' effect; it is difficult to use a service that few of your friends and relatives use, so while many people will download Signal and maybe even use it for some discussions that they'd rather nobody else sees, WhatsApp is unlikely to suffer much in the long term other than a bruised ego. It is more than likely that many groups, after discussing the new privacy policy threadbare with huge doses of misinformation, have gone back to their regularly scheduled "Good Morning" and "Good Evening" messages.

At a level, this comes down to our understanding of privacy as a people. In such a crowded country, the concept of personal privacy as understood in the western world does not simply exist. If one is really concerned about privacy, they should probably use better hardware devices, the iPhone for example, instead of Chinese-brand Android devices and pay for better messaging and email services. There has to be a realisation that there is a price for 'free services' because, as the saying goes, "You can't have your cake and eat it too". There is a cost to privacy when it comes to technology and when notions of personal privacy are so limited to begin with, teaching Indians about the need to keep things private is a difficult task. In many western countries, for example, it is a given that without the permission of a guardian, the pictures of children cannot be published; in India we do not think twice before doing such a thing. Remember, Indian cricket player Virat Kohli and his actor wife Anushka — among the most photographed couples in the country — had to very recently make an appeal to the paparazzi to refrain from taking pictures of their newborn daughter. The simple issue was the pesky photographers who often cross the fine line between the demands of the "profession" and intrusion of privacy. On the other hand, citing the case of the western world, is the instance of Hollywood actor George Clooney, who sued a member of the paparazzi brigade and his publication for climbing over the walls of the actor's villa and clicking photos of his child. Privacy is a luxury in a crowded nation and if we want it, we have to pay for it, such as living in a large house with a boundary wall. If we want luxury on the internet, we have to be willing to pay!

Virus shadow over R-Day

No chief guest at this year's parade; the number of attendees as well as pageantry scaled down, too



The devastating Coronavirus pandemic has upended all our lives and nothing is the same again. Not the global economy, nor the way we socialise, nor the education and the healthcare systems nor the way we work, conduct business or even celebrate. If there has been a major disruptive force in living memory, it is the outbreak of the accursed virus. And now, in a historical first since 1966, India will celebrate its Republic Day without a Head of State as the chief guest to showcase its military prowess to. The pesky virus has ensured that British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who was supposed to attend the iconic Republic Day parade, had to bow out after he announced a fresh lockdown in the UK over the

new strain of the Coronavirus that has affected thousands of people there and reared its ugly head in India, too. The complete lockdown for England's 56 million people could last until mid-February, hence the Prime Minister was needed back home. This was supposed to be Johnson's first bilateral outing after the UK's departure from the European Union in December. But the contingency back home needed his urgent attention, so he had no choice but to cancel his visit that was expected to bind the Indo-UK relations even closer. The trip to New Delhi was being seen in the diplomatic circles as the UK's post-Brexit tilt towards the Indo-Pacific region, in which India is an important player. In fact, on December 15, UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, who visited New Delhi as a prelude to Johnson's trip, announced a closer collaboration with India on an enhanced trade partnership, and he also met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss a 10-year roadmap for a new era in the UK-India ties. Apart from trade, the two democracies are also seeking closer collaboration on tackling the Coronavirus pandemic, climate change, enhancing defence cooperation so that they can better address key issues like terrorism and maritime security.

A disappointed India, which had been "looking forward to Johnson's visit", tried to fill the gap on the dignitary podium by approaching leaders in neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka and Bhutan, but lockdowns and various COVID-related issues made it impossible for others to step in. As it is, the parade this time had been restricted to a limited few from the masses instead of the thousands who used to throng it earlier. Even the marching contingents will be fewer and they will sport face masks and face shields, and the general distance between members in each of the contingents has been expanded from two to three feet. Even the number of dignitaries will be less and only a limited number of people will be invited; and they too will be seated far apart in order to maintain social distance. The highlight of the parade this year is expected to be the felicitation of the "Corona warriors". A few hundred people who have been in the frontline from the field of medicine — such as staff nurses, paramedics, doctors and sanitation staff — have been selected and they will be given certificates of appreciation on the occasion to show the nation's appreciation for the work they have been doing in battling the virus. This whittling down of the pomp and show that is usually associated with the R-Day parade makes one wonder why we never thought of this before? Each year, India spends hundreds of crores in organising the mega event. So this begs the question: Where is the justification in a poor country like India spending so much money on impressing the world's leaders when millions are dying of malnutrition and living below the poverty line in the nation? Would this money not be better spent on ramping up our healthcare and educational infrastructure? Or skilling the nation's *beti* and fighting crimes against women? If we can decrease our disease and hunger burden and increase our per capita income, it would really be something to showcase to the world. Else, we should adopt the Gandhian principle of leading a simple life.

Anatomy of Uttarayana

Makar Sankranti is an event of the sidereal solar calendar while Uttarayana is a matter of tropical solar reckoning



PRIYADARSHI DUTTA

Makar Sankranti marks the Sun's entry into Makar *raashi*, identified with the sign of Capricorn. The reference here is merely to the apparent motion of the Sun resulting from Earth's yearly revolution. Annually, there would be a dozen such Sankrantis, because of the Sun's transit across 12 signs of the celestial zodiac. No other Sankranti enjoys religious significance, though each of them marks the beginning of a new month in the sidereal solar calendar. In India, several States like Tripura, Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Punjab, Haryana and so on follow a sidereal solar calendar. Several other States like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh-Telangana in addition to the Hindi-speaking belt follow the luni-solar calendar.

In the luni-solar calendar, the months are based upon a lunar cycle of 29-1/2 days, resulting in a year length of 354 days. Therefore, it has to be adjusted against the solar year by insertion of intercalary month (*Adhimasa*) every three years. The luni-solar calendar, besides being expressly followed in several parts of India, is also implicit to the solar calendar because of its religious significance. All Hindu religious festivals including *vrats*, *parvas* and most *jayantis* are determined as per the 354-day lunar calendar. This results in a drift of dates for religious festivities and austerities (within a bracket of 25 days) *vis-a-vis* the Gregorian calendar.

Why is Makar Sankranti celebrated with such great fanfare even in parts of India where the writ of solar calendar does not run? This is due to a belief that Makar Sankranti marks Uttarayana (literally meaning sun turning north). Uttarayana is a function of a tropical solar calendar like the Gregorian calendar. Tropical calendar has zero connection with zodiac background. It stands on four pillars — Vernal Equinox (March 21), Summer Solstice (June 21), Autumn Equinox (September 21) and Winter Solstice (December 21). In the two equinoxes, the day and night are of equal length all over the world. In June solstice, the day is longest across the northern hemisphere, shortest in the southern. In December solstice, the day is shortest in the northern hemisphere and longest in the southern. This interplay of 'light and shadow' is due to the fact that the axis of Earth's rotation is inclined to the plane of Earth's revolution at 23.5°. As a



result, different zones of the globe receive direct light whereas others pass into shadow. This, in the extreme, results in six months of day and six months of night between one equinox to the other in alternating polar zones — the Arctic and Antarctic.

In winter, the sun travels low across the sky in the northern hemisphere. On December 21, the declination is the least and the Sun is directly overhead the Tropic of Capricorn (23.5° S) at the local noon. The trend is, however, reversed on the morning of Solstice. The Sun, figuratively speaking, turns northwards. Thus, as per one belief, December 22 should be the real Uttarayana. A common factor, coincidental at first sight, is the name Capricorn. On December 21, the Sun is overhead the Tropic of Capricorn, an imaginary line; and on January 14 it enters the Sign of Capricorn. However, we realise that it is more than mere coincidence when the same thing is repeated in the summer. While on June 21 the Sun is directly overhead at the Tropic of Cancer, it enters the Sign of Cancer on July 16. The gap is 24 days.

Now, 24 days seems to be the new common factor. What explains this 24 days' time lag that links the name of a tropic (an imaginary line) with a constellation? The secret might lie in the factor called "precession of equinoxes" or "axial precession" called *ayana-chalan* in Sanskrit. The axis of the Earth is not exactly stable but describes a conical motion. This motion, similar to the wobble of a spinning top, results from the Sun's

“ WE GET THE SEASONS FROM THE SUN, NOT FROM THE ZODIACAL BACKGROUND. THUS, MEASURING SEASONS FROM THE ZODIAC SIGNS BY IGNORING THE EFFECT OF PRECESSION (THE NIRAYANA CALENDAR) IS NOT THE BEST WAY. ”

gravitational pull acting differently at the equator from the poles. The conical motion would be complete in 28,500 years during which the North Pole would point at several different stars — like Thuban, Polaris and Vega. During the same interval the point of the equinox, where the plane of revolution intersects the plane of

rotation, goes round the entire zodiac. The amount of precession is 50" (less than 1/60th of one degree, when one segment of zodiac is of 30 degrees).

We get the seasons from the Sun, not from the zodiacal background. Thus, measuring seasons from the zodiac signs by ignoring the effect of precession (the Nirayana calendar) is not the best way. The sidereal or Nirayana year (365 d 06 hrs 09 m 10 s) is 21 minutes longer than tropical year (365 d 05 h 48 m 46 s). A sidereal year, therefore, would disengage from the seasons twice as fast as Julian calendar (which assumed year length to be flat 365 d and 6 hrs) did before being reformed by Pope Gregorian XIII in 1582.

"The difference between the sidereal and the tropical year is 20.4 minutes," says Bal Gangadhar Tilak, "which causes the seasons to fall back nearly one lunar month in about 2,000 years, if the sidereal solar year is to be taken as the standard of measurement" (*The Orion*, P.19). This would explain the mystery of the lost 24 days. Possibly two millennia ago, the Sun went overhead in the southernmost tropic when it entered the sign of Capricorn. In the ancient times, Uttarayana and Sun's entry into Capricorn would have coincided. That is no longer true.

Tilak (1856-1920), however, hinted at a different possibility on Uttarayana. Known as a tough politician, he was also a noted Sanskrit scholar who found time to delve deep into Hindu astronomy to reconstruct Vedic history. It is reflect-

ed in his books like *The Orion, or, Researches Into The Antiquity of the Vedas* (1893) and *Arctic Home in the Vedas* (1903). In his book, viz., *The Orion*, the author says that Uttarayana is susceptible to two meanings. Tilak states: "It might mean 'turning towards the north from the southernmost point' or it may indicate 'the passage of the Sun into the northern hemisphere, i.e. to the north of the equator'. If we adopt the first meaning, Uttarayana and the year must be held to commence from the winter solstice while, if the second interpretation is correct, Uttarayana and the year must have commenced with the vernal equinox." Citing the *Rig Veda*, Tilak says: "The facts that the central day of annual *satra* was called *vishuvan*, the Vasant or spring was considered the first of the seasons and the *agrayaneshtis* or the half-year sacrifices were required to be performed every Vasant (Spring) and Sharad (autumn) clearly show that the second interpretation is more likely to be correct (*The Orion*, P.22)." Tilak, thus, maintained that Uttarayana was the vernal equinox (March 21). He further believed that the six-month period from vernal equinox to autumn equinox, when the Sun moves along the northern latitude, is *Devayana* (way of the gods) in the *Rig Veda* and from autumn equinox to vernal equinox *Pitriyana* (way of the dead ancestors) as mentioned in the *Rig Veda*.

(The writer is an author and independent researcher. The opinions expressed are personal.)

SOUNDBITE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not respect the farmers. The Congress is with farmers and will support them till these laws are withdrawn.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi



United States so far, at least the current administration, is doing all it can to hamper any chance for dialogue between Iran and the Persian Gulf countries.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov



I think every film mattered, right from my first film, because that is what gave me my first step into the film industry. My entire journey has been special.

Actor Kiara Advani



It is great to be coaching the young players of the West Indies and trying to guide them as we prepare for the World Cup at home.

West Indies Under-19 coach Floyd Reifer



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ensure accountability

Sir — The Government must frame stringent laws to hold politicians accountable for corruption in the country. It is often seen in cases of corruption or malpractices in any Government department that the officials are usually taken to task by agencies like the CBI and ED while politicians belonging to the ruling dispensation, who are no less involved in the fraud, walk away scot-free.

Our politicians, with their unchecked involvement in corrupt practices, have tarnished the reputation of our country. Over the past four decades or so, we have seen many cases of corruption. It will not be an exaggeration to say that most of the politicians are corrupt to the core and are involved in the dirty game of power and money. They have unaccounted money stocked in foreign banks or assets disproportionate to their income.

It is high time for all political parties to think about this serious issue and join hands for making legislations that are more effective in curbing corruption by the politicians.

Seetharam B Telangana

India should provide vaccines to poor nations

As India is all set to launch the world's biggest vaccination drive on Saturday, many countries look towards it with hope.

Apart from inoculating millions of countrymen, India should also provide the COVID vaccine vials to its neighbours and poor countries across the globe, either free of cost or on concessional rates. India's commitment to serve humanity is second to none and we, as a nation, have always helped those in need.

It's beyond doubt that the chariot of self-reliant India is touching new heights everyday and the days are not far when we will become the torch-bearer of humanity and development. The manufacturers of the vaccines — Bharat Biotech (Covaxin) and Serum Institute of India (Covishield) — should take the lead and work out a plan with the Centre for exporting the vaccine to Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and so on. This will go beyond their realm of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and be a true service to the mankind. We, as a nation, cannot fail those who look towards us for help during the COVID crisis. India must tread cautiously and care about its global image. If the



immunisation drive turns out to be successful, India will set an unprecedented example in the world's history. It will emerge as the world leader and its reputation will increase manifold.

The Opposition parties and leaders, who have unequivocally criticised the Modi Government during the initial phase of vaccine development, should also rise above politics.

Aman Jaiswal Delhi

Accept demands in toto

Sir — The Modi Government must immediately repeal the three farm laws that are the bone of contention between the Centre and the farmers. Although the Supreme Court has put a stay on these legislations but the farmers are not contended and the situation can turn volatile anytime.

The cultivators are not ready to settle for anything less than revocation of the laws and a legal guarantee on the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The NDA Government must realise that 70 per cent of the rural households still depend primarily on agriculture for their livelihood. They also constitute a large proportion of the BJP's vote bank and if they

turn against it in the next elections, it will severely mar the party's prospects of making it to the power corridors. Farmers are a peace-loving community and their leaders have clarified that the tractor rally on January 26 will take place only at the Haryana-Delhi border.

Bhagwan Thadani Mumbai

Army is our pride

Sir — On Army Day, we must remember those who choose to die for the nation. The sad part is that today's youth doesn't know about the stories of courage and valour that have shaped India's destiny saved us from enemies. Those who are ignorant about their past cannot shape their future.

It's time to remember our heroes like Field Marshal KM Cariappa, who was the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army and all the Param Vir Chakra (PVC) awardees like Major Somnath Sharma (first winner of the PVC), Naik Jadunath Singh, Lt Rama Raghoba Rane, Company Havildar Major Puru Singh and many others who made the supreme sacrifice for the nation. India's history is incomplete without its military history and our soldiers are our real heroes. We are safe because they are guarding our borders and fighting our enemies. We must pay our tribute to them on such occasions.

N Soumik Bhubaneswar

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

A shot at halting the virus' march

Vaccines take over six weeks to provide immunity. So it will be vital to continue with COVID protocols during the vaccination period and beyond



RAJINDER DHAMIYA

India begins its first phase of the COVID-19 vaccination drive from today. History is being created as it marks an important milestone in the pandemic's trajectory which began almost a year ago when three students returning from Wuhan were found to be COVID positive in Kerala. Since then, we have lost more than 1.51 lakh people and over 1.05 crore individuals have tested positive in India. The year 2020 was indeed a long one as lives were lost and livelihoods vanished as business closures, job losses and salary cuts became the norm. Politics overtook science in many countries and they eventually paid the price in terms of preventable deaths and sickness just because of a delay in instituting Corona protocols like masking, social distancing, hand hygiene and restriction of movement. As I had highlighted previously in these columns, the cold and pollution resulted in a surge in Coronavirus cases in India and globally, too. However, many mathematical models have been proved wrong in terms of hypothetical projections of the number of cases as well as the timelines of the pandemic's trajectory. Experimental therapies were tried in order to save lives, some of which failed to generate scientific evidence while others were withdrawn fearing more risk than benefit through their use. The learning curve continues as the contagion rages on and new mutations are being reported from different parts of the globe, keeping science and scientists on their toes. Consequently, physical distancing has led to social isolation for many, especially the elderly and vulnerable populations like people with disabilities and comorbidities. This has resulted in significant mental health issues. Social isolation is indeed a major risk factor not only for the psychological repercussions it has but also for those suffering from ailments. The approval of two Coronavirus vaccines and their rollout from today is a major step towards combating the pandemic in India and may be the beginning of the end of the COVID-19 outbreak. Covaxin and Covishield will be used during the initial phase of the inoculation drive and a priority group of three crore people will get the shots. The vaccination programme will use Co-WIN, an online digital platform developed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which will facilitate real time information of vaccine stocks, storage temperature and individualised tracking of beneficiaries for the shot. This digital platform will assist programme managers across all levels while conducting inoculation sessions.

This drive is a welcome step in the right direction and the Coronavirus shot is indeed a gift for mankind in the midst of this humanitarian crisis. Vaccines have historically saved lives from many deadly diseases in the past. A vaccine for the Coronavirus becoming available in less than a year seemed impossible at one time. However, it has become possible because of global efforts and collaborations by scientists and nations. Consequently, these shots have been developed in record time and have shown remarkable efficacy with safety. But India's vaccine campaign poses a major challenge in getting a substantial number of the population inoculated in view of scepticism and the undercurrent of vaccine hesitancy. So far these jobs have protected people from getting the virus, thereby preventing morbidity, hospitalisation and subsequent mortality. This is important not only for countries like ours with an inadequate and inequitable public health system but also for nations with a robust health infrastructure.

It is widely understood that a person protected by a vaccine or a natural COVID-19 infection acts as a dead end for the virus' transmission and an unprotected person who has not been inoculated or had the infection becomes a facilitator. We need most of the population to be vaccinated to break the chain of transmission. The shot will prevent the disease for sure in most of the vaccinated people but whether it will prevent the spread of the virus is still unclear. There is evidence, though not strong, that some of these shots do prevent the spread of the virus. Epidemiological methods reveal that we need at least 60 to 70 per cent of the population to be immunised either through jabs or natural infection to halt the transmission of the virus and develop 'herd immunity.' So how do we tackle these challenges with the vaccine rollout now becoming a reality? First we need to vaccinate as many people as possible by allaying fears and convincing citizens about the benefit of the vaccine not only for them but also for the community. The vaccine needs to be made as easily available as possible, keeping priorities in place. Plus, the importance of concise communication to the masses cannot be underestimated as is highlighting and stressing scientific facts over misinformation and myths prevalent on social media. It must also be anticipated that people may become complacent during the vaccination drive or after getting the shot. All vaccines take at least six weeks to provide immunity. So it will be critical to continue with all COVID protocols like before during the vaccination period and months or years after completing the two dosages of the shot. We will need to continue the new normal with all public health measures in place along with lasting change in our behaviour. The shot is here but we will have to live with the virus even after this. Vaccines will save lives and livelihoods but the virus is here to stay.

(The writer is Head of Neurology Department, Lady Hardinge Medical College and SSK Hospital. The views expressed are personal.)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

MAY GOD GIVE OWAISSI STRENGTH. HE HELPED US IN BIHAR AND WILL HELP US IN UP PANCHAYAT AND ASSEMBLY POLLS AND ALSO IN WEST BENGAL.

—BJP MP
 SAKSHI MAHARAJ



PEOPLE OF UP AND WEST BENGAL HAVE ALSO SEEN THROUGH THIS NEXUS AND WILL NOT LET THIS MATCH-FIXING GO THROUGH.

—CONGRESS LEADER
 JITIN PRASADA

Curb regulatory overreach

Neither the legislature nor the judiciary should be allowed to frame and pronounce punishment disproportionate to the crime as compared to other contextual offences



ABHAY RAJ MISHRA

Since time immemorial, human civilisation has maintained social order by framing rules and regulations which are implemented through various mechanism of imparting justice to people. Justice by its very nature represents something that is just and right. What is just may depend on the context but being fair, impartial and right is essential to the idea of justice. Professor Henry Sidgwick, a 19th century British jurist known for his ethical theory had opined that the best indicator of a nation's political success is to see how it administers justice.

In primitive societies punishment was targeted to evoke fear by subjecting offenders to brutality. This was supposed to act as a lesson and deterrent for others. However, with development and social evolution, punishment is now a subject of human rights with greater focus on reforming the wrongdoers, instead of tormenting them.

India as a welfare State has also adopted a reformative approach where the primary aim is to rehabilitate the offender. For instance, then IG (Prisons) Kiran Bedi took her reformist vision to Tihar Jail in 1993 and initiated a programme for the welfare of the inmates in the notorious prison, totally transforming the conditions inside Tihar. The reform policy had several aspects like changing prisoners' attitudes through education, meditation and yoga; imparting vocational skills; making the prison administration accountable; involving prisoners through mobile petition boxes, various panchayats and daily mass *sabhas*; providing a better diet and improving living conditions; assisting addicts through drug de-addiction centres and undertrials through legal aid cells. Similarly, the introduction of the Model Prison reforms by the Government in 2016 was a major step which brought uniformity in laws, rules and regulations governing prisoners.

However, there remains a major gap when it comes to the structure and uniformity of sentencing guidelines. Despite this being raised by various committees from time to time, neither the legislature nor the judiciary has issued any structured sentencing norms. The Malimath Committee on Reforms of the Criminal Justice System that was set up by the Ministry of Home Affairs, in its report submitted in 2003, emphasised the need to introduce sentencing guidelines in order to minimise uncertainty in awarding sentences. A few years later the Madhav Menon Committee, too, reasserted the need for a sentencing policy in India. In 2010, the then Law Minister stated that India was planning to establish a "uniform sentencing policy" on the lines of the guidelines followed in the US and the UK. However, no progress has been made in this direction till date. Instead, the recent amendments proposed in the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2020, (COTPA 2020) signal a movement in the reverse direction.

COTPA 2020 amendments prescribe new excessive penalisation for petty street vendors or hawkers selling tobacco products. Exemplifying this is a seven-year imprisonment or a fine of ₹1 lakh for violations which involve immense subjectivity. Further, these violations are proposed to be made cognisable offences, which means police officers have the unilateral power to arrest these vendors, without a warrant or permission of a court and a bail will require appearance in front of a Magistrate.

These violations include selling tobacco products to a person below 21 years of age and selling

“WHILE THERE IS NO DEBATE ON THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF TOBACCO AND AN ONGOING REDUCTION IN ITS USE SHOULD BE PURSUED, SHOCKINGLY DISPROPORTIONATE DRAFT RULES MAKE A MOCKERY OF THE SYSTEM AND CREATE A LEGAL PARADOX, THEREBY RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LAW-MAKING PROCEDURE IN THE COUNTRY”



tobacco within 100 meters of an educational institute. Even selling loose cigarettes, which has been an age-old system, is going to abruptly become a crime attracting a jail term.

In a country where an 18-year-old is a legal adult with the right to vote or marry, this is regulatory overreach. A section of these petty retailers sell their goods on foot and we don't have a fixed definition of educational institutes which can vary, from a school to a private tuition centre. This proposal makes petty retailers look like heinous criminals who will be subjected to the whims and fancies of local police officers, many of whom can be compulsively corrupt.

Compared to other sentences and imprisonments prescribed under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), these are disproportionate and excessive. For instance the law prescribes a maximum punishment of six months' jail for sale of adulterated drugs (IPC 275); up to six months in prison for rash or dangerous driving (IPC 279); maximum two years for rioting (IPC 147); three years for voluntarily causing hurt with a dangerous weapon (IPC 324); five years for voluntarily throwing acid (IPC 326B) and seven years for kidnapping (IPC 363).

This move has rightfully caused widespread consternation among small retailers who are being made to look like criminals. The potential social harm caused by the sale of a *bidi* or a cigarette to an 18-year-old adult with fundamental rights to make informed choices, does not equal to the acts of kidnapping or throwing acid or even sale of adulterated drugs which can kill or maim. If tobacco is a legal product with the Government earning hefty revenues, how can selling it to lawful adults become a

crime? This raises pointed questions on the process behind the framing of such rules. Is it the poor quality of research by bureaucrats drafting such proposals where they did not compare this with other existing provisions? Or is there an emotional overdrive to control tobacco consumption too fast? These retailers also sell other items of daily consumption like tea, water, juices, soft drinks, biscuits, savoury items and confectionary besides tobacco products. Their presence on every street corner forms the very character of India's urban retail activity and is a sign of self-reliance and microentrepreneurship among people at the bottom of the pyramid.

The critics of the Government might draw controversial conclusions and say this is a larger move to attack unorganised retailers and kill micro retail activity to benefit large business groups or networks seeking organised retail activity. NGOs might even term it a bid by foreign firms to push more international tobacco into India through smuggled and illicit products at the cost of Indian tobacco farmers. However, this is a clear case of loss of balance that legislators and the judiciary need to maintain while framing sentencing guidelines. Neither the legislature nor the judiciary should be allowed to frame and pronounce punishment, which is disproportionate to the crime as compared to other contextual offences. Otherwise the belief of the people in the rule of law will erode.

In the past there have been instances of disproportionate sentencing being overturned by the judiciary. In the Soman vs. State of Kerala case, 2012, the Supreme Court reversed the imprisonment sentence imposed on the accused by the High Court, who was a liquor retailer charged with selling spurious

alcohol which eventually led to the death of six people. Here the Supreme Court observed that: "Giving punishment to the wrongdoer is at the heart of the criminal justice delivery, but in our country, it is the weakest part of the administration of criminal justice." The court cited the need to consider a combination of three factors while directing the quantum of sentence: Proportionality, deterrence and rehabilitation, among which the principle of proportionality assumes highest prominence. A sentence must be commensurate with the seriousness or gravity of the crime. Here, the seller was the last and the weakest link in the supply chain of adulterated liquor comprising of an illicit manufacturer, the distributor and finally the retailer. Hence the court felt that reduction of the sentence from five years of imprisonment to three years was a fair decision.

While there is no debate on the harmful effects of tobacco and an ongoing reduction in its use should be pursued, shockingly disproportionate draft rules make a mockery of the system and create a legal paradox, thereby raising questions about the law-making procedure in the country. Such rules, affecting the livelihoods of many, need more debate and should be reviewed by expert committees comprising of judicial experts, socialists and industry representatives, before being put up for public review. If allowed, these will adversely affect the sense and sensibilities of judges who will have a dilemma while pronouncing sentences, given their disproportionate nature as compared to other crimes.

(The writer is president, not-for-profit organisation PRAHAR. The views expressed are personal.)

Biden holds promise for US-Taiwan relations

At the diplomatic level, Taiwan works as a major bargaining chip for the US to deal with an increasingly aggressive China



SUDHIR SINGH SUMIT KUMAR

Just days before the US Congress certified President-elect Joe Biden's victory in the 2020 presidential election, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo lifted the long-standing restrictions on dealing with Taiwan. These "self-imposed restrictions", which were introduced decades ago to appease the mainland Chinese Government were declared "null and void" by Pompeo on January 9.

This allows US officials to engage with their Taiwanese counterparts on the same footing with

which they deal with functionaries of other countries.

While the latest development has elevated US-Taiwan relations to a new height, it is still to be seen whether Biden follows the trend or reverses the trajectory of bilateral engagement that has been achieved under the Donald Trump era.

Some experts, diplomats and commoners are speculative that the Biden Administration could backpedal US-Taiwan relations and instead favour China. Their apprehensions are not without a reason, as they cite a statement made by Biden in the US Senate in 2001 when he said that "Washington is not willing to go to war over Taiwan's unilateral declaration of independence."

However, it would be unfair to form an opinion about his foreign policies just based on some isolated statement. It is pertinent to recall that Biden had supported the Taiwan Relations Act in 1979. Even in 2020 he was among the first global leaders to congratulate Taiwanese

President Tsai Ing-wen on her re-election and said: "You are stronger because of your free and open society. The United States should continue strengthening our ties with Taiwan and other like-minded democracies." Biden has also supported US legislations providing arms and defence equipment to Taiwan under the outgoing President Donald Trump's Administration.

We should also keep it in mind that Biden had used strong words against China during his election campaign. He termed the communist nation a "thug" and even accused Trump of being too soft on China. Further, in an article published in a journal, Biden said: "We're a Pacific power, and we'll stand with friends and allies to advance our shared prosperity, security, and values in the Asia-Pacific region," and "that includes deepening our ties with Taiwan." This, in turn, makes it aptly clear that Biden is fully conscious of the changing geostrategic, security and econom-

ic environment largely due to China's expansionist tendency.

Furthermore, some appointments made by Biden should indeed be viewed as a good signal for the East Asian nation. For instance, Antony Blinken, the Secretary of State-designate, has held talks with Taiwanese diplomats and in a tweet, Blinken mentioned that "stronger economic relations between the US and Taiwan will support our shared democratic values and our common commitment to regional peace and stability."

At the same time, the existence of Taiwan as an independent and vibrant democracy is also in the interest of the US for various reasons. First, Taiwan's geo-strategic location in the South China Sea (SCS) prevents Beijing from dominating sea trade routes. China controlling Taiwan would embolden Beijing to establish its dominance over the SCS and eventually it would pose a serious threat to East, Southeast Asia and the US. China can further assert its territorial

claim more aggressively against the Philippines, Vietnam and some other countries in the region.

Second, Taiwan is one of the leading export-based economies in the world. Taiwan succumbing to China would only accentuate Beijing's imperialist tendency. Third, at the diplomatic level, Taiwan works as a major bargaining chip for the US to deal with China. Fourth, while the recent attack on the Capitol Hill in Washington has bemused several countries across the world, the disappearance of Taiwan as an independent country would prove to be a big blow to the idea of democracy.

Taiwan can contribute significantly towards promoting the emergence of a strong supply chain free from the clutches of China. While Taiwan runs leadership training courses for the officials of the Pacific islands, its timely medical support to the rest of the world and its success in controlling the spread of COVID-19 have won the hearts of the international community.

But Taiwan could have certainly helped immensely had it been a member of the World Health Organisation.

The global perception about China has changed significantly in recent years as Beijing has become more repressive internally and aggressive internationally. China's repressive measures against peaceful protesters in Hong Kong and its attempt to cover up the outbreak of the contagion have finally ended the delusions about China's peaceful rise. It is all because of these factors that there exists a strong bipartisan understanding among US leaders about strengthening ties with Taiwan.

Now, the time has come when not only the independent existence of Taiwan should be a global concern, but efforts should also be undertaken to enable it to contribute to world affairs in an effective manner. For its pursuance, the US should take initiatives to sign the Free Trade Agreement with Taiwan, which in turn would propel other

countries to institutionalise their economic ties with it. The process will eventually not only reduce Taiwan's economic dependence on China, it would also integrate Taiwan into the regional and global economic groups.

The US should also take initiatives to include Taiwan into the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD). Since the East Asian country has fostered a strong relationship with India, Japan has already expressed its concern for the independence of Taiwan and Australia is facing an assertive China, Washington can explore the means of providing a role to Taiwan in this QUAD grouping.

While it becomes logical for the Biden Administration to sustain the momentum of the bilateral relationship, only time will tell if this transition leads to anticipated transformation.

(Singh is Professor at Delhi University while Kumar is former fellow at National Chengchi University, Taipei.)

Capitol rioters included highly trained ex-military and cops

Washington: As President Donald Trump's supporters massed outside the Capitol last week and sang the national anthem, a line of men wearing olive-drab helmets and body armor trudged purposefully up the marble stairs in a single-file line, each man holding the jacket collar of the one ahead.

The formation, known as "Ranger File," is standard operating procedure for a combat team that is "stacking up" to breach a building — instantly recognizable to any U.S. Soldier or Marine who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was a chilling sign that many at the vanguard of the mob that stormed the seat of American democracy either had military training or were trained by those who did.

An Associated Press review of public records, social media

posts and videos shows at least 21 current or former members of the U.S. Military or law enforcement have been identified as being at or near the Capitol riot, with more than a dozen others under investigation but not yet named. In many cases, those who stormed the Capitol appeared to employ tactics, body armor and technology such as two-way radio headsets that were similar to those of the very police they were confronting.

Experts in homegrown extremism have warned for years about efforts by far-right militants and white-supremacist groups to radicalize and recruit people with military and law enforcement training, and they say the Jan. 6 insurrection that left five people dead saw some of their worst fears realized.

"ISIS and al-Qaida would

drool over having someone with the training and experience of a U.S. Military officer," said Michael German, a former FBI agent and fellow with the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University. "These people have training and capabilities that far exceed what any foreign terrorist group can do. Foreign terrorist groups don't have any members who have badges." Among the most prominent to emerge is a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel and decorated combat veteran from Texas who was arrested after he was photographed wearing a helmet and body armor on the floor of the Senate, holding a pair of zip-tie handcuffs. Another Air Force veteran from San Diego was shot and killed by a Capitol Police officer as she tried to leap through a barricade near the House chamber. AP

Amid cacophony since Capitol siege, key officer stays silent

Washington: In the week since a mob laid siege to the U.S. Capitol, the House has impeached President Donald Trump.

Dozens of people have been arrested nationwide over participation in the riots. Politicians and business leaders are loudly condemning the violence.

Twitter and other social media sites have banned Trump and thousands of other accounts.

Yet amid all the noise, a Capitol Police officer hailed as a hero for confronting the insurrectionists and leading them away from Senate chambers has remained silent.

Officer Eugene Goodman isn't saying whether he thinks he saved the Senate, as many of the millions

who've viewed the video believe.

In fact, Goodman isn't saying anything at all publicly — not to reporters, not on social media. And he's asked the force's union, bosses, family and friends to help him maintain his privacy and not publicly discuss the events of January 6.

But the video speaks volumes.

Goodman, a Black man facing an overwhelmingly white mob, is the only officer seen for a full minute of the footage, shot by reporter Igor Bobic of HuffPost.

Goodman stands in front of the rioters, walks backward until he reaches a collapsible baton lying on the floor, and picks it up.

"Back up... Back it up!" he yells, keeping his eyes on the mob. AP

More than 100 individuals arrested for Capitol Hill riots, says FBI

Washington: US security agencies have arrested more than 100 individuals for their criminal activities in last week's siege of the Capitol and are monitoring "an extensive amount of concerning online chatter" ahead of President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration on January 20, FBI Director Christopher Wray said.

The violence on January 6 by outgoing President Donald Trump's supporters temporarily halted the counting of Electoral College votes and resulted in the deaths of five individuals, including a police officer.

"We and our partners have already arrested more than 100 individuals for their criminal activities in last week's siege of the Capitol and continue to pursue countless other related investigations," Wray said during a meeting with Vice President Mike Pence.

"And those help not only prevent those

individuals from any effort to repeat that kind of activity but also should serve as a very stern warning to anybody else who might be inclined to try to engage in that activity," he said.

Wray also said that law enforcement was aware of and monitoring "an extensive amount of concerning online chatter" ahead of President-elect Biden's inauguration next week, but added that authorities were vowing to sift through "what's aspirational versus what's intentional."

The FBI, he said, is looking at individuals who may have an eye toward repeating that same kind of violence that was seen at the Capitol Hill last week.

"I mean, from January 6 alone, we've already identified over 200 suspects. So we know who you are, if you're out there, and FBI agents are coming to find you," he said. PTI

Rare sedition charge gains interest after Capitol attack

New York: A Civil War-era sedition law being dusted off for potential use in the mob attack on the US Capitol was last successfully deployed a quarter-century ago in the prosecution of Islamic militants who plotted to bomb New York City landmarks.

An Egyptian cleric, Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, and nine followers were convicted in 1995 of seditious conspiracy and other charges in a plot to blow up the United Nations, the FBI's building, and two tunnels and a bridge linking New York and New Jersey.

Applications of the law making it a crime to conspire to overthrow or forcefully destroy the government of the United States have been scant. But its use is being considered against the mob that killed a police officer and rampaged through the

US Capitol last week. Michael Sherwin, acting US attorney for DC, has said "all options are on the table," including sedition charges, against the Capitol invaders. AP

GOP senators in spotlight as 2nd impeachment trial looms

Washington: For a second time, Republican senators face the choice of whether to convict President Donald Trump in an impeachment trial. While only one GOP senator, Utah's Mitt Romney, voted to convict Trump last year, that number could increase as lawmakers consider whether to punish Trump for his role in inciting a deadly insurrection at the Capitol.

Whatever they decide, Trump is likely to be gone from the White House when the verdict comes in. An impeachment trial is likely to start next week,

as early as Inauguration Day, raising the specter of the Senate trying the previous president even as it moves to confirm the incoming president's Cabinet.

GOP leader Mitch McConnell, who says he's undecided, is one of several key senators to watch, along with Democratic leader Chuck Schumer, who is set to take the Senate reins as his party reclaims the Senate majority.

Others to watch include GOP senators up for reelection in 2022 and several Republicans who have publicly backed impeachment. AP

Biden announces \$1.9 trillion Covid stimulus plan to revive US economy

Washington: US President-elect Joe Biden has announced a USD 1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package to tackle the economic fallout from the pandemic, including direct financial aid to average Americans, support to businesses and to provide a boost to the national vaccination programme.

The relief package, announced on Thursday, includes USD 415 billion focused on combating the COVID-19 pandemic, over USD 1 trillion in direct aid to individuals and families and USD 440 billion in assistance to businesses.

It includes USD 1,400 in additional stimulus cheques to Americans, an extension for key unemployment programmes from mid-March to the end of September and an increase in weekly additional unemployment assistance from USD 300 to USD 400 and increasing the federal minimum wage to USD 15 an hour over time.

Biden's proposal also sets aside USD 20 billion for a national vaccination programme and USD 50 billion to scale up coronavirus testing.

"It's not hard to see that we are in the middle of a once-in-several generation economic crisis within a once-in-several generation public health crisis. A crisis of deep human suffering in plain sight. And there is no time to wait," Biden, who is set to be sworn in as the 46th President of the US on January 20, said in a televised address from his hometown, Wilmington in Delaware.

"We have to act and act now. This is what the economists are telling us. More importantly, it is what the values we hold in our hearts as Americans are telling us. A growing chorus of top economists agree that, in this moment of crisis, with interest rates at historic lows, we cannot afford inaction," he said. PTI

Indonesian divers find parts of crashed plane's black box

Jakarta: Divers found parts of the cockpit voice recorder on Friday as more personnel joined the search for wreckage and victims from an Indonesian plane that crashed last weekend in the Java Sea with 62 people on board.

The aerial search for the crashed Sriwijaya Air jet was being expanded as well, said National Search and Rescue Agency mission coordinator Rasmun, who uses one name.

More than 4,000 search and rescue personnel are supported by 14 airplanes, 62 ships and 21 inflatable boats. They are using an underwater metal detector and remotely operated vehicle to search for human remains, the cockpit voice recorder and more wreckage. AP

Biden picks familiar faces for top roles at FEMA, CIA

Washington: President-elect Joe Biden is nominating New York emergency department commissioner Deanne Criswell to serve as the Federal Emergency Management Agency administrator and has tapped former CIA deputy director David Cohen to return to the agency in the same role he served during the Obama administration.

The picks, along with a trio of other new nominations confirmed to The Associated Press by the Biden team, come as the president-elect is putting a premium on experience, and perhaps familiarity, as he looks to fill out top positions at federal agencies with less than a week to go before his inauguration.

Criswell, who also spent more than five years in top posts at FEMA during the Obama administration, is the first woman nominated to head the agency, whose primary responsibility is to coordinate responses to major disasters inside the United States that require federal attention. Nancy Ward served as the agency's acting administrator in the early months of the Obama administration before his pick, Craig Fugate, could be confirmed.

Cohen, who was deputy CIA director from 2015 to 2017, has traveled the world for years tracking money flowing to terror groups, such as the Islamic State group, and other bad actors on the international stage. AP

North Korea holds huge military parade as Kim vows nuclear might

Seoul: North Korea rolled out developmental ballistic missiles designed to be launched from submarines and other military hardware in a parade that punctuated leader Kim Jong Un's defiant calls to expand his nuclear weapons programme.

State media said Kim took center stage in Thursday night's parade celebrating a major ruling party meeting where Kim vowed maximum efforts to bolster his nuclear and missile program that threatens Asian rivals and the American homeland to counter what he described as U.S. Hostility.

During the eight-day Workers' Party congress that ended Tuesday, Kim also revealed plans to salvage the nation's economy amid U.S.-led sanctions over his nuclear ambitions, pandemic-related border closures and natural disasters that wiped out crops. AP

Iran's Guard holds ballistic missile drill amid tensions

Tehran (Iran): Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard forces on Friday held a military exercise involving ballistic missiles and drones in the country's central desert, state TV reported, amid heightened tensions over Tehran's nuclear program and a U.S. Pressure campaign against the Islamic Republic. In the first phase of the drill Friday morning, the Guard's aerospace division launched several surface-to-surface ballistic missiles against simulated enemy bases, state TV reported. AP

At least 34 dead as Indonesia quake topples homes, buildings

Mamuju (Indonesia): A strong, shallow earthquake shook Indonesia's Sulawesi island just after midnight, toppling homes and buildings, triggering landslides and killing at least 34 people.

More than 600 people were injured during the magnitude 6.2 quake, which sent people fleeing their homes in the darkness on Friday. Authorities were still collecting information about the full scale of casualties and damage in the affected areas.

There were reports of many people trapped in the rubble of collapsed homes and buildings.

In a video released by the National Disaster Mitigation Agency, a girl stuck in the wreckage of a house cried out for help and said she heard the sound of other family members also trapped. "Please help me, it hurts," the girl told rescuers, who replied that they desperately wanted to help her.

The rescuers said an excavator was needed to save the girl and others trapped in collapsed buildings. Other images showed a severed bridge and damaged and flattened houses. TV stations reported the earthquake damaged part of a hospital and patients were moved to an emergency tent outside.

Ugandan Prez reported leading in early election results

Kampala (Uganda): Uganda's electoral commission said on Friday that President Yoweri Museveni led in Thursday's election based on results from roughly a third of polling stations, receiving 65 per cent of ballots while top opposition candidate Bobi Wine had 27 per cent. Final results are expected Saturday afternoon.

Wine, a popular singer-turned-lawmaker half the president's age, alleged that the vote in the East African country was rigged. "Whatever is being declared is a total sham," he told reporters, while there was a heavy police presence near his home. AP

Nepal approves AstraZeneca's India-made Covid-19 vaccine for emergency use

Kathmandu: Nepal has granted emergency approval for AstraZeneca's India-made Covishield vaccine against the novel coronavirus that has claimed nearly 1,950 lives in the country. The decision to grant the approval for the vaccine was taken on Friday, Nepal's Department of Drug Administration (DDA) said in a statement.

"Conditional permission has been granted for emergency use authorisation of Covishield vaccine against COVID-19 in Nepal," the statement said. Drug major AstraZeneca has partnered with the Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII), the world's largest vaccine manufacturer, for the supply of the vaccine to the Indian government and also to a large number of low and middle-income countries.

The vaccine, developed with the University of Oxford, is made from a virus which is a weakened version of a common cold virus (adenovirus), that has been genetically changed so that it is impossible for it to grow in humans. PTI

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Mr. Suresh Kumar Sharma is the owner of Property No. E-16, measuring 250 sq. yds., Block-E, situated at Rousee Lane Industrial Area, Phase-II, New Delhi, known as Mayapuri Industrial Area Phase-II, New Delhi, by virtue of Sale Deed dated 18.09.2015, Registration No. 4147, executed by Mr. Suresh Malik who was owner of the said property by virtue of conveyance deed dated 26.07.2010, has lost his misplaced Requirementment deed dated 16.10.1988, and some pages of another Relinquishment deed executed by Mr. Din Dayal Malik, also personal lease deed is in misplaced condition. All persons are hereby informed that Mr. Suresh Kumar Sharma want to take loan against the said property from HDFC Bank Ltd. if anybody has any objections upon the said property & its ownership Title & Mortgage kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
200, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, N. Delhi-110 014
Ph.: 011-4112017-28, kumarassociatesadvocates@gmail.com

WANTED PERSON

General public is hereby informed that a male namely **UNKNOWN, S/O Unknown, R/o Unknown is wanted in FIR No. 31/20 dated 06.08.2020 u/s 420/34 IPC was registered in P.S. North Avenue, New Delhi.** During the course of investigation photograph of the accused person was developed based on CCTV footage. The description of the accused person is as under:-

Name: Unknown, Age: 20-25 Years, Height: 5'8", Face: Long, Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Thin, Wearing: Pant and Shirt.

If anyone have any information about this wanted person please inform PS North Avenue, New Delhi.

Web: http://cbi.nic.in, Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639 SHO
Police Station, North Avenue, New Delhi
DP/188/NDD/21 Ph.: 011-23093040, 23093294

SORIL INFRA RESOURCES LIMITED
(CIN : L52190HR2005PLC07960)

Extract of the consolidated unaudited financial results for the quarter and nine months ended 31 December 2020 (Rs. in crores)

Particulars	3 months ended 31 December 2020		Year to date figures for current year period ended 31 December 2020		3 months ended 31 December 2019	
	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited
Total income	50.42	142.65	64.54		64.54	
Net profit for the period (before tax, exceptional and extraordinary items)	5.40	23.20	5.67		5.67	
Net profit for the period before tax (after exceptional and/or extraordinary items)	5.40	23.20	5.67		5.67	
Net profit for the period after tax (after exceptional and/or extraordinary items)	4.98	18.95	4.39		4.39	
Total comprehensive income for the period (comprising profit for the period (after tax) and other comprehensive income (after tax))	4.99	19.22	4.94		4.94	
Paid-up equity share capital	31.50	31.50	31.50		31.50	
Earnings per share before extraordinary items (face value of Rs. 10 per equity share)						
*EPS for the quarter/ nine month are not annualised						
- Basic (Rs)	1.58 *	6.02 *	1.39 *		1.39 *	
- Diluted (Rs)	1.58 *	6.02 *	1.39 *		1.39 *	
Reserves (excluding revaluation reserve) as per audited financials of the previous year March 2020			208.83			

Note to the financial results:

- The above results have been reviewed by the audit committee and subsequently approved at the meeting of the Board of Directors held on 15 January 2021. These financial results have been subjected to a limited review by the statutory auditors of the Company.
- Key standalone financial information of SORIL Infra Resources Limited: (Rs. in crores)

Particulars	3 months ended 31 December 2020		Year to date figures for current year period ended 31 December 2020		3 months ended 31 December 2019	
	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited
Total income	43.59	113.69	52.21		52.21	
Profit / (loss) before tax	2.73	7.13	0.34		0.34	
Net profit / (loss) after tax	2.73	6.77	0.34		0.34	

3) The above presentation is an extract of the detailed format of quarter/ nine month financial results filed with the stock exchanges under regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the quarter/ nine month financial results are available on the Company's website (http://sorialinfraresources.com) and on the website of BSE (http://www.bseindia.com) and NSE (http://www.nseindia.com).

Registered Office: Plot No. 448-451, Udyog Vihar, Phase-V, Gurugram - 122016 For and on behalf of Board of Directors
Place : Gurugram Anil Malhan
Date : 15 January 2021 Executive Director

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is notified for the information of rail passengers that the timings of the 02311 Howrah Jn - Kalka Superfast Special Train will be revised w.e.f. 22.01.2021 as under:-

Revised Timings of 02311 Howrah Jn - Kalka Superfast Special Train (Daily)

Train No.: 02311	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	21:55	---	HOWRAH JN
NO TIME CHANGE BETWEEN HOWRAH JN - PT DEEN DAYAL UPADHYA JN STATIONS			
09:08	09:10	---	MIRZAPUR
10:40	10:50	---	PRAYAGRAJ JUNCTION
12:10	12:12	---	FATEHPUR
13:30	13:40	---	KANPUR CENTRAL
14:40	14:41	---	PHAPHUND
15:28	15:33	---	ETAWAH
16:10	16:12	---	SHIKOHABAD JUNCTION
16:30	16:32	---	FIROZABAD
17:05	17:10	---	TUNDLA JUNCTION
NO TIME CHANGE BETWEEN ALIGARH JN - KALKA STATIONS			
03:00	---	---	KALKA

For details related to stoppages/accommodation of trains etc. passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

Note: All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

Security Helpline No. 182 Integrated Helpline No. 139

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अति अल्पकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण सूचना संख्या - 03 SBD / 2020-21
(राष्ट्रीय / राजकीय स्पर्धा)
(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

1. कार्य का विवरण -

सूच सं.	कार्य का नाम	अवधि का राशि (लाख रु० में)	प्रारंभिक राशि (लाख रु० में)	अवधि का राशि (लाख रु० में)	परिष्कार - विवरण का मूल्य (अवधिपूर्वकीय) (केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में मुगतेय) रु० में	बेल्डिंग को देय बिड प्रोसेसिंग की (अवधिपूर्वकीय) (केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में मुगतेय) रु० में	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
01	02	03	04	05	06	07	
01.	घनपुर रिटायर लाईन पर कटाव निरोधक कार्य ।	1325.50	23.26	10,000.00	5,900.00		15-05-2021
02.	पौढी तटबंध के कि०मी० 28.00 से कि०मी० 35.00 के बीच कटाव निरोधक कार्य ।	1211.66	22.12	10,000.00	5,900.00		15-05-2021
03.	जी०एच० तटबंध के कि०मी० 0.23 से कि०मी० 0.835 के बीच एवं कि०मी० 1.56 से कि०मी० 2.16 और कि०मी० 2.66 से कि०मी० 3.16 के बीच कटाव निरोधक कार्य ।	536.45	10.73	10,000.00	5,900.00		15-05-2021

2- निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निरत करने की तिथि : दिनांक - 12.01.2021
3- निविदा कमजोर जडनकोड एवं अपलोड करने की तिथि (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर) : दिनांक 19.01.2021 से दिनांक 23.01.2021 के 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक
4- प्री-बिड मीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक-21.01.2021, 3.00 बजे अपराह्न में, मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, बाढ़ नियंत्रण एवं जल निराकरण, जल संसाधन विभाग, गोपालगंज।
5- तकनीकी बिड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 27.01.2021 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
6- वित्तीय बिड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 27.01.2021 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट 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 पता : बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल-1, पड़रौना। मोबाईल नं० - 7463889135
10- विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in एवं www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar पर देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल-1,
पड़रौना

PR. No. 011090 (WRD) 2020-21

बाढ़ सामग्री - संबंधी किसी तरह की आज्ञाकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC & ITS ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

India took 'very decisive' steps: IMF MD

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has praised India for taking "very decisive" steps to deal with the coronavirus pandemic and its economic consequences and asked the country to do more this year to support an accelerated transformation of the economy.



Participating in a global media roundtable on Thursday, the chief of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted a less bad outlook for India in the upcoming World Economic Update due to the

At the same time, she said that one of the aspects of India's reforms that are still lagging is on gender equality

deal with the pandemic and to deal with the economic consequences of it," Georgieva said. The IMF is scheduled to release its World Economic Update on January 26. Talking about India, she said it was a very dramatic lockdown for a country of this size of the population with people clustered so closely together.

"Then India moved to more targeted restrictions and lockdowns. What we see is that that transition, combined with policy support, seems to have worked well. Why? Because if you look at mobility indicators, we are almost where we were before Covid in India, meaning that economic activities have

been revitalised quite significantly," she said.

"What the government has done on the monetary policy and the fiscal policy side is commendable. It is actually slightly above the average for emerging markets. Emerging markets on average have provided six per cent of the GDP. In India, this is slightly above that. Good for India is that there is still space to do more.... If you can do more, please do," Georgieva said.

According to the IMF Managing Director, 2021 is the year to use that space.

"But use it wisely in a more targeted manner and to support an accelerated transformation of the economy. Because what we see is amazing how much faster structural change takes place. And policymakers ought to be leaning forward in this environment to support this structural transformation and to cushion the impact it has on those

that are on the losing side of it," she said. Georgieva said that she is impressed by the appetite for structural reforms that India is retaining.

"We welcome that. No question those reforms, and actually that applies very much to South Africa... Will determine competitiveness in the future. We need higher productivity. We need more vibrant and inclusive economies. And they are not going to fall from the sky. There have to be reforms that support them," she said.

Welcoming the fact that India does not give up on structural reforms, she said: "And I'm saying, yes, do it! Because the world change is accelerating and economies have to be agile and adaptable to change... We have to be constantly leaning forward."

At the same time, she said that one of the aspects of India's reforms that are still lagging is on gender equality.

Sensex slumps 549 points on profit-taking; posts weekly gain

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity indices sank deep into the red on Friday as concerns over stretched valuations and a bearish trend in global markets triggered across-the-board selling.

Investors preferred to book profits at higher levels despite a good start to the earnings season, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex slumped 549.49 points or 1.11 per cent to finish at 49,034.67. The broader NSE Nifty tumbled 161.90 points or 1.11 per cent to 14,433.70.

Tech Mahindra was the top loser in the Sensex pack, shedding 4.35 per cent, followed by HCL Tech, ONGC, Asian Paints, UltraTech Cement, HDFC and HUL.

Only four Sensex components closed with gains — Bharti Airtel, ITC, Bajaj Auto and Bajaj Finance, spurring up to 3.84 per cent.

During the week, the

Sensex advanced 252.16 points or 0.51 per cent while the Nifty rose 86.45 points or 0.60 per cent.

Global equities were on the backfoot on Friday even as US President-elect Joe Biden unveiled his widely-anticipated USD 1.9 trillion stimulus package as investors fretted over possible tax hikes and higher interest rates.

"Markets began circling amidst weak job data in the US even as Joe Biden unveiled details of the \$1.9 trillion rescue package. Friday's afternoon trade saw profit taking in IT stocks despite the biggies putting out positive commentary with large deal wins as MCAP to GDP crossed 100 per cent, leading to volatility," said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

Sector-wise, BSE oil and gas, IT, realty, capital goods, utilities, energy, power and consumer durables indices fell up to 2.43 per cent, while tele-

com rallied 3.68 per cent. In the broader markets, the BSE midcap and smallcap indices skidded up to 1.25 per cent.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Shanghai and Hong Kong ended on a positive note, while Seoul and Tokyo were in the red.

Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading in the negative territory in early deals.

Meanwhile, the global oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 1.77 per cent lower at \$55.42 per barrel.

Farm Bills have potential to represent significant step forward for agri reforms: IMF

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The IMF believes the farm Bills passed by the Indian Government have the potential to represent a significant step forward for agricultural reforms, but a social safety net is needed to protect those who might be adversely impacted during the transition to the new system, a spokesperson of the global lender said here.

Gerry Rice, Director of Communications at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), said the new measures will reduce the role of the middlemen and enhance efficiency. "We believe the farm bills do have the potential to represent a significant step forward for agricultural reforms in India," Rice said at a news conference in Washington on Thursday.

"The measures will enable farmers to directly contract with sellers, allow farmers to retain a greater share of the sur-

plus by reducing the role of middlemen, enhance efficiency and support rural growth," he said. "However, it is crucial that the social safety net adequately protects those who might be adversely impacted during the transition to this new system," the spokesperson said responding to a question on the ongoing protests by farmers against the laws in India.

This can be done by ensuring that the job market accommodates those that are impacted by the reforms, he said.

And of course, the growth benefits of these reforms will depend, critically, on the effectiveness and the timing of their implementation, so need to pay attention to those issues as well with the reform," Rice said.

Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana, have been camping at several Delhi border points, demanding a complete repeal of the three farm laws and legal guarantee of minimum sup-

Economy likely to contract up to 7.5% this fiscal, may see 9-11% growth in FY22: Arvind Virmani

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian economy is likely to contract in the range of 5-7.5 per cent this fiscal but will see a growth of 9 to 11 per cent in FY 2021-22, former chief economic adviser Arvind Virmani said on Friday.

Addressing a virtual event organised by industry body PHDCCI, Virmani said in the upcoming Budget, the government should come up with policies to accelerate India's economic growth.

"In the post pandemic Budget, policy reforms (are) needed for accelerating India's economic growth..." he said adding that the economy is likely to contract to 5 per cent to 7.5 per cent in FY2020-21 and grow 9-11 per cent in the next fiscal," he said.

The Union Budget for FY2021-22, the eighth of the Narendra Modi-led government, is scheduled to be presented in Parliament on February 1, 2021.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will be presenting her third Budget. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has projected the Indian economy to contract 7.5 per cent in the current fiscal while the National Statistical Office (NSO) estimates the contraction at 7.7 per cent. Virmani further said that India can't become 'Aatmanirbhar' with the 20th century Direct Tax Code (DTC). "There is a need to simplify direct taxes and indirect taxes for MSMEs. We can't have 21st century Aatmanirbhar with 20th century DTC... We need 21st century Direct Tax Code," he said.

The eminent economist also emphasised that there is a need of 15 per cent uniform GST rate for 75 per cent of goods and services.

Noting that production-linked incentive (PLI) was actually a very good scheme, Virmani said the government should promote employment generating exports.

Exports enter positive zone after 2 months, up marginally to \$27.15 bn in December

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's exports grew marginally to \$27.15 billion in December while imports surged 7.56 per cent, increasing the trade deficit to \$15.44 billion, official data showed on Friday.

Imports during the month were estimated at \$42.59 billion, with inbound shipments of gold rising sharply by 81.82 per cent to \$4.48 billion.

"The trade deficit for

December 2020 was estimated at \$15.44 billion as against the deficit of \$12.49 billion in December 2019, which is an increase of 23.66 per cent," as per the government data.

Exports growth was in the negative territory in October and November.

The data revealed that exports of petroleum products contracted 35.35 per cent to \$2.34 billion in December, while that of readymade garments shrank 15.05 per cent to

\$1.19 billion. However, exports of electronic goods rose by 16.51 per cent to \$1.25 billion and of chemicals by 10.79 per cent to nearly \$2 billion.

The outward shipments of rice, tea, spices and oil meals too were higher in December 2020 compared to the same month last year. Cumulative value of exports for the period April-December 2020-21 was \$200.80 billion as against \$238.27 billion during the same period last year, down 15.73 per cent.

Forex reserves up by \$758 m to lifetime high of \$586.082 bn

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The gold reserves climbed by \$568 million to \$37.594 billion, weekly data by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) increased by \$5 million to \$1.515 billion.

The country's reserve position with the IMF rose by \$35 million to \$5.181 billion in the week, as per the data.

In the reporting week, foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves, rose by \$150 million to \$541.791 billion.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

The gold reserves climbed by \$568 million to \$37.594 billion, weekly data by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed.

After remaining unchanged during the last week, the special drawing rights

RPF returns bag with valuables to owner

Kolkata: On Thursday at about 09.25 am, an on duty RPF staff at Mahanayak Uttam Kumar station found a bag lying unclaimed on passenger's chair in the station's UP Platform and it was brought to the RPF post of this station. After opening the bag in front of all RPF officials, several bearer cheques amounting to ₹1,43,299, one ATM card, one Aadhar card, one Voter card, one Pan Card, one money purse and agree-

ment papers of building constructions were found therein. A mobile number was also found from the money purse containing in the bag.

The mobile number was dialled and the owner was contacted. He came to the RPF post. After proper verification and observing all official formalities, the bag was handed over to him. He expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the RPF officials for recovery of his bag. **PNS**

Office of Municipal Commissioner NAGAR NIGAM HARIDWAR

Email : nagarnigamharidwar@gmail.com

Notice Inviting Tender (NIT)

Nagar Office of Municipal Commissioner, Nagar Nigam, HARIDWAR on behalf of "Governor of Uttarakhand" invites item rate re-tenders through e-tendering, from Eligible Bidders for Implementation of ICT Enabled Solid Waste Management and Toilet Cleaning and Monitoring System during Maha Kumbh 2021.

Detailed eligibility criteria, EMD, ITB, and other terms & conditions of the re-tender document can be seen at <https://uktenders.gov.in>. Any amendment in future against the re-tender shall be uploaded on <https://uktenders.gov.in>.

Document Download Start Date	16.01.2021 at 1000 hrs
Proposal Due Date	22.01.2021 up to 1500 hrs
Opening of Technical Bids	22.01.2021 at 1600 hrs
Cost of Tender Document	INR 5900/-

No 299/ICT/KumbhMela-2021/E-Tender Date: 15.01.2021
Municipal Commissioner, Nagar Nigam Haridwar

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that this boy (depicted in the photo) namely: **Sonu Kumar S/o Virender Mehto R/o E-515 DDA Colony Khayala, Delhi** has been missing from the area of Keshopur Mandi since 05.01.2021 at 01:15 PM. In this regard FIR No. 06/2021 Dated 05.01.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Tilak Nagar, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the boy but no clue has come to light so far.

His physical description is as under:-
Sex: Male, **Age:** 14 years, **Height:** 5'3" ft., **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Long, **Built:** Thin, **ID Mark:** A mole on upper lip, **Wearing:** Blue Jeans & Cherry Colour Jacket and Cloth Shoes in feet.

Any person is having information or clue about this missing/kidnapped boy may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> P.S. Tilak Nagar, New Delhi
E-mail: cbi@gov.in Ph.: 011-25409290
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 Mob. No.: 8750871130
Fax No.: 011-24368639 DP/319/WD/2021

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of female **Namely:** Unknown, **D/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** approx. 35-40 years, **Height:** 5', **Complexion:** Wheatish, **ID:** Having Tajmahal Tattoo on right hand, **Injury:** on forehead, **Wearing:** Green colour saree, blue colour warm inner and lower, purple colour shawl and black colour rubber shoes, who was found at vacant DDA land between Sanskriti and Baghban Apartment, Sector 28, Rohini, Delhi. In this regard a case FIR No. 09/21 Dated 08.01.2021 has been registered at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

Sd/- SHO
P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi
DP/737/ON/2021 Tel.: 011-27821047, 27822207

PNIT NO (e-TENDER): e-PT-III/EE/RDSD/2020-21 DATED-11/01/2021

The Executive Engineer, RD Store Division, Gurkhabasti, Agartala invites e-tender for procurement of ISI marked (IS: 1786:2008) TMT bar (3600 MT) as per specification of DNIT from eligible bidders upto 3.00 PM of 01/02/2021. For details visit website- <https://tripuratenders.gov.in> and contact at M-9774488585. Any subsequent corrigendum will be available in the website only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer RD Store Division Agartala
ICA/C-2805/2020-21

NOTICE

Company Name: Heidelberg Cement India Ltd. Reg. Office: 9th Floor, Infinity Tower 'C' DLF Cyber City Phase-II, Gurugram, Haryana - 122002. Notice is hereby given that the certificates for the under mentioned securities of the company have been lost/misplaced and the holder of the said securities has applied to the company to issue duplicate certificates.

Name of the holders	Kind of Securities and face value	Folio No.	Certificate No.	Disactive Numbers From To Total No.
Anup Padmakar Joshi	Shares of Rs. 10/- each	J001806	409	747202 747301 100
		J001806	8268	1163543 1163592 50
		J001806	57593	3402219 3402278 60
		J001806	139909	14336803 14336902 100
		J001806	133910	14336903 14336927 25
				335

Any person who has a claim in respect of the said securities should lodge such claim with the company at its registered office within 15 days from this date, else the company will proceed to issue duplicate certificates without further intimation.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

Dy. CST/EE/CW/Northern Railway, DRM Office, 2nd floor, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender under Single Packet system from experienced & established contractors having sufficient experience in similar nature of work and satisfying minimum eligibility criteria on the prescribed form for the following work:

Name of work	"S&T work for alteration of PI at Kathua and Madhopur Punjab stations and associated telecom work at adjoining stations in c/w doubling across Ravi Bridge section over Ferozpur Division of Northern Railway".
Approximate cost of the work	Rs. 66.35 Lakh
Earnest money	Rs. 1,32,700/- (Rupees One Lakh Thirty Two Thousand Seven Hundred only)
Completion period	06 (Six) months
Date, Time & Place for submission and opening of tender	Tender will be available on www.ireps.gov.in website from 18.01.2021 to 11.30 Hrs. on 10.02.2021 and will be opened on 10.02.2021 after 11.30 hrs. Tender can be uploaded from 27.01.2021 to 11.30 hrs. on 10.02.2021 and will be opened on 10.02.2021 after 11.30 hrs.
E-Tender document cost - Nil.	The detailed e-tender notice and document will be available on Northern Railway website i.e. on www.ireps.gov.in from 18.01.2021 to 11.30 hrs. on 10.02.2021, bidders are advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which, they would require to obtain class III digital certificate (if already not obtained) issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document.
Address from where tender form can be purchased	

No.: 178-Sig/CW/32/96/PI-II Date: 15.01.2021 125/2021
Serving Customers with a Smile

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Balbir Saran S/o Sh. Ram Swarup R/o D-4/4035, Vasant Kunj, Delhi have lost the original Plot Buyer's Agreement dated 3rd April 1986 of property no N-1/40, DLF City Phase-II, Gurugram, Haryana.

Any person finds the above said original Plot Buyer's Agreement, may please contact the undersigned.

Balbir Saran (Owner) S/o Sh. Ram Swarup R/o D-4/4035, Vasant Kunj, Delhi Mob: 9910174035

IN THE COURT OF SH. AASHISH GUPTA, ACJ/CCJ/ARC-(South East) Room No. 203, Second Floor, Saket Court, New Delhi. SS-10/20

MR. ACHYUTANAL GUHA & ANR. VS. THE STATE

Memo of Parties:-
1. Mr. Achyutanal Guha S/o Late Mr. Anuday Guha 4-C, DDA, SFS Flats, B-Block, East of Kailash, Srinivaspur, S.O. South Delhi, New Delhi-110065.
2. Mrs. Milan Maia Sarin W/o Mr. Sudhir Sarin 313 Jalvayu Tower, Sector-56, Gurugram, Haryana-122011
.....Petitioners

VERSUS
State (Govt. of NCT of Delhi) Through SDM, DM Office Road, National Park, Old Gurga College Building, Amar Colony, Lajpat Nagar-IV South-East Delhi New Delhi-110024
.....Respondent

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, 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/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Nidhi Bakshi/ Rajnish Bakshi/ Puneet Sharma/ Travel World International/ LBDEL00002713905	F-3/11, SF, Sec- 15, Rohini, Delhi/ January 12, 2021	August 18, 2020/ Rs. 30,09,620/-	Delhi/ NCR

The above-mentioned borrower(s)/ guarantor(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: Delhi/ NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Yaari Digital Integrated Services Limited

(Formerly known as Indiabulls Integrated Services Limited)
(CIN: L51919HR2007PLC077999)

Particulars	Extract of Consolidated Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended 31 December 2020 (Rs. in Crores)		
	3 months ended 31 December 2020	Year to date figures for current period ended 31 December 2020	3 months ended 31 December 2019
Total Income from Operations	56.07	164.39	77.51
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Minority Interest and Share of Profit / (Loss) of Associate, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(25.53)	(66.59)	25.34
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (after Tax, Minority Interest and Share of Profit / (Loss) of Associate (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items))	(25.53)	(66.59)	25.34
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax, Minority Interest and Share of Profit / (Loss) of Associate (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(28.62)	(76.07)	18.70
Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	132.28	296.13	264.18
Equity Share Capital	17.87	17.87	17.87
Earnings per Share (EPS) before extraordinary items			
- Basic (Amount in Rs.)	(3.40)	(9.27)	1.92
- Diluted (Amount in Rs.)	(3.40)	(9.27)	1.92
Earnings per Share (EPS) after extraordinary items			
- Basic (Amount in Rs.)	(3.40)	(9.27)	1.92
- Diluted (Amount in Rs.)	(3.40)	(9.27)	1.92

Note to the financial results:
1) The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and subsequently approved at the meeting of the Board of Directors held on 15 January 2021.

2) Key Standalone Financial Information:

Particulars	(Rs. in Crores)		
	3 months ended 31 December 2020	Year to date figures for current period ended 31 December 2020	3 months ended 31 December 2019
Total Income	0.49	4.03	0.12
Loss before Tax	(27.38)	(58.29)	(13.71)
Net Loss after Tax	(27.38)	(58.29)	(13.93)

3) The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Nine months Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Nine months Financial Results are available on the Company's website (<https://indiabullsintegratedservices.com>) and on the website of BSE (<https://www.bseindia.com>) and NSE (<https://www.nseindia.com>).

Registered Office: Plot No. 448-451, Udyog Vihar, Phase-V, Gurugram - 122016
Place: Gurgaon Date: 15 January 2021
For and on behalf of Board of Directors
Kubair Khara Executive Director & CEO

SHORT CIRCUITS



RANDEEP HOODA

Portraying a super cop like Avinash Mishra in my debut web series *Inspector Avinash* is exciting as well as challenging at the same time. I am thrilled to start the year with this series, a cop-thriller based on real events. I am looking forward to present a thorough entertainer to the audience with this one.



MAANVI GAGROO

Third season of web series *Four More Shots Please* is feeling extremely positive. After receiving so much love for season two, it almost feels like we owe this season to our fans. Apart from that, having lived through lockdown and not seen each other for so long, there's been a beautiful sense of togetherness that's crept in.



YASH TONK

It feels great to be back shooting for a television show again. Set in the traumatic backdrop of pre-Partition, *Kyun Utthe Dil Chad Aaye* narrates the story of three young women who dared to dream the impossible in the 1940s. My character Lala Brij Kishore is an innocent yet aggressive person, who is at odds with everyone.



SIDHARTH SIPANI

If you are disciplined with your work, everything eventually falls in place and you are happier. You need to follow your passion and do whatever makes you happy. Everything gets easier with time. There are days when your body gives up, you have sleepless nights but you need to keep going on. Don't ever give up, that is the only way.

SELENA GOMEZ

My Spanish single titled *De Una Vez* is the beginning of something I've wanted to explore for long. I hope you love it as much as I do.



CONVERSATION 45 MINUTES



The increasingly unsustainable use of marine resources for economic activities, fishing, boating, tourism etc, has hurt the health of our oceans, seas and coasts. However, the wake of Coronavirus and the lockdown has turned out to be an opportunity to revive the marine ecosystem. To throw light on the varied and vast marine ecology, Sony BBC Earth has brought a show called *Blue Planet Revisited*. The two-part series celebrates marine life from all corners of the globe, exploring the challenges facing the ecosystems and wildlife in two key locations — Australia's Great Barrier Reef and the Bahamas. As the breeding season gets underway, the series focusses on the action following whales and their calves, turtles and their hatchlings and the scientists who know our oceans best. It is packed with insight and spectacle. Incredible shark dives in the Bahamas. The underwater dawn chorus of the Great Barrier Reef, home to 600 different kinds of coral and more than 1500 species of fish.

To build relevance around the show through her expertise, the channel reached out and on-boarded Nayantara Jain, Executive Director of Reef Watch Marine Conservation — one of India's oldest and only organisations committed to protecting India's coasts and oceans. Excerpts:

THE DEEP DIVE

Marine biologist NAYANTARA JAIN feels that shows like *Blue Planet Revisited* are needed to dispel myths around animals and help people explore marine life. By TEAM VIVA

Can you tell us about your journey as a marine biologist and what led to resource marine conservation India?

I learned how to scuba dive when I was 16. I think a lot of what drove me towards learning diving was the incredible nature documentaries that I've watched before, like the original *Blue Planet* and *Oceans* and all the BBC documentaries, narrated by Sir David Attenborough. Watching them really inspired me to learn how to dive. And once I started diving, because I was very passionate about it that I became a scuba diving instructor. After working as a scuba instructor for a few years, I realised how our life on lands were impacting the ocean and especially coral reef ecosystems. That's when I became very passionate about conservation, and that's what led me to study marine biology and then work with Reef Watch.



Tell us about the various initiatives undertaken by Reef Watch Marine Conservation India?

We have two sort of key field placements. One is in the Andaman Islands, and the other on the coast of Karnataka, to the West coast of India. In the Andaman, we work a lot with coral reef restoration and conservation. So, we have various ongoing projects where we are looking at different ways to regrow and repair the damaged reef areas. In another mainland, on the West coast, the work that we're doing is to do with injured and stranded marine megafauna, like sea turtles, dolphins and even whales. We have a lot of them on our parts, even on the mainland, and a lot of them often get stranded on land, either dead or sometimes alive and injured. So, we have a project where we look after the injured or ill megafauna that come up to our coast and study the ones that wash up dead.

What is your take on the show *Blue Planet Revisited*? Do you think shows like these help people understand oceans and its life better?

Yes, and this is one of the main reasons I am associated with the channel, to talk about this show, because my own journey began very much with shows like these. A lot of what I knew before I did my masters on the subject, a lot of what I knew about the ocean and the animals that live in it came from shows like this. Such shows also help dispel a lot of myths and bring things into the right perspective for a lot of people. One of the episodes of the show is about sharks. I believe they are one of the most misunderstood animals on our planet today... so many people are terrified of sharks. I was just telling somebody earlier that when I worked as a full time

instructor, the question I was asked most frequently was, 'are there sharks in these waters and are they going to attack me?'

Shows like this and nature documentaries teach people a lot about these animals. They teach them which animals are dangerous and which ones are not. They create a lot of excitement and curiosity, leading to more people exploring these spaces in real life. It's wonderful to have such shows. One of my greatest dreams is to make a documentary about India's coast specifically.

Can you tell us about some of the astonishing encounters in your journey underwater? What keeps you going in this field?

One of my most memorable diving experience ever, was when I got to do something very similar to what they have shown on this show about the sharks in the Bahamas. A few years ago I got to dive in Galapagos Islands, which is another sort of shark sanctuary we have on our planet today. So, I got to dive with hundreds of different species of sharks. And, I could see these really powerful, magnificent beings swimming around me — I can never forget that moment in my life. So, it was really cool to see something similar like that on a particular episode of the show.

What is the future of our islands

and marine world, especially in India?

I've been working as a diver and then as a conservationist for the past 10 years. Over the years, I have seen a lot of damage to our oceans. Areas that boasted of a lot of sharks are completely fished out of it now. I've seen a lot of coral reefs being degraded over the years. There's an increasing amount of litter and plastics on our coastline and waters. It is very concerning, but the silver lining here is that I've seen a surge of young children concerned about the environment. They get in touch with me, wanting to be marine biologists or wanting to come and volunteer with the organisation or know how they can organise a beach clean-up in their city. Indians are coming in to learn how to dive and surf and just interact with the ocean more. This is really encouraging. Right now, the interest of youth in all of this is rising and if more people connect with the ocean and want to preserve it, things can change for good. We still have coral reefs in the Andaman. We still have sharks in our ocean, we still have whales in the sea, and we can have sea turtles along the coastline. So, this is really the time for us to act. If we as a society realise the importance of a healthy ocean and come together we can bring about a change.

(The show airs on January 23, 9 pm on Sony BBC Earth.)

STUDIO TALK 30 MINUTES



THE GREY STORY

The investigative documentary, *What Killed Maradona?*, is a celebration of the astonishing talent of a flawed football icon and the influences that led to his demise

Genius, legend, addict. A lifetime of highs and lows. For decades it was drugs that kept him playing but wrecked his life off the pitch. Diego Maradona rose from street urchin to become a footballing god. But he was never to see out his later years, dying at just 60 years old. The cause of death was given as a heart failure, but what really killed Maradona?

After his untimely death, *What Killed Maradona?* pieces together the extraordinary life of a man who was addicted to drugs off the pitch, but who also relied on a cocktail of pharmaceuticals to maintain his world-beating performance on the pitch. It also reveals how this lethal lifestyle, that began when Maradona was just a child, eventually became the perfect prescription for his death.

Maradona's story is one of genius and trauma, from the humblest of beginnings in a Buenos Aires shanty town where he would play football with his friends for hours on end, to becoming a football superstar known and feted around the world.

But his poverty-stricken childhood left him at a disadvantage and despite his prodigious talent on the pitch throughout his junior playing career, Maradona received treatments to build up his physique, which had been hampered due to his impoverished background. His younger years were filled with constant medical intervention.

As a foretaste of the controversy that would later engulf his life, Maradona's infamous 'hand of God' goal against England, as he led his country to victory at the 1986 World Cup in Mexico, as well as to a place in the final, four years later. He broke the world transfer record joining Italian club Napoli for £6.9m but as Maradona's income rose, so did the pressure to support a growing number of dependents off the pitch, as well as the intense fame and adulation of his fans. He started to show the signs of addiction to alcohol and cocaine, as well as prescription medicines.

A preliminary autopsy, widely reported by Argentine

media, reveals pulmonary oedema caused by heart failure, but the lifetime of pressure, addiction and abuse of his body have all helped lead him there.

Issac John, Digital Head, APAC - Discovery, said, "It's been our constant endeavour to make the sports fan experience immersive sports stories that showcase both, the hardships and glories of being at the pinnacle as well as the not-so-often talked about aspects of stardom. The show is one of those stories that presents the greyer shades of a legend whose game inspired the dreams of many of today's superstars in the world's favourite sport of football."

With testimonies from those who knew him best including Jon Smith football's original 'super-agent', who represented Maradona; Fernando Signorini Maradona's former trainer, and Giuseppe Bruscolotti, former captain of Napoli and teammate of Maradona, the show reveals how this lifestyle led to his untimely demise.

(The show is streaming on discovery+.)

CELEB TALK 15 MINUTES

My journey has been special: Kiara

Actor Kiara Advani made her Bollywood debut in 2014 with *Fugly*, which was a no-show at the box office. However, she was later seen in hits such as *M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story*, *Lust Stories*, *Kabir Singh* and *Good Newz*. The actor cannot name a particular role as gamechanger in her career, but credits all her work for the success she enjoys today.

"For me, I think every film mattered, right from my first because that is what gave me my first step into the film industry. People also say *Kabir Singh* and *Lust Stories* but every film has been a turning point in my life. So, I can't think of just one film, my entire journey has been special," Kiara said.

The actor, whose latest release is *Indoo Ki Jawaani*, has a string of releases coming up. She will be seen in the *Sidharth Malhotra*-starrer *Shershaah*, *Bhoolaiya 2* with Kartik Aaryan and the star-studded *Jug Jug Jeeto*.

—IANS



IMMERSIVE 45 MINUTES

When Javicia Leslie moved to Los Angeles, she frequently rode down the popular Sunset Boulevard to view the row of erected TV and film billboards for inspiration. As an aspiring actor, she often parked underneath her favourite ones to study before an audition.

For years, Leslie made this her routine in hopes of one day seeing her image on full display in Hollywood. Her dreams ultimately became reality when the 33-year-old actor — who starred on CBS's *God Friended Me* and Carl Weber's *The Family Business* on BET+ — recently saw a billboard of herself donning the black-and-red Batwoman suit.

Leslie will star as the caped crusader on CW's *Batwoman*, which premieres its second season on January 17. She succeeds Ruby Rose, becoming the franchise's first Black actress to portray the superhero, and will be featured as an avowed LGBTQ central character.

In *Batwoman*, Leslie plays the role of Ryan Wilder, who spent years as a drug runner while dodging Gotham police. Her character has lethal hand-combat skills but is viewed as a kindhearted person who lives in a van with a plant. In a recent interview, Leslie spoke about carrying the mantle as the new Batwoman, the importance of the character being a lesbian and having a conversation with her mother about her sexual orientation.

◆ **What compelled you to study for your roles under billboards?**

I needed that visual to remind myself of what the end goal was and what I really wanted. It just motivated me. It was fun. Sometimes, I'd study until I fell asleep. Like I had to wake up and drive back home.

◆ **So this is something you manifested?**

I feel like everything I'm living right now, I've spoken into existence. From the

Just keep going

Actor JAVICIA LESLIE talks about carrying the mantle as the new Batwoman, the importance of the character being a lesbian and having a conversation with her mother about her sexual orientation

very beginning to the detail. Even with *Batwoman*, I did an interview in May and was asked what role I wanted to do next, and I said, "I want to play a superhero." ... The following month, I got the audition. I didn't even know they were looking to cast a new Batwoman. So, I truly believe in manifestation.

◆ **What does being DC's first Black female lead superhero mean to you?**

I always just remind myself that my purpose isn't for me. My purpose is to empower other people. God brought me here for a reason. He put me in this position for a reason. With that, it's nothing to fear because I know this will empower someone to see a Black female superhero. You don't get to see it often. It's so epic. I grew up on Batman and Catwoman and the Joker and Penguin. Now, to see blackness in that, I think it's very inclusive and empowering.

◆ **What's the importance of this character to be a lesbian?**

It's important to have representation in general. Fans of DC represent everyone, whether it's about race, whether it's LGBTQ. I think what I love so much about my show is that every character is really a great representation of everything.

◆ **Before telling your mom about landing the Batwoman role, you informed her about your sexual orientation as a bisexual. How was that conversation?**

I never had a fear of talking to my mom about anything. It's to the point where I don't have to talk about a lot of things. She already gets it. She already knows. So when we had a conversation, she was like "I am your mother. There's nothing you can tell me that I didn't already know." She's my best friend, very supportive.

◆ **How did your character Ryan endure being homeless?**

That may seem like the bottom to some people, but that was the top of what she's been through. To even have her own van and take care of herself, that meant something to her.

her. She comes from foster care and abusive foster homes and people not caring for her. The one person that cared about her was murdered in front of her. I think what may seem like nothing to someone else is a lot to her. She holds onto and cherishes it.

◆ **How did your character's circumstances mold them?**

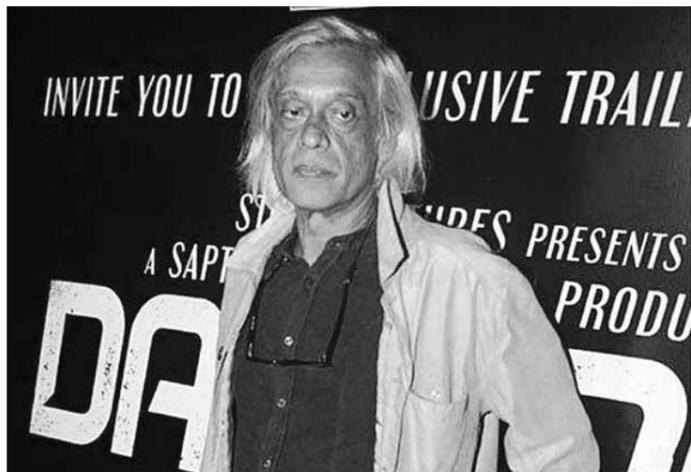
I think that if there is anything that roots the darkness in her, it's probably a little bit of revenge. The vengeance she has for the ones that killed her mother. That is enough. How can you truly fight for what's good if you can't forgive? How can you truly be on the right side if vengeance is what empowers you?

◆ **What do you want people to take away from your career so far?**

There's so many times where I could have said "This is hard" and walked away. But you must keep going. One of the things I live by is that if you follow your passion, you'll find your purpose. I think God puts passions in us for a reason. ... You must find your purpose in anything you want and speak it into existence. Then you need to have the work ethic to support it.



ENCOUNTER 15 MINUTES



Value it more

Filmmaker SUDHIR MISHRA feels that films these days are judged like political essays with no regard to the craft of storytelling

Filmmaker Sudhir Mishra feels films these days are judged like political essays with no regard to the craft of storytelling.

"There is a lack of political understanding yet everything is about politics. Films are judged like political essays. Cinema has no place. Craft has no place. What is happening?" Mishra tweeted on Friday.

"Cinema is, plucking an idea out of the air, about apparently nothing but then it becomes about so much more. About your life and mine. About your world and mine," he added.

Mishra entered Bollywood as a director with *Yeh Woh Manzil To Nahin* in 1987. He added strokes of diverse stories on the cinematic canvas, with *Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi*, *Chameli*, *Inkaar*, *Khoya Khoya Chand* and *Calcutta Mail*,

over the years, besides the OTT-released film *Serious Men* and the web series *Hostages*.

His most recent project *Serious Men* was an adaptation of Manu Joseph's eponymous book. The film featured Nawazuddin Siddiqui, and narrated the story of a father who wants to create a bright future for his son.

Meanwhile, the filmmaker had shared that the pandemic has left an everlasting impact on his life. "I don't know this whole experience of the pandemic. I've lost a bit of my swag. When I saw myself terrified, holding my father in my arms and running towards an ICU, and then watching him die, that has done something. I don't know what exactly. It will show in my next (project)," he said earlier.

—IANS

DIALOGUE 30 MINUTES

Amit salutes soldiers on Army Day

Actor Amit Sadh, who plays Kargil war hero Major Deependra Singh Sengar in a forthcoming web series *Jeet Ki Zid*, offered his best wishes to the brave officers of the Indian Army on the occasion of Army Day on Friday.

"Every Indian soldier is a shining example of valour and courage. They are the sole reason that every Indian citizen can sleep peacefully. There is nothing that can even come close to the selfless work our Indian Army does to protect us. I offer my best wishes and salute the brave officers of the Indian army. I feel honoured to have essayed the role of Major Deependra," said Amit.

The series, which also features Amrita Puri and Sushant Singh, is directed by Vishal Mangalorkar and produced by Boney Kapoor, Arunava Joy Sengupta and Akash Chawla.

The makers of the show got expert help from Special Forces consultants and mission choreographers Colonel Ashok Galoth and Major Arjun Galoth on the show.

"I am a part of a project which shows the dedication and sheer will of the Indian Army. I am glad that the makers reached out to us and took our suggestions to help create this show. It was indeed a fulfilling experience," said Colonel Ashok Galoth. Major Galoth shared that Major Deependra's story is not



only an "inspiration for us, but for the entire world." He added, "We have helped the team in our own little way with the basics of our routine, but the actual credit goes to the ones who thought of creating an entire web series on such an inspirational story." (The series is slated to premiere on January 22 on Zee5.) —IANS

Important to pick varied roles: Swara

Actor Swara Bhasker says picking roles that span across genres has always been important to her.

"Picking roles that span across genres and varied character graphs has always been important to me. Whether it was as the sultry Shanoo (*Rashbhari*), the amiable Beanie (*Bhaag Beanie Bhaag*) or now the freespirted Mausam in the horror comedy *Aapkey Kamrey Mein Koi Rehta Hai*, I've enjoyed portraying all," Swara said.

The actor will soon be seen in the horror comedy which also stars Sumeet Vyasa, Naveen Kasturia, Amol Parashar and Ashish Verma.

"I think this show will hit the right notes of laughter and unexpected drama," Swara said about the series, the trailer of which released on Friday.

Her co-star Sumeet said, "Horror comedy is a genre that I've really come to enjoy — be it as an actor who is playing a role in the narrative or for that matter — even watching such stories. It was fun to work with such great artists for this project and I believe that the comedy of errors for these four friends and their newly acquired, unexpected roommate who is a ghost will make for a fun watch."

Naveen feels the "bite-sized series is a melange of fun, comedy, horror, and entertainment. In the midst of content that is heavy on crime and drama, this will leave you with goosebumps and a healthy dose of laughter."

The series shows the journey of four friends in their newly-rented apartment that is haunted. The show, directed by Gaurav Sinha, will release on MX Player on January 22.

—IANS



Inexperienced attack keeps Oz in check

Debutants Natarajan, Washington shine as Australia score 274/5 courtesy Labuschagne ton

PTI ■ BRISBANE

The incredible underdog fairytale of Thangarasu Natarajan got better with his twin strikes on debut headlining a commendable effort from an inexperienced Indian bowling attack, which reduced Australia to 274 for 5 despite a stylish hundred from Marnus Labuschagne on the opening day of the final Test here.

The Indian attack, with a collective experience of 3 Tests and 10 balls and 11 wickets in its kitty, was pitted against a batting line-up with 59 hundreds.

After 87 overs, the two Tamil Nadu rookies Natarajan (20-2-63-2) and Washington Sundar (2-4-63-1) could hold their heads high for a lion-hearted effort on a good batting pitch in the absence of the injured Ravichandran Ashwin and Jasprit Bumrah.

If tall off-spinner Washington set up a nice little trap to get rid of Steve Smith (36 off 77 balls), Natarajan forced centurion Labuschagne (108 off 204 balls) and Matthew Wade (47 off 85 balls) to miscue their pull-shots after a 113-run stand which threatened to put India in a spot.

At stumps, Tim Paine (38) and Cameron Green (28) had added 61 runs for the sixth wicket and the visitors would need a few quick wickets to keep the first innings total within a manageable range.

The distance between Palayampatti, a non-descript village in Tamil Nadu's Salem, to Australia's modern city Brisbane is 9035 km on a google map.

But add the hardships of a daily wage mother trying to put



Shardul Thakur hugs Washington Sundar after he dismisses Australian opener Marcus Harris on Day 1 of fourth Test at Gabba

food on table, being called for suspect action early in his career, not being privileged enough to get a paternity leave (his daughter is already three months old), it's a million miles emotionally that Team India's favourite Nattu has traversed.

Getting Labuschagne, who was on a rampage, with a short delivery ensured that Australia didn't finish the day with a score close to 350.

For someone, who was supposed to be a net bowler, India's Test Cap No 300, did well

enough on the first day despite not exactly being a natural. He also knows that he doesn't have the express pace to trouble batsmen (his average speed is 130 plus).

He bowled full during his first two spells and made the length shorter when the ball got old and that's how he induced Wade and Labuschagne to go for those pull shots.

Nobody would have blamed a Natarajan or a Shardul or "leader of the attack" Mohammed Siraj (19-8-51-1),

all of whom toiled manfully throughout their multiple spells in a battle of unequals.

The inexperience was palpable as Thakur (18-5-67-1) bowled a lot of full pitched deliveries which Labuschagne pounced on in the second and third sessions during an innings that had nine boundaries.

If all the injuries weren't enough, Navdeep Saini (7.5 overs) now seems to be in trouble as he has sustained a groin niggle moments after his skipper Ajinkya Rahane dropped a

dolly at gully when Labuschagne was on 37.

By far, Australia's most consistent batsman in the series, Labuschagne batted in two gears during the day.

In the first session, he faced 82 balls and sedately moved to 19 but in the next 113 balls, scored another 82 runs to reach his fifth hundred in 195 balls.

4th Test, Day 2
Live from 5:00am IST
SONY TEN 1, 3 & SIX

He trusted the bounce, hit some lovely drives and was also ready to pull anything that was short.

During his partnership with Smith, the former Australian skipper was the aggressor but Washington, a specialist batsman till 2016 and now a front-line off-spinner, with the help of his seniors — skipper Rahane and his deputy Rohit Sharma — laid a beautiful trap.

Washington had bowled three maiden overs prior to lunch and the fidgety Smith, who is always looking to get a move on, fell for the leg trap that

Saini complains of groin pain



Brisbane: The injury-plagued Indian team took another hit on Friday when pacer Navdeep Saini was forced off the field during the fourth and final Test due to groin pain and taken for

scans. The 28-year-old Saini had bowled five balls of his eighth, and the innings 36th, over during the second session when he had to walk off the field because of the pain. With this, his further participation in the match, which began this morning, has been thrown into serious doubt.

"Navdeep Saini has complained of pain in his groin. He is currently being monitored by the BCCI medical team," read a short statement from the BCCI on the one-Test-old bowler's condition. "Navdeep Saini has now gone for scans," added a brief update that came after the initial note. PTI

was set for him.

Rohit stationed himself at short mid-wicket for a whip that Smith plays on the on-side.

They were banking on the extra bounce that they had seen

Washington generate with the white ball.

The plan worked as Smith flicked one straight into Rohit's hands just few minutes after the lunch.

Labuschagne disappointed at not getting 'big score'

PTI ■ BRISBANE

A fifth Test hundred in his kitty against a "very disciplined" bowling attack but Australia's Marnus Labuschagne was still a disappointed man on the opening day of the fourth Test here as he knocked "big" enough for him.

Australia ended the day 274/5, thanks largely to Labuschagne's 108 off 204 balls. The 26-year-old said he should have done more.

"...I think, I am definitely disappointed not going on and getting a really big score, which would have put us in a better position as a team," Labuschagne said at the virtual post-play press-conference.

"Any Test century, it doesn't matter who it is against or against what opposition, you want to make sure you are scoring hundreds and probably for me (it was) today it was disappointing that (I) did not

end up making that a really big hundred," he stressed.

However, he credited the Indian bowlers for being disciplined early on and hardly giving away any scoring opportunities.

"...Indian bowling attacks, they are very disciplined and doesn't matter who is bowling, they are very planned, they are very strategic and we saw that today with their bowling attack."

"They were disciplined early and did not give us many of those scoring opportunities in the first session," the right-handed batsman said.

Siraj abused by Gabba crowd, called grub

PTI ■ BRISBANE

India fast bowler Mohammed Siraj was targeted for abuse by a section of the crowd on the opening day of the fourth Test, a newspaper here reported, claiming that he was called a "grub" by some spectators.

The reported incident happened a few days after Siraj was racially abused by spectators at the Sydney Cricket Ground on the third and fourth day of the drawn third Test. That had led to an expulsion of six people from the stands and an unreserved apology from Cricket Australia to the visiting team.

On Friday, a report in the Sydney Morning Herald quoted a spectator as saying that a

section of the crowd at the Gabba targeted Siraj.

"The guys behind me have been calling — shouting — both Washington and Siraj grubs," a spectator named Kate was quoted as saying by the newspaper.

"It started targeted at Siraj and it was a chant similar to the SCG one (in which fans sung to the tune of Que Sera, Sera but substituted the lyrics with Que Shiraz, Shiraz).

"But this time it was Siraj. I suspect it's not a coincidence that it's Siraj being targeted post the SCG stuff."

According to the newspaper, at one point, a man in the crowd was heard yelling, "Siraj, give us a wave, give us a wave, give us a wave. Siraj, you bloody grub."



Injured Hanuma Vihari on Friday left for India after being ruled out of the ongoing fourth Test in Brisbane. Vihari has sustained a grade 2 injury during the final day of his match-saving 23 and will now require rest, followed by intense rehabilitation which rules him out of England series. BCCI/Twitter

Sundar ready to bowl 40-50 overs

PTI ■ BRISBANE

Washington Sundar, prior to his unexpected Test debut on Friday against Australia, had bowled over 285 overs in first-class cricket and after dismissing Steve Smith, the Tamil Nadu off-spinner is ready to bowl 50 in an innings if that's what the side wants of him.

India's T20 specialist off-spinner was asked to stay back by the team management after the white-ball series to help as a net bowler but injuries to key players, including senior pro Ravichandran Ashwin, landed him in a mouth-watering duel with Smith which he won hands down.

"I have always felt that my skills are very good with red ball. I have bowled a lot of overs in first class cricket and first division league in Chennai as well.



Washington Sundar celebrates after he dismisses Steve Smith

I was just waiting for this opportunity and last couple of months, we were here, I did get to bowl a lot of overs and improve upon my skills," the shy bowler said after first day's play.

But does he have the stamina to bowl long spells that a team expects from its spinners

Labuschagne and I am very glad they worked. The first wicket definitely felt good."

Washington kept Smith quiet for two overs and in the 13th delivery got him caught at short mid-wicket.

Did Ashwin versus Smith set a template for him?

"We did have some plans for Smith and it's a different game altogether. Last game was different, conditions were different and I had to bowl good balls over and over again. It happened (the dismissal) and it's great."

The former India U-19 World Cupper feels the wicket was good for batting and it was great effort to reduce to the hosts to 274 for 5.

"There was a little bit of spongy bounce till lunch and the wicket was good and bowlers did a good job to restrict Australia to 5 for 274."

Arjun Tendulkar makes debut for Mumbai senior team

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Budding left-arm pacer Arjun Tendulkar, who is the son of iconic former batsman Sachin Tendulkar, made his Mumbai senior team debut on Friday in a Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy match against Haryana, which the hosts lost by eight wickets here.

In the Elite E League group clash played at the suburban BKC ground, Mumbai made 143 after opting to bat first, a target which Haryana overhauled in 17.4 overs.

Arjun had an off day with

the ball as he returned with rather unimpressive figures of 1/34 in the three overs that he bowled.

He dismissed Haryana opener Chaitanya Bishnoi (4) cheaply after he edged a delivery to wicket-keeper Aditya Tare to claim his maiden wicket for the Mumbai senior team.

Incidentally, his legendary father's last Ranji Trophy game was against Haryana back in 2013.

Arjun didn't get the chance to face a single delivery when Mumbai batted as the team was bundled out in

19.3 overs. Haryana then rode on one-down Himanshu Rana's blazing unbeaten 75 off 53 balls to chase down the target with consummate ease.

The 21-year-old Arjun has now qualified for the IPL auctions, as he has made his debut for the Mumbai team.

Tendulkar junior was added to the Mumbai squad, along with another pacer Krutik Hanagavadi, by the Salil Ankola-led selection committee, after the BCCI permitted a total of 22 players to be selected.

Captain Root's 168* puts Eng ahead

AFP ■ GALLE

England captain Joe Root hit an unbeaten 168 as his side built up a lead of 185 over Sri Lanka on a rain-hit second day of the opening Test.

England were 320/4 when rain halted play in Galle. Root and Dan Lawrence, who scored 73 on his Test debut, built a 173-run partnership after the tourists resumed the day on 127/2.

Root, who is batting with Jos Buttler (7), hit his 18th Test ton and kept up the pressure on the home bowlers despite losing overnight partner Jonny Bairstow for 47 early in the day.

"I think the things could happen very quickly as the game moves forward, generally does here. It is really important that we make the most of this first innings lead that we have got now," Root told reporters.

"We will be really ruthless. I have spoken about this ahead of the series and make it count and put them under pressure. That way try and bat just once."

After a full opening day in the empty stadium in Galle, rain started falling just before the start of the second day and wiped out the final session.

Root started the day on 66 and passed 100 soon after lunch with a single off Dilruwan Perera. He raised his bat and hugged Lawrence. It was the star batsman's highest Test score in more than a year after going through 2020 without a century and said he felt "good" to make it count.

"Generally when I get a hundred I make it really count," Root, who has a Test best of 254 in 98 Tests, said. "I have got a good record past 100. Tomorrow I will try to make another really big one and drive the game forward from there."



Arsenal remain in midtable after draw

AFP ■ LONDON

Mikel Arteta admitted Arsenal were suffering from fatigue after their recent revival ground to a halt in a scrappy 0-0 draw against Crystal Palace on Thursday.

Arteta's side had won their previous four matches in all competitions, but they were not fortunate enough to extend their unbeaten run to five games.

Palace were unable to convert several first half chances at the Emirates Stadium and, although Arsenal improved after the interval, they missed a chance to climb into the top half of the Premier League.

"I wanted to see a win and a few goals but we were fatigued. I cannot fault the spirit but it wasn't enough," Arteta said.

"We created a lot of situations against the low block but there was a period when we gave the ball away too much. We are playing a lot of games and you can see fatigue. Many players aren't fresh. We lacked the quality in the final third to win the game."

Arsenal sit in 11th place, eight points adrift of the Champions League places as they continue to pay the price for their worst start to a season since 1974-75.

Just before Christmas, Arsenal were only four points above the relegation zone, so their current position 12 points away from the bottom three affords Arteta some much-needed breathing space.

But this disjointed display underlined the attacking flaws that have stopped Arsenal building on last season's FA Cup triumph.

Palace have only won one of



their past eight matches in all competitions and are one point behind Arsenal in 13th.

Emile Smith-Rowe, Arsenal's promising young midfielder, started after scoring against Newcastle as a substitute last weekend.

But Kiernan Tierney was absent with muscle tightness and the Gunners missed the Scotland left-back's busy presence.

Aubameyang has endured a difficult season and, once again, Arsenal's captain was a diffident figure.

The Gabon forward briefly sparked into life and tested Vicente Guaita with a fierce strike that was parried by the Palace keeper.

But Palace were finding their feet on a wet evening and Granit Xhaka had to make a perfectly timed sliding tackle to stop Wilfried Zaha getting a shot away after the forward slalomed into the penalty area.

Palace broke through the Arsenal defence again when Christian Benteke scooped his shot wastefully over from 10

yards after good work by Tyrick Mitchell.

James Tomkins was inches away from giving Roy Hodgson's men the lead as the Palace defender got above Rob Holding to glance his header against the bar from Eberechi Eze's free-kick.

Arsenal were struggling to get out of their own half and Bernd Leno had to make a superb save to repel Benteke's header from Mitchell's cross.

Arteta's half-time team talk seemed like it might have the desired effect and Hector Bellerin drilled just wide from the edge of the area in the opening minute of the second half.

Arsenal threatened again as Bukayo Saka forced Guaita to block at the near post before Lacazette blasted into the side-netting after a flowing move.

Arteta sent on Nicolas Pepe and Thomas Partey, back after a month out with a thigh injury. But the expected push never came and Palace were able to keep the misfiring Gunners at bay with ease.

Pak drop Masood, Haris for SA Tests

Karachi: Six players, including Shan Masood, Haris Sohail and Imam-ul-Haq, from the recent New Zealand series were axed as Pakistan's new chief selector Mohammad Wasim on Friday announced a massively overhauled 20-member squad for the two-Test home series against South Africa.

Wasim rewarded several top performers of the domestic season and included nine uncapped players in the squad, which will be trimmed to 16 players ahead of the first Test.

Top scoring batsmen Saud Shakeel, Kamran Ghulam, all-rounder Agha Salman, left-arm spinner Nauman Ali, off-spinner Sajid Khan and fast bowlers Hasan Ali and Tabish Khan — all got call-ups for the series beginning on January 26 at the National Stadium here.



The selectors also upgraded young batsman Abdullah Shafique to the Test squad although he was selected for the New Zealand tour as a specialist T20 player. Similarly, the selectors have also called up pacer Haris Rauf, another T20 specialist for the two-Test series.

The selectors also dropped six players from the dismal tour

of New Zealand with Wasim insisting that fast bowler Naseem Shah was not in the Test squad because he had an injury.

Other players dropped from NZ tour include experienced pacers, Mohammad Abbas and Sohail Khan.

Wasim, insisted that selectors would follow a horses for courses policy now and the squad had been picked keeping in mind the conditions in Pakistan for the SA series.

Test squad: Babar Azam (C), Mohammad Rizwan (VC), Imran Butt, Abdullah Shafique, Abid Ali, Azhar Ali, Fawad Alam, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Saud Shakeel, Kamran Ghulam, Agha Salman, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Tabish Khan, Haris Rauf, Sajid Khan, Nauman Ali, Yasir Shah, Faheem Ashraf, Mohammad Nawaz. PTI