

MONEY 6
PETROL, DIESEL PRICES
UNCHANGED ACROSS METROS**WORLD 7**
ANOTHER UN PEACEKEEPER
KILLED IN MALI, 5TH IN A WEEK**SPORT 8**
PUNJAB, TN CLOSE
TO MUSHTAQ ALI Q/OPublished From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL
BHUANESWAR RANCHI
RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD
VIJAYWADA

DEHRADUN, SUNDAY JANUARY 17, 2021; PAGES 8-4 ₹3

**USUAL SUSPECTS**
SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Need for a measure of juridical predictability

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

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

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

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

What the Indian Constitution stipulates is that the government has the absolute right to take bad decisions as long as they do not violate the "basic structure" of the Constitution. What constitutes the "basic structure" is a matter that the courts have arrogated to themselves. It is not an idea that finds any mention in the Constitution. There have been a series of protests against the farm bills in northern India. However, I don't see there anyone in their right mind has presumed to suggest that the right of farmers to sell their produce across state boundaries is unconstitutional. Nor is there any suggestion that it is constitutionally obligatory to inject the Minimum Support Price into the rules governing the relevant Act. The debate on the subject is partly grounded in economics and partly in politics. That is where the battle must be conducted, not in the courtrooms.

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

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

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

2L get 1st dose of anti-Covid protection

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



A medic administers Covishield vaccine to sanitation worker Manish Kumar, the first recipient in Delhi, in the presence of Union Health Minister Rajan Dixi | Pioneer

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

Launching the "world's largest vaccination drive" against Covid-19, Modi congratulated citizens and scientists for the feat but cautioned people to follow precautions after taking the first dose of the vaccination.

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

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

people in just the first phase. He saluted scientists for developing the vaccines in such a short span of time. The PM cautioned people to ensure that they take both the doses at one month's gap and show patience as the country begins to get the antidote to its huge population.

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

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

The Covid-19 vaccination drive was successfully conducted on the first day, Additional Secretary in the Union Health Ministry Manohar

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

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

SII CEO receives 1st dose of Covishield

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

Owl found dead in Delhi Zoo, test at Bhopal lab confirms bird flu

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A dead owl in the Delhi Zoo has been infected with bird flu as the samples were found positive for H5N1 avian influenza virus under RT-PCR test done by ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Disease (NIHSA), Bhopal, on Friday, officials said on Saturday.

"The zoo witnessed the death of a brown fish owl in its captivity. Its cloacal, tracheal and oropharyngeal swabs were sent to the animal husbandry unit of the Delhi Government for serological examination," zoo Director Ramesh Pandey said.

BKU Lokshakti requests SC to replace members for panel

Says nominate those who can do job 'on mutual harmony basis'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Bhartiya Kisan Union Lokshakti approached the Supreme Court on Saturday, requesting it to remove the remaining three members of a committee it had set up to hold talks with the farmers protesting against the three contentious farm laws.

The BKU (Lokshakti) has requested the court to nominate people to the committee who can do the job "on the basis of mutual harmony".

The BKU (Lokshakti) is one of the 40-odd farmer unions spearheading the agitation on various border points of Delhi for about 50 days now, demand-

ing repeal of the farm laws.

In an affidavit, the BKU (Lokshakti) said the principle of natural justice is going to be violated as those appointed to the four-member committee "have already supported these laws".

It is important to mention here with great respect that the principle of natural justice is going to be violated by making these persons as members of the committee... how they will hear all farmers on equal parameters when they have already supported these laws," it said.

The union also sought dismissal of a plea of the Central Government, filed through the Delhi Police, seeking an injunction against the proposed tractor march or any other kind of protest by farmers that could disrupt the gathering and celebrations of the Republic Day on January 26.

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

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

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

Haryana recorded 13 adverse event cases following the immunisation. Officials from Maharashtra said they are further investigating the 14 cases of adverse events.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

No way to go, no age to go

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

A host of political leaders and journalists have mourned her death. An emotional Chandan Mitra, the Editor-in-Chief of The Pioneer, nearly broke down on hearing the news of Usha's demise. "She nurtured



USHA SRIVASTAVA
FEB 12, 1961 — JAN 16, 2021

the Hindi Pioneer like her own baby. She was a spirited, committed, and lively colleague, whose absence cannot be filled easily. I miss her with grief," he said.

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

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

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

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

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

LAL BHABHUR SHASTRI INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT
Approved by AICTE, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India

LAST DATE FOR APPLYING - 22 JANUARY 2021

Apply online at <https://forms.lbsim.ac.in>

LBSIM Announces Admissions to its Two Year Full Time PGDM Programs (2021-22)

POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT

• GENERAL (MBA ACCREDITED) • FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT (MBA ACCREDITED)

Accredited by AICTE, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India

Salient Features of LBSIM

- 12 Term Accredited Lab & Analytics Lab with SPSS and SAS.
- Ranked 10th (Gurukul-pravasi standards) in India & 33rd India Today India & 1st in Business in 2020.
- Highly qualified faculty with Ph.D.
- Consistent among placement record since the inception of the Institute.
- State of the art infrastructure & Recreational Library.
- Well furnished residential accommodation for outstation students.

Eligibility: Graduation or equivalent degree in any discipline from a recognized university. Students graduating in 2021 may also apply.

Selection: Shall be based on CAT 2020, Current Affairs, Group Discussion, Personal Interview, Academic, Extra-Curricular Achievements and Work Experience.

25th Anniversary

25

beyond obvious

HOME THEATRE

Plenty of twists and intrigue



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— Shalini Sakseena

Starts on a good note



OUTSIDE THE WIRE
Netflix
Presenter: Anthony Mackie, Danson Idris, Emily Beecham, Michael Kelly, Piliu Ashbak
Rated: 6/10

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

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

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

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

In order for to stop its android soldiers' project since the prototype has gone rogue.

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

— Shalini Sakseena

TELLY TALE

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

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

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

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

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

DHARMESH ONBOARD FOR DD
Life is always better when you dance! With the lockdown behind us and

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

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

WHO'S YOUR ROOMMATE?

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

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

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

Of history and hope

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

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

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

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

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

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

With such roles, he says, comes a lot



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

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

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

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

'I had never done fantasy thriller'

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

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

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

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

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

■ Did the role offer any challenges?

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

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

I am growing and evolving with every project that I do, not only as an actor but also as a human being. That's my biggest takeaway. I am grateful for whatever I have achieved and my journey is nothing short of amazing.

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

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

■ How did acting happen to you?

It happened after school. I always wanted to act. I told my parents that I want to go

I AM GROWING AND EVOLVING WITH EVERY PROJECT THAT I DO, NOT ONLY AS AN ACTOR BUT ALSO AS A HUMAN BEING. THAT'S MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAY FROM THE INDUSTRY



PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank
Regd. Office: Landmark, Race Course Circle, Vaidhatri, 380007
Corporation Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Mumbai 400051, India.

Ref: ICICIDSMG/Jan/2101 01 05, 2021
SUNIL DUTT KANTHOLA
SUZIL LAXA VIJAY PARK
EXTENSION, DEHRADUN- 248001
Dear Sir Madam,
Sub: 1) Facility Agreement No.: LBDEH00002221761
2) Total amount Payable of Rs.: 976674/- as on 18/06/2020 (Refer to the attached 1362) Notice
3) Property Address: 608 6TH FLOOR, TOWER C FOREST LAXANAAAT
ICICI FOREST AND HILLS MOHAKAMPUR DEHRADUN
We refer to the Home Loan facility availed by you from ICICI Bank Ltd. (hereinafter referred to as "the bank") for the purchase of the above mentioned property and wherein the builder being GTM Builders and Promoters Pvt. Ltd. In this regard we wish to inform you that you have failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of your agreement.
As a result of which, GTM Builders and Promoters Pvt. Ltd., Regd. & Corp. Office: GTM House G-5, Pashchim Enclave, Outer Ring Road, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110063 has cancelled the allotment of the said property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from date of this notice, failing which bank will be constrained to take necessary steps as deemed fit. However, we hope that, in your interest you will come forward and settle the matter with the builder.
This notice is issued to you without prejudice to the rights & remedies available to us in any proceedings, which may either, have been initiated or are likely to be initiated.
Without prejudice to the above, considering as a service gesture, through a copy of this letter, we submit that in the event of any further clarification, you are requested to contact the undersigned Vikrant Baloni on mobile no. 9897510777 and / or visit our branch office between 10:00 am to 04:00pm at ICICI BANK LTD., REGIONAL OFFICE, GROUND FLOOR, NCR PLAZA, 24-A, NEW CANTT. ROAD, MATIBARKALA, DEHRADUN 248001 upon obtaining prior appointment.
Thanking you,
Place : Dehradun
Sd/-
For ICICI Bank Ltd.

Vaccination drive to combat Covid-19 starts in U'khand

72 % of targeted 3,182 health care workers inoculated with Covishield vaccine at 34 hospitals on the first day

Vaccine completely safe; avoid any negative publicity about the vaccination: CM Rawat

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

A massive vaccination drive against the novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) started in Uttarakhand on Saturday. On the first day a total of 2276 health care workers were inoculated with the Covishield, the vaccine developed by Oxford University, AstraZeneca and manufactured in India by Serum Institute of India (SII). The health department had organised a total of 34 vaccination sessions in different hospitals of the state and had planned to vaccinate 3182 health care workers on the first day. The department claimed that 72 percent vaccination target was achieved

on the first day. The Chief Minister Triwinda Singh Rawat formally inaugurated the vaccination drive in the state at 10.30 am at Government Doon Medical College (GDMC) hospital. The first vaccine jab was administered to the ward boy of GDMC hospital, Shalendra Diwedi and the second person to get inoculated in the hospital was the Head of Department (HoD) of chest and TB and Covid-19 in charge, Dr Anurag Agarwal. Addressing media persons on the occasion, the CM said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has started the biggest vaccination drive in the world and it would help in containing the menace of



the disease to a large extent. He appealed that the people should avoid believing any negative publicity about the vaccine is completely safe. Terming the vaccine as an effective method of preventing the disease, the CM said

that everyone should continue to follow the safety measures for Covid-19 like washing hands, wearing masks and maintaining social distancing. "By following the mantra of Dawai Bhi Kadai Bhi we can remain safe from the disease," he said.

The Mayor of Dehradun Municipal Corporation (DMC) Sunil Uniyal Gama, Rajpur MLA Khajana Das, Health Secretary Amit Singh Negi, secretary in-charge Dr Pankaj Kumar Pandey, Director General (DG) state health services, Dr Anita

No adverse reaction reported from anywhere: Health dept

84% vaccination in Chamoli, 69 % in Dehradun

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The state health department has claimed there was no adverse reaction reported in any of the beneficiaries inoculated with the vaccine on the first day of the drive in Uttarakhand. The Chief Operation Officer (COO) of the state Covid Control Room, Dr Abhishek Tripathi said that 72 percent of the targeted beneficiaries were

vaccinated on the first day in Uttarakhand. He said that the percentage of beneficiaries vaccinated in Uttarakhand is much higher than many states and added that those left out today would be vaccinated soon.

Tripathi claimed that the vaccination drive was done strictly in accordance with the operational guidelines of the government of India.

The data of the department suggests that a total of 2276 people were vaccinated on the first day against a target of 3,182. With 84 percent vaccination,

Chamoli remained at the top of the table. Here 110 out of 131 targeted were inoculated. Champawat and Pauri recorded 80 percent each vaccination while 79 percent target was achieved in Rudrapur district.

In Dehradun district 353 people were vaccinated against targeted 509 beneficiaries. It is learnt that some beneficiaries citing health issues refrained from getting vaccinated.

The health authority has made it clear that the vaccine would be administered only after obtaining consent of the individual.

department were present on the occasion.

A total of 34 vaccination sessions were organised in the state on the day. Five sessions were held in Dehradun district

while Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar had four such sessions each. Three sessions were organised in Nainital while the remaining nine districts had two vaccination sessions each.

64 health care workers vaccinated in Himalayan hosp

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In Dehradun, five vaccination sessions were organised on the first day of the drive. In Himalayan Hospital Jollygrant, the first vaccine was administered to Lalit Thapa, a member of housekeeping staff of the hospital. A total of ten booths were prepared in the hospital for vaccination where health and other front line workers were inoculated. The Vice Chancellor (VC) of the Himalayan University Vijay Dhamana who was present on the occasion said that vaccination is like a Suraksha Chakra against Covid-19 virus. The hospital had constituted a team of doctors headed by Hospital Superintendent Dr S L Jethani

and nodal officer Dr Sanay Das for the vaccination. A total of 64 health care workers were administered vaccines on the day.

Lalit Thapa who was the first person to be inoculated on the day in the hospital said that he had worked in the Covid-19 ward and served the patients of the disease in the hospital. Expressing happiness on receiving the vaccine jab he said that everyone in the society would now remain safe from the disease.

The deputy Chief Medical Officer (Dy CMO) of Dehradun Dr Sanjay Dutt, Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Doiwala Laxminar Chauhan and others were present on the occasion.

Follow Covid-19 protocol till 90% population vaccinated: AIIMS director

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Rishikesh Ravikant has said that people should follow the social distancing norms and wear masks till 90 percent of the population of the country is vaccinated against the Covid-19.

Ravikant said that the vaccine made by the Indian scientists is completely safe and there should be no confusion about the vaccine.

The AIIMS Director was the second person to be vaccinated at the AIIMS Rishikesh on the first day of the vaccination. The hospital



authorities administered the first vaccine jab to Meena Devi, a class IV employee of the hospital. She said that she felt totally healthy after receiving the vaccine. She added that she gets pride in serving in an institute like AIIMS Rishikesh. The hospital administration

informed that in the first phase, vaccines will be given to those frontline workers of AIIMS who are doing duty in the Covid wards.

These include doctors posted in Covid duty, nursing staff, sanitation staff and attendants.

Ministers to report after district tour to CM

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Various issues were discussed and party programmes were finalised in the meeting of the Bharatiya Janata Party state core group held here on Saturday evening. Informing the media about the decisions taken in the meeting, the BJP State president Banshidhar Bhagat said that the issues of the farmers were discussed in the meeting and all the core group members unanimously opined that the party should now come in the election mode. The important initiatives of the BJP State Government including facilitation of tap water connection in rural areas for Rs one each

were also discussed in the meeting. It was also decided that the Chief Minister



Party state in-charge Dushyant Kumar Gautam and co-in-charge Rekha Verma were also present

Triwinda Singh Rawat will himself guide the ministers about visiting areas in the districts they are in-charge of. The Ministers will then visit the

areas and report back to the chief minister within a month, said Bhagat.

Chief Minister Triwinda Singh Rawat, party state in-charge Dushyant Kumar Gautam, co-in-charge Rekha Verma, cabinet minister Madan Kaushik, State minister Dhan Singh Rawat, senior leader Vijay Bahuguna and other members of the core group were also present in the meeting.



Juna Akhada head Mahant Prem Giri and other members of the Akhada conduct an inspection in Haridwar along with Government officials to check Kumbh Mela preparations on Saturday. Pioneer photo

Covid-19 contagion on decline in U'khand

Four deaths, 226 new cases of the disease reported on Saturday

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Even as the vaccination drive against the novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) starts in Uttarakhand on Saturday, the contagion of the disease is rapidly declining in the state. The state health department reported only 226 new cases of Covid-19 on Saturday after which the number of patients of novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) in the state climbed to 9469. The department also reported the death of four patients of the disease on the day after which the death toll mounted to 1606 in the state. The health department charged 272 patients from different hospitals on Friday. A total of 89,182 patients have recovered from the disease so

RECOVERY PERCENTAGE FROM THE DISEASE CLIMBS TO 94.47



far in the state. The recovery percentage from the disease is now at 94.47 as the sample positivity rate is 4.79 percent. Two patients of Covid-19 were reported dead at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Rishikesh on Saturday. Similarly one patient each succumbed to the disease at District hospital Chamoli and Sushila Tiwari Government hospital, Haldwani on the day.

The authorities reported 90 new cases of the disease from Dehradun, 40 from Nainital, 31 from Haridwar, 18 from Udham Singh Nagar, 14 from Almora, nine from Tehri, six from Chamoli and two each from Champawat, Pauri, Rudrapur and Uttarakashi on Saturday.

Committee to be formed for drinking water tariff revision



PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief Minister Triwinda Singh Rawat has directed the formation of a committee comprising Urban Development minister Madan Kaushik and State minister for Higher Education, Dhan Singh Rawat for drinking water tariff revision. This committee will check the relevant facts in depth and then present its recommendations to the chief minister after which a policy decision will be taken regarding the

revision of drinking water tariff.

Chairing a meeting on Saturday regarding drinking water tariff revision, the chief minister said that it is important to simplify the rigidity of tariffs currently implemented for water and sewer maintenance. For this, he directed the Urban Development minister and the State minister for Higher Education to evaluate all relevant facts and present their recommendations.

Other issues like unauthorised use of water, charging annual water tax from those securing water by boring for groundwater and from other water plants, buildings/establishments not connected to available sewer facility and other aspects were also discussed in detail during the meeting. Urban Development minister Madan Kaushik, State minister for Higher Education, secretary Om Prakash, secretaries Amit Singh Negi and Nitesh Jha among others were also present in the meeting.

CM reviews Kumbh Mela works

Complete remaining works on time, lay special focus on sanitation: Rawat

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The remaining works related to the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar should be completed soon and special focus should be laid on the sanitation arrangements, Chief Minister Triwinda Singh Rawat issued these directions while chairing a meeting to review Kumbh Mela works here on Saturday. The CM said that considering the convenience of devotees, all the arrangements should be completed on time. The cooperation of voluntary organisations, social organisations and the public should also be taken in the cleanliness campaign. Further, the Covid-19 standards should be fully observed, stressed Rawat. He said that all works of a permanent nature should

be completed by the end of January, adding that any negligence towards the quality of works will not be tolerated. He also directed that an elaborate public awareness campaign be undertaken in view of the Kumbh Mela.

Stating that all departments should work in coordination with the Mela administration for a clean, beautiful and safe Kumbh Mela, Rawat said that there should be adequate arrangement for masks and sanitizers in the Mela area. The Mela and district administration should also undertake a public awareness campaign on Covid-19 through various media. The remaining works of a temporary nature should also be completed soon along with the beautification work which should also be completed on time, he said. All arrangements should be made with advance planning as the number of devotees will increase considerably on the special Kumbh Mela occasions, said the CM.

The Urban Development minister Madan Kaushik said



that various aspects of the nation and state related to religion, culture and faith will be brought to the fore in the Kumbh Mela. The officials concerned have been directed that there should be no shortcoming towards organising a divine and grand Kumbh Mela, said the minister. Urban Development secretary Shailesh Bagauli

informed that top priority is being accorded to Kumbh Mela works.

On the approved proposals, decisions are being taken immediately and the budget is also being allocated, he said.

Kumbh Mela officer Deepak Rawat informed about the works being undertaken for the Kumbh Mela stating that the majority of works of a per-

manent nature have been completed while the remaining works will also be completed soon. Majority of the works related to roads and bridges have also been completed while all necessary infrastructure works of the national highway will also be completed soon, he added.

Chief secretary Om Prakash, director general of police, Ashok Kumar, secretaries Amit Singh Negi, Nitesh Jha, Pankaj Pandey, SA Murugesan, inspector general (Kumbh Mela) Sanjay Goujral and officials of the executing agencies were also present in the meeting.

Roshni scam: CBI books 13 in Pulwama

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has re-registered 1&K ACB FIR in connection with the alleged irregularities committed in transfer of land under the Roshni Scheme against 13 persons of Pulwama, including seven then officials posted in the district like the Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama and his subordinates.

The then Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama, Mehraj Ahmad Kakroo, the then Additional Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama (Fikhar-ul-Hasnain), the then Assistant Commissioner, Revenue, Mohammad Rajab Bhatt, the then Tehsildar Mohammad Hussain, the then Naib Tehsildar, Kakpora, Mohammad Maqbool Ahanger, the then Giridar, Kakpora, Gulam Ahmad Sheikh and the then Patwari Halga, Kakpora, Abdul Razak Wagey have been named in the FIR.

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



Majid Sheikh and Gulam Rasool Wani.

The accused have been booked under Section 120-B (criminal conspiracy) of the Ranbir Penal Code and relevant provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

"In pursuance of the 1&K High Court, FIR No 29/2015 Of Police Station-VOK, now ACB, 1&K is re-registered," reads the FIR.

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

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

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

PC slams Centre for stalemate over farm laws

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

Broadcasting.

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

this unique initiative due to its reach and expertise.

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

The body issued a statement claiming that the new WhatsApp privacy policy encroaches upon various fundamental rights of the citizens. About the petition, the traders' body said it "has also prayed that Union of India must frame guidelines to govern big technology companies like WhatsApp and frame policies which would protect the privacy of citizens and businesses".

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

According to IMD, Ludhiana, Patiala, Karnal and Aligarh reported visibility 50 meters each at 5.30 pm on Saturday and Bagrah, Gangtok, Coohar Bazar-200 each. As regards Delhi and Safdarjung, the reported visibility 500 meters while visibility in Palam was reported 1000 meters.

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



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

CBI suspends its 2 officials for taking bribe

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Dyspension for allegedly receiving bribe to compromise investigation against companies accused of bank fraud, the CBI has suspended two of them -- Inspector Kapil Dhanraj and Stenographer Samir Kumar Singh -- and recommended administrative action against the other two.

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

interference," the Nepalese foreign minister said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PM announces ₹1,000-cr 'Startup India Seed Fund'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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



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

He further said that startups in India are not limited to big cities and about 40 per cent of such budding entrepreneurs are coming from tier-II and -III cities. Modi said in 2014 there were only four startups in the unicorn club, but today there are more than 30. He informed that 11 startups entered the unicorn club in 2020 itself. India is the world's third largest startup ecosystem. There are over 41,000 startups in the country,

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

PTI ■ CHENNAI

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

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

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

In a bid to maintain financial stability, Das emphasised that the RBI has been using resources in advance as a buffer.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

CAIT moves SC over WhatsApp's new privacy policy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

all the PSBs would become 'limited' banks. BIC will have the power to appoint the board of directors and make policy decisions about subsidiaries.

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

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

With this in place, the dependence of PSBs on government support would also come down and ease fiscal pressure.

To save interest burden and ease the fiscal pressure, the government decided to issue zero-coupon bonds for meeting the capital needs of the banks. The first test case of the new mechanism was a capital infusion of ₹5,500 crore into Punjab & Sind Bank by issuing zero-coupon bonds of six different maturities last year. These special securities with tenure of 10-15 years are non-interest bearing and valued at par.

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

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

PTI ■ MUMBAI

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

At the standalone level, net profit for the three-month period grew 18.09 per cent to ₹7,58,29 crore, on the back of a 15.1 per cent growth in the core net interest income at ₹16,317 crore. Its deposits grew 19.1 per cent and the share of low-cost current and savings account deposits was 43 per cent. HDFC Bank is the first major lender to declare its results for the December quarter. This is also the maiden earnings declaration under

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

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

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

It held contingent provisions of ₹8,656 crore and floating provisions of ₹1,451 crore as of Dec 31. It said 0.5 per cent of its ₹10,82 lakh crore in advances have been restricted under the special scheme announced by the RBI to handle the COVID-related stress.

Stockbrokers seek rationalisation of tax structure for capital market

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

ple classification system for calculating tax on capital market income.

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

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

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

The industry has been hit hard due to COVID-19 led disruptions and the most newspapers have stopped sending newspapers to rural areas where there is less than 50 copies to reduce the distribution cost, said the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) President L Adimoolam.

In a representation to the Finance Minister

Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday ahead of the forthcoming union budget, INS has suggested to take steps as to reduce the customs duty on import of newsprints, a stimulus package for the industry or at least to help the publishers by releasing advertisement with an increased tariff of 50 per cent.

"If working out a stimulus package for print media is difficult at this juncture, DAVP (Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity) may please consider releasing advertisement for all its departments to all publications with an increased tariff of 50 per cent, which would be highly helpful for the industry as a whole," the INS representation said. It has also asked to extend the validity of RNI (Registrar of Newspapers for India) Circulation Certificates up to March 31, 2022 which will enable DAVP rates to remain the same till next year.

Raj CM interacts with health workers

Jairaj: Chief Minister Shri Ashok Gehlot said that due to efficient management of the health workers by the state government, limiting the number of Covid patients in the state and introduction of vaccine will be a happy coincidence.

Just as we have fought the corona in the best way with the cooperation of all, similarly we will set an example by making this vaccination campaign a success.

To ensure that the corona is completely eradicated despite the vaccine, everyone should ensure continued adherence to other health protocols, including masking, social distancing, and more.

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



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

Petrol, diesel prices unchanged across metros

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

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

In the national capital, petrol was sold at the record high level of ₹84.70 per litre. Prices in Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata were ₹81.32, ₹87.40 and ₹86.15 per litre, respectively.

Across the country, pump price of petrol and diesel remained stable on Saturday. In Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, diesel was sold for ₹74.88, ₹81.60, ₹80.19 and ₹78.47 per litre, respectively.

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

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

WESTERN RAILWAY

CANCELLATION NOTICE

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

0579

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

WESTERN RAILWAY

CANCELLATION NOTICE

Tender No: BCT/20-21/305, dtd. 05.01.2021, DOP: 08.02.2021. Above tender may be treated as cancelled due to technical reason. Please visit www.iwreps.gov.in in respective tender for further details & information.

0580

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

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR

TEL:0194-2474234 Fax - 2452032 - email - kashflor@rediffmail.com

Sub: Extension No. 02.

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

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

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

By order
Sd/- Accounts Officer
(Member secretary)

No. DIPK-11831/20
Dated:- 16.01.2021

BIHAR STATE KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES BOARD

Department of Industries, Government of Bihar

Corrigendum -1

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

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

Wherever appear in the bid Document or NIT

Last date of Receiving Bid Document: 04th January 2021, 2 PM

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

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

Chief Executive Officer
KVIB, PATNA

Chief Executive Officer, Bihar State Khadi and Village Industries Board, East Gandhi Maidan, Patna-800001. Contact: 7220923213, 7004503382
Mail id: kvibpatna@gmail.com or kvib@kvib.com

PR. No. 011304 (INDUSTRIAL) 2020-21

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

1. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
01	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

2. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
02	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

3. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
03	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

4. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
04	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

5. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
05	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

6. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
06	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

7. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
07	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

8. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
08	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

9. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
09	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

10. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
10	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

11. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
11	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

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

12. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र.सं.	प्रकार का कार्य	प्रमाणित की गई मात्रा	प्रमाणित की गई दर (₹/यूनिट)	प्रमाणित की गई कुल मूल्य (₹)	प्रमाणित की गई तिथि
12	नदी किनारे बाढ़रोक बांधों का निर्माण	683.19	13.68	10000.00	15.05.2021

जल संसाधन विभाग
कार्यालय अभियंता का कार्यालय
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, कटिहार

अलकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण योजना संख्या - 0 SBD/2020-21
(राजेश्वर / राजनीय स्लम)

(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट

Rohit's dismissal puts India on backfoot

PTI ■ BRISBANE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

till Rohit kept the scoreboard ticking at the other end.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Paine was just getting into the groove with some good drives

Rohit has no regret of playing that shot

PTI ■ BRISBANE

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

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

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

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

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

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

When Thakur provided the breakthrough.

With the partnership broken, Green probably lost his concentration as he played for the turn to an



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Disciplined Sundar fill Ashwin's shoes well: McDonald

PTI ■ BRISBANE

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

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

The duo was travelling with the squad as net bowlers.

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

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

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

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



their own," the 39-year-old said.

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

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

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

PTI ■ BRISBANE

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

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

'Natarajan is here to stay'

mean feat.

"Natarajan bowled pretty well, to be honest. Playing outside the country (internationally) for the first time and bowling to such batsmen, it wasn't going to be easy and he was not under any pressure," Rohit said about the debutant, who was the pick of the bowlers with 3/78 in 24 overs.

"From ball one, he was right up there. He showed a

lot of composure, is a strong character who doesn't speak much but we all know he has a solid personality. He wants to do well for the team and also for himself. He is here to stay," he said.

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

best batters, and test themselves," he said.

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

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

It's not every team that can restrict Australia to less than 400 hundred in six completed innings and that's a big credit to bowling unit. The A tours must have helped. Shardul, Navdeep and Siraj have played a lot of A team cricket. They know how difficult it can be in Australia. Their understanding of conditions helped them.

It's not let Australia score 400 is an achievement in itself. These tours they have done has helped them stay in control," he said.

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

PTI ■ ALUR

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

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

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

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

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

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

A struggling Uttar Pradesh recorded their first win of the tournament with nine-wicket victory over Tripura. Opener Karan Sharma top scored for UP with an unbeaten 68 off 36 balls. Sudhanshu Raina too remained unbeaten with 56 off 23 balls.

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

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

Put in to bat, Baroda rode on stand-in skipper Kedar Devdar's stroke-filled unbeaten 99 off 71 balls to post a competi-

itive 158 for four.

Right-arm medium pacer Atif Sheth (41/7) then wreaked havoc to scuttle out Maharashtra for a meagre 98 and give his team four full points.

Devdar was held the captaincy after regular skipper Krunal Pandya left the bubble following his father's demise.

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

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

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

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

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

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

teammates in the pavilion and a lone England fan watching from a nearby fort could applaud, the performance confirmed Rohit's return as a batsman after a barren 2020 season fall to number 11 in the ICC rankings.

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

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

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

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

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

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

landmark four then Dom Bess was run out as the tourists suffered a bout of nerves.

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

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

Perera and Thirimanne made 101 for the first wicket.

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

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

Indian fan complains of racism at SCG during 3rd Test

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

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

Sydney resident Krishna Kumar filed a formal complaint on Thursday to lodge an official complaint, accusing the security at the venue of racial profiling and unjustified frisking.

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

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

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

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

"He told me, 'If you need to address this matter, go back to where you belong,'" Kumar said.

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

"To me this is a pure case of profiling. They changed their entire formation so the guy was being secondary is standing right in front of me and facing me," Kumar said.

"I want justice. I want accountability. I was feeling stripped, feeling watched and I went there to fight racism. Why should I be stopped from addressing racism, especially at a ground where it was debatable whether it was happening or not?," he added.

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

PTI ■ KARACHI

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

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

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

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

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

Pakistan won Test against Sri Lanka and Bangladesh in late 2019



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

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

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

"The series against South Africa

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

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

Mark Boucher cautioned his team, saying his batsmen will face a tough task against a "dangerous" side like Pakistan.

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

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

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

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

AFP ■ GALLE

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

The England captain made 228 of his team's 421 all out — 26 runs short of his brilliant 254-run record against Pakistan at Old Trafford in 2016.

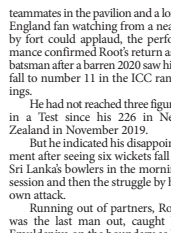
But Lahiru Thirimanne led Sri Lanka's stubborn resistance, hitting an unbeaten 75 while Kusal Perera made 62 as the home team reached 156/2 in their second innings. After their disappointing 135 in the first innings, they need another 130 to reach England's total.

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



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

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



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

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

Death is an interesting affair

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

2



4

Meditate for a better future

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

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



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

NORTH EAST ON THE RADAR

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

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

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

FOCUS OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

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

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

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

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

FALLING INSURGENCY

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

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

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

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

STATE GOVERNMENT CHIPPING IN

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

ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

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

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



information from people in their own circle who had been to the region. "Live streaming of a destination creates an impact like no other. The travel industry too tapped into the potential of the new media," says Das.

YOUTH POWERING CHANGE

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

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

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

STARTUPS REV UP

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

of income and employment."

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

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

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

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

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

COMMUNICATION, CONNECTIVITY AND AWARENESS

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

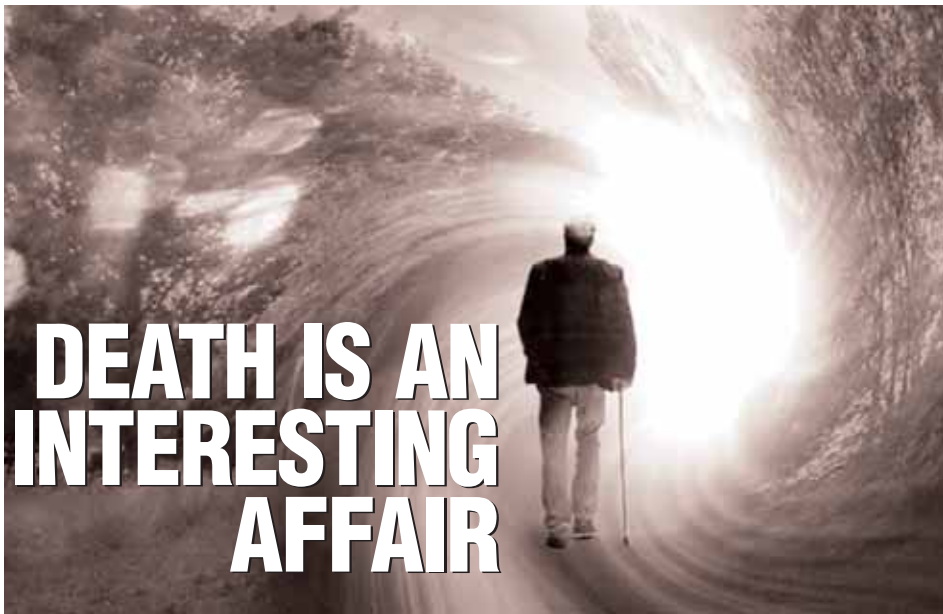
Karthiayani Kunhamma, my mother, passed away peacefully on November 6, 2020. Her departure from this world was as uneventful as she lived for 90 years. There were no theatrics or high drama accompanying the event. She was there alive one moment and then the other she was gone. My long-time friend and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

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

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

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

"A journalist who came to the National Liberal Club where he was staying in London at 1.30 am on 26 September 1966, even if he was not well, thinking Sir CP had a cold. CP laughed loudly at this and replied in a cheerful voice, 'My dear lady, I have never been ill a day in my life.' So saying he leaned back in his upholstered chair where he was drooped and he was no more,"



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

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

had been cruel to him throughout this life.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

stood that death is an interesting and entertaining phenomenon and it's not something bad as propagated by the Abrahamic religion. All one could feel after going through the book is, fine, here I am, waiting happily for me rendezvous with the person whom I was born with but yet to see face to face with him. Vaglar Ramavarma, a leftist poet in Kerala, had written a poem way back in the 1970s spitting venom at death. "Oh death, get lost. I am not willing to join you in your solitude as I don't have death and I am immortal" he had written in the revolutionary song. Had Ramavarma read what Sadhguru has to speak about death, I am sure, he would have simply welcomed death for that enlightening encounter. Yes, Death is beautiful provided you learn the basics of its science.



NEW ARRIVALS

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

A decade ago, in 2010, Indira Chandrasekhar set up *Out of Print* to address a need she felt as a writer: a focused platform for the short story; a space for robust editorial discussions as well as one that would serve as a platform for discoveries — of never facets of the form itself and of new writing. This commemorative volume hopes to capture something of that adventure. It is, thus, not a 'best of' volume, but one that speaks to the spirit of the magazine: its diversity of literary voices, its openness to experimentation, its focus on Indian-language publishing and its stand against mediocrity. Most crucially, of course, this is an ode to the short-story form, its 'art of brevity and honesty'.

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

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

A guide to turning crisis into opportunity

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

At a time when the entire world is struggling with Covid-19 pandemic, which has brought the economy almost to a standstill, it becomes impending on the leaders to go the extra mile, exhibit resilient behaviour and leadership qualities to help the common man sail through this trying time safely. And, the passion to drive this resilience requires a clear understanding to help and guide the right behaviour. Author Ritesh Vig has tried to catalyse this human trait through his book *Leadership in Unprecedented Times* that offers help to business leaders, special business entrepreneurs, common man and youngsters to build confidence to fight back by deploying unprecedented measures.

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

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



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

Agreeing with the book's pitch, Kohli said that leaders need to keep in mind that "It is about acceptance of the change. We can say there are courageous and bold decisions to be made, but it isn't like that. It is some-

times difficult to accept major change and this causes problems. According to me (and the book), look at the change; accept, embrace, and love it. Once you do that, it will be easier for you to

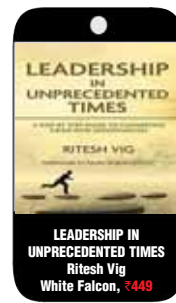
change the model, the culture, and the product range accordingly. All changes become easy then."

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

China angle: Biden to cement India-USA relations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

AP/IF

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The evolution of geo-political dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region and the world at large and emergent threat from China's aggressive posture would require both India and the USA to continue to work as close strategic partners



VIRENDRA GUPTA

PERSPECTIVE

NEP can change dynamics of Defence services

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

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

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

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

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

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

among the new generation towards strengthening country's forces.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

ented courses on the other.

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

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

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

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

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

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

vey their knowledge in a collaborative learning environment.

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

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

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

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

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

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



SUDHIR HINDWAN



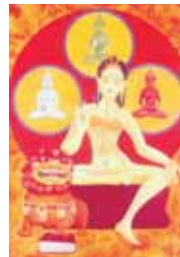
YOUR YEAR AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA

**ARIES** March 21-April 19

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

Lucky number 9
Lucky colour Orange
Lucky day Saturday

**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

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

Lucky number 6
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Friday

**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

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

Lucky number 3
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Wednesday

**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

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

Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Friday

**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

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

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Tuesday

**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

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

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Indigo
Lucky day Tuesday

**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

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

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Golden
Lucky day Sunday

**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

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

Lucky number 19
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Friday

**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

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

Lucky number 22
Lucky colour Red
Lucky day Wednesday

**CANCER** June 21-July 22

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

Lucky number 21
Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Wednesday

**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 21

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

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Blue
Lucky day Thursday

**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

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

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Monday

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

**ASTROTURF**

BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Meditate for a better future

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Write to him at G-102, Bharat Nagar, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110 025
Tel: 91-11-49846475/981803273
Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com